

Łukasz Niesiołowski-Spanò

Goliath's Legacy

Philistines and Hebrews in Biblical Times

PHILIPPIKA

Altertumswissenschaftliche Abhandlungen

Contributions to the Study of Ancient World Cultures 83

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of Ancient World Cultures

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ROZWOJU HUMANISTYKI**

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Abbreviations

Biblical Books

Gen, Ex, Lev, Num, Deut, Josh, Judg, Ruth, 1–2 Sam, 1–2 Kings, 1–2 Chr, Ezra, Neh, Job, Ps, Prov, Eccl, Song, Wis, Sir, Bar, Isa, Jer, Lam, Ezek, Dan, Joel, Hos Am, Ob, Jon, Mic, Nah, Hab, Zeph, Hag, Zech, Mal, Jdt, Esth, 1–2 Macc, Mt, Mk, Lk, Jn, Acts

Abbreviations used in the text

- ABD* – D. N. Freedman (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 1–6, New York 1992
AfO – *Archiv für Orientforschung*
AHI – G. I. Davies, *Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions. Corpus and Concordance*, Cambridge, vol. 1, 1991 (2nd edition 1997); vol. 2, 2004
Ant – Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, transl. H. S. J. Thackeray (The Loeb Classical Library), London–Cambridge 1926–1965
AJA – *American Journal of Archaeology*
ANET – J. B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern texts relating to the Old Testament*, vol. 1, Texts, Princeton 1969
Arad – Y. Aharoni, *Arad Inscriptions*, Jerusalem 1981
ArOr – *Archiv Orientalní*
BA – *Biblical Archaeologist*
BAR – *Biblical Archaeology Review*
BASOR – *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BDB – *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, Boston 1906 (repr. 1997)
Benz – F. L. Benz, *Personal Names in the Phoenician and Punic Inscriptions*, Rome 1972
BZAW – *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
CAD – *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, vol. 1–21, Chicago 1956–2010
CAH – *Cambridge Ancient History* (3rd edition)
CANE – J. M. Sasson (ed.), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, vol. 1–4, (2nd edition) New York 2000
CBQ – *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
Chantraine – P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque: histoire des mots*, Paris 1999
COS – W. Hallo, *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 1–3, Leiden–Boston 2003
CWSSS – N. Avigad, B. Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamps Seals*, Jerusalem 1997
DCH – D. J. Clines, *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, Sheffield 1993
DDD – K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, P. W. van der Horst (eds.), *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (2 ed.), Leiden–New York–Köln 1995

- DMic* – F. Aura Jorro, F. R. Adrasos (eds.), *Diccionario Griego-Español*, *Diccionario Micénico*, vol. 1–2, Madrid 1999
- EA* – W. L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, Baltimore–London 1992
- GLAJJ* – M. Stern, *Greek and Latin authors on Jews and Judaism*, vol. 1–3, Jerusalem 1974–1984
- HAL* – L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner, J. J. Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Leiden 2001
- Hdt* – Herodotus, *Histories*, transl. A. D. Godley, Cambridge 1920
- HTAT* – M. Weippert, *Historisches Textbuch zum Alten Testament*, Göttingen 2010
- HTR* – *Harvard Theological Review*
- HUCA* – *Hebrew Union College Annual*
- IEJ* – *Israel Exploration Journal*
- Jacoby, *FGrHist* – F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, Berlin 1923
- JANER* – *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions*
- JAOS* – *Journal of the American Oriental Society*
- JBL* – *Journal of Biblical Literature*
- JCS* – *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*
- JEA* – *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
- JJS* – *Journal of Jewish Studies*
- JNES* – *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
- JOAS* – *Journal of the American Oriental Society*
- JSOT* – *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
- JSOT Suppl.* – *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement*
- JSS* – *Journal of Semitic Studies*
- JTS* – *The Journal of Theological Studies*
- Jub* – Jubilees, transl. O. S. Wintermute, in: J. H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, New York 1985, vol. 2, pp. 35–142
- KAI* – H. Donner, W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften*, vol. 1–3, Wiesbaden 1966–1969
- KTU* – M. Dietrich, O. Loretz, J. Sanmartín (eds.), *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani und anderen Orten* = *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places*, Münster 2013
- LAB* – C. Perrot, P.-M. Bogaert (eds.), *Pseudo-Philo, Les Antiquités Bibliques (Sources Chrétiennes 229-230)*, Paris 1976
- LSJ*⁹ – H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford 1996
- Luckenbill – D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. 1-2, Chicago 1926 (repr. London 1989)
- LXX* – Septuagint
- MT* – Masoretic Text
- Melchert – H. C. Melchert, *Cuneiform Luvian Lexicon*, Chapel Hill 1993 (www.unc.edu/~melchert/LUVLEX.pdf; access 1.1.2011)
- NEA* – *Near Eastern Archaeology*
- NEAEHL* – E. Stern (ed.), *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, vol. 1–4; Jerusalem–New York–London 1993; vol. 5, Jerusalem 2008
- OBO* – *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis*

- OLA – *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta*
 PEFQS – *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*
 PEQ – *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*
 PH – *Przegląd Historyczny*
 RB – *Revue Biblique*
 RIMA – A. K. Grayson, *The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia. Assyrian Period*, vol. 1–3, Toronto 1987–1996
 RS – Ras Shamra
 RSF – *Rivista di Studi Fenici*
 SBO – *Scripta Biblica et Orientalia*
 SEL – *Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici sul Vicino Oriente Antico*
 SJOT – *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*
 TA – Tel Aviv
 TADAE – B. Porten, A. Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic documents from ancient Egypt*, vol. 1–4, Winona Lake 1986–1999
 TDOT – G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 1–15 Grand Rapids 1997–2006
 TSSI – J. C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, vol. 1–3, Oxford 1971–1982 (repr. 2002)
 UF – *Ugarit Forschungen*
 VT – *Vetus Testamentum*
 VT Suppl. – *Vetus Testamentum Supplements*
 ZA – *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie*
 ZAW – *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
 ZDPV – *Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins*

Introduction

The present study deals with relations between two peoples whose mutual conflicts have been widely depicted in the Old Testament. The Philistines and the Hebrews – as shown in the Bible – were engaged in constant conflicts. The historian's task is to examine to what extent the biblical narrative corresponds with the facts. Therefore, I have tried to find out what the relations between these two peoples looked like and what their mutual impact was. Firstly, it is important to mention the methodology of using the Bible as a historic source. I share the viewpoint of those who regard the Old Testament as a dynamic and not static work. Consequently, I think that biblical literature continued to develop and expand for a long time. It underwent redactions and corrections, and it was not until the beginning of our era that it became a normative text, which with time led to the codification of the concrete textual versions, creating the canons. This stand forces the historian to decide how to use the source the precise origin of which is difficult or even impossible to define. Despite the conviction that the editorial and redactional efforts of the post-exilic epoch, including the Hellenistic times, had decisive influence on the present biblical texts, I think that the Old Testament still remains a valuable source of getting to know the realities of the pre-exilic epoch. However, this declaration is not of a maximalist type but rather supports those who adhere to traditional biblical studies. Since I believe that the Bible as a work growing in the circles of the local men of learning and is characterised by a conservative desire to preserve the early heritage. The redactions and re-writings were made within the literary and notional achievements of previous generations. Even if some text originated in the Persian epoch and was revised in the Hellenistic period, this does not mean that the text cannot reflect certain awareness and intellectual tradition reaching back into the early centuries. At the same time, numerous biblical texts – because of their redactional fate – lost their primary context and meaning. Thus the historian often faces the task of deciphering the hidden senses in the source. Nevertheless, the total negation of the usefulness of the Bible as a source is not justifiable.

Chapter One presents the issues related to ethnicity in antiquity, which is a necessary step to evaluate the communities of the Philistines and the Hebrews.

Chapter Two answers the question how other nations perceived the Philistines. It discusses the data of various sources concerning the Philistines or the territories they inhabited. This part aims at collecting source-based information concerning the population and area called Palestine. The knowledge of the picture of the Philistines in written sources has been completed with a historic reconstruction of the process of the Philistine settlement in Palestine. My focus has been to establish the range and model of the Philistine settlement.

Chapter Three describes various peoples (nations) living in Palestine. The biblical tradition mentions numerous ethnic groups that inhabited Palestine when there were intensive contacts between the Hebrews and the Philistines. It was of special importance to

me to define the relations between the Philistines and the Canaanites considering the fact that both groups – in the biblical narrative – were regarded as Israel's eternal enemies. Relations were examined on the basis of the biblical texts, the aim being to see how the Hebrews perceived the Canaanites and the Philistines. Then I focused on those peoples whom I temporarily called “pseudo-Canaanite” and “pseudo-Hebrew.” I meant those biblical nations that played some role in relations between the Hebrews and the Philistines. Since some of those peoples were not attested in non-biblical sources, it was necessary to investigate whether they actually existed or whether they were only literary creations. The peoples, living in Palestine at the turn of the Bronze Age and the Iron Age, and the biblical tradition concerning them were thus characterised.

As indicated above, the Philistines were emblematic – both real and proverbial – enemies of Israel. Chapter Four aims at establishing when, where and how these nations entered into contact. However, it should be stressed that our historic reconstruction must be based on the biblical material to a large extent. Treating the biblical sources separately allows us to analyse in detail the forms and mechanisms of the presentation of the content in various biblical books. Consequently, we have gained a synthetic picture of the Philistines as depicted in the Bible. The material has been arranged according to the internal chronology of the biblical narrative since at this stage my aim was not to determine the changes of the biblical picture of the Philistines but only to collect the biblical testimonies pertaining to the Philistines. Consequently, it is a kind of illustration of the thesis on the role of the Philistines as Israel's opponents in the Holy Scriptures. This “chronologically” conducted reasoning has been completed with information from non-biblical data, concerning mostly the period which was well attested in the sources, namely the eighth–seventh centuries. This part is entitled *Pax Assyriaca* because – as I have attempted to prove – the epoch of Assyrian domination had a special meaning for the relations between the Hebrews and the Philistines. The final part of this chapter discusses the territories where possible contacts between these two nations could have taken place. My interest was centred on the mentions, chiefly the biblical ones, allowing me to set the border of the influences of Philistine culture in Palestine. This review enabled me to define the range of the territory in which one could expect the presence of Philistine culture. Since I tried to prove that mutual contacts and intercultural exchange, which constitute the main theme of the work, really could have taken place.

With the knowledge of the possible areas in which intensive contacts between the Philistines and the Hebrews might have happened and the knowledge of the epochs during which these relations might have intensified, I led the Reader to the next part of my book. Chapter Five presents the elements of Philistine heritage that could have penetrated into the culture of the Hebrews and the Bible. The analysed aspects of Hebrew culture and biblical literature served to disclose the elements constituting the Philistine legacy.

All biblical quotations come from the New Revised Standard Version. All the dates, if not indicated otherwise, concern the epoch before the Common Era.

* * *

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Chapter 1

Problems connected with intercultural relations

Before I began working on this book, I had asked a number of questions related to the biblical picture of the Philistines and their role in the history of Palestine. I try to answer some of them here. Most simply, one can say that in the corpus of “mythological” texts, the Bible makes the Philistines the main antagonists and fierce enemies of the Hebrews. An intriguing question was what reality and what epoch evoked this image of Israel’s mortal enemies. How did they influence the Hebrews and why was this ominous role ascribed to the Philistines in the biblical vision of Israel’s past?

I have purposefully omitted the fiercely debated question of the origin of the Philistines. I have followed the scholars who accept that the peoples, whom the Egyptians called the Sea Peoples, originated from the Mycenaean cultural area, since, in my opinion, the representatives of this group came from the Aegean or Aegean-Anatolian lands. Having no decisive proofs, and especially new data, scholars trust their own opinions. Thus the Reader will find a brief outline of the history of the Philistines, together with plausible hypotheses explaining their origin. However, this does not set the objective of this book.

The first thing is to establish the facts concerning the group – our subject matter. I did not only want – as in most scholarly works on the Philistines – to gather the archaeological material. Firstly, I am not competent in this field and secondly, there are erudite works on this issue.¹ Yet there is another reason: I am not convinced of the existence of a direct relationship between the specificity of material culture, archaeologically traceable, and the distinctive features of a certain group of people.

1 T. Dothan, *The Philistines and Their Material Culture*, New Haven–London 1982; D. Ben-Shlomo, *Philistine Iconography. A Wealth of Style and Symbolism*, (OBO 241), Fribourg–Göttingen 2010. The most important archaeological reports include M. Dothan, D. N. Freedman, *Ashdod I*, (‘Atiqot 7), Jerusalem 1967; M. Dothan, *Ashdod II–III*, (‘Atiqot 10–11), Jerusalem 1971; M. Dothan, Y. Porath, *Ashdod IV*, (‘Atiqot 15), Jerusalem 1982; M. Dothan, Y. Porath, *Ashdod V*, (‘Atiqot 23), Jerusalem 1993; M. Dothan, D. Ben-Shlomo, *Ashdod VI*, (Israel Antiquities Authority Reports 24), Jerusalem 2005; L. E. Stager, J. D. Schloen, D. M. Master, *Ashkelon I. Introduction and Overview (1985–2006)*, Winona Lake 2008; A. Mazar, *Excavations at Tell Qasile, Part One. The Philistine Sanctuary: Architecture and Cult Objects*, (Qedem 12), Jerusalem 1980; idem, *Excavations at Tell Qasile II: Various Objects, the Pottery, Conclusions*, (Qedem 20), Jerusalem 1985.

Research on the ethnicity of ancient societies

For the last decades numerous investigations have focused on the widely understood ethnic identification of ancient communities. This issue must be of special interest to us, which is understandable. However, besides optimistic studies attention should be paid to the pessimistic ones, evaluating our chances of discovering the essence of the ancient sense of ethnicity (if this term can be applied to ancient communities at all). It must suffice to give the example of two recent monographs written by two archaeologists: Ann Killebrew² and Avraham Faust.³ In both works, the main line of reasoning is the conviction that archaeological material (the core of the source database) can be ethnically identifiable. Therefore, scholars assume that the identification of a certain group of objects, types of construction or customs (e.g. funeral customs) allows us to deduce the range of the settlement of the given group. This reasoning can lead to absurdity, for example giving the present identification of our population on the basis of material culture, i.e. through the use of objects, which could mean that almost the whole population of Earth should be described as Chinese.

Doubts concerning the methodological possibilities of applying archaeological data to describing ethnic communities living in the ancient Near East appeared a long time ago.⁴ The key marker of the groups that can be evaluated with respect to their ethnic adherence and self-awareness is the disposal of their own collections of texts. Without such sources, working only on archaeological data, it is completely impossible to ascribe some ethnic or

2 A. Killebrew, *Biblical Peoples and Ethnicity. An Archaeological Study of Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, and Early Israel 1300–1100 BCE*, Atlanta 2005.

3 A. Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis. Settlement, Interaction, Expansion and Resistance*, London 2007.

4 D. Edelman, *Ethnicity and Early Israel*, in: M. G. Brett (ed.), *Ethnicity and the Bible*, (Biblical Interpretation Series 19), Leiden 1996, pp. 25–55; S. Bunimovitz, A. Yasur-Landau, *Philistine and Israelite Pottery: A Comparative Approach to the Question of Pots and People*, *TA* 23 (1996), pp. 88–101; T. L. Thompson, *Defining History and Ethnicity in the South Levant*, in: L. L. Grabbe (ed.), *Can a "History of Israel" Be Written?*, London 2004, pp. 166–187; R. Kletter, *Can a Proto-Israelite Please Stand Up? Notes on the Ethnicity of Iron Age Israel and Judah*, in: A. Maeir, P. de Miroschedji (eds.), *"I Will Speak the Riddles of Ancient Times."* Archaeological and Historical Studies in Honor of Amihai Mazar on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday, vol. 2, Winona Lake 2006, pp. 573–586; N. P. Lemche, Avraham Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis, and Social Anthropology*, in: E. Pfoh (ed.), *Anthropology and the Bible. Critical Perspectives*, Piscataway 2010, pp. 93–104; J. D. Muhly, *The Crisis Years in the Mediterranean World: Transition or Cultural Disintegration?*, in: W. A. Word, M. S. Joukowski (eds.), *The Crisis Years: The 12th Century B.C. From Beyond the Danube to the Tigris*, Dubuque 1992, pp. 10–26, esp. p. 13: "Now the practice of equating pots with people has a long and rather disreputable history in prehistoric archaeology. The idea that everyone who used a grey pot spoke an Indo-European language has led to some rather wild and woolly contributions to the archaeological literature. Ceramics and ethnicity do not go together very well. [...] Recognition of the dangers involved in such assumptions has led to enunciation of what is known as the Hervey Thesis: the presence of any pottery of any given state and any given site is no evidence for the activity of traders (or indeed settlers) from that site at that site." I. Finkelstein, *The Rise of Early Israel. Archaeology and Long-Term History*, in: S. Ahituv, E. D. Oren (eds.), *The Origin of Early Israel – Current Debate. Biblical, Historical and Archaeological Perspectives*, Jerusalem 1998, pp. 7–39 (the author gives the example of distributing vessels imported from Europe during the Crusades; the distribution is spread between the Muslim, local Christian and Frankish settlements, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 16–17).

national identity to groups.⁵ Let us consider the following example. The pottery, commonly identified with Philistine production (Myc. IIIC:1b), made locally in Palestine as the imitation of the Mycenaean patterns from the Aegean world, has been found at numerous archaeological sites in Palestine.⁶ When the intensification of occurrence of this pottery is extensive, archaeologists call the site “Philistine.” When the quantity is a little smaller, they speak of import, i.e. redistribution of these vessels, attesting to the prestige of their owners. If the sites are isolated, in the context of the whole site they are regarded as accidental or having no influence on the ethnic picture of the site as a whole.⁷ The pottery as a criterion has become a tool, which is simultaneously popular and slightly unreliable while determining the adherence of the analysed groups. If some other data indicate possible relations between the given place and the Philistines, but no Philistine pottery has been discovered there, it is suggested that there was no such relationship. However, I will attempt to show that a simple relation between the presence of the archaeological remains of typical artefacts is not the only, and surely is insufficient, argument to acknowledge or exclude the possibility that the users of these vessels and the dwellers of this area were Philistines.

The limitation resulting from the possibility of describing the ethnic identity of some ancient group only on the basis of partly preserved material culture has made me consider other data in order to define the territorial range of the Philistine presence. In order to do this, it is important to determine, firstly, the structures of settlement in the analysed period, and secondly, the social characteristics of the analysed community (e.g. its economy). Consequently, the fact that the Philistines controlled (at least in some period) iron

5 Cf. the classic work by J. Hall, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity*, Cambridge 1997, esp. pp. 111–142. D. Mendels, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Nationalism*, New York 1992; S. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, Berkeley 1999; D. Goodblatt, *Elements of Ancient Jewish Nationalism*, Cambridge 2008.

6 Methodological doubts concerning the identification of the remains of material culture with some ethnic group were expressed by S. Bunimovitz, *Problems in the “Ethnic” Identification of the Philistine Material Culture*, *TA* 17 (1990), pp. 210–222. The history of investigations concerning the relations between the Philistine pottery and the Aegean population, and other reservations are presented in: I. Sharon, *Philistine Bichrome Painted Pottery: Scholarly Ideology and Ceramic Typology*, in: S. R. Wolff (ed.), *Studies in the Archaeology of Israel and Neighboring Lands in Memory of Douglas L. Esse*, (SAOC 59), Chicago 2001, pp. 555–609. See the latest works: A. Yasur-Landau, *Under the Shadow of the Four-Room House. Biblical Archaeology Meets Household Archaeology in Israel*, in: Th. E. Levy (ed.), *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future. The New Pragmatism*, London 2010, pp. 142–155; A. Killebrew, *The Philistines and their Material Culture in Context. Future Directions of Historical Biblical Archaeology for the Study of Cultural Transmission*, in: *ibid.*, pp. 156–167.

7 Megiddo, in *Stratum VIA* (dated to ca. 1100–1000), regarded as being inhabited mainly by the local Canaanite population, while Building 2072 is interpreted as the place indicating the Philistine presence (A. Kempinski, *Megiddo. A City-State and Royal Centre in North Israel*, Munich 1989, pp. 82–83; T. P. Harrison, *Megiddo 3. Final Report on the Stratum VI Excavations*, [OIP 127], Chicago 2004, pp. 18, 105–106) or residence of a Canaanite nobleman who maintained trade contacts only with Philistia (B. Halpern, *The Dawn of an Age: Megiddo in the Iron Age I*, in: J. D. Schloen (ed.), *Exploring the “Longue Durée.” Essays in Honor of Lawrence E. Stager*, Winona Lake 2009, pp. 151–163, esp. p. 157). Halpern’s statement is astonishing since he himself claims that the Philistine influences at Megiddo are visible in the palatial area and in the whole city – not only pottery but also traces of ritual behaviour (sacrificial dogs); *ibid.*, p. 157.

processing can allow me to assume that they strove to control the sources of the acquisition of iron ore,⁸ which seems to be the consequence of the existence of an iron industry monopoly.⁹ Philistine domination over the subdued areas could have taken various forms: from direct dependence through indirect dependence to completely loose and formal dependence. The structure of these circles of influence – as a theoretical model – was aptly presented by Ernst Axel Knauf (cf. map 6, on p. 113).¹⁰

Fierce methodological controversies concerning the notions of nationalism and ethnicity as well as the possibilities of their application to ancient communities are in strict connection with the discussed relations between the Philistines and the Hebrews. Some scholars opt for positive answers as for the presence of national and ethnic feelings existing also in ancient communities.¹¹ However, there is another trend in contemporary studies on ethnicity and national communities, stressing the artificiality and propagandistic character of many elements that with time were regarded as constitutive for the separateness of a given group.¹² In the literature concerning these themes, this difference in views concerning the nation is expressed by the juxtaposition of “primordialists” and “modernists,” thus between the followers of the thesis of the eternity of the nation and those who are inclined to see the nation as a modern phenomenon, or even a nineteenth century one.¹³

The problem of Jewish identity in antiquity has been investigated intensively. These investigations, drawing abundantly from the studies on the sense of the Greek identity, i.e. the problem of the existence of the Greek nation/ethnos, include both theoretical studies and detailed analytical works.¹⁴ Currently, most scholars tend to accept the existence of the sense of community of the Jews¹⁵ in antiquity (some call them “nation” whereas others –

8 Cf. R. A. Coughenour, A Search for Mahanaim, *BASOR* 273 (1989), pp. 61–63.

9 Doubts concerning the role of the Philistines in spreading the technology of iron processing were expressed by Y. Gottlieb, The Advent of the Age of Iron in the Land of Israel: A Review and Reassessment, *TA* 37 (2010), pp. 89–110.

10 E. A. Knauf, Saul, David, and the Philistines: from Geography to History, *Biblische Notizen* 109 (2001), pp. 15–18.

11 A. D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, New York–London 1971, pp. 153–167; S. Grosby, *Biblical Ideas of Nationality. Ancient and Modern*, Winona Lake 2002.

12 E. Hobsbawm, T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge 1984; B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London – New York 1991. A synthetic presentation of the research trends concerning ethnicity and nationalism related to our interests is made in: A. D. Smith, *Nationalism and the Historians*, in: idem (ed.), *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, (*International Studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology* 60), Leiden 1992, pp. 58–80; idem, *The Nation in History. Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Hanover (NH) 2000; idem, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford – New York 1986, esp. pp. 21–68.

13 Cf. the interesting analysis of the present investigations and possibilities of their application to the ancient world: B. Routledge, The antiquity of the nation? Critical reflections from the ancient Near East, *Nations and Nationalism* 9 (2003), pp. 213–233.

14 See for example S. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, Berkeley 1999; K. L. Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel: Prolegomena to the Study of Ethnic Sentiments and Their Expression in the Hebrew Bible*, Winona Lake 1998; D. Schwartz, *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity*, Tübingen 1992; D. A. Nestor, *Cognate Perspectives on Israel Identity*, (LBS 519), New York–London 2010.

15 I have tried to differentiate terms describing the population of ancient Palestine: “Hebrews” is the widest term, embracing the believers of Yahweh from the Late Bronze Age; “Judahites” are the

“ethnic group”); a community united by common elements of culture (mainly religion) and a sense of common origin.¹⁶

Various kinds of premises allow us to recognise that in order to speak of a nation (*ethnos*) in ancient times numerous conditions, which – due to limited sources – cannot be verified, must be fulfilled. As for the cultural area under discussion, we can safely say that in the Hellenistic epoch there was a Jewish nation¹⁷ while we are not authorised to regard the Philistines as a nation.¹⁸ Moreover, present studies show beyond all doubts profound changes of the sense of identity and national/ethnic separateness of the Jews living in the Hellenistic epoch, especially in the second century. This resulted from changes occurring in Judaism and from the clash between their culture and foreign (Hellenistic) patterns, both in the Diaspora and in Palestine. Additionally, a key role in the consolidation of the Jewish communities was played by the Bible as the sacralised text of the community.¹⁹ Yet, we do not know how far back the Jewish (Hebrew) *ethnos*/nation goes.

The relations between two groups of population can, however, go beyond typical analyses conducted by scholars examining nationalisms. The thing is that the majority of our knowledge concerning the Philistines comes from the Bible, i.e. the constitutive work being the basis of the sense of national and ethnic identity of the Hebrews. The question about the mechanisms of creating the image of “others” in the process of forming one’s own identity must be raised. Can the biblical information about the Philistines be regarded as a typical expression of the description of the reality (and is it reliable) or is it rather a creation of the mechanisms of self-identification of the Hebrews? It could have happened that creating their own identity – which is the aim of the whole text of the Old Testament – the community of the Hebrews “created” their emblematic enemies so that – by opposition to them – it could define its own identity more explicitly?

Contemporary works focus on the question of the mechanisms used by a group that has been placed in a foreign environment. Scholars differ in their opinions concerning the mechanisms, the range and methods of assimilation; the scale of the methods depends on many circumstances. The term “acculturation” has also made a career for itself.²⁰ Papers concerning the Philistines seldom use terms drawn from investigations of modern colonies, namely “creole”/“creolization” and *pidgin* as the name of a language.²¹ This results from the lack of research material, which is language and literature. Since the term “creole”

inhabitants of the kingdom of Judah, and later of Judea; “Israelites” are the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel, i.e. Samaria; “Jews” are a group distinguished only by its religion (Judaism), existing from the Persian epoch (the name “Jews” comes from the Hebrew *yehudi*, i.e. term originating from the name of the Persian province: *Jehud*).

16 Cf. D. Goodblatt, *Elements of Ancient Jewish Nationalism*, Cambridge 2008, esp. pp. 1–27.

17 D. Mendels, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Nationalism*, New York 1992; T. L. Thompson, *The Bible in History: How Writers Create a Past*, London 1999; K. Whitelam, *The Invention of Ancient Israel: the Silencing of Palestinian History*, London 1996; Ph. R. Davies, *The Origins of Biblical Israel*, New York 2007; G. Garbini, *Scrivere la storia d’Israele*, Brescia 2008.

18 A. D. Smith, *The Antiquity of Nations*, Cambridge 2004, esp. pp. 127–153.

19 D. Goodblatt, *Elements of Ancient Jewish Nationalism*, pp. 28–48.

20 B. J. Stone, *The Philistines and Acculturation: Culture Change and Ethnic Continuity in the Iron Age*, *BASOR* 298 (1995), pp. 7–32.

21 Cf. C. Stewart, *Creolization: History, Ethnography, Theory*, Walnut Creek 2007, pp. 1–25.

(although with time it developed and assumed a wider meaning “mixed,” “syncretic” and “hybridoidal”) means a linguistic phenomenon created within a group of the users of a given language that functions in the environment of another language. In our case the object of investigation would be the language of the Philistines yielding to Semitic influences.²²

As opposed to “creolization,” the term “acculturation” has been widely applied in studies dedicated to the Philistines, as it was mainly used by archaeologists. Since archaeological material shows the changes taking place between newcomers and locals. Unfortunately, we are not always certain how to interpret the changes which we are observing in archaeological material. The term itself indicates a rapid and conscious assumption of the elements of a foreign culture at the cost of one’s own heritage.²³ At the same time, the implied meaning is that this process occurs between big groups, which explains why sociologists are interested in this phenomenon.

These assertions are, however, based on the general assumption that contacts between two groups are bound to the assimilation of the “weaker” group. Yet, there are examples of intensive contacts between groups which have led to mutual coexistence, but instead of the expected assimilation both groups fostered a sense of distinctiveness.²⁴

As is known, conducting historic studies we can use the rules worked out by social sciences. It can be assumed that when two different groups develop contacts, sooner or later they will begin interaction. Contacts between these groups can lead to mutual rejection or friendly relations. In turn, the latter can cause the assimilation of one group by the other. The way to assimilation, even partial assimilation, is acculturation, which becomes a process enabling mutual relations between two groups.

* * *

Facing dramatic changes that took place in the Aegean world at the end of the Bronze Age, leaving their Aegean and eastern Mycenaean areas, the south-western parts of Asia Minor, highly specialised armed men began their search for new settlements.²⁵ Here we are not dealing with mass migration, but rather with movements of small groups led by the

22 One can say that the Philistines – first newcomers – could have undergone creolization, and in the next generations created a pidgin, but we lack almost any source-based data confirming this hypothesis.

23 E. Nowicka, *Akulturacyja*, in: W. Kwaśniewicz (ed.), *Encyklopedia socjologii*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1998, pp. 17–20.

24 A. D. Smith, *The Cultural Foundations of Nations*, Oxford 2008, pp. 51–56. Cf. S. Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present*, London 1997. An example of increasing intensification of the exchange of goods that did not have any influence on the decrease in the sense of ethnic separateness is given by S. W. Silliman, *Change and Continuity, Practice and Memory: Native American Persistence in Colonial New England*, *American Antiquity* 74 (2009), pp. 211–230.

25 Only few authors have objected to migration, claiming that the available documentation can show only technological changes that did not have to result from people’s migrations, cf. J. D. Muhly, *The Crisis Years in the Mediterranean World*, pp. 10–26, esp. p. 15; R. Drews, *Canaanites and Philistines*, *JSOT* 81 (1998), pp. 39–61.

representatives of the local elites (since they knew how to reach the rich land of Egypt), on their way drawing the locals (who were probably also the local elites) to themselves. Thus the Sea Peoples should be seen as an assemblage of various groups united by the need to conquer new lands for settlement and by some common cultural element, probably Mycenaeans. These conquerors became the elites of the subdued areas. Their choice of mainly urban and not rural centres can be explained by their strategic advantages and the relation with the urban tradition of the Mycenaeans. The settlers continued their cultural patterns, expressed by the luxury and elegance of material culture and by religion, which as such undergoes very slow changes. The newcomers' indigenous tradition is the reason why they continued the local, Canaanite urban culture and its typical settlement model – large, strong, fortified cities and weak, depopulated villages in the neighbourhood of the cities. However, the consolidation of the conquered population in cities favoured the assumption of culture by the new local elites. For example, mixed marriages and co-existence within the cities caused the loss of the language and customs of material culture, and inclined the elites to follow the patterns and language of the mostly Semitic cities. So, whereas the Normans in England kept their distance from the locals, thanks to which they preserved their cultural elements longer, what could have survived concerned the behaviours that were not “contaminated” by the indigenous influences, e.g. the *Männerbund*, and behaviours restricted to the elites, e.g. morality related to the culture of wine drinking and – by nature conservative – religious beliefs.

A reverse phenomenon can be seen in the centres of the Villanovan culture, where the newcomers – new elites – managed to force their language on the autochthons. In the case of the Philistines, the rapid acculturation and resultant Semiticisation (analogous to the Varangians in Ruthenia) could have resulted from the attractiveness of the local alphabetic script and elements of urban culture that were related to that script.

The findings of pottery imitating Mycenaean patterns (monochrome and bichrome) can indicate the presence of the Philistines. However, these findings do not mark the centres colonised by the Philistines but only show the existence of a culture having its source in the morality of the Philistine elite. The Philistine pottery found at Megiddo or Deir ‘Alla do not have to prove directly military expansion and settlement but can rather speak of the attractiveness of the cultural patterns promoted by the Philistine population and of the passability of routes between the coast and the interior.

In my opinion, the so-called Philistine pottery, and precisely, monochrome and bichrome pottery, imitating the Aegean patterns, should not be treated as a marker of ethnic distinctiveness but of cultural autonomy. Even if the name *Plšt* was used to describe a tribe preserving certain characteristics that distinguished them from their neighbours, this does not mean that this community, promoting the products of their own culture, expanded and grew in number.

Looking at the type of feasting spread within the Mycenaean world, we can assume that the kind of feasting following the Aegean way differed from the Oriental one. Both the appearance of buildings imitating the Greek megarons and the presence of hearths show the spread of the custom of “egalitarian” feasting within Philistine culture. We can think that a certain group, i.e. the elite (military or financial) feasted together. This feasting community supported the cohesion of the group. A marker of adherence to this group was the tableware used for wine drinking. In the Oriental world, built on the hierarchical structure, with the

central role of the king, this “egalitarian” within the elites seems to be a social innovation. The use of Philistine pottery does not attest to the expansion of those using only their own decorated ceramic vessels but to the spread of cultural (cultic?) behaviours that required using new, valuable, elegant and expensive pottery.²⁶ The intensification of the use of this pottery, which became a social status-marker, must have coincided with the period of the formation of new elites who, in the heterogeneous society, especially among the inhabitants of cities, created their own background, becoming the leaders of the newly created communities at the end of the Bronze Age.

I have no doubts that another marker of the Philistine spirit – described in various studies – namely, the increase in the percentage of pork bones found among the animal remains, cannot be treated as direct information concerning the spread of this ethnic group. The increase in the pork remains at the archaeological sites in the Near East coincides with the great transformations at the turn of the Bronze and Iron Ages. It can be connected with the changes occurring in economy and climate as well as in populace. However, this does not mean that the increase in pork consumption can be a proof of the multiplication of the members of the ethnic group whose menu embraced pork as a significant component. The impossibility of using these archaeological data to describe the ethnicity of population results from the fact that pork remains do not directly prove that some group, having certain traditions and culinary tastes, just appeared, but are only a proof of the occurrence of certain new dietary habits. Moreover, animal remains show the menu to a large extent. They also help us interpret the content of animal offerings. Since animals were slaughtered mainly as offerings and were eaten as sacrificial animals. They did not express people’s tastes. Consequently, at those archaeological sites where we can find more pork bones, we cannot assume the presence of the Philistines or another ethnos related to the diet of the Aegean and Anatolian culture, but we can assume the presence of a people practising religious behaviours, especially the offerings that were typical of those regions. However, in most cases there is *unctim* between both groups, but it is not a rule.²⁷ We can safely assume that just as the local Semitic populace assumed the style of the elites, requiring

26 Cf. the interesting analysis of probable data concerning the owners of pottery on the basis of the Greek pottery from the Early Iron Age: P. J. Crielaard, Production, circulation and consumption of Early Iron Age Greek pottery (eleventh to seventh centuries BC), in: P. J. Crielaard, V. Stissi, G. J. van Wijngaarden (eds.), *The Complex Past of Pottery. Production, Circulation and Consumption of Mycenaean and Greek Potter (sixteenth to early fifth centuries BC)*. Proceedings of the ARCHON international conference, held in Amsterdam, 8–9 November 1996, Amsterdam 1999, pp. 63–67 and idem, Early Iron Age Greek pottery in Cyprus and North Syria: a consumption-oriented approach, in: *ibid.*, pp. 261–290. For the elitist character of feasts with wine drinking in the Mycenaean culture, see E. Borgna, *Aegean Feasting: A Minoan Perspective*, in: J. C. Wright (ed.), *The Mycenaean Feast*, Princeton 2004, pp. 127–159.

27 Cf. G. Lehmann, Cooking pots and loomweights in a “Philistine” village: preliminary report on the excavations at Qubur el-Walaydah, Israel, in: V. Karageorghis, O. Kouka (eds.), *On Cooking Pots, Drinking Cups, Loomweights and Ethnicity in Bronze Age Cyprus and Neighboring Regions*. An International Archaeological Symposium held in Nicosia, November 6th-7th 2010, Nicosia 2011, 287–314.

using impressive pottery, they adopted the cults and religious ceremonies in which the key element was the choice of the animal offering – the pig.²⁸

Analogously, the same applies to the identity of the Canaanites. Killebrew has no doubt that one can show a list of defined cultural distinctives, typical of the Canaanites.²⁹ Was it then an ethnically distinctive group? It seems that the biblical tradition very strongly conditioned scholars who repeat the biblical vision of the dichotomous society based on the rivalry of two ethnoses: Canaanites–Israelites. The non-ethnic understanding of the name “Canaan” is attested by both Egyptian testimonies and the critical reading of the biblical text.³⁰

These general rules governing the mechanisms of people’s behaviours will be more understandable when supported by an example.

Analogies: Normans in Sicily and Ruthenia under the Scandinavians

Seeking an analogy of the situation, which the Philistines created by settling in Palestine, requires establishing essential features of the process itself. Thus the settlement of the Sea Peoples in Palestine is characterised by:

1. small, or at least non-mass, number of settlers;
2. military advantage;
3. technological superiority;
4. rapid process of acculturation.

These features occur in many known past invasions. However, the analogy with the Norman settlement in Sicily and the Scandinavians in Ruthenia seems to be the closest one. The example of the conquistadors in Mexico differed from our case since the conquerors were followed by a wave of settlement that – though resulting from a successful conquest – meant an influx of new settlers. The conquerors, and the same can be said of almost all modern processes of European colonisations, treated the occupied territories as an area of exploitation, preserving their original identification with the culture of the metropolis (e.g. the Europeans *versus* autochthons). As far as we know, the Philistine settlers could not preserve their full identification with their indigenous territories because these lands underwent drastic changes, which made it difficult for them to maintain close contacts. Besides the long influx of the Sea Peoples on the rich and safe territories of Egypt and the Near East confirms that they were rather refugees than colonists.

Examining the sources of Norman domination in Sicily – although it depended on a successful military campaign – one can see another type of migration than that of the Sea Peoples. The difference was that the Sea Peoples fled from their own territories where their existence was threatened. The Normans were immigrants who could return to their lands.

28 Cf. Ł. Niesiołowski-Spanò, Ślady kultu chtonicznego w Biblii – hebrajski czasownik *‘arap*, in: A. Wolicki (ed.), *Timai. Studia poświęcone profesorowi Włodzimierzowi Lengauerowi przez uczniów i młodszych kolegów z okazji Jego 60. urodzin*, Warszawa 2009, pp. 88–101.

29 A. Killebrew, *Biblical People and Ethnicity*, pp. 93–148.

30 R. Drews, *Canaanites and Philistines*, pp. 39–61; cf. N. P. Lemche, *The Canaanites and their land: the tradition of the Canaanites*, (JSOT Suppl. 110), 2nd edition, Sheffield 1999.

They went to Sicily as bandits hungry for gains. The later Norman elites in Sicily consisted of those who had come from Italy and not from the north of Europe. This is the biggest difference between the analysed events. As some historians claimed, the Norman conquest of Sicily would not have been possible had the island been a united state.³¹ Similar opinions might be given by the scholars investigating the history of Palestine at the end of the Bronze Age. The Norman presence in Sicily is something obvious in the history of Italy. It can be seen in architecture, applied arts, literature; its traces can be observed even today – for instance, in the high percentage of tall and red-haired Sicilians. In Sicily no one is astonished seeing people with fair or red hair, who are much taller than the typical inhabitants of the Mediterranean region. However, the presence of the Normans does not mean a lack of the continuation of the culture that developed on the island before the 11th century. The language spoken by the Franks/Normans did not become the prevailing way of communication and if it functioned it was only in the niches – among the clergy, dominated by newcomers from Northern Europe, and partly in the court in Palermo.³² The dominant languages in Sicily, including the language of diplomacy and administration, were Greek³³ and Arabic.³⁴ The constant presence of Arabic in high culture, i.e. not only as a relic in the provinces which the conquerors omitted, but at the centre where the Normans had the biggest opportunities to make changes, testifies to the ability of local culture to preserve its autonomy. At the same time, it testifies to the skill of the conquerors – do not reject and destroy what has been conquered but use it in an appropriate way.³⁵

In the period preceding the Normans arrival in Sicily (and southern Italy), this region was intensively urbanised through Byzantine administration. Up to this period both southern Italy and Sicily had been typical rural areas.³⁶ In the history of Sicily and southern Italy, the 11th–13th centuries were periods of growth and development. It is difficult to define the degree to which Sicily owed this growth to its unification under the Normans. This prosperity must also have been caused by elements that were independent from the Normans, such as technological changes (the spread of watermills, the introduction of the three-field system of farming), the increase in population or the intensification of settlement network, including the foundation of new cities.³⁷

The process of the settlement of the Scandinavian Ruthenians among the East Slavs was slightly different. The well-organised military elites did not control the conquered autochthons but rather decided to let them create new political organisms. In the 9th

31 M. Amari, *Storia dei Musulmani di Sicilia*, vol. 3, Firenze 1868, pp. 147–149 (repr. Catania 1933–1939, 3, pp. 150–151).

32 Ibid., pp. 214–215 (repr. Catania 1933–1939, vol. 3, p. 222).

33 V. Von Falkenhausen, *The Greek Presence in Norman Sicily: The Contribution of Archival Material in Greek*, in: G. A. Loud, A. Metcalfe (eds.), *The Society of Norman Italy*, Leiden 2002, pp. 253–287.

34 H. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: a Ruler between East and West*, Cambridge 2002, pp. 98–113; A. Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Sicily under Christian Rule*, in: G. A. Loud, A. Metcalfe (eds.), *The Society of Norman Italy*, pp. 289–317.

35 A. Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Sicily: Arabic-Speakers and the End of Islam*, London 2003. See too G. A. Loud, A. Metcalfe (eds.), *The Society of Norman Italy*.

36 J.-M. Martin, *Settlement and the Agrarian Economy*, in: G. A. Loud, A. Metcalfe (eds.), *The Society of Norman Italy*, pp. 28–32.

37 Ibid., pp. 17–45.

century, the East Slavs were dependent on the Khazars, and the appearance of the Scandinavian military-political elites allowed them to abolish the Khazar domination.³⁸ Having economic means thanks to the far-reaching trade, and – what is always worth stressing – exceptional military forces, the Ruthenians managed to force their rules on the Slavs. With time, the Scandinavian elites entered into relationships with the Slavic population, which is confirmed by Slavonic names given to the members of the elites, who were undoubtedly of Scandinavian origin.³⁹ The identity of the Scandinavian elites must have been long formed in opposition to the conquered autochthons, which is attested by luxurious objects of Scandinavian provenance or objects continuing their patterns, which proved the social status. However, as opposed to the Norman model in Sicily, where the Normans only replaced the previous elites, the Ruthenians became a state-forming factor among the East Slavs. It was the presence of these foreign elites that allowed the locals to abolish Khazar domination, and the Slavs owed the origin of their first strong state organisms to the Scandinavians.

38 W. Duczko, *Viking Rus: Studies on the Presence of Scandinavians in Eastern Europe*, Leiden–Boston 2004, esp. pp. 202–238.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 212–213.

Chapter 2

The Philistines and Palestine

The question of the Philistines' self-awareness deserves a comprehensive discussion. However, our evidence is so dispersed that drawing definite conclusions is not easy. The oldest mentions concerning the Philistines come from several Egyptian inscriptions in which they appear as people who were (allegedly) conquered by the pharaoh. They received a common term "the Peoples of the Sea or the Sea Peoples." The names mentioned in these inscriptions are interchangeable but several groups of people who continuously harassed the Egyptians can be identified.¹

The identification of the ethnonym *Prstw* with the Philistines known from other sources does not evoke any controversies.² Thus one can say that the historically attainable beginnings of the Philistines reach the first decade of the twelfth century. Unfortunately, we have no evidence which confirms that the Philistines themselves used this name. Nevertheless, both the appearance of the name next to other ethnic names in the Egyptian inscriptions and its dissemination in the later periods can testify to the adequacy of this term, which must have been used both by foreigners – since it appears in the Assyrian texts³ or the biblical texts – and by the people in question.

Although among the monuments created by the Philistines there is none that mention the term "Philistines," its usage seems to be fully justifiable considering the consistent presence of this ethnonym in the Egyptian, Akkadian, Greek and biblical sources.

1 The specification is based on: J. F. Brug, *A Literary and Archaeological Study of the Philistines*, Oxford 1985, pp. 16–22. The text of the inscription of Ramses III from Medinet Habu is also included in: *ANET*, pp. 262–263. Cf. M. Astour, *Hellenosemitica. An Ethnic and Cultural Study in West Semitic Impact on Mycenaean Greece*, Leiden 1965, pp. 6–8. Extensive analyses can be found in: D. O'Connor, *The Sea Peoples and the Egyptian Sources*, in: E. D. Oren (ed.), *The Sea Peoples and Their World: A Reassessment*, Philadelphia 2000, pp. 85–102; S. Wachsmann, *To the Sea of the Philistines*, in: *ibid.*, pp. 103–143, and R. A. S. Macalister, *The Philistines. Their History and Civilization*, London 1914 (reprinted from the 1965 Chicago edition), pp. 19–28.

2 Egyptians did not use the consonant "l." In writing, it was substituted by "r."

3 Cf. J. F. Brug, *A Literary and Archaeological Study of the Philistines*, pp. 33–37, especially: C. S. Ehrlich, *The Philistines in Transition. A History from ca. 1000–730 BCE*, Leiden 1996.

Table 1: The names of the peoples harassing the Egyptians mentioned in the Egyptian inscriptions.

Inscription of Ramses II (ca. 1286)	Inscription of Merneptah (ca. 1220)	Inscription of Ramses III* (ca. 1193)**
<i>Rkw</i> (Lukka) <i>Drdnw</i> (Dardana) <i>M3sw</i> <i>M3sw</i> (or) <i>irwnw</i> <i>Pdsw</i> <i>Krks</i> <i>S3rd3n3</i> (Sherdana)***	<i>3kw3sw</i> (Ekwesh) <i>Trsw</i> (Teresh) <i>Rkw</i> (Lukka) <i>Srdnw</i> (Sherdana) <i>Skrsw</i> (Shekelesh)	<i>Dnynw</i> (Danuna) <i>Prstw</i> (Peleset) <i>T3krw</i> (Tjeker) <i>W3ssw</i>

* The dates of the rules of Ramses III are being vividly discussed and the difference can reach over 35 years. Similarly, *CAH*³ II 2, 241. M. and T. Dothan (People of the Sea. The Search for the Philistines, New York 1992, p. 19) opt for the year 1185 as the date of the origin of this inscription.

** W. Edgerton, J. Wilson (Historical Records of Ramses III. The Texts in “Medinet Habu,” Chicago 1936, p. 47 (pl. 44, line 15) mention – perhaps because of the graphic composition of the text – only, “Peleset, Denyen, Shekelesh,” and further on p. 53 (pl. 46, line 18), “Peleset, Tjeker, Shekelesh, Denye(n), Weshesh.”

*** As Egypt’s ally. The analogous function of the Sherdana as Egypt’s mercenaries appears in the papyrus of Anastasi I (*ANET*, pp. 475-476).

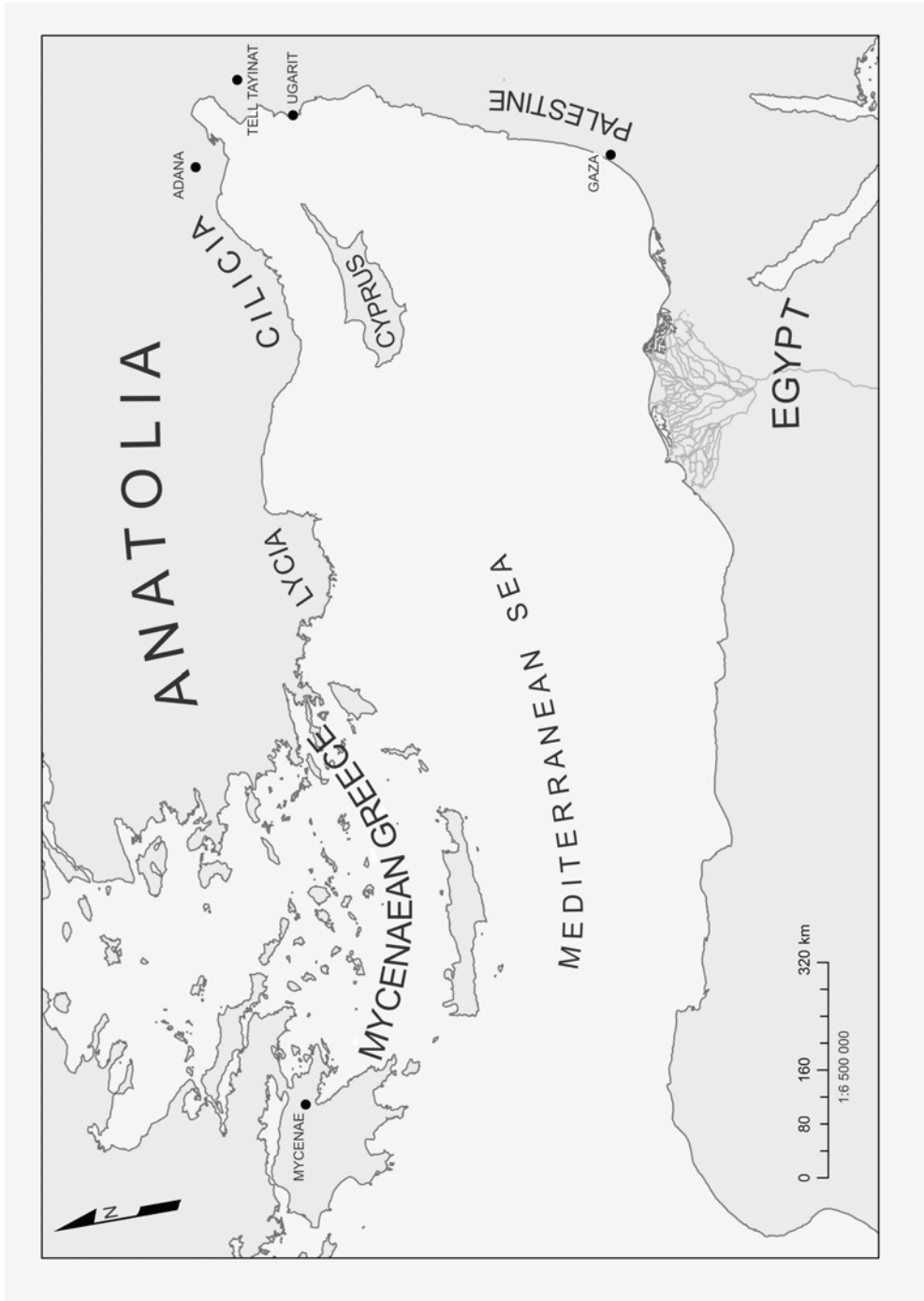
“Palestine” in the non-biblical sources

The names of peoples defined as “the Sea Peoples” appeared in the Egyptian inscriptions at the turn of the thirteenth and the twelfth centuries. Unfortunately, the data we possess are very sparse and the next period, i.e. the Philistines’ settlement and domination (ca. 1150-950), is almost completely devoid of sources. We have only isolated data concerning this period. The so-called Onomasticon of Amenemope,⁴ mentioning Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gaza as well as the Sherdana, Tjeker, and Philistines, dates back to ca. the year 1100.⁵ Some scholars think that besides these names the document mentions Asher, i.e. one of the tribes that the Bible includes in the Hebrew community.⁶

4 A. H. Gardiner, *Ancient Egypt Onomastica*, vol. 1, Oxford 1968 (reproduced from the 1947 edition), *190–*205.

5 I. Singer, Egyptians, Canaanites, and Philistines in the Period of the Emergence of Israel, in: I. Finkelstein, N. Na’aman (eds.), *From Nomadism to Monarchy. Archaeological and Historical Aspects of Early Israel*, Jerusalem 1994, pp. 296–297.

6 Cf. E. Stern, *Dor. Ruler of the Seas*, Jerusalem 1994, p. 89.



Map 1. Eastern Mediterranean in the time of Sea Peoples' migration.

One of the groups mentioned in the Onomasticon of Amenemope – Tjeker (according to another transcription: Sikil or Cheker) – also appears in another text dated to ca. 1075.⁷ This is “The Report of Wenamun,”⁸ the only 11th century text allowing a certain reconstruction of the situation of Palestine of those days. The eponymous character called Wenamun was sent from the temple of Amon at Karnak to Byblos in order to purchase cedar wood for the construction of a ceremonial boat. The hero depicts his complicated adventures during his voyage between Dor, Tyre, Byblos and the coast of Cyprus (*Alashiya*). The ruler of Dor – as all evidence shows also belonged to one of the groups that had arrived in these lands with the migration of the Sea Peoples – was some *Bdr* (Beder?). Besides describing Dor and the Tjeker (Chekers) living there, who were fairly free in the activities at sea,⁹ the text mentions other figures who are often identified (though without solid grounds) with inhabitants of the main coastal Philistine cities. The rulers mentioned are: Zakar-Baal, called the prince of Byblos, *Wrt* (Weret), *Mkmr* (Mekmer) and *Wrktr* (Weret-El?). Ephraim Stern states that Weret came from Ashkelon, and the others from Gaza.¹⁰ The main premise upon which such identification has been made is to be the non-Semitic etymology of these names.

If the story of Wenamun were to depict reliably the relations occurring in Palestine at the beginning of the 11th century, one could state that the ruler of Byblos strove for preserving good relationships with Egypt while the ruler of Dor, who had a large fleet at his disposal, did not recognise Egypt as a power whom he should especially esteem.

The presence of the Tjeker people in the area of Dor, attested in the 11th century Egyptian text, does not evoke any controversy now. Archaeologists state that it was these people that colonized Tel Zeror (near Hadera). Similarly, it is assumed that the findings from the vicinity of Acre (Akko), and especially from Tell Keisan, should be related to the Sherdana.¹¹ The southern boundary of the Tjeker's settlement is not easy to establish. Researchers think that the territories, which were subordinate to them, could have been limited northwards to the Plain of Sharon and even reached the Yarkon River, thus being in the direct neighbourhood of the Philistines. A supporter of another hypothesis is Itamar Singer, who claimed that the findings from Stratum X-11 at Aphek can be connected with the Tjeker (Sikils) while stratum (X-10) is unquestionably a trace of the Philistines' presence. In this reconstruction the territories subordinate to the Tjeker (Sikils) at first reached as far as Aphek in the south but because of Philistine expansion the boundary was moved northwards.¹²

7 B. Sass (Wenamun and His Levant – 1075 B.C. or 925 B.C.?, *Egypt and the Levant* 12 (2002), pp. 247–255) thinks that this text originated during the reign of Pharaoh Sheshonk, i.e. ca. 945–925, and was only “transferred” to the reality of the first half of the 11th century.

8 *ANET*, pp. 25–29; *HTAT*, p. 100.

9 The mention of Šiqal on the ships already appeared in one Ugarit text (RS 34.129), dated back to 1190–1185, cf. M. Yon, The End of the Kingdom of Ugarit, in: W. A. Ward, M. S. Joukowsky (eds.), *The Crisis Years: The 12th Century B.C. From Beyond the Danube to the Tigris*, Dubuque 1992, pp. 111–122, esp. p. 116.

10 E. Stern, *Dor. Ruler of the Seas*, p. 90.

11 *Ibid.*; I. Singer, Egyptians, Canaanites, and Philistines in the Period of the Emergence of Israel, pp. 296–298.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 297.

The next important, although very debatable documented premise, is the inscription on the statuette preserved in Baltimore, commemorating some Pedeēset/Pet-ausest.¹³ He is defined as an “emissary of Canaan of Philistines” (*wpwty n p3-Kn ‘n n Pršt*).¹⁴ It is the only Egyptian source speaking about Philistia as an area.¹⁵ Unfortunately, we cannot establish a precise date for the origin of this inscription. We only know that the figurine originated in the period of the Twelfth Dynasty. We are not certain when the inscription was added. The scholars differ in their opinions, suggesting the period of the Twenty-Second Dynasty (925–716), the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty (678–525),¹⁶ not excluding, however, some earlier period.¹⁷ Since the dating of this monument is not certain it is difficult to draw binding conclusions concerning the use of the toponym “Philistia”/Palestine.” Regardless of the date of its origin we should understand the way it was used. Some interpret the list of the names *p3-Kn ‘n* and *Pršt* as “Gaza of the Philistines.”¹⁸ This interpretation is based on the ambiguous use of the term *p3-Kn ‘n* in the Egyptian texts (commencing with the Nineteenth Dynasty), meaning both the whole territory of Canaan and Gaza as the main garrison in this region.¹⁹ However, this interpretation seems pointless since it aims at eliminating the juxtaposition of these two regions. Manfred Weippert interpreted this inscription stressing the subjectivity of Philistia which was not – according to the author of the inscription – identical with Canaan.²⁰ Robert Alexander Stewart Macalister understood the sense of this inscription similarly, suggesting that this juxtaposition was to stress the linguistic difference between these two territories.²¹ Michel Valloggia was of the same opinion, explaining the key place as “Canaan of the Philistines.”²²

If this inscription could be interpreted as mentioning a territory called *Pršt*, we would have an extremely important argument to reconstruct the history of the Philistines. Firstly,

13 G. Steindorff, The Statuette of an Egyptian Commissioner in Syria, *JEA* 25 (1939), pp. 30–33.

14 I. Singer, Egyptians, Canaanites, and Philistines in the Period of the Emergence of Israel, p. 330: “emissary of Canaan of Philist(ines)”; R. A. S. Macalister, The Philistines, p. 82; *HTAT*, p. 104.

15 S. Ahituv, Canaanite Toponyms in Ancient Egyptian Documents, Jerusalem 1984, p. 155. G. Steindorff (The Statuette of an Egyptian Commissioner in Syria, p. 32) thought that the analogous use of the name *Prst* as a toponym appeared in the inscription from Medinet Habu. However, it is commonly assumed that the term was used as an ethnonym.

16 Cf. among others B. Schipper, Egypt and the Kingdom of Judah under Josiah and Jehoikim, *TA* 37 (2010), pp. 213–214; dating this monument to the reign of Psamtik I.

17 G. Steindorff, The Statuette of an Egyptian Commissioner in Syria; I. Singer, Egyptians, Canaanites, and Philistines in the Period of the Emergence of Israel, p. 330; S. Ahituv, Canaanite Toponyms in Ancient Egyptian Documents, p. 155.

18 N. Na’aman, Borders & Districts in Biblical Historiography, Jerusalem 1986, pp. 241–242.

19 S. Ahituv, Canaanite Toponyms in Ancient Egyptian Documents, pp. 83–85. Cf. A. Alt, Ein gesandter aus Philistāa in Aegypten, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 9 (1952), pp. 163–164. For example, the famous Merenptah Stele confirms it.

20 M. Weippert, Semitische Nomaden des zweiten Jahrtausends: Über dei š3šw der ägyptischen Quellen, *Biblica* 55 (1974), pp. 265–280; 427–433.

21 R. A. S. Macalister, The Philistines, p. 82.

22 M. Valloggia, Recherche sur les messagers (*wpwtyw*) dans les sources égyptiennes profanes, Genève 1976, pp. 188–189 (no. 147): “le ‘messenger’ de Canaan des Philistins.” Cf. N. P. Lemche, The Canaanites and Their Land: The Tradition of the Canaanites, (JSOT Suppl. 110), 2nd ed., Sheffield 1999, p. 54.

it would attest to the fact that the Egyptians saw the territories of Philistia as separate from the territories of Canaan. Macalister's reasoning concerning the linguistic heterogeneity seems completely right. Secondly, this text would point to certain homogeneity of the Philistine territories. It is important because most of the data, which are at our disposal, define the territory of Philistia using names of cities and ignoring the characteristics of the whole territory.

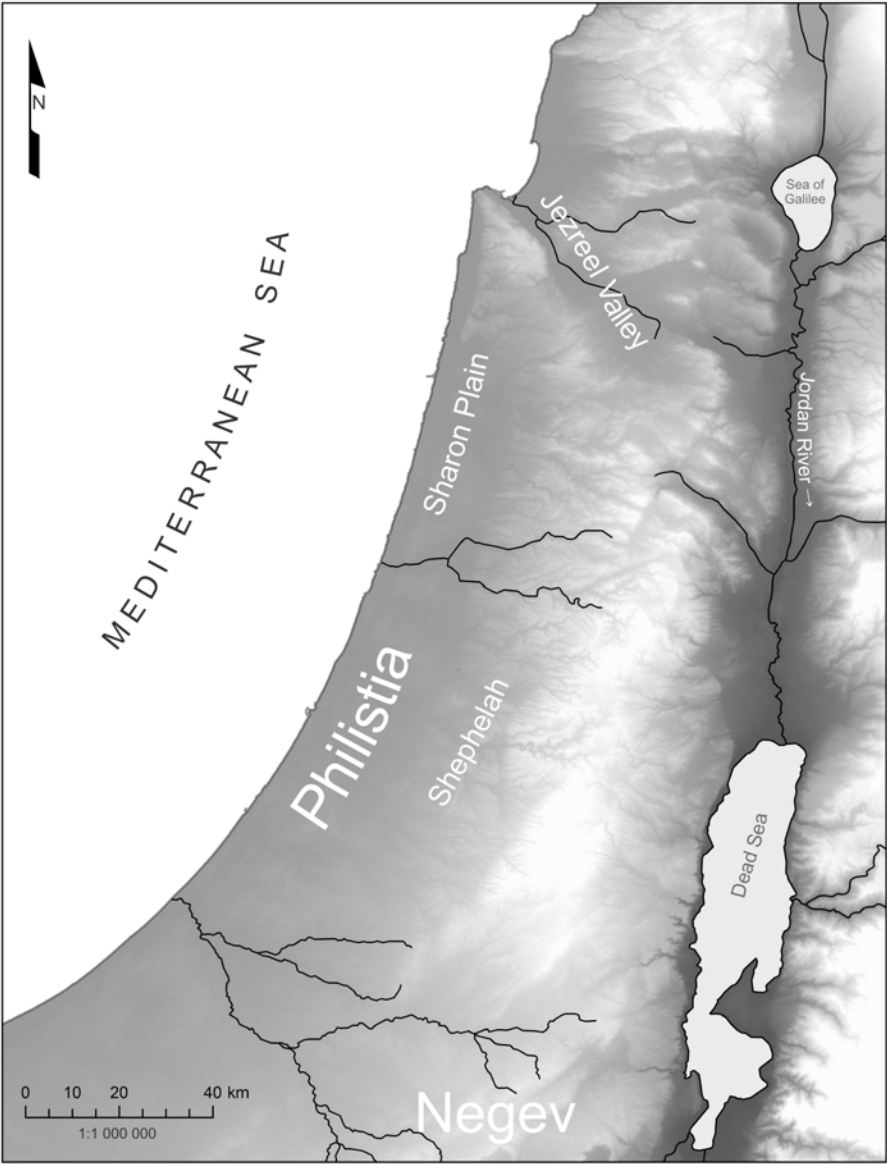
Great importance is attached to the latest findings at Tell Ta'yinat and their interpretation in this analysis of the source data concerning the range, significance and use of proper names connected with the Philistines. The site is located in the northern part of the Orontes Valley, at the borderland between Anatolia and Syria. The excavations expose a city built between the Bronze Age and the Iron Age, representing a typical culture of the Neo-Hittite world in this region.²³ The traces of the characteristic buildings of the type *bit hilani* or other remains of the material culture point to the representativeness of Tell Ta'yinat as a city in the area of the so-called Neo-Hittite cultures. However, this site is peculiar because of the remains testifying to the relations with the Aegean culture and Palestine. Numerous typical Aegean weavers' weights and – which is important – ceramics similar to the ones found in the territories in Palestine inhabited by the Philistines were excavated.²⁴ However, we should focus on the epigraphic data. Analysing two inscriptions containing hieroglyphic Hittite texts found in the temple of the god of tempest in the citadel at Aleppo, J. David Hawkins managed to decode the name of the territory: “Land of Palistin.”²⁵ These texts mention Taitas, who describes himself as “hero and king of the Land of Palistin.” A person bearing the same name is mentioned in the inscriptions found in the Orontes Valley (IX.14 Sheizar A1 §1-2 [Meharde]; 1 §1 [Sheizar]).²⁶ The text states, “This stele (is) (of?) the divine Queen of the Land. Taitas the hero, Wadasatinean king, made (it) for her” (on the stele from Meharde) and “I am Kupapiyas the wife(?) of Taitas the Hero of the country Watasatini” (from the citadel at Sheizar). The excavations from Aleppo show that the name

23 J. D. Hawkins, *Anatolia: The End of the Hittite Empire and After*, in: E. A. Braun-Holzinger, H. Matthäus (eds.), *Die nahöstlichen Kulturen und Griechenland an der Wende vom 2. zum 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr. Kontinuität und Wandel von Strukturen und Mechanismen kultureller Interaktion*; *Kolloquium des Sonderforschungsbereiches 295 “Kulturelle und sprachliche Kontakte” der Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz*, 11.–12. Dezember 1998, Möhnesee 2002, pp. 143–151.

24 B. Janeway, *The Nature and Extent of Aegean Contact at Tell Ta'yinat and Vicinity in the Early Iron Age: Evidence of the Sea Peoples?*, *Scripta Mediterranea* 27/28 (2006/2007), pp. 123–146; T. P. Harrison, *The Late Bronze/Early Iron Age Transition in the North Orontes Valley*, in: F. Venturi (ed.), *Societies in Transition. Evolutionary Processes in the Northern Levant between Late Bronze Age II and Early Iron Age*. Papers Presented on the Occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the New Excavations in Tell Afis. Bologna 15th November 2007, Bologna 2010, pp. 83–102, especially pp. 88–91; idem, *Lifting the Veil on a “Dark Age”: Ta'yinat and the North Orontes Valley during the Early Iron Age*, in: J. D. Schloen (ed.), *Exploring the “Longue Durée.” Essays in Honor of Lawrence E. Stager*, Winona Lake 2009, pp. 171–184; idem, *Neo-Hittites in the “Land of Palistin.” Renewed Investigations at Tell Ta'yinat on the Plain of Antioch*, *NEA* 72.4 (2009), pp. 174–189.

25 T. P. Harrison, *The Late Bronze/Early Iron Age Transition in the North Orontes Valley*, pp. 83–84 and n. 5; idem, *Neo-Hittites in the “Land of Palistin,”* p. 175.

26 J. D. Hawkins, *Corpus of hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions*, vol. 1: *Inscriptions of the Iron Age*, Berlin 2000, pp. 415–419.



Map 2. Palestine. Land relief.

of the country (or its inhabitants) “Watasatini/Wadasatin” – testified in the inscriptions from Tell Ta’yinat – is used interchangeably with the name “Palistin.”

The epigraphic evidence coming from the Orontes, supported by the relations of the material culture, supplies a very important and new argument for the reconstruction of Philistine history. The available material seems to show the functioning of a state in the Neo-Hittite world, a state in which an important, or even decisive – since it gave names – ethnic element was a people who defined themselves as Palistin/Wadasatin (Watasatini). The identity of this ethnonym with the name of the Philistines from the Egyptian reliefs relating to the Sea Peoples, which Hawkins suggested, seems both attractive and very likely.²⁷

Regardless of the final confirmed date of the reign of King Taitas, the ruler of Palistin/Wadasatin (Tell Ta’yinat),²⁸ the importance of this northern material lies in showing that the Philistines who had settled in Palestine were not the only representatives of this people in the Near East. On their way southwards a part of the migrating people settled in the Orontes Valley. The strong Anatolian influences, especially Hittite, at Tell Ta’yinat can show both the local specificity (borderline between Anatolia and Syria) and testify to the cultural roots of the Philistines.

Apart from the Egyptian and Neo-Hittite sources the name “Palestine” is attested fairly widely in the Assyrian sources.²⁹ The earliest mentions of *Palast* come from the inscription of King Adad-nirari III (811–783). The inscription on the plate from Nimrud, dated to the year 806, mentions lands subordinate to the Assyrian authority; in line 12 there are: Tyre, Sidon, Israel, Edom, Philistia (*māt Šurru māt Šidunu māt Ḫumrī māt Udumu māt Palastu*).³⁰ The inscription of Adad-nirari III indicates that in the eyes of the Assyrian administration at the turn of the ninth and the eighth centuries the territory of Canaan was tripartite and consisted of Philistia, Edom and Israel (Bit-Humria).³¹ The stele from Saba’a contains a description of a military expedition to Palestine. Line 12 reads, “I ordered the numerous army of Assyria to march against Palestine (*Pa-la-āš-tu*).”³²

More mentions of Philistia come from the times of Tiglatpileсар III (745–727), which results obviously from the fact that the king conducted intensive military activities in this region. Several mentions of Philistia can be found on the inscriptions and in the ruler’s chronicles. Among the military expeditions in the year 734, one can read about an

27 T. P. Harrison, *The Late Bronze/Early Iron Age Transition in the North Orontes Valley*; idem, *Neo-Hittites in the “Land of Palistin.”*

28 According to J. David Hawkins, the reign of King Taitas dates back to the 9th/10th cent. Benjamin Sass suggested some later date: second half of the tenth century; see B. Sass, *Taita, King of Palistin: ca. 950–900 BCE?*, published at www.bu.edu/asor/pubs/nea/documents/sass-reply.pdf (access: 2 December 2010).

29 A wide report with quotations can be found at: C. S. Ehrlich, *The Philistines in Transition*, pp. 167–194. Cf. A. Bagg, *Répertoire Géographique des Textes Cunéiformes. Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der neuassyrischen Zeit. Die Levante VII/1*, (Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients. Reihe B, Geisteswissenschaften), Wiesbaden 2007.

30 Following C. S. Ehrlich, *The Philistines in Transition*, pp. 170–171. Cf. *ANET*, p. 281; *COS*, 2, p. 276 (§2.114G).

31 G. Garbini, *I Filistei: gli antagonisti di Israele*, Milan 1997, p. 144.

32 *ANET*, p. 282.