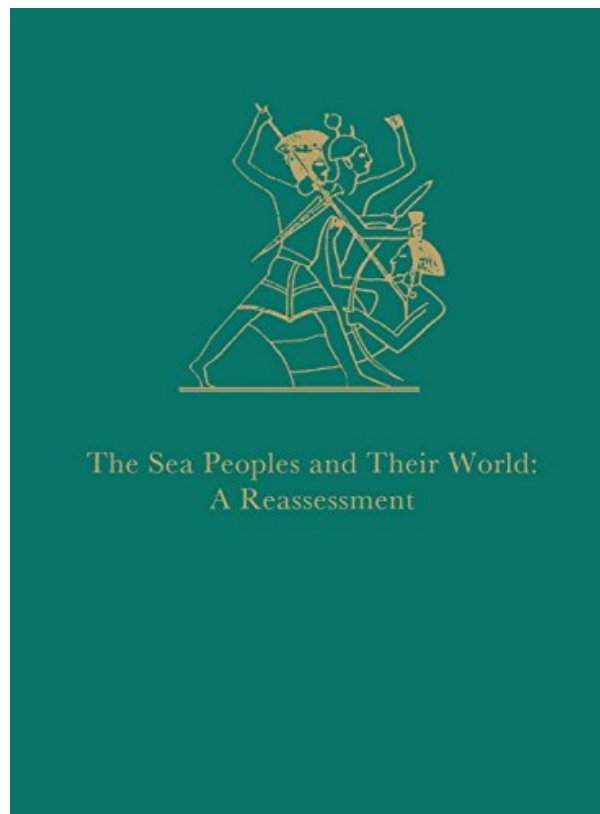


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About the Author

Eliezer D. Oren is Professor of Archaeology at Ben Gurion University. He has led many archaeological excavations and surveys in Israel and has published several volumes on his research.

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This volume presents the results of the 1995 international seminar on the history and archaeology of the Sea Peoples. The 17 comprehensive articles, written by leading scholars in the fields of Egyptology, Hittitology, biblical studies, and Aegean, Anatolian, and Near Eastern archaeology, examine current methodologies and interpretations concerning the origin, migration, and settlement of the Sea Peoples against the overwhelming new archaeological record from sites throughout the Mediterranean basin and the Levant.

Symposium Series 11

University Museum Monograph, 108

- Sales Rank: #1994197 in Books
- Published on: 2000-08-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 11.02" h x .88" w x 8.50" l, 3.39 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 368 pages

About the Author

Eliezer D. Oren is Professor of Archaeology at Ben Gurion University. He has led many archaeological excavations and surveys in Israel and has published several volumes on his research.

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Sloooooow reading

By Pete

Gosh! I must have read 70 pages of this book and understood maybe three or four words. I see I'm going to have to reread it several times to fully understand it if I can. I've been interested in the sea peoples for a while and I had hoped this book would help me. Perhaps when I finish it I'll have a better understanding. Personally I really liked Sailing to Paradise by Jim Bailey. That book really gave me a good understanding of the sea peoples and what they were up to. I got a used copy of Sailing to Paradise on Amazon, great book check it out.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Essential for any Sea People Collection

By Andrew J. Perash

This fine book gives readers the state of the art of professional thoughts and findings of the Sea Peoples and related Late Bronze Age topics as of the late '90's- 2000. It is still a valuable work in this area and should be

in your collection if the subject interests you. Because it showcases a professional seminar on these subjects it is dry, but it is not as bad as another reviewer stated. Not all archaeology is a Nat-Geo Special and thinking persons should have no trouble with the content. NOTE: If you read older reviews you'll still see complaints about the book being "held hostage" by one amazon merchant in particular. That is no longer true but certainly was once. I regularly pined for want of this book when it was priced at over a \$1,000 (that right!) dollars several years ago. Finally, more copies came out and now it has been at the price you see it for a while. Printing, type, and binding quality are excellent and I'm proud to finally have a copy. It may be rather dry, but if you have any interest in this subject you should order a copy for your collection ASAP.

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Interested in the 12th century BC Eastern Mediterranean?

By Steven Zoraster

This is a collection of papers reporting the latest research on the Sea Peoples and their impact on the Eastern Mediterranean. Anyone, amateur or professional, interested in the still mysterious collapse of many Eastern Mediterranean civilizations in the 12th century BCE should read this book. It has the widest range of up-to-date papers by the best experts gathered in one place that I am aware of. The volume includes 17 papers, with titles like "Biblical Traditions: The Philistines and Israelite History", "The Aegean and the Origin of the Sea Peoples", and "The Sea Peoples and the Egyptian Sources". Authors include Egyptologist Ronald D. Redford contributing "Egypt and Western Asia in the Late New Kingdom: An Overview"; and the man who might be described as the dean of Israeli Archeology, Dr. Israel Finkelstein, contributing "The Philistine Settlements: When, Where and How Many?". The book is well edited, the figures excellent, the writing superb, and the paper the book is printed on is of the highest quality. In other words, what you would expect from a fine university academic publication.

Unfortunately - or possibly fortunately for those of us fascinated by the whole Sea Peoples story - while this volume provides much interesting information, it settles few outstanding questions. Some of the conclusions in the papers contradict others. To quote from the introduction, "...modern scholarship is still largely challenged by the very basic questions of just who the Sea Peoples were and whence they came, as well as those focusing on the process of their migration and settlement, acculturation, and subsequent assimilation". My favorite paper was "The Sea Peoples and the Egyptian Sources", by David O'Connor, an art historian, who provides a detailed description and interpretation of the Egyptian Medinet Habu temple which memorializes Ramesses III's military victories, including two over the "Sea Peoples", one on land and one on sea. The Medinet Habu temple panels devoted to the Sea Peoples are analyzed from both artistic and historical points of view. This examination extends from showing how both battle scenes represent the victory of "[Egyptian] order over chaos", down to identifying particular individuals, out of what appear at first glance to be undifferentiated hundreds, as probable Sea People's leaders due to their unique depictions and positioning in individual displays.

My second favorite paper was "Down to the Seas of the Philistines", by Shelley Wachsmann, a nautical archeologist at Texas A&M, who argues convincingly - to me - that the "standard" Sea Peoples' ship shown in the Medinet Habu sea battle scene is a sea-going Mycenaean galley. The Mycenaeans appear to have had a remarkably "modern" sea-going ships, and along with Cyprus carried out long distance trade at this time with the Central Mediterranean as far as Sardinia. The same paper also argues - not so convincingly to me - that, based on the depictions of waterfowl devices on the both the bow and sterns, this one "standard" ship was probably manned by members of the Urnfield Culture of Central Europe!

My third favorite paper was "New Evidence on the End of the Hittite Empire", by Itamar Singer, Tel Aviv University, who discussed textual evidence for 12th century BCE warfare along the southern Anatolian coast fatally weakening both the Hittites and the Hittite clients state of Ugarit.

The very tentative consensus of the various authors who address the question, is that the Sea Peoples came from the Aegean, quite possibly Greece itself, probably by way of Southern Anatolia, where, as mentioned in the proceeded paragraph, they caused all kinds of problems for the last Hittite kings and the Ugarits. And

picked up and dropped off peoples like the Philistines along the path to Egypt - or on the way back.

One paper, by Lucia Vagnetti of the Istituto per gli Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici, argues against a Western Mediterranean origin of the Sea Peoples. I found this refreshing, since I already found it hard to accept the widely held belief that some of the Sea Peoples came all the way from Sardinia and Sicily. In another paper, by Phillip Betancourt, of Temple University, climate change that disrupted Greek agriculture is suggested as the reason for the movement of the Sea Peoples. This climate change and the associated agricultural collapse may have almost depopulated mainland Greece. (This is the best explanation I have read for the "Dark Ages" of Greece, between the 11th and 8th centuries BC.)

Finally, I should note for the serious archeologists that there are a number of papers devoted almost entirely to archeological subjects, such as excavations of individual sites in Palestine, and the study of pottery in Palestine and Cyprus. So there are plenty of photographs and drawings of excavation sites, contemporary building layouts, Late Bronze Age weapons, and unearthed terracotta figures. I tended to skip lightly over those papers, concentrating more on papers addressing the "big picture".

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