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# MEDITERRANEAN ARCHAEOLOGY

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## ABBREVIATIONS

The reference system adopted by *Meditarch* is modelled on that of the German Archaeological Institute, and the bibliographical abbreviations are those listed in *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 1997, 612–24, with the addition of the following:

ABNGV	Annual Bulletin of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
ABVic	Art Bulletin of Victoria, Melbourne
Atti I CMGr	Atti del primo Convegno di studi sulla Magna Grecia
Beazley, ABV	J. D. Beazley, Attic Black-figure Vase-painters (1956)
Beazley, Addenda	Beazley Addenda. Additional References to ABV, ARV (2nd ed.) & Paralipomena, compiled by L. Burn & R. Glynn (1982)
Beazley, Addenda <sup>2</sup>	Beazley Addenda. Additional References to ABV, ARV (2nd ed.) & Paralipomena, ed. by T. H. Carpenter (1989)
Beazley, ARV	J. D. Beazley, Attic Red-figure Vase-painters (2nd ed., 1963)
Beazley, EVP	J. D. Beazley, Etruscan Vase Painting (1947)
Beazley, Paralipomena	J. D. Beazley, Paralipomena. Additions to Attic Black-figure Vase-painters and to Attic Red-figure Vase-painters (1971)
BTCGI	G. Nenci–G. Vallet (eds.), Bibliografia topografica della colonizzazione Greca in Italia, Iff. (1977ff.)
DACL	Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
OEANE	E. M. Meyers (ed.), The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East (1997)
ProcBritAc	Proceedings of the British Academy
QBNGV	Quarterly Bulletin of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
RGVV	Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten
SHAJ	Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan (Department of Antiquities, Amman)

Abbreviations of ancient authors and works, and transliterations of Greek names conform to those listed in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

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# 'SEA PEOPLES' IN EGYPTIAN GARRISONS IN LIGHT OF BETH-SHEAN, (RE-)RECONSIDERED\*

Jeffrey P. Emanuel

## INTRODUCTION

The Late Bronze Age administrative centre of Beth-Shean is the most extensively excavated New Kingdom garrison town in Canaan.<sup>1</sup> Located in northern Israel, at a key junction of the roads that traverse the Jordan River Valley and the route from the Jezreel Valley to Gilead,<sup>2</sup> the site was home to an Egyptian presence in the last four of its five Late Bronze Age (LBA) settlement phases and in the earliest Iron Age level, before being destroyed some time between the reigns of Rameses IV and Rameses VIII.<sup>3</sup> Egyptian activity at the site reached its zenith during the 13th and early 12th centuries BC: the town was extensively built up in the 19th dynasty and rebuilt in even grander fashion by Rameses III early in the 20th dynasty, with large public buildings replete with dedicatory inscriptions, royal statues, and decoration.<sup>4</sup> The increase in high-visibility architecture and monuments during the latter period seems to be contradicted by a significantly reduced Egyptian footprint in Canaan at this time (particularly in the north), and may signal an effort to compensate for a decrease in foreign influence by projecting an even stronger posture.<sup>5</sup> The destruction of the site at the end of this period, in turn, seems to mark the end of Egyptian control over the remainder of Canaan.<sup>6</sup>

One of the most noteworthy, and most discussed, groups of material finds from Beth-Shean comes from the site's Northern Cemetery, where the remains of at least 50 clay

\* Note the following abbreviations, used in addition to the usual ones:

- Braunstein S. L. Braunstein, *The Dynamics of Power in an Age of Transition*, PhD diss. Columbia Univ. (1998)
- Dothan 1982 T. Dothan, *The Philistines and their Material Culture* (1982)
- Mazar 1993 A. Mazar, 'Beth-Shean', in: E. Stern *et al.* (eds.), *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, I (1993) 214–23
- Mazar 2006 *id.*, *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean 1989–1996*, I (2006)
- Mazar 2011 *id.*, 'The Egyptian Garrison Town at Beth-Shean', in: S. Bar–D. Kahn–J. J. Shirley (eds.), *Egypt, Canaan and Israel. Proceedings of a Conference at the University of Haifa*, 3–7 May, 2009 (2011) 155–89
- MHI Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu I: Earlier Historical Records of Ramses III* (1930)
- Morris 2005 E. F. Morris, *The Architecture of Imperialism: Military Bases and the Evolution of Foreign Policy in Egypt's New Kingdom* (2005)
- Oren E. D. Oren, *The Northern Cemetery of Beth Shan* (1973)
- Vermeule–Karageorghis E. T. Vermeule–V. Karageorghis, *Mycenaean Pictorial Vase Painting* (1982)
- Yasur-Landau A. Yasur-Landau, *The Philistines and the*

*Aegean Migration at the End of the Late Bronze Age* (2010)

<sup>1</sup> N. Panitz-Cohen–A. Mazar, *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean 1989–1996*, III (2009); Mazar 2011, 155; 1; J. Weinstein, 'Egypt and the Levant in the Reign of Ramesses III', in: E. H. Cline–D. O'Connor (eds.), *Ramesses III: The Life and Times of Egypt's Last Great Hero* (2012) 168.

<sup>2</sup> Mazar 1993, 214.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., F. W. James, *The Iron Age at Beth Shan* (1966); J. Weinstein, 'The Collapse of the Egyptian Empire in the Southern Levant', in: W. A. Ward–M. S. Joukowsky (eds.), *The Crisis Years* (1992) 142–50; *id.* in: F. W. James–P. E. McGovern, *The Late Bronze Egyptian Garrison at Beth-Shean* (1993) 92, 221; *id.* art. cit. (n. 1) 169; A. Mazar, 'Four Thousand Years of History at Beth-Shean', *Biblical Archaeologist* 60, 1997, 62–7; *id.*, 'Iron Age Chronology: A Reply to I. Finkelstein', *Levant* 29, 1997, 157–67; Mazar 2006; Mazar 2011, 165–7; R. M. Porter, 'An Egyptian Temple at Beth-Shean and Ramesses IV', in: C. J. Eyre (ed.), *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Egyptologists* (1998) 903–10; *id.*, 'A Note on Ramesses IV and "Merneptah" at Beth-Shean', *TelAviv* 35, 2008, 244–8; C. R. Higginbotham, *Egyptianization and Elite Emulation in Ramesside Palestine* (2000) 89–91, 130.

<sup>4</sup> Panitz-Cohen–Mazar *op. cit.* 1.

<sup>5</sup> Mazar 2006, 29; 2011, 178–9; Weinstein *art. cit.* (n. 1) 167–8.

<sup>6</sup> Mazar 1993, 218; 2009, 167.

anthropoid coffins were uncovered in eleven tombs dating mainly to the 13th and 12th centuries BC.<sup>7</sup> Five of these in particular, from Tombs 66 and 90, are unlike anything known from the corpus of anthropoid coffins in Canaan or the greater Egyptian world.<sup>8</sup> It was quickly noted that the appliquéd decorations on these lids, ‘grotesque’ in style (see below), were very similar to the decorative courses depicted on the headdresses of some of the ‘Sea Peoples’ shown on the walls of Rameses III’s mortuary temple at Medinet Habu (**figs. 1, 2**).<sup>9</sup> All five feature decorative courses around their subjects’ foreheads that find parallels in these portrayals, while one also features vertical fluting above the forehead decoration—a possible attempt to portray this ‘feathered’ motif (**fig. 1c**).<sup>10</sup> While the view of these coffins as

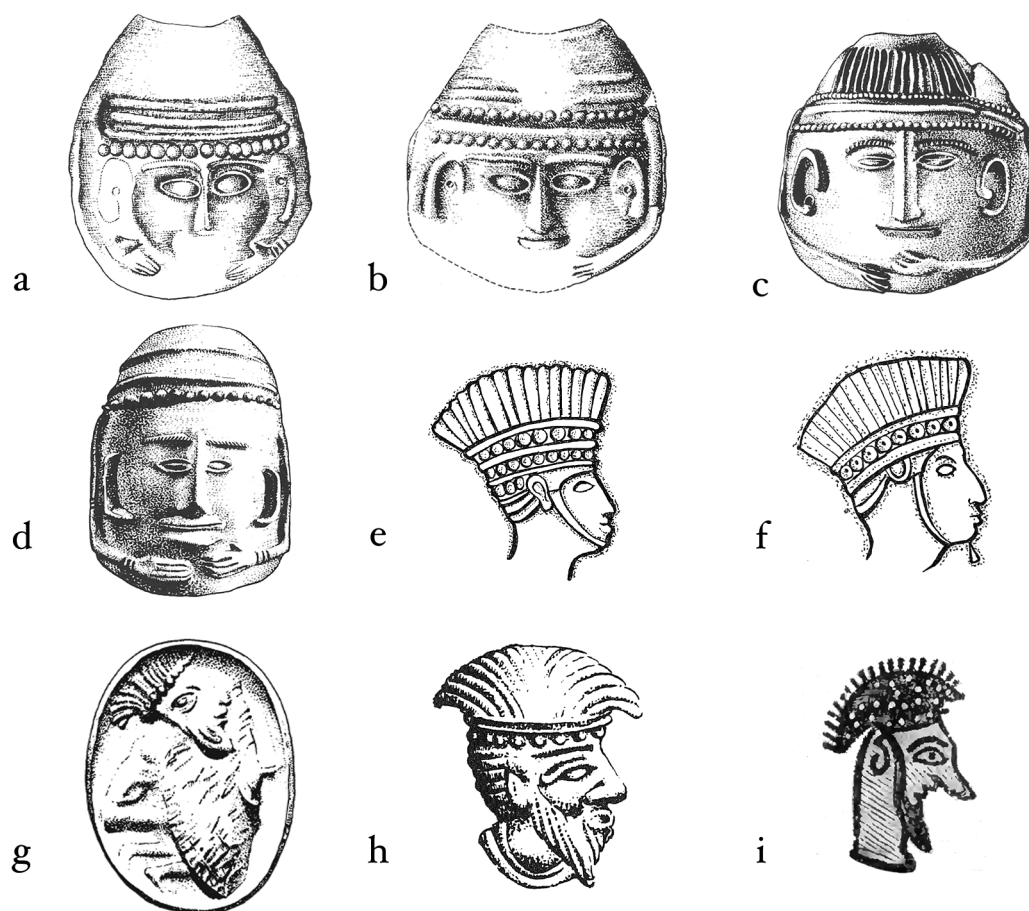


Figure 1. Representations of warrior headdresses and sarcophagi with ‘beaded’ patterns at the base: (a–d) Anthropoid coffins from Beth-Shean; (e–f) Profiles of ‘Sea Peoples’ warriors from Medinet Habu (after Oren 136); (g–h) Warrior seal and footman accompanying an animal hunt on an ivory game box, from Enkomi (after Yasur–Landau, *Philistines and Aegean Migration* 152–3); (i) Hedgehog-helmeted warrior from the Mycenaean Warrior Vase (after Tsountas–Manatt, *Mycenaean Age* pl. 18).

<sup>7</sup> Oren 129–32; Mazar 1993, 218; 2011, 151.

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., Dothan 1982, 274.

<sup>9</sup> e.g., J. B. Pritchard, *Palestinian Figurines in Relation to Certain Goddesses Known Through Literature* (1943) 39; MHI.

<sup>10</sup> Note that the illustration of a second sarcophagus with the representation of a fluted headdress in Y. Yadin, *The Art of*

*Warfare in Biblical Lands* (1963) 345, is a composite image, created by taking the fluting from one and adding it to the top of another. As J. F. Brug, *A Literary and Archaeological Study of the Philistines* (1985) 145 fig. 20e, has noted, fluting can also be found (without headband) on a sarcophagus from Kom Abou Billou in Egypt; though this representation appears closer in style to the coffin from Tomb 562 at Tell el-Far’ah (S), which Brug (*ibid.* fig. 20a) identified as a self-representation of a Libyan.

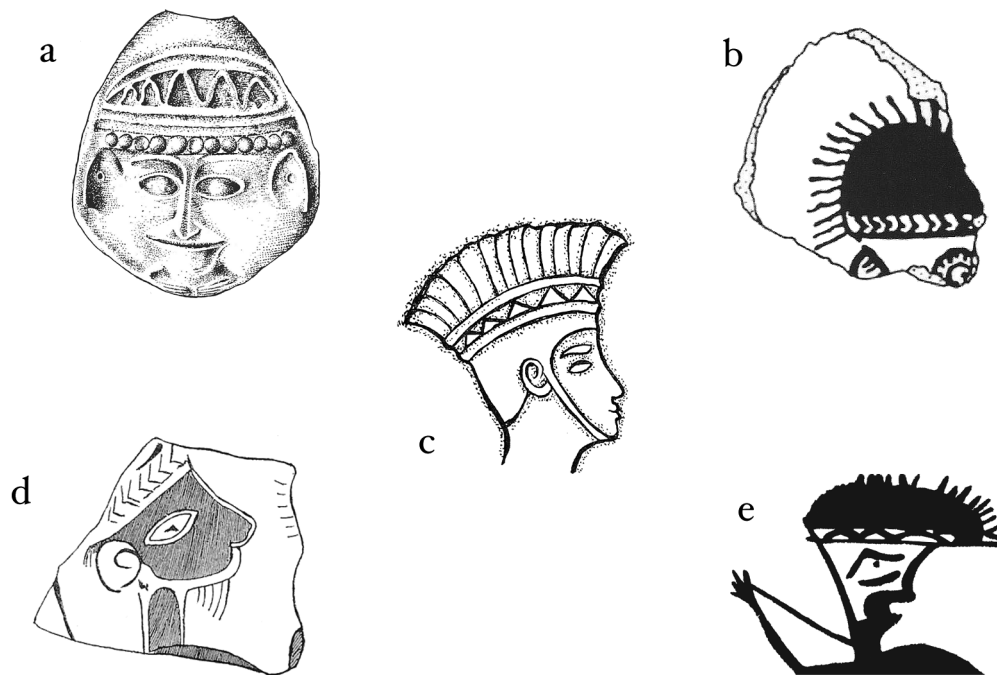


Figure 2. Representations of warrior headdresses and sarcophagi with zigzag patterns at the base: (a) Anthropoid coffin from Beth-Shean (after Oren 136); (b) Fragment of a LH IIIc Middle larnax from Mycenae (after Crowel, *Mycenaean Pictorial Pottery* fig. 7b); (c) Profile of a 'Sea Peoples' warrior from Medinet Habu (after Oren 136); (d) Fragment of a LH IIIc Middle krater from Mycenae (after Furtwängler–Loeschcke, *Mykenische Thongefässe* fig. 37); (e) Figure from the Bademgedigi Tepe sea-battle krater (after Mountjoy, *AJA* 2011, fig. 3).

representations of Sea Peoples has fallen out of favour in recent years, this paper argues that this specific coffin group—and site—should be separated from the larger phenomenon of anthropoid coffin burials in Canaan as well as in Egypt and Nubia, and that this iconographic and chronological connection adds to the evidence for a presence of individuals connected to the Sea Peoples' tradition in the Egyptian garrison at Beth-Shean in the 12th century BC.

## CLAY ANTHROPOID COFFINS: A BRIEF SURVEY

### HISTORY AND STYLE

Analyses by Levantine archaeologists of clay anthropoid coffins from Egypt, Canaan, and Nubia have traditionally divided them into two stylistic groupings: 'naturalistic' and 'grotesque'. This terminology originated in the early 20th century, when the naturalistic coffins at Beth-Shean were assigned to women (despite occasional Osiris beards), and their 'grotesque' counterparts to men.<sup>11</sup> The more common naturalistic-style lids feature faces carved in relief, 'mimic[ing] the basic appearance of an Egyptian wood or cartonnage coffin', sometimes with Osiris beard and painted decoration.<sup>12</sup> 'Grotesque' coffin lids, on the other hand, feature facial attributes—eyes, eyebrows, nose, mouth, ears, and beard—in appliqué,

<sup>11</sup> C. S. Fisher, 'Bethshean: Excavations by the University Museum Expedition, 1921–1923', *Museum Journal* 14, 1923, 234.

<sup>12</sup> T. Dothan, *Excavations at the Cemetery of Deir el-Balah*

(1979) 100; E. Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs About the Dead* (1992) 164; W. H. Peck, 'Mummies of Ancient Egypt', in: T. A. Cockburn *et al.* (eds.), *Mummies, Disease, and Ancient Cultures* (1998) 34; Morris 2005, 520.

giving the representation ‘a bizarre, somewhat caricature-like effect’, and their iconography is much less cleanly connected to Egyptian tradition.<sup>13</sup> Whatever the specific inspiration for the ‘grotesque’ coffin style may have been, its appearance alongside naturalistic contemporaries marks its use as the result of a conscious choice to deviate from Egyptian style and tradition even while adopting an Egyptianizing burial method.<sup>14</sup>

‘Grotesque’ anthropoid coffins have been associated with Aegean art since the early 20th century, and their discovery led to the association of these burial containers with Sea Peoples captives or mercenaries of the Ramesside pharaohs.<sup>15</sup> This was bolstered by the interpretation of Rameses III’s posthumous claim to have ‘settled’ these defeated peoples ‘in strongholds, bound in my name’ as a reference to his positioning them in Canaan.<sup>16</sup> Even more moderate analyses have, at times, reflexively associated the coffins in the ‘grotesque’ tradition with the Aegean and, therefore, with the Sea Peoples. To mention just one recent example, E. F. Morris followed W. M. F. Petrie in referring to these sarcophagi as ‘Aegean-style anthropoid coffins’ and explaining this style as the Aegeanization of an Egyptian burial practice. She further noted, in reference to the gold and electrum funerary masks from Grave Circles A and B at Mycenae, that ‘it would be very interesting to know ... whether the lids had been originally painted yellow to imitate the gold of Mycenaean facemasks’.<sup>17</sup>

Such a suggestion encounters three main problems. The first is the four centuries of chronological separation between the Sea Peoples and the 16th-century Mycenaean shaft graves which contained the gold and electrum masks to which Morris makes reference. The second is the lack of evidence for such a burial tradition within the Aegean world in the Late Bronze or Early Iron Ages.<sup>18</sup> Neither these obstacles nor the combination of the New Kingdom presence in Canaan from the 18th dynasty and the long history of this interment method in Egypt prevented the assumption of a connection between ‘grotesque’ coffins and the Aegean from giving way to the suggestion that the custom of burial in clay anthropoid coffins as a whole was brought to Canaan by the best known of these groups, the Philistines

<sup>13</sup> Dothan loc. cit.: As M. Pouls Wegner, ‘Anthropoid Clay Coffins of the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age in Egypt and the Near East: A Re-Evaluation of the Evidence from Tell El-Yahudiya’, in: T. P. Harrison–E. B. Banning–S. Klassen (eds.), *Walls of the Prince: Egyptian Interactions with Southwest Asia in Antiquity* (2015) 296, notes, one potential connection is the ‘Bes Jar’, whose appliquéd facial features are similar to the ‘grotesque’ coffins in general and whose occasional fluting atop the head (resembling a feathered headdress) is similar to one from Beth-Shean in particular. However, as discussed further below, the most prominent aspect of the headwear on the Beth-Shean coffins is not fluting, which appears in a single case, but the decorative course around the forehead, where the base of a headdress or helmet would be situated.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* 297.

<sup>15</sup> L.-H. Vincent, ‘Les Fouilles américaines de Beisân’, *RBi* 32, 1923, 437–40; also W. M. F. Petrie, *Beth Pelet I* (1930) 8; G. E. Wright, ‘Philistine Coffins and Mercenaries’, *Biblical Archaeologist* 22, 1959, 54–66; *id.*, ‘Fresh Evidence for the Philistine Story’, *Biblical Archaeologist* 29, 1966, 69–86; Dothan op. cit. (n. 12) 103; Dothan 1982, 288. This view was summed up by P. E. McGovern, ‘Were the Sea Peoples at Beth Shan?’, in: N. Lemche–M. Müller (eds.), *Fra Dybet: Festschrift til John Strange* (1994) 150, who wrote that ‘Egyptians would not have preferred to be buried in Palestine, and local Palestinians had never shown any

inclination to adopt Egyptian burial practices. The Sea Peoples thus are the most likely candidates for having been buried in anthropoid coffins in this area.’

<sup>16</sup> Papyrus Harris I, from J. A. Wilson, ‘Egyptian Historical Texts’, in: J. B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (1974) 260. This view came about in part from a need to reconcile the appearance of Philistine settlements on the southern coastal plain with the evidence for a continued Egyptian presence in the southern Levant into the mid-12th century BC; on the problematic nature of reading P. Harris I in this way, see now J. P. Emanuel, *Black Ships and Sea Raiders* (2017) 69, and S. Ben-Dor Evian, ‘Ramesses III and the “Sea Peoples”: Towards a New Philistine Paradigm’, *OxfJA* 36, 2017, 269–70.

<sup>17</sup> Petrie loc. cit.; Morris 2005, 702 n. 30; p. 761.

<sup>18</sup> W. F. Albright, ‘An Anthropoid Clay Coffin from Sahab in Transjordan’, *AJA* 36, 1932, 304; O. T. P. K. Dickinson, *The Origins of Mycenaean Civilisation* (1977) 42–6; W. Taylour, *The Mycenaean* (1983) 69; G. Graziadio, ‘The Chronology of the Graves of Circle B at Mycenae’, *AJA* 92, 1988, 343–72; G. D. Middleton, *The Collapse of Palatial Society in LBA Greece and the Postpalatial Period* (2008) 276; cf. O. Negbi, ‘Were there Sea Peoples in the Central Jordan Valley at the Transition from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age?’, *TelAviv* 18, 1991, 212.



(see below).<sup>19</sup> In some analyses, these objects began to be viewed through the prism of an intrusive, non-Egyptian culture within Syro-Palestine—an approach which then gave way to the assumption that, because such burials are clearly intrusive to Palestine, they must also be considered foreign in Egypt, where they became evidence for 'colonies of [Philistines] ... in the Nile Delta and on Egypt's southern frontier in Nubia'.<sup>20</sup>

More recently, in recognition of Egypt's enduring anthropoid coffin tradition, and of the decrease in their appearance in Canaan following the end of the Egyptian administration there, a move was made to reassign all anthropoid coffins in Canaan, Egypt, and Nubia alike back to Egyptians.<sup>21</sup> This likewise went too far, focusing only on the origin of the coffin tradition and the presence of Egyptian administrative officials at the sites where they occur. While anthropoid coffins are clearly an interment method of Egyptian origin, the clay sarcophagi utilized in Canaan represent a much more complex state of affairs.<sup>22</sup> They should not simply be viewed as markers of Egyptian ethnicity, particularly at the expense of a more holistic approach that considers the Beth-Shean coffins as examples of self-identification, and the burials both as composite objects within a larger mortuary context, and as possible examples of the transculturalism, associated in part with the Sea Peoples, that marked the Early Iron Age in much of the southern Levant and beyond.<sup>23</sup> In particular, the 'Beth-Shean Five', as we may call them, likely represent Egyptianizing burials of a small number of Sea Peoples-related mercenaries, conscripts, or recruits serving in the pharaoh's garrison there in the 12th century.

#### CLAY ANTHROPOID COFFINS IN EGYPT AND NUBIA

Anthropoid coffins of wood and stone are known in Egypt from at least the 12th dynasty (20th–18th centuries BC), with heavily ornamented pharaonic sarcophagi being the most

<sup>19</sup> Cf., e.g., T. Dothan, 'Archaeological Reflections on the Philistine Problem', *Antiquity and Survival* 2, 1957, 151–64; D. B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (1992) 192–213; Weinstein art. cit. (n. 3) 143; art. cit. (n. 1) 168; C. R. Higginbotham, 'Elite Emulation and Governance in Ramesside Canaan', *TelAviv* 23, 1996, 154–69; ead. op. cit. (n. 3); A. E. Killebrew, *Biblical Peoples and Ethnicity* (2005) 51–92.

<sup>20</sup> Wright art. cit. (n. 15) 54; id., 'Fresh Evidence for the Philistine Story', *Biblical Archaeologist* 29, 1966, 71; Dothan art. cit. 163–4; ead. op. cit. (n. 12) 103; ead., 'Aspects of Egyptian and Philistine Presence in Canaan During the Late Bronze–Early Iron Ages', in: E. Lipinski (ed.), *The Land of Israel: Cross-Roads of Civilizations* (1985) 63–6; J. B. Pritchard, 'New Evidence on the Role of the Sea Peoples In Canaan at the Beginning of the Iron Age', in W. A. Ward (ed.), *The Role of the Phoenicians in the Interaction of Mediterranean Civilizations* (1968) 99; cf. L. Kuchman, 'Egyptian Clay Anthropoid Coffins', *Serapis* 4, 1977, 11–12; L. Kuchman Sabbahy, *Anthropoid Clay Coffins* (2009) 9; Oren 144.

<sup>21</sup> See especially S. Bunimovitz, 'Problems in the "Ethnic" Identification of the Philistine Material Culture', *TelAviv* 17, 1990, 216; L. E. Stager, 'The Impact of the Sea Peoples in Canaan 1185–1050 BCE', in: T. E. Levy (ed.), *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land* (1995) 341–2; also M. A. S. Martin, 'Egyptian-Type Pottery in the Late Bronze Age Southern Levant', in: M. Bietak–H. Hunger (eds.), *Contributions to the Chronology of the Eastern*

*Mediterranean* (2011) 153; A. Mazar, 'Was King Saul Impaled on the Wall of Beth-Shean?', *Biblical Archaeology Review* 38, 2012, 34–41, 70. Clay anthropoid coffins did not disappear from the southern Levant at the end of Iron I, particularly in Transjordan, where those dated to the 10th–7th centuries BC have been found, e.g., at Sahab, Amman, and Dibon: see Albright art. cit. (n. 18) 295–306; T. Dothan, 'Anthropoid Clay Coffins from a Late Bronze Age Cemetery near Deir el-Balah. Preliminary Report', *IEJ* 22, 1972, 138 (but see K. Bramlett, *The Transjordan Highlands in Late Bronze Age Hegemonic Contest* [2009] 179–82, 192–9 for a LBA date and more specifically a date to the 13th century).

<sup>22</sup> Oren 135–42 figs. 1–19; Dothan 1982, 274.

<sup>23</sup> Stager art. cit. 341; K. Birney, *Sea Peoples or Syrian Peddlers?* (2007) 395; Martin art. cit. 134; D. D. DePietro, *Piety, Practice, and Politics: Ritual and Agency in the Late Bronze Age Southern Levant* (2013) 92, 97–8; A. Hein, 'Graves as Composite Objects: Developing a Model and Method of Analysis', *UCLA Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Conference*, 2013 (unpub.); L. A. Hitchcock, "'Transculturalism" as a Model for Examining Migration to Cyprus and Philistia at the End of the Bronze Age', *AWE* 10, 2011, 267–80; P. M. Fischer–T. Bürge, 'Cultural Influences of the Sea Peoples in Transjordan', *ZDPV* 129, 2013, esp. 162; P. W. Stockhammer, 'How Aegean is Philistine Pottery?', in: P. M. Fischer–T. Bürge (eds.), *The "Sea Peoples" Up-To-Date* (2017) 379–87; G. J. van Wijngaarden, 'Shifts in Value? Exotica in the 13th–12th Centuries BCE Mediterranean', *ibid.* 401–12 (see also below).

visible and best known examples of this phenomenon.<sup>24</sup> Clay coffins became more common in the 18th dynasty and continued to be used alongside stone and other materials until Roman times, though wood and cartonnage remained common media of construction.<sup>25</sup> They appear in New Kingdom cemeteries from Canaan to Nubia, most often at sites associated with military garrisons or outposts, though a very low percentage of the total number found have been published.<sup>26</sup> Published sites within Egypt include Ahnas el Medineh, Amarna, Beni Hasan, Kom Abou Billou, Gurob, Lisht, Meidum, Rifeh, Riqqeh, Saft el-Henneh, Saqqara, Suwa, Tell el-Yahudiya, Tell Nebesheh, and Thebes.<sup>27</sup> Clay coffins also appear in quantities at sites farther south, including Aniba, Buhen, Dabod, and Hesa.<sup>28</sup>

### ... IN CANAAN

In addition to those from Beth-Shean, clay anthropoid coffins dating to the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages have been published from four sites in Canaan: two from Lachish, two from Tell el-Far'ah (S), over fifty from Deir el-Balah, and one from Tel Shadud.<sup>29</sup> Each of these sites has been associated with Egyptian garrison activity in the Late Bronze Age, with Beth-Shean and Deir el-Balah characterizing longer-term Egyptian occupations and investments, and Lachish and Tell el-Far'ah (S) perhaps representing shorter-term Egyptian

<sup>24</sup> W. M. F. Petrie, *Gizeh and Rifeh* (1907) 12; J. Garstang, *The Burial Customs of Ancient Egypt as Illustrated by Tombs of the Middle Kingdom* (1907) 173–4, 207–9 fig. 226; G. A. Reisner, *The Archaeological Survey of Nubia: Report for 1907–1908* (1910) 76; Albright, art. cit. (n. 18) 305; M.-L. Buhl, *The Late Egyptian Anthropoid Stone Sarcophagi* (1959); T. Dothan, 'Anthropoid Clay Coffins from a Late Bronze Age Cemetery near Deir el-Balah', *IEJ* 23, 1973, 138–9; J. Haynes, 'Shawabtis, Servant Figures and Models', in: K. A. Bard (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt* (1999) 887; J. Bourriau, 'Change of Body Position in Egyptian Burials', in: H. Willems (ed.), *Social Aspects of Funerary Culture in the Egyptian Old and Middle Kingdoms* (2001) 78; Pouls Wegner art. cit. (n. 13) 294–7.

<sup>25</sup> Oren 143–4; Kuchman art. cit. (n. 20) 12, 21 n. 2; Kuchman Sabbahy op. cit. (n. 20) 9, 17; M. Smith, 'Dating Anthropoid Mummy Cases from Akhmim', in: M. L. Bierbrier (ed.), *Portraits and Masks: Burial Customs in Roman Egypt* (1997) 66–71; K. M. Cooney, *The Cost of Death: The Social and Economic Value of Ancient Egyptian Funerary* (2007) 17.

<sup>26</sup> Kuchman art. cit. 13; Dothan 1982, 276–9.

<sup>27</sup> Ahnas el-Medineh: E. Naville, *Ahnas el-Medineh (Heracleopolis Magna)* (1894) pl. ix; Dothan 1982, 253 map 3; Amarna: J. Borchardt, *Homerische Helme* (1911) 30 fig. 13; Beni Hasan: Kuchman Sabbahy op. cit. 17; Kom Abou Billou: S. Farid, 'Preliminary Report on the Excavations of the Antiquities Department at Kôm Abû Billo', *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 61, 1973, 22; Z. Hawass, 'Preliminary Report on the Excavations at Kom Abou Bellou', *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* 7, 1979, 79–80a; Gurob: Petrie op. cit. 22; G. Brunton–R. Engelbach, *Gurob* (1927); Lisht: J. Bourriau, 'The Dolphin Vase from Lisht', in: P. D. Manuelian (ed.), *Studies in Honor of William Kelly Simpson* (1996) 110; Meidum: W. M. F. Petrie, *Hyksos and Israelite Cities* (1906) 37; Oren 144; Rifeh: Petrie op. cit. (n. 24) 22 pls. XXIII, XXVII;

Riqqeh: R. Engelbach, *Riqqeh and Memphis* (1915) 18; Saft el-Henneh: W. M. F. Petrie, *The Labyrinth, Gerzeh and Mazghuneh* (1912) 24–8; Oren loc. cit.; Saqqara: G. Jéquier, *Deux pyramides du Moyen Empire* (1933) 49–53; Suwa: Morris 2005, 520 n. 466; Tell el-Yahudiya: E. Naville–F. L. Griffith, *Antiquities of Tell Yahudiyeh* (1890) pls. 13, XIV; Pouls Wegner art. cit. 297–303; Tell Nebesheh: W. M. F. Petrie *et al.*, *Tanis, Part II: Nebesheh (AM) and Defenneh (Tahpanhes)* (1888) 20 pl. I; Thebes: H. E. Winlock, 'Excavations at Thebes', *MetrMusArtBull* 17, 1922, 32 fig. 27.

<sup>28</sup> Kuchman Sabbahy op. cit. (n. 20) 17; Aniba: G. Steindorff, *Aniba* (1937) 161–76 pls. 39–40; Buhen: D. Randall-MacIver–L. Woolley, *Buhen* (1911); Morris 2005, 520; Dabod: Kuchman art. cit. (n. 20) 12; Morris loc. cit.; Hesa: Reisner op. cit. (n. 24) 76.

<sup>29</sup> Lachish: O. Tufnell, *Lachish III* (1953) 219 pl. 126; Tell el-Far'ah (S): Petrie op. cit. (n. 15) 6–8 pls. 19–24; Deir el-Balah: Dothan op. cit. (n. 12); ead. art. cit. (n. 20); ead., *Deir el-Balah: Excavations in 1977–1982* (2010); Tell Shadud: D. Namdar *et al.*, 'Absorbed Organic Residues in a Late Bronze Age II Clay Coffin with Anthropoid Lid from Tel Shadud, Israel', *JASReports* 12, 2017, 726–33. A group was also excavated at Pella in 1964, perhaps dating to the 13th or 12th century: K. Yassine, 'Anthropoid Coffins from Raghdan Royal Palace Tomb in Amman', *AAJ* 20, 1975, 57–68, and Bramlett op. cit. (n. 21) 182 references an unpublished find near Aleppo that may have dated to the Iron I. In a different vein, J. N. Tubb, 'Sea Peoples in the Jordan Valley', in: E. D. Oren (ed.), *The Sea Peoples and Their World: a Reassessment* (2000) 181–96, suggests that double-pithos burials in Canaan (with particular emphasis on Tell es-Sa'idiyeh in the Jordan Valley), should also be seen as evidence of the presence of Sea Peoples, although this association remains tenuous—particularly given the clear precedent for this tradition in Hittite Anatolia, which Tubb acknowledges.

garrisons established as part of what L. E. Stager has referred to as a *cordon sanitaire* put in place shortly after, and in response to, the initial Philistine settlement on the southern coastal plain of Canaan.<sup>30</sup> The locally manufactured Deir el-Balah coffin group is earliest in date (14th–13th cent. BC) and features both 'grotesque' and naturalistic types.<sup>31</sup> This demonstrates that both coffin types predate the Sea Peoples as a phenomenon, and that they should not be considered on their own as evidence for such presence.<sup>32</sup> A closer look at those found elsewhere in Canaan also supports this conclusion, while reinforcing the need to separate the five 'grotesque' Beth-Shean coffins discussed here from the larger phenomenon.

The clay anthropoid coffins at Tell el-Far'ah (S) were found in two of five chamber tombs (532, 542, 544, 552, and 562) at the site's '500 Cemetery'<sup>33</sup> that have historically been associated with Mycenaean burial architecture. Petrie dubbed the four largest of these the 'Tombs of the Lords (*seranim*) of the Philistines', in large part because they contained Philistine ceramics.<sup>34</sup> Philistine ceramics were also found in ten other tombs at the site, though, while four of the five burials in question also contained locally produced pottery of Egyptian type, with the majority coming from the two tombs containing sarcophagi.<sup>35</sup> Further, rather than being diagnostic in form and number, Philistine ware was far from being even a plurality of ceramics in the Tell el-Far'ah (S) burials.<sup>36</sup> Instead, to quote D. M. Master and A. J. Aja's apt phrasing, 'the rare Philistine material [was] radically privileged in this assemblage so as to dominate the interpretation of the whole'.<sup>37</sup>

Proportion of total ceramics aside, the presence of Philistine pottery alone does not necessitate the use of any specific tombs by Philistines, nor does it overshadow further problems with the interpretation of these burial assemblages. As has been noted in the past, the features on the sarcophagus from T562 seem to conform more closely to representations of Libyans in Egyptian art at this time than to any known representations of Sea Peoples.<sup>38</sup> Further, despite the contention that these tombs follow an Aegean model, there are differences between the placement of bodies and the construction of the benches and *dromoi* in Mycenaean chamber tombs and those utilized in Canaan.<sup>39</sup> This, combined with W. H. Stiebing's argument for their development from Middle Bronze Age (MB) IIC bilobate

<sup>30</sup> Stager art. cit. (n. 21) 344; Bramlett op. cit. (n. 21) 199–200; cf., e.g., Dothan 1982, 276–9; Higginbotham op. cit. (n. 3) 126; Braunstein 334 (see, however, Martin art. cit. [n. 21] 268 for the problematic nature of the Egyptian presence at Lachish).

<sup>31</sup> I. Perlman *et al.*, 'Provenience of the Deir el-Balah Coffins', IEJ 23, 1973, 147–9; Dothan art. cit. (n. 21) 71; ead. art. cit. (n. 24) 141; ead., 'The Impact of Egypt on Canaan During the 18th and 19th Dynasties', in: A. F. Rainey (ed.), *Egypt, Israel, Sinai* (1987) 131; J. Yellen *et al.*, 'The Origin of Late Bronze White Burnished Slip Wares from Deir el-Balah', IEJ 40, 1990, 257–61; Stager art. cit. (n. 21) 341.

<sup>32</sup> *Contra* McGovern art. cit. (n. 15) 147, according to whom the Deir el-Balah coffins are 'one of the strongest arguments in support of the Sea Peoples having been buried' at Beth-Shean; cf. Dothan, who noted as early as 1973 (art. cit. n. 21 p. 142) that at best 'the custom of burial in anthropoid coffins was taken over by the Philistines' in the Iron I period.

<sup>33</sup> Cemetery 500 at Tell el-Far'ah (S) is contemporary with Tomb 66 at Beth-Shean (12th cent.): Oren 117. Possible fragments of another coffin were found in Tomb 935 in the 900 Cemetery; E. Macdonald *et al.*, Beth Pelet II (1932) 25. On the Mycenaean associations of burial architecture,

see J. C. Waldbaum, 'Philistine Tombs at Tel Fara and their Aegean Prototypes', AJA 70, 1966, 334–40; Wright art. cit. (n. 20) 74; Dothan 1982, 29, 260–4.

<sup>34</sup> 532, 542, 552, and 562; Petrie op. cit. (n. 15) 7.

<sup>35</sup> T242, 601, 615, 621, 625, 815, 841, 844, 851, and 859 also contained Philistine pottery: R. Amiran, *Ancient Pottery of the Holy Land* (1970) 266; Dothan 1982, 98, 132, 172–3 pl. 2: 1; Braunstein 178, 263. Of the so-called 'Tombs of the Philistine Lords', T532 contained no Egyptian-style pottery and T542 contained only one form: Martin art. cit. (n. 21) 231–5.

<sup>36</sup> T. L. McClellan, 'Chronology of the 'Philistine' Burials at Tell el-Far'ah (South)', JFieldA 6, 1979, 69–70 table 8.

<sup>37</sup> D. M. Master–A. J. Aja, 'The Philistine Cemetery of Ashkelon', BASOR 377, 2017, 150.

<sup>38</sup> Brug op. cit. (n. 10) 145; cf., e.g., MH I pls. 17–24, 26.

<sup>39</sup> Waldbaum art. cit. (n. 33) 366; Wright art. cit. (n. 20) 74; cf. C. W. Blegen, Prosymna, the Helladic Settlement Preceding the Argive Heraeum (1937) 245 pls. 15, 28, 31–2, 43, 45; W. H. Stiebing, 'Another Look at the Origins of the Philistine Tombs at Tel el-Far'ah (S)', AJA 74, 1970, 139 n. 9; Braunstein 158.

chamber tombs at the same site, should argue against the necessity of foreign origin.<sup>40</sup> Finally, the Tell el-Far‘ah (S) coffins bore Osiris beards and lacked any distinguishing features, like those seen at Beth-Shean, which would clearly identify them with an outside group.<sup>41</sup> Thus, *pace* T. Dothan’s earlier claim that Cemetery 500 was ‘used by the newly arrived Philistine settlers’, the evidence does not support interpreting these burials as Sea People-related rather than Egyptian or Egyptianizing.<sup>42</sup>

The assumption that Sea Peoples were settled or stationed at Lachish was likewise fuelled by the two anthropoid coffins found in Tomb 570 at the site.<sup>43</sup> However, the chronology of this burial is questionable: E. D. Oren dated it to the 13th cent. BC based on LBA ceramics from T570 and its neighbour, T571, that are identical to those found in Fosse Temple III (destroyed in the late 13th cent.), while Dothan placed T570, with its anthropoid coffin burials, into an ‘elusive’ 12th-century occupation level.<sup>44</sup> One of these coffins featured a ‘crude’ hieroglyphic inscription, as well as representations of the goddesses Isis and Nephthys, both of whom were associated with mummification in Egyptian culture.<sup>45</sup> In light of this, and in the absence of Philistine wares from the site, Oren argued that these burials ‘had nothing to do with the Philistines or other Sea Peoples’.<sup>46</sup> The inscription on the sarcophagus, on the other hand, seems to represent an emulation of Egyptian funerary rites by non-Egyptians. This combines with the dearth of Egyptian and Egyptian-style pottery in this phase of the site to support a combination of Egyptianizing behaviour by Canaanite elites and a less significant presence of Egyptians at the site than previously thought.<sup>47</sup>

#### ‘FEATHERED’ HEADDRESSES IN THE AEGEAN AND THE INTERFACE

While the motifs of the ‘Beth-Shean Five’ find no parallel on anthropoid coffins elsewhere in Egypt or Canaan, their unique decorations are analogous to features on other media—in particular, relief and painted pottery—from both Egypt and the Levant, as well as from Cyprus, the Aegean, and the East Aegean-West Anatolian Interface. The latter, henceforth referred to as ‘the Interface’, was identified and defined by P. A. Mountjoy as a region most visibly connected by a ceramic *koine* across the Aegean islands (including all but Rhodes in the Dodecanese) and into the western territories of Asia Minor.<sup>48</sup> As might be expected given their medium, the characters painted on Helladic vases are portrayed more schematically and in far less detail than their companions in Egyptian relief or Cypriot art.

Though commonly referred to as ‘feathers’ in scholarship, this interpretation of the vertical fluting on these warriors’ headdresses is a result of the Medinet Habu representations; the

<sup>40</sup> S. Loffreda, ‘Typological Sequence of Iron Age Rock Cut Tombs in Palestine’, *Liber Annus* 18, 1968, 282–7; Stiebing art. cit. 139–41; Bunimovitz art. cit. (n. 21) 216–7; Braunstein 158–9.

<sup>41</sup> Dothan 1982, 261–2 figs. 4, 6; Oren 141 identified these coffins as ‘debased but naturalistic’ in style, while Dothan (*ibid.*, 263) characterized them as ‘ineptly modeled in the grotesque style’ but ‘far removed from the deliberate exaggeration of the Beth-Shean grotesque lids’.

<sup>42</sup> Dothan 1982, 29; A. Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible* (1990) 285; Bloch-Smith op. cit. (n. 12) 166; Braunstein 331–5; cf. Albright art. cit. (n. 18) 299.

<sup>43</sup> O. Tufnell, *Lachish IV* (1958) 131–2, 248–9 pls. 45–6; Dothan 1982, 276.

<sup>44</sup> Oren 140; also Tufnell op. cit. 248–50; Wright art. cit. (n. 15) 59–60; J. N. Tubb, ‘The Role of the Sea Peoples in the Bronze Industry’, in: J. Curtis (ed.), *Bronze-Working Centres*

of Western Asia (1988) 263 n. 11.

<sup>45</sup> Dothan 1982, 276–8 fig. 15 pl. 24; Tufnell op. cit. 132; Wright art. cit. (n. 15) 66; A. Leonard, ‘Archaeological Sources for the History of Palestine’, *Biblical Archaeologist* 52, 1989, 33; Stager art. cit. (n. 21) 342; Higginbotham op. cit. (n. 3) 244–5.

<sup>46</sup> Oren 140.

<sup>47</sup> Dothan 1982, 279; Brug op. cit. (n. 10) 150; Higginbotham op. cit. (n. 3) 134; D. Ussishkin, ‘Lachish and the Date of the Philistine Settlement in Canaan’, in: M. Bietak–E. Czerny (eds.), *The Synchronisation of Civilisations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium B.C.*, III (2007) 602; Martin art. cit. (n. 21) 217–21, 268.

<sup>48</sup> P. A. Mountjoy, ‘The East Aegean-West Anatolian Interface in the Late Bronze Age’, *AnatSt* 48, 1998, 33–67; ead., *Regional Mycenaean Decorated Pottery* (1999) 985–6.

examples found on painted pottery from the Aegean, the Interface, and the Levant do not bear this appearance. Instead, the likely Aegean parallel to the Medinet Habu feathers is a much less detailed set of dark spikes or lines protruding from the head. Most examples of this style take the form known as the 'hedgehog helmet', so called for its similarity to Aegean portrayals of hedgehogs in similar media.<sup>49</sup> Warriors in this style of dress first appear in Egyptian iconography at Medinet Habu, and they also appear in the Helladic pottery repertoire in the Aegean and the Interface around this time. There is no clear Late Bronze antecedent in the region; the first secure representations appear at the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 12th centuries BC, which in Aegean chronology is defined as Transitional Late Helladic (LH) IIIB2–IIIC Early and LH IIIC Early (= Late Bronze III/Iron Ia). The vast majority of examples date to the LH IIIC Middle, roughly 1130–1070 BC.<sup>50</sup>

Though not always portrayed in Aegean representations, as opposed to those from Cyprus and Egypt, the spiked or feathered components of these headdresses are set above a band decorated with beaded, zigzag, or checkerboard patterns, the former two of which are very similar to those found on the Beth-Shean coffins (**figs. 1–3**).<sup>51</sup> A physical analogue to these depictions may be found in an object from Tomb 3 at Portes in the western Peloponnese. Along with weapons, armour, pottery, and bronze objects, this wealthy LH IIIC Middle chamber tomb contained the bronze-plated, cylindrical base of a helmet, adorned with horizontal rows of bronze strips and circular beads or rivets, one above the other, to a height of nearly 16 cm—a similar, if less compact, pattern to that seen at Medinet Habu and elsewhere. The interior of the Portes base was lined with a tightly woven straw hat or skullcap, and may have been topped with material of some sort to give the appearance that we see in contemporary imagery.<sup>52</sup>

Conventional wisdom holds that this headgear originated in, and spread from, the Aegean region.<sup>53</sup> As noted above, though, the overwhelming majority of known examples from this area fits comfortably into the LH IIIC Middle period, which is roughly contemporaneous with the Iron Ib in the Levant.<sup>54</sup> The earliest examples of this motif known to date come

<sup>49</sup> Furumark Motif [FM]. While A. Furumark, *The Mycenaean Pottery* (1941) 240 n. 5 suggested that these headdresses may have been fashioned from actual hedgehogs, it seems more likely that they represented leather, folded linen, rushes, hair stiffened with lime, or something similar: see N. K. Sandars, *The Sea Peoples: Warriors of the Ancient Mediterranean* (1985) 134; Vermeule–Karageorghis 132; P. A. Mountjoy, 'Mycenaean Connections with the Near East in LH IIIC', in: R. Laffineur–E. Greco (eds.), *Emporia: Aegeans in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean* (2005) 425; A. Yasur-Landau, 'The 'Feathered Helmets of the Sea Peoples'', *Talanta* 44, 2012, 27–40.

<sup>50</sup> Furumark op. cit. 256; Vermeule–Karageorghis 143. Similar helmet or hair-style portrayals continue into the Geometric period, in the Aegean and on Cyprus; cf., e.g., L. B. Holland, 'Mycenaean Plumes', *AJA* 33, 1929, 201–3. Also requiring briefest mention is Sign 2 on the Phaistos Disc, which has been dated to Middle Minoan (MM) III, nearly four centuries prior to LH IIIC. Though A. Evans, *Scripta Minoa I* (1909) 25, identified this sign with the feather-hatted Sea Peoples of Ramesses III's reign (and, incorrectly, that of Merneptah, *ibid.* fig. 11c) we cannot draw a clear connection between this artefact and the present discussion; cf. M. G. F. Ventris, 'Introducing the Minoan Language', *AJA* 44, 1940, 497 n. 9; O. T. P. K. Dickinson, *The Aegean Bronze Age* (1994) 197; A. Robinson, *Lost*

*Languages* (2009) 297–315. Additionally, H. R. Hall's ('A Note on the Phaistos Disk', *JHS* 31, 1911, 120) suggestion that warriors depicted on the Siege Rhyton from Shaft Grave IV in Mycenae (16th century) should be connected to the 'feather-hatted' tradition has been largely discarded: see J. T. Hooker, 'The Mycenae Siege Rhyton', *AJA* 71, 1967, 270.

<sup>51</sup> While cautioning that the Medinet Habu reliefs should not be treated as a historical source, R. G. Roberts, 'Identity, Choice, and the Year 8 Reliefs of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu', in: C. Bachhuber–R. G. Roberts (eds.), *The End of the Bronze Age in the Mediterranean* (2009) 63–7, has suggested that different Sea Peoples groups might be identified by their headband decorations (beaded, zigzag, and cross-hatched).

<sup>52</sup> I. Moschos, 'Evidence of Social Re-Organization and Reconstruction in Late Helladic IIIC Achaia', in: E. Borgna–P. Cassola Guida (eds.), *From the Aegean to the Adriatic* (2009) 356–7 (with further comparanda and references).

<sup>53</sup> Yasur-Landau art. cit. 27–8.

<sup>54</sup> It has been suggested that a fragment of decoration at the extreme left of a broken sherd from Mycenae is part of a hedgehog helmet; Furumark op. cit. 448 n. 1; Vermeule–Karageorghis 90, 132, 211 pl. IX.8. This seems unlikely due in no small part to the inherent chronological conflict: if this

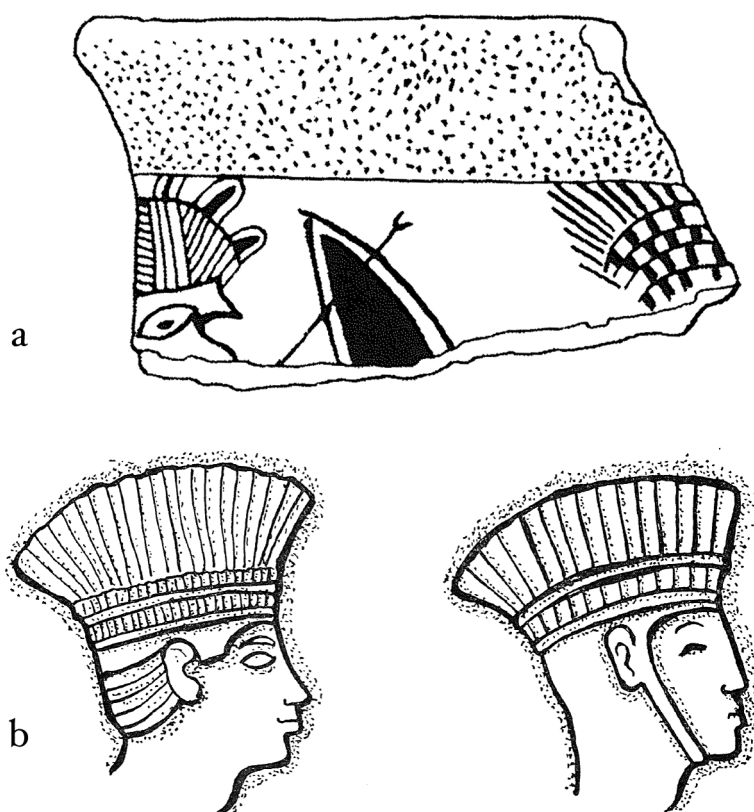


Figure 3. Representations of warrior headdresses and with cross-hatched or 'checkerboard' patterns at the base: (a) Fragment of a LH IIIC Middle krater from Kos (after Vermeule–Karageorghis, *Pictorial Vase Painting* pl. XII: 29); (b) Profile of a 'Sea Peoples' warrior from Medinet Habu (after *MH I* pl. 33).

from the Interface, and their appearance there is followed geo-temporally by what seems to be a southward spread to Cyprus and Egypt, after which it appears in quantity in the Aegean proper. (As will be discussed below, it also appears on Aegean-style pottery in the Levant during Iron I.) The earliest published example appears on a krater that Mountjoy has dated to the Transitional LH IIIB:2–IIIC Early (c.1210–1190 BC).<sup>55</sup> This vessel was found at Bademgediği Tepe in western Anatolia, a site near the eastern boundary of the Interface (and, therefore, on the edge of the spheres of influence of the great powers whose recession marked the last years of the Late Bronze Age).<sup>56</sup> Regardless which side of the Aegean the motif originated from, its appearance no earlier than the end of the 13th cent. BC complements the Medinet Habu reliefs of Rameses III's first twelve years (c.1183–1171) to provide a chronological anchor for the appearance and movement of these peoples, and thus to support the identification of the Beth-Shean anthropoid coffins.

sherd does in fact portray a 'hedgehog-helmeted warrior, it is the sole example of this motif to appear in the LH IIIB, and predates all other examples from Mycenae—all of which fall in the LH IIIC Middle period—by as much as a century. Therefore, it seems logical—though not authoritative—to consider either that this fragment of decoration is something other than the tip of a hedgehog helmet, or that it should be

reclassified, based on the motif, into LH IIIC.

<sup>55</sup> 'A Bronze Age Ship from Ashkelon', *AJA* 115, 2011, 484.

<sup>56</sup> Mountjoy art. cit. (n. 48) fig. 9; T. R. Bryce, 'The Late Bronze Age in the West and the Aegean', in: S. R. Steadman–G. McMahon (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Anatolia* (2011) 363–75; Emanuel art. cit. (n. 16) 275–6.

## THE ICONOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

The best-known example of the hedgehog-style headdress, and the most complete picture of warriors in full panoply at this time, comes from the Warrior Vase, a vessel found by Heinrich Schliemann in the now eponymous House of the Warrior Vase at Mycenae (**fig. 4**).<sup>57</sup> This vessel, which dates to LH IIIC Middle, features a procession of warriors on each side. On the obverse are six bearded soldiers marching in step to the right. Each carries a nearly-circular shield, a leather 'ration bag', and a single spear with a leaf-shaped point on his right shoulder, and they wear corslets, kilts, greaves, and horned helmets with plumes flowing from the crest.<sup>58</sup> The five soldiers on the reverse are identical except for the placement of their spears (they are cocked in each soldier's right arm, seemingly in preparation for throwing), the corresponding absence of the ration bags, and the composition of their helmets, which are hedgehog in style instead of horned. A combination of these scenes, with interspersed hedgehog- and horn-helmed warriors marching in step with spears cocked, appears on a painted limestone stele, also from Mycenae.<sup>59</sup>

Several further comparanda come from this Helladic centre, and all likewise date to the LH IIIC Middle. A larnax fragment from Mycenae contains up to three hedgehog-helmed warriors,<sup>60</sup> while one of two similar krater fragments may be the only known example of a helmet simultaneously adorned with horns and the hedgehog motif (as noted above,

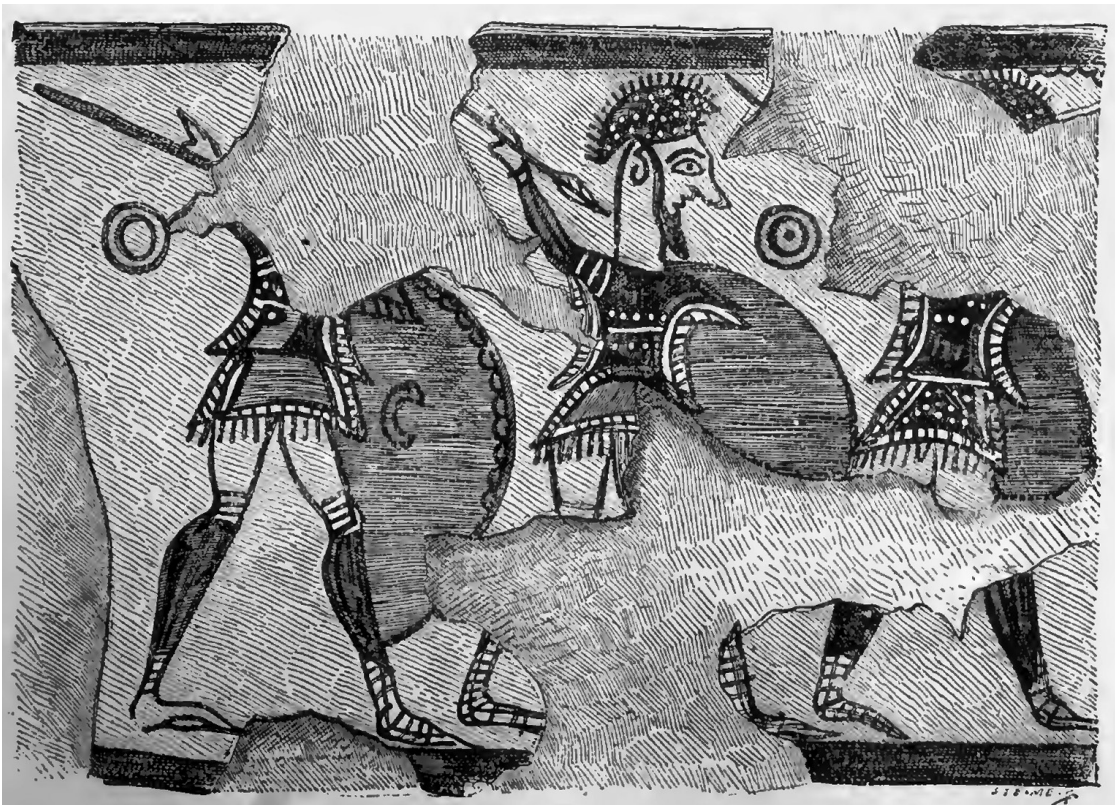


Figure 4. Reverse of the Warrior Vase from Mycenae (LH IIIC Middle) (after Tsountas–Manatt, *Mycenaean Age* pl. 18).

<sup>57</sup> Vermeule–Karageorghis 130–2, 222 pl. XI.42.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* 131.

<sup>59</sup> Ch. Tsountas, 'Γραπτή στήλη εκ Μυκηνών', *ArchEph* 1886

(1896) pls. 1–2; Furumark *op. cit.* 452–3.

<sup>60</sup> J. H. Crouwel, *The Mycenaean Pictorial Pottery* (1991) fig. 7a.

six soldiers on the obverse of the Warrior Vase also wear horned helmets).<sup>61</sup> Another larnax fragment either shows two soldiers in hedgehog helmets or a soldier and an actual hedgehog.<sup>62</sup> Of particular importance to the present discussion are fragments of another larnax and krater from Mycenae: each of these shows a warrior's head with a band around the bottom of the headdress that resembles the 'zigzag' course atop one of the coffins from Tomb 90 at Beth-Shean, as well as on some of the feathered hats from Medinet Habu (**fig. 2**).<sup>63</sup>

Examples of this headdress motif have also been found elsewhere on the Greek mainland. A krater from Iolkos in Thessaly shows three warriors wearing such headdresses; two carry spears, while the third may wear a metal corslet.<sup>64</sup> From Tiryns, a rhyton or stirrup jar shows a soldier in full panoply who seems to be leaping, while two other krater fragments show two hedgehog-helmed soldiers aboard a chariot and a hedgehog-helmed warrior carrying a spear over his shoulder.<sup>65</sup> Further krater fragments from Amarynthos and Thermon depict, respectively, a man in the same type of headdress following what may be a chariot and driver, and a highly fragmentary series of warriors reminiscent of, though not identical to, those shown on the Warrior Vase and Stele.<sup>66</sup> Additionally, two krater rim fragments of unknown provenance (but still of LH IIIC Middle date) show hedgehog headdresses, one of which is clearly a helmet,<sup>67</sup> while the remaining sherds of a vessel known as the 'Warrior and Horses Krater' from Lefkandi retains all of the features of such a warrior in similar garb to those on the Warrior Vase and Stele (kilt, greaves, and tunic or cuirass), though his head has been lost.<sup>68</sup>

Further evidence for this type of headdress can be found on scenes of naval warfare, a motif rarely employed in Helladic art prior to the LH IIIC.<sup>69</sup> The aforementioned krater from Bademgediği Tepe depicts at least ten warriors standing atop the decks of two antithetic ships which appear to be engaged in combat. The warriors are armed with spears and round shields, and they wear hedgehog helmets with zigzag bands at the base (**fig. 5**).<sup>70</sup> A krater dated to LH IIIC Middle from Livanates in Central Greece (Homeric Kynos) also shows antithetic oared galleys (**fig. 6**).<sup>71</sup> Five people—four warriors and, on the most complete vessel, a helmsman—are shown in silhouette, and all visible heads feature hedgehog helmets. Two other krater fragments from Kynos also show hedgehog-helmed warriors standing aboard the decks of galleys with shields raised and spears poised for throwing.<sup>72</sup> As with the Bademgediği Tepe

<sup>61</sup> Vermeule–Karageorghis 222 pl. XI.46. The figure (FM 1.32, Myc. IIIC:1) may be bearded; Furumark op. cit. 240–1 fig. 26.

<sup>62</sup> Vermeule–Karageorghis 222 pls. XI.42–3, 45. A similar juxtaposition of warrior and hedgehog can be found on the aforementioned Warrior Stele.

<sup>63</sup> Crouwel op. cit. fig. 7b; Vermeule–Karageorghis pl. XI.47. The figure on the latter krater fragment (FM 1.30, Myc. IIIC:1) may also be bearded, and the fringe of another warrior's 'hedgehog' helmet appears to be visible at the right edge; Furumark op. cit. 240–1 fig. 26; Vermeule–Karageorghis loc. cit.

<sup>64</sup> Vermeule–Karageorghis 223 pl. XI.57.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. 221, 223 pls. XI.28, 49, 51.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. 223 pl. 56; K. A. Wardle–D. Wardle, 'Prehistoric Thermon: Pottery of the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age', in: N. Kyprissi-Apostolika–M. Papakonstantinou (eds.), *The Periphery of the Mycenaean World* (2003) 154.

<sup>67</sup> Vermeule–Karageorghis pls. XI.64, XI.64.1

<sup>68</sup> J. H. Crouwel, 'Late Mycenaean Pictorial Pottery', in: R.

D. G. Evely (ed.), *Lefkandi IV* (2006) 238–9, 246 pl. 58; cf. Vermeule–Karageorghis pls. XI.3, 7, 38–9, 44, 63.

<sup>69</sup> F. Dakoronia, 'Warships on Sherds of LH III C Kraters from Kynos', in: H. Tzalas (ed.), *Second International Symposium on Ship Construction in Antiquity* (1987) 117–22; A. Papadopoulos, 'Warriors, Hunters, and Ships in the Late Helladic IIIC Aegean', in: Bachhuber–Roberts (eds.), op. cit. (n. 51) 69–77; J. P. Emanuel, 'Sea Peoples, Egypt, and the Aegean', *Aegean Studies* 1, 2014, 21–56; id., 'Maritime Worlds Collide: Agents of Transference and the Metastasis of Seaborne Threats at the End of the Bronze Age', *PEQ* 148, 2016, 265–80.

<sup>70</sup> Compare especially the foremost soldier on the left ship to the figure on a fragment of a LH IIIC Middle larnax from Mycenae; Crouwel op. cit. fig. 7b

<sup>71</sup> F. Dakoronia–P. Mpougia, *Τον καιρον των Μυκηναϊων στη Φθιώτιδα* (1999) 23; Mountjoy art. cit. (n. 55) 484.

<sup>72</sup> F. Dakoronia, 'Kynos...Fleet', in: H. Tzalas (ed.), *Fourth International Symposium on Ship Construction in Antiquity* (1996) 171 fig. 9; S. Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships and Seamanship in the Bronze Age Levant* (1998) 134 fig. 7.15.





Figure 5. Fragments of a transitional LH IIIB:2–Early IIIC krater from Bademgediği Tepe showing opposing ships manned by hedgehog-helmeted warriors with zigzag bands (after Mountjoy, *AJA* 2011 fig. 3).



Figure 6. Fragments of a LH IIIC Middle krater from Livanates showing opposing ships manned by hedgehog-helmeted warriors (after Mountjoy, *AJA* 2011, fig. 2).

representation, the Kynos krater shows hedgehog-helmeted warriors on both vessels. A recently published representation from Liman Tepe may also follow in this tradition, although it is highly fragmentary, with only one remaining rower below decks and a single partial figure atop the deck.<sup>73</sup>

Interestingly, if the feathered headdresses of the warriors on these vessels do in fact mark them as Sea Peoples, then these may not only be Sea Peoples' vessels, but participants in a battle scene portraying combat between ships manned by Sea Peoples. It is possible that this scene represents the chaotic nature of the Late Bronze–Early Iron Age transition in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean, and the warlike nature of the parties involved in what we refer to as the Sea Peoples phenomenon. It may also support the theory that the Sea Peoples, such as they were, were as much victim as cause of the maelstrom that engulfed the Eastern

<sup>73</sup> A. Aykurt–H. Erkanal, 'A Late Bronze Ship from Liman Tepe with Reference to the Late Bronze Age Ships from

Izmir/Bademgediği Tepesi and Kos/Seraglio', *OxfJA* 36, 2017, 61–70.

Mediterranean at this time.<sup>74</sup> However, it should be noted that the iconography of warfare throughout the Mycenaean period overwhelmingly depicted similarly attired and equipped warriors in combat with each other. (Consider, as one example out of many, the combatants shown on the LH I ‘Battle Krater’ from Shaft Grave IV at Mycenae.) In other words, whether read thematically or viewed as representations of actual events, war in Mycenaean iconography was almost exclusively depicted as being fought between individuals or groups from within the Aegean milieu.<sup>75</sup> Thus, the nature of the nemeses pictured on the Kynos and Bademgediği kraters is consistent with the preceding phases of the Late Helladic, even if both ship-to-ship combat and warriors of this type represent post-palatial motifs.

The most exceptional representations of this headgear can be found on several krater fragments from Cos in the central Dodecanese, which have been dated as early as Transitional LH IIIB:2–IIIC Early or as late as LH IIIC Middle.<sup>76</sup> Two of these, which may belong to the same krater, show highly schematic vertical plumes emanating from the flat crest of each warrior’s helmet (or head). These are either forked at their tips or intended to represent something more akin to folded linen or some other ‘crinkled’ material.<sup>77</sup> On another, a warrior wears a headdress with checkered decoration below an array of simple vertical lines that may parallel another Sea Peoples headdress from Medinet Habu (**fig. 3**), while a fourth fragment preserves only the bottom portion of the headdress, along with the head and shoulders of a bearded individual. Another naval scene portrays rowers wearing what E. T. Vermeule and V. Karageorghis described as ‘baggy turbans’, though they also seem likely to be representations of the feather-hatted motif.<sup>78</sup>

Two further representations are remarkable because of their provenance: they come from sites which are at opposite ends of the Levant, but which are both associated with the presence of Sea Peoples (**fig. 7**). The first is a krater from Ashkelon in the Philistine bichrome style, which is contemporaneous with LH IIIC Middle (late 12th–early 11th century). This vessel features two warriors in the hedgehog headdresses tradition: on one side, a warrior, perhaps holding a shield, is pictured face to face with a dolphin or sea monster, and on the other side a hedgehog-helmeted figure, perhaps carrying a kylix, rides what may be a chariot.<sup>79</sup> The second, recently published by B. Janeway, comes from Tell Ta‘yinat on the Orontes River (perhaps the centre of the Early Iron Age land of *Palistin*), and features a figure in silhouette from mid-torso up, with nine spines protruding from the crown of his head.<sup>80</sup> He appears to hold lines of some sort, which connect to the left-most edge of a textured image that appears similar to the mane of a horse, perhaps suggesting that this vessel also featured a chariot scene.

## DISCUSSION

We have now seen the parallels between the Aegean and Interface iconography, the Medinet Habu reliefs, and the ‘grotesque’ coffins from Beth-Shean. While the connection between the Aegean hedgehog style, the Egyptian feathered headdresses, and the fluting on one of the Beth-Shean sarcophagi is stylistically compelling, the most important aspect of these

<sup>74</sup> T. Tartaron, *Maritime Networks in the Mycenaean World* (2013) 64–5; H. Whittaker, ‘The Sea Peoples and the Collapse of Mycenaean Palatial Rule’, in: Fischer–Bürge (eds.) op. cit. (n. 23) 79.

<sup>75</sup> F. Blakolmer, ‘Ethnicity and Identity in Aegean Bronze Age Iconography’, *Talanta* 44, 2012, 53–77.

<sup>76</sup> Mountjoy op. cit. (n. 48) 1106; art. cit. (n. 49) 424.

<sup>77</sup> Vermeule–Karageorghis 160; Mountjoy op. cit. (n. 48)

1106.

<sup>78</sup> Vermeule–Karageorghis 160–1; Sandars op. cit. (n. 49) 135; Yasur-Landau 182.

<sup>79</sup> L. E. Stager–P. A. Mountjoy, ‘A Pictorial Krater from Philistine Ashkelon’, in: S. White Crawford–A. Ben-Tor (eds.), *Up to the Gates of Ekron* (2007) 50–61.

<sup>80</sup> B. Janeway, *Sea Peoples of the Northern Levant?* (2017) 87–91 pl. 9: 15.

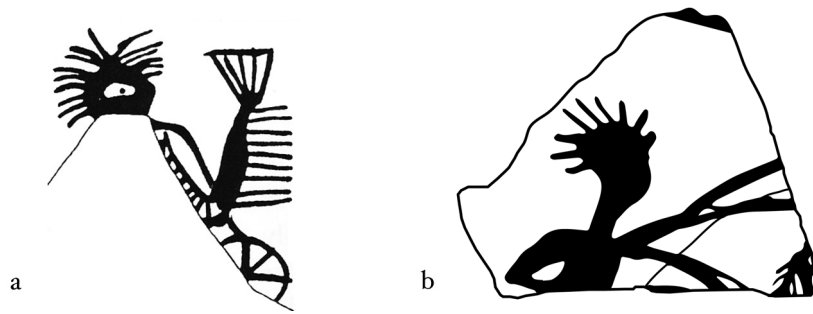


Figure 7. Representations of hedgehog helmets from the Levant: (a) Fragment of a Philistine bichrome krater from Ashkelon (after Stager–Mountjoy in White Crawford–Ben-Tor, *Gates of Ekron* fig. 4); (b) Fragment of a LH IIIC Middle krater from Tell Ta'yinat in the northern Levant (after Janeway, *Sea Peoples* pl. 9: 15).

representations is the bands around the warriors' foreheads in all three media, as well as on objects from Cyprus (see below). This decorative motif does not appear on all ceramic examples, a fact due at least in part to the silhouette nature of some representations (as seen, for example, in **figures 6** and **7**). As noted above, the three patterns seen at Medinet Habu do appear on Aegean pottery: the checkered pattern is found on one of the representations from Cos, the zigzag is present on the Bademgediği Tepe krater, and both zigzag and beaded patterns appear on sherds from Mycenae. The Beth-Shean coffins feature two of these three motifs: one combines the zigzag and beaded patterns, while two display multiple rows of beading which are separated by horizontal bands. This design is strikingly similar to the bronze remnant of the LH IIIC Middle helmet from Portes, which features three courses of beads separated by five horizontal bands and located between two bands at top and bottom, respectively.

The dates assigned to these objects are relative, and result primarily from stylistic analysis and find context rather than scientific testing. If we accept the connection between them, though, the dates assigned to the comparanda from around the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean can assist in the identification of the 'grotesque' coffins from Beth-Shean: a time-span beginning with the last years of the 13th century BC and continuing through the 12th fits with the Iron I date Oren initially assigned to Tomb 66, and while the contents of Tomb 90 place its initial use in the 13th century (LB IIB), it continued in use into Iron I.<sup>81</sup>

#### POTS AND PEOPLE

Unlike Tell el-Far'ah (S), addressed above, no 'Philistine' pottery was found in association with the Beth-Shean anthropoid burials. Locally made Aegean-style pottery, following in the tradition of LH IIIB rather than LH IIIC, was found in the cemetery and on the Tell, while a small number of 'Myc. IIIC' vessels of Cypriot provenance were also found in Level VI.<sup>82</sup> The latter repertoire is limited and is primarily made up of closed forms—particularly stirrup jars, like the 70 that were found in the Northern Cemetery (including five in T66 and one in T90).<sup>83</sup> The context of these finds, amidst pottery and objects of Egyptian character, led S. Sherratt to suggest that 'whoever discarded these pots was well integrated into the official

<sup>81</sup> Tubb art. cit. (n. 44) 263 n. 7.

<sup>82</sup> For the pottery of Cypriot origin, see, e.g., Mazar 1993, 216; E. S. Sherratt, 'Imported Mycenaean IIIC Pottery', in: Panitz-Cohen–Mazar (eds.) op. cit. (n. 1) 478–99; H. Mommsen *et al.*, 'Neutron Activation Analysis of

Mycenaean IIIC-Style Pottery', *ibid.* 510–18.

<sup>83</sup> Oren 112–3. Additionally, while Mycenaean-style figurines were found in a burial at Beth-Shean, these were all inside a coffin in Tomb 241, not associated with the 'grotesque' burials in T66 and T90; Higginbotham op. cit. (n. 3) 229.

structure of the Egyptian garrison, probably at a relatively high level'.<sup>84</sup> As a result, they may represent the import substitution engaged in by Cypriots amidst the breakdown of the Late Bronze international trading network that had previously delivered authentic Mycenaean pottery to the Eastern Mediterranean,<sup>85</sup> although an alternative is that these represent the presence of what P. W. Stockhammer has called 'highly mobile individuals with close connections to Cyprus', who 'defined themselves by their international material culture and related social practices', including the use of stirrup jars.<sup>86</sup>

Certainly the distribution of Aegean pottery changed from the 13th century to the 12th, and according to some scholars the pots themselves moved less, while people moved more.<sup>87</sup> Thus, while the presence of these wares at Beth-Shean may result from a desire by personnel stationed at the Egyptian garrison—perhaps even Sea Peoples of Cypriot origin—to acquire such familiar (and luxurious) items either for possession or for secondary exchange,<sup>88</sup> it may also be a marker of those individuals described by Stockhammer, who were known alternately as 'a transcultural amalgam of highly mobile agents of very different origin', 'nomads of the sea', 'mafioso characters', 'pirates', and 'Sea Peoples'.<sup>89</sup>

The absence at Beth-Shean and Lachish of what we might call the locally produced 'Mycenaean IIC calling-card' traditionally associated with the Philistines (and, by extension, all other Sea Peoples) has been seen as having significant implications for both ethnicity and chronology.<sup>90</sup> The latter is outside the scope of the present study, particularly as it relates to the date of the Philistines' arrival *en masse*, such as it may have been.<sup>91</sup> This is for the same reasons that the former must be considered in its proper context: first, we are not considering a migratory presence, but what was likely a small number of individuals, and second, there is no reason to assume that the Sea Peoples we seek at Beth-Shean were Philistines at all (Oren,

<sup>84</sup> Sherratt art. cit. 494.

<sup>85</sup> e.g., S. Sherratt, 'Sea Peoples and the Economic Structure of the Late Second Millennium in the Eastern Mediterranean', in: S. Gitin *et al.* (eds.), *Mediterranean Peoples in Transition: Thirteenth to Early Tenth Centuries BCE* (1998) 282–314; ead., 'Globalization at the End of the Second Millennium B.C.E.', in: W. G. Dever–S. Gitin (eds.), *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past* (2003) 44–51.

<sup>86</sup> Stockhammer art. cit. (n. 23) 383.

<sup>87</sup> This is, of course, a simplified description of the situation, which van Wijngaarden art. cit. (n. 23) 402, 409, phrases as: 'Rather than the cessation of long-distance maritime contacts at the end of the Bronze Age, the role of materials in these contacts appears to change, with an increased emphasis on the local production of exotic items, implying a wider sharing of information about crafts, technologies and values.' This 'can best be explained by changes in the flows of information about material culture across the Mediterranean as a result of population movements, [creating] a sense of material community among groups of migrants settled in different parts of the Mediterranean.' Cf. also Stockhammer loc. cit.

<sup>88</sup> A. Mazar, 'Myc IIC in the Land Israel: Its Distribution, Date, and Significance', in Bietak–Czerny (eds.) op. cit. (n. 47) 572–3; Sherratt art. cit. (n. 82) 494–5.

<sup>89</sup> Stockhammer art. cit. 383; M. Artzy, 'Nomads of the Sea', in: S. Swiny–R. L. Hohlfelder–H. W. Swiny (eds.), *Res Maritimae: Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean from Prehistory to Late Antiquity* (1997) 1–16; S. Sherratt,

'Circulation of Metals and the End of the Bronze Age in the Eastern Mediterranean', in: C. F. E. Pare (ed.), *The Supply and Circulation of Metals in Bronze Age Europe* (2000) 88; L. A. Hitchcock–A. M. Maeir, 'A Pirate's Life for Me: The Maritime Culture of the Sea Peoples', *PEQ* 148, 2016, 245–64, respectively.

<sup>90</sup> On the Myc IIC 'calling-card' and other aspects of (and assumptions about) the Sea People and their material culture, see, e.g., A. Gilboa, 'Fragmenting the Sea Peoples', in: T. P. Harrison (ed.), *Cyprus, the Sea Peoples and the Eastern Mediterranean* (2006–7) 209–10; A. M. Maeir–L. A. Hitchcock–L. K. Horwitz, 'On the Constitution and Transformation of Philistine Identity', *OxfJA* 32, 2013, 3–4; Emanuel op. cit. 19–21; on Beth-Shean, Lachish, and the date of Philistine arrival, see, e.g., M. Bietak, 'The Sea Peoples and the End of the Egyptian Administration in Canaan', in: J. Aviram (ed.), *Biblical Archaeology Today 1990* (1993) 299–300; I. Finkelstein, 'The Date of the Settlement of the Philistines in Canaan', *TelAviv* 22, 1995, 213–39; A. Mazar, 'The Debate over the Chronology of the Iron Age in the Southern Levant', in: T. E. Levy (ed.), *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating* (2005) 12–30; id., 'Iron Age Chronology: A Reply to I. Finkelstein', *Levant* 29, 2007, 157–67, 2005; Ussishkin art. cit. (n. 47).

<sup>91</sup> Further on the always contentious question of chronology, see now Y. Asscher *et al.*, 'Absolute Dating of the Late Bronze to Iron Age Transition and the Appearance of Philistine Culture', *Radiocarbon* 57, 2015, 77–97; id., 'Radiocarbon Dating Shows an Early Appearance of Philistine Material Culture in Tell es-Safi/Gath, Philistia', *ibid.* 825–50.

for example, suggested that they were Denyen<sup>92</sup>). The relative clarity that archaeology has provided about those referred to by the Egyptians as the *Peleset* (or, more specifically, of the subset among them who settled on the southern coastal plain of Canaan at the beginning of the Iron Age) has long influenced interpretations and expectations regarding other Sea Peoples groups—particularly how they should appear in the material record.<sup>93</sup> However, the Sea Peoples' phenomenon was far broader and more complex than can be represented by a single group, a fact being increasingly clear as the focus of study has shifted from origin and so-called 'ethnicity' to social processes and the construction and formation of identity.<sup>94</sup> As such, there is no reason to assume that the material culture of others who fall under the Sea Peoples rubric should be identical to that of the Philistines—a 'group' whose own heterogeneity, we should note, has been increasingly recognized in recent years.<sup>95</sup> The aforementioned stirrup jars, which are found in the southern Levant only outside Philistia, may be an example of this very circumstance.<sup>96</sup>

The martial occupation of those buried in the Beth-Shean coffins may be supported by grave-goods: of the four tombs in the Northern Cemetery that contained weapons, by far the most were found in T66 and T90. Two types of arrowhead were found in the former, while the latter contained 19 arrowheads of four types, a spear-butt, and a dagger, all of which can be dated to the LBA–Iron I transition and to Iron I.<sup>97</sup> If Sea Peoples-related personnel were at Beth-Shean for a purpose that was primarily military in nature, then a dearth of diagnostic pottery at the site should not be surprising. Whether mercenaries or captives who had been pressed into service, they would, as J. N. Tubb has previously noted, 'surely have adopted whatever pots came to hand—Egyptian in Egypt, or Canaanite in Canaan'.<sup>98</sup> This does raise the question why such foreigners would continue to use Aegean-style stirrup jars but not maintain other customs, such as preparing and consuming food in the same way that they did prior to their arrival at Beth-Shean.<sup>99</sup> If stirrup jars, however, were in fact one means of self-identification for these individuals, as Stockhammer has suggested, then they may hold greater value and signify foreign presence in a more meaningful way than we can currently understand. In the absence of further diagnostic evidence, other markers of ethnicity or identification should also be considered—a key example of which, in this case, is self-representation on Egyptianizing burial containers.<sup>100</sup>

## SEA PEOPLES' SELF-REPRESENTATIONS

Potential comparanda for these coffins, in the form of self-representations by possible Sea Peoples, may be found elsewhere in the Near East, including on Egyptian media from

<sup>92</sup> Oren 138.

<sup>93</sup> Emanuel op. cit. 16–22. The Tel Dor excavations in particular have demonstrated the inapplicability of the so-called 'Philistine paradigm' to other Sea Peoples groups. While the Sikils are associated with Dor by the 11th-cent. *Tale of Wen-Amon*, Gilboa art. cit. (n. 90) 233–4 and A. Gilboa–I. Sharon, 'Fluctuations in Levantine Maritime Foci across the Late Bronze/Iron Age Transition', in: Fischer–Bürge (eds.) op. cit. (n. 23) 292, continue to regard the Sikils not as an intrusive population at all, but as having been synonymous with the Phoenician coast and with coastal residents who maintained intense contact with Cyprus (*contra* E. Stern, *The Material Culture of the Northern Sea Peoples in Israel* [2013] among many others).

<sup>94</sup> Gilboa–Sharon art. cit. 285 (with references).

<sup>95</sup> See especially Maeir–Hitchcock–Horwitz art. cit.;

A. M. Maeir–L. A. Hitchcock, 'The Appearance, Formation and Transformation of Philistine Culture', in Fischer–Bürge (eds.) op. cit. (n. 23) 149–62.

<sup>96</sup> Stockhammer art. cit. (n. 23) 381–4.

<sup>97</sup> Oren 117–8.

<sup>98</sup> Tubb art. cit. (n. 29) 182; also Morris 2005, 761.

<sup>99</sup> One of the key archaeological markers of an intrusive presence at a site is 'deep change', or the appearance in a material assemblage of objects associated with individuals' or groups' private identity, of which foodways are a major component: cf. Yasur-Landau 15–16.

<sup>100</sup> As noted above, Brug op. cit. (n. 10) 145 sees the same phenomenon in the coffin from T562 at Tell el-Far'ah (S)—one of Petrie's 'Tombs of the lords of the Philistines'—but with the self-representation being commissioned by a Libyan rather than an Aegean.

Canaan and Egypt, and on a seal from Cyprus (as well as the pictorial pottery examples from Ashkelon and Tell Ta'yinat noted above). The first of these is a scaraboid from Beth-Shean, which shows a figure with spiked hair or headdress offering a lotus flower to an unspecified deity (**fig. 8a**).<sup>101</sup> Unfortunately, because it is unique, and because it was found out of context in Stratum IV, little concrete information can be gleaned from it.<sup>102</sup> The depicted person's ability to commission such an object does demonstrate a certain level of status, as do the robes he chose to show himself wearing.<sup>103</sup> This object is also worth mentioning not just because it may further support the presence of feather-hatted foreigners at Beth-Shean, but because of the duality of the representation: the commissioner clearly differentiates his own identity from that of the Egyptians and Canaanites present at the site, but he utilizes an Egyptianizing medium to do so, thus suggesting a level of acculturation undergone either by this person or by a group of people of whom he is representative.

Two further objects clearly show offerings being made to Egyptian deities—an act which, as noted above, suggests significant acculturation by their non-Egyptian subjects. First among these is an early 12th-century BC seal from T936 at Tell el-Far'ah (S), which shows what has been interpreted as a 'feather-hatted person', similar to the Philistine 'prince' pictured at Medinet Habu but with what may be a beaded headband at bottom, presenting an offering to Amun (**fig. 8b**).<sup>104</sup> There is little in this tomb besides this single scarab (one of 41) to suggest an affiliation with Sea Peoples. The grave-goods are largely typical of Cemetery 900 burials, though relatively wealthy, and include Egyptian and Canaanite vessels, Aegean stirrup and three-handled jars, and Canaanite toggle pins. A connection with the military is supported by a scarab bearing the title 'scribe of the young soldiers',<sup>105</sup> as well as by the fact that T936 was one of only two tombs at Far'ah (S) in which arrowheads were found.<sup>106</sup> Rather than relying on the seal to identify the tomb's occupants, it may be better to view the toggle pins as ethnic identifiers, thus marking those buried with them as Canaanites, though they may also represent 'Canaanizing' behaviour on the part of Egyptians or others at the site.<sup>107</sup> S. L. Braunstein, for example, suggests that the scarab referring to the 'scribe of the young soldiers' should classify this as an Egyptian tomb (along with four other chamber tombs, including those that contained anthropoid coffins).<sup>108</sup> Thus, the scarab and its commissioner may not be specifically related to the burial or to the site of Tell el-Far'ah (S) itself, other than as a final resting place.

The third object is a stele from the temple of Heryshef at Herakleopolis in Lower Egypt, which has been dated anywhere from the 19th to the 22nd Dynasties (**fig. 8c**). The scene on

<sup>101</sup> James op. cit. (n. 3) fig. 117: 4; cf. B. Brandl, 'Scarabs, Seals, Sealings and Seal Impressions', in: Panitz-Cohen-Mazar (eds.) op. cit. (n. 1) 636–84. In dress, and perhaps in hair-style, this compares favourably to a captive pictured on a polychrome glazed tile from Medinet Habu (Sandars op. cit. [n. 49] 136 figs. 90–2; compare hair-style, but not dress, to the individuals following the Sherden in lion hunt and parade scenes from Medinet Habu; MH I pl. 35; II pl. 62). However, the Aegean 'hedgehog style' may be a more likely analogue to the hair-style or headdress portrayed on this object: see Yasur-Landau 211.

<sup>102</sup> Stratum IV is dated to Iron IIB, though the scaraboid likely predates this period (see Yasur-Landau 210).

<sup>103</sup> Yasur-Landau 211; id. art. cit. (n. 49) 34.

<sup>104</sup> Braunstein 157, 776; O. Keel–C. Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses and Images of God in Ancient Israel* (1998) 110, 112 fig. 129; Yasur-Landau 209–10; MH II pl. 118c.

Braunstein 780 identifies this figure as 'Thutmose III or Amenhotep II ... wearing [the] crown of Upper Egypt'. Cf. also, interestingly, the determinative used at Medinet Habu in the list of defeated Libyan chiefs from Ramesses III's eighth year; MH I pl. 28 col. 47.

<sup>105</sup> Braunstein 186–7, 200, 219, 264, 279, 785.

<sup>106</sup> Along with T644; F. M. Cross–J. Milk, 'A Typological Study of the El Khadr Javelin- and Arrow-Heads', *AAJ* 3, 1956, 18; Braunstein 215.

<sup>107</sup> Bloch-Smith op. cit. (n. 12) 86–7; Braunstein 285, 289; R. T. Sparks, 'Canaan in Egypt: Archaeological Evidence for a Social Phenomenon', in: J. Bourriau–J. Philips (eds.), *Invention and Innovation: The Social Context of Technological Change II* (2004) 31–2; cf. A. Rowe, *The Topography and History of Beth-Shan* (1930) 14–5 pl. 33; Mazar 2011, 158–9; Panitz-Cohen–Mazar op. cit. (n. 1) 22–3.

<sup>108</sup> Braunstein 290.

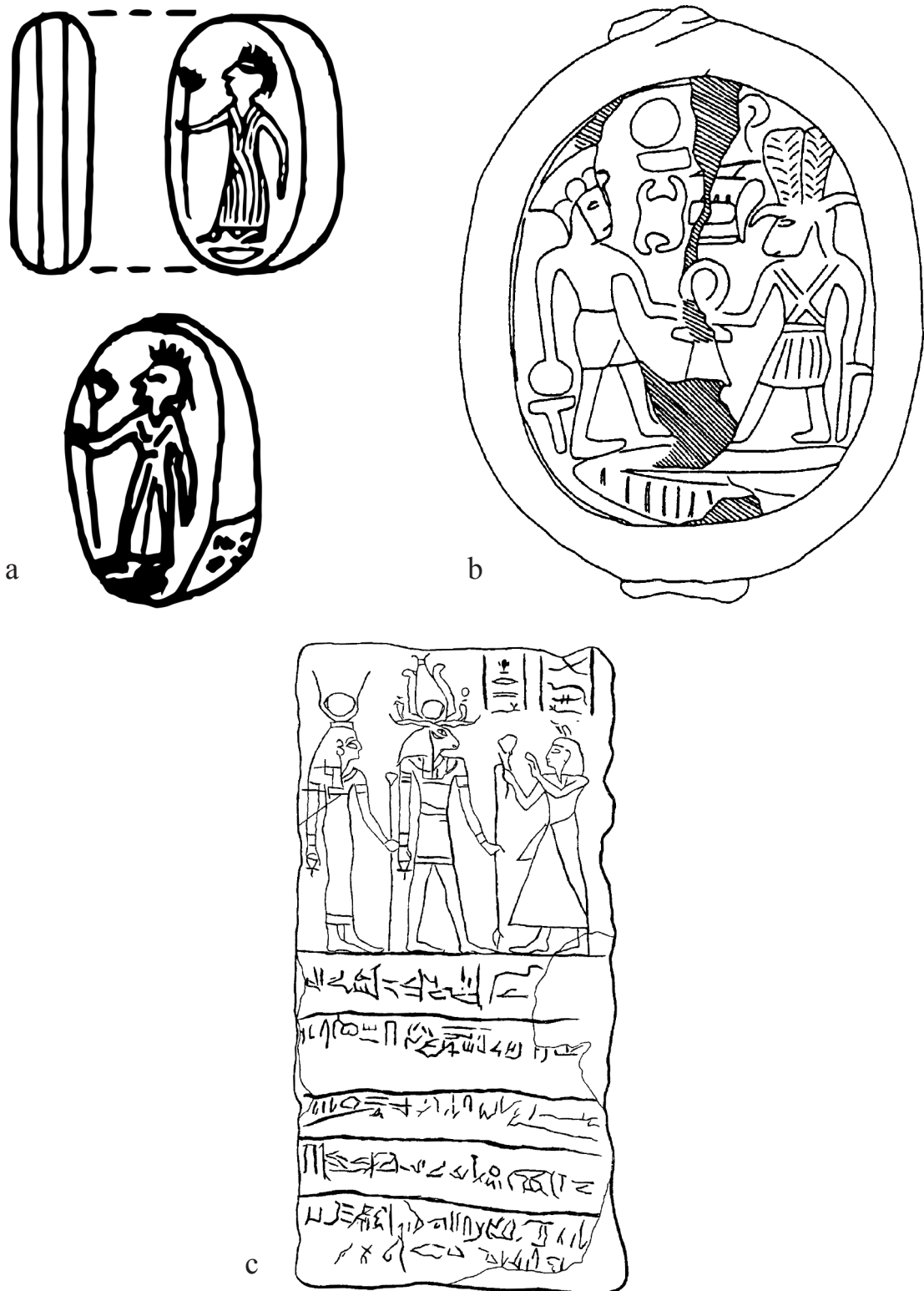


Figure 8. (a) Scaraboid from Beth-Shean (after James, *Iron Age at Beth-Shean* fig. 117: 4); (b) Scarab from T936 at Tell el-Far'ah (S) showing a possible feather-hatted individual making an offering to Amun (after Uehlinger, *ZDPV* 1988, fig. 4); (c) Stele from the Temple of Heryshef at Herakleopolis inscribed with the words 'Padjeseft ... Sherden soldier of the great (?) fortress Usermarres' (after Petrie, *Ehnsasya* 22).

it features a man in Egyptian dress bringing offerings to Heryshef and Hathor. Below the image is part of a text containing the phrase ‘Padjeseḫ ... Sherden soldier of the great (?) fortress (called) Usermarres’.<sup>109</sup> The images on these three objects display different levels of acculturation. All show Egyptian scenes, and both scaraboids and scarab seals are clearly Egyptian media. However, the individuals who commissioned the former two objects chose to clearly display non-Egyptian and non-Canaanite traits even while taking part in Egyptian scenes on Egyptian objects. The scene portrayed on Padjeseḫ the Sherden’s stele, on the other hand, is entirely Egyptian in nature: its subject can be identified as a foreigner only by his own textual admission.<sup>110</sup>

The final object is an oft-cited seal from Level IIIB at Enkomi (= LH IIIC Middle),<sup>111</sup> which shows a bearded, shield-bearing warrior wearing a feathered hat with a beaded band like those on some of the Sea Peoples depicted at Medinet Habu, as well as on all five Beth-Shean coffins (**fig. 1g**). The status associated with these symbols is particularly interesting to consider in light of another oft-cited representation from Enkomi, an ivory game box from Tomb 58 (12th cent. BC). This object depicts a chariot-borne hunting scene, including two footmen who wear kilts and bead-banded feather headdresses that are both identical to those worn by several of Rameses III’s enemies at Medinet Habu (and to that on the Enkomi seal), and strongly reminiscent both of those at Beth-Shean and of the Portes helmet (**fig. 1h**).<sup>112</sup>

## CONCLUSION

From being assigned entirely to Philistines, to being reassigned entirely to Egyptians, the classification of the ‘Beth-Shean Five’—and anthropoid coffins dating to the years surrounding the Late Bronze–Early Iron Age transition in general—has swung like a pendulum over the years. However, the evidence suggests the need for a more holistic approach in our consideration of these objects, and for more shades of grey in their interpretation. As we have now seen, with differences in media and cultural milieus having been acknowledged, the similarities in appearance, context, and chronology suggest that the hedgehog-helmeted warriors shown on Aegean (and Aegean-style) pottery, the feather-hatted warriors on the Enkomi seal and game box on the walls of Medinet Habu, and the ‘grotesque’ coffin lids from Beth-Shean may very well have been of the same class of person, if not the same ‘people’ altogether.

The act of commissioning such objects as the Beth-Shean coffins and the Enkomi and Tell el-Far‘ah (S) seals suggests a certain status, if not necessarily affluence. Reading across the two objects from Enkomi may provide insight into the social growth and development that went into attaining such status, as the progression from companion on a hunt to commissioner of a seal shows an increase in station that may be reflected once again in the coffins from Beth-Shean. The scene on the game box shows individuals acting in service to nobility in

<sup>109</sup> W. M. F. Petrie, *Ehnasya 1904* (1905) 22; B. Cifola, ‘The Role of the Sea Peoples at the End of the Late Bronze Age’, *Oriens antiqui miscellanea* 1–2, 1994, 8. Interestingly, the earliest known reference by name to the Sea Peoples’ territory of Philistia comes from a Third Intermediate Period inscription on a Middle Kingdom statue base, which references the similarly-named ‘Padeset’ who is ‘emissary of Canaan of the Philistines’, see 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* (1994) 330.

<sup>110</sup> J. P. Emanuel, ‘Šrdn from the Sea: the Arrival, Integration, and Acculturation of a Sea People’, *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 5, 2013, 21.

<sup>111</sup> Mountjoy art. cit. (n. 49) 165 table 7, 210.

<sup>112</sup> A. Evans, ‘Mycenaean Cyprus as Illustrated in the British Museum Excavations’, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 30, 1900, 210 fig. 6; A. S. Murray *et al.*, *Excavations in Cyprus: Bequest of Miss E. T. Turner to the British Museum* (1900) pl. 1.



general or to the crown in particular—a very similar role to that which the individuals interred in the Beth-Shean coffins may have carried out in the service of the pharaoh.<sup>113</sup>

The seals and coffins alike, therefore, follow a pattern of foreigners of certain rank adopting a local motif or medium of expression, while choosing to clearly mark themselves as 'others' through the self-representations they commissioned.<sup>114</sup> The greatest value provided by these examples is the fact that, as self-representations, they can signal to the modern observer—as they did to contemporaries at the time of their creation—the aspects of their appearance that were most critical to their self-identification as individuals, and as members of the group(s) with which they most closely identified. Though they may have begun as mercenaries or rank-and-file soldiers, the occupants of the Beth-Shean coffins had, by the time of their deaths, both the ability and the interest to commission such Egyptianizing burial sculpture, while the designs implemented demonstrate a keen interest in preserving and presenting their own identities for all eternity.

<sup>113</sup> Yasur-Landau 152, 208–9; *id.* art. cit. (n. 49) 33. A relevant example of variation in status among those identified with a Sea Peoples group can be seen in the Wilbour Papyrus, a register of land allocation in Middle Egypt from the reign of Ramesses V, in which Sherden are listed either as

landowners or as being assigned others' land to work; e.g., contrast §123:48.45–6 and §49.4–5 of the Wilbour Papyrus: A. H. Gardiner, *The Wilbour Papyrus II* (1948) 51; Emanuel *op. cit.* 155–7.

<sup>114</sup> Yasur-Landau 151.