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WHAT HAS BECOME OF THE PHILISTINES ?

A BIOLOGIST'S POINT OF VIEW.

(Concluded from *Q.S.*, January, p. 45.)

By REDCLIFFE N. SALAMAN, M.A., M.D.

THE name "Philistine" in itself conveys very little. In 1747 Fournant equated it with that of the Pelasgi or early inhabitants of the Cyclades, whilst Gesenius considered the word to be Ethiopic and to mean a wanderer. Macalister points out that it is of interest that in Egypt, Babylon and Israel the term Philistine was recognized as that of the particular people of whom we are speaking, which would at least strongly suggest that the word was one by which they designated themselves.¹

In the Bible there are several references to the origin of the Philistines. In all but two places they are spoken of as coming from, or related to, Capthor, whilst in one place it is stated that it is from the Isle of Capthor. In the table of the nations (Gen. x, 13, 14) they are derived from Ham through Mizraim, as "Casluhim whence went forth the Philistine and Capthorim." In other places the Philistines are spoken of as "Cherethites," which the Septuagint translates as "Cretans." In the two exceptional references (2 Sam. xx, 23 and 2 Kings xi, 19) the Cherethites are spoken of as "Carites"—a variant appellation of great interest and importance.

The name Capthor had been interpreted as meaning Crete long before there was any support for such interpretation by the results of modern archaeological research. The results, however, of Aegean and Egyptian discoveries have not only given a strong support to this derivation of the word, but have shed a considerable light on the entire question. Full use has been made by the writer of the works of Macalister, Evans, Hall and Hogarth, to whose writings he is mainly indebted for such historical and critical information as is contained in this paper.

The Hebrew word, Capthor, is in all probability an adaptation of the Egyptian word "Keftiu," which was used to designate those

¹ *The Philistines, their History and Civilization*, p. 2 (Schweich Lect. 1911, 1914).

people who brought to Egypt the famous Aegean wares of bronze and pottery. Known to the Egyptians from the earliest dynasties, their records are, however, most abundant from the time of Thutmose III (*circa* 1500 B.C.) onwards, and there can be practically no doubt whatever that by Keftiu is meant the land of the Cretans whose wares they so enormously prized and whose portraits they have so fortunately handed down to us.

The researches of Sir Arthur Evans at Knossos in Crete have shown that somewhere about 1400 B.C. the thalassocracy of Crete was destroyed and, with the loss of external power on the sea, was combined an internal disaster which effectually laid low the elaborate civilization which long centuries of peace and prosperity had allowed to grow up in the island, associated with a degree of artistic culture which has in some respects scarcely been equalled since. This destruction of Cretan civilization and power was brought about, apparently, by the descent on Crete of related peoples from the mainland of Greece and the islands, who were driven out by the incoming Danubian tribes, amongst the earliest of whom were the Achaeans. It is possible that the islanders and inhabitants of the coastlands of South-West Asia Minor, formerly under the sway of Crete, may have joined in bringing about the Cretan *debâcle*.

In the reign of Ramses II (*c.* 1300 B.C.) Egypt was engaged in war with the Hittites in order to recover the lands lost by Ikhnaton, the father-in-law of Tutenkhamen. To the Hittites were attached, as allies, certain peoples whose names, occurring again in the records of the reign of Merneptah and Ramses III, have been readily identified with tribal groups inhabiting Crete, the Aegean Isles, and the neighbouring coastlands. It is interesting to note that on the side of Ramses were certain mercenaries, the Sheridan or Sardinians, one of the same group of sea-rovers as were fighting on the side of the enemy. Merneptah (1225-1200), in the famous stele in which he records that "Israel is desolated, his seed is not," described his campaigns against the revolting Lybyans with whom were, as allies, "the peoples of the sea"; and amongst these are to be found the same Sardinians and a people of the name "Ekwesh" which authorities equate with "Achaeans."

So far the Egyptian records are dealing with the people of the sea, but no reference is made to any that can be claimed as Philistines; but in the records of Ramses III we meet both with

written and graphic records of sea-tribes amongst whom one can undoubtedly recognize the Philistine. The records are to be found on the sculptured walls of Medinet Habu at Thebes in Upper Egypt. The inscription relates how the northerners were disturbed and proceeded to move eastward and southward, swamping in turn the land of the Hittites, Carchemish, Arvad, Cyprus and Syria. The advance was made later by sea and land, and in the reliefs are to be seen the enemy in their boats, vessels which are clearly identical with the Cretan style of ship. Similar representations of ships occur on the Phaestus Disk, which, though found in Crete, is considered by most authorities as of Carian or Lycian origin. In other portions of the sculptured walls are seen the same people conducting their womenfolk and children in two-wheeled carts drawn by four oxen. Ramses III, engaging them both on land and sea, defeated them, with the result that instead of entering Egypt, the sea-tribes turned back and settled on the Syrian coast. The tribes comprising the enemy forces are enumerated and their soldiery is depicted showing the dress and accoutrements peculiar to the different groups.

The list of tribes comprises, not only those met with in the previous records, but also the following three peoples: the Pulesati, the Zakkala and the Washasha. These Pulasati have been equated by all the leading authorities with the Philistines. The Zakkala, of whom more later, were a sub-division of the Philistines. The Washasha have not been definitely equated with any known tribe, but Macalister points out that Strabo (XIV, ii, 7) states that the ancient name of Rhodes was Ophiussa, a form presenting an obvious similarity to that of Washasha, which would at the same time bring these people into line with the other island and coastland tribes.

The victory recorded on the walls of Medinet Habu took place about the year 1190 B.C. In the Golenischeff papyrus dating about 1110 B.C. and written in the reign of Ramses XII, the journeys of Pharaoh's emissary called Wenamon are recorded, and he gives with great detail his dealings with the Zakkala whom he meets first at Dor, which is the modern Tantura, just south of the promontory of Carmel. In the further pursuit of his business, which was to bring cedar wood from the Lebanon, he proceeds to Byblos in the neighbourhood of Tyre, where he again meets the Zakkala ruled over by a certain Zakar-Baal, who incidentally informs him that his grandfather had also been Governor of Byblos.



FIG. 1—Top row. Philistines, from reliefs at Medinet Habu, XXth dynasty. *Photographs from Petrie's Casts, Nos. 194, 195.*
Lower row. Ditto. *From Petrie's Casts, Nos. 213, 214.*



FIG. 2—Philistines, from relief at Medinet Habu, XXth dynasty. *Photographs from Petrie's Cast, No. 181.*



FIG. 4.—Female Cretan head from Knossos.
Late Minoan II Period.



FIG. 3.—The Cupbearer, from a fresco in Knossos,
Crete. Late Minoan II Period.
Reproduced from a photograph kindly lent by Sir Arthur Evans.

This last fact, together with other incidents mentioned, would correspond with a settlement of the Zakkala in this region just north of Palestine at a date of about 1180, which would be about ten years after the great battle which ultimately settled the fate of these particular roving tribes of Sea Vikings.

The physical appearance of the men of the Pulasati, Zakkala and Washasha are portrayed with an abundance of detail on the sculptured walls of Medinet Habu, and we are able to compare them both with the representations of the Keftiu from the XVIIIth dynasty tombs of Senemut and Rekhmare as well as with the numerous representations of the inhabitants of Crete which have been found at Knossos and elsewhere in the island.

It is impossible to compare this series of portraits, whose origin is so diverse in geographical location as well as in time, without being at once struck by their similarity. The outstanding character of all the people represented, no matter where found, is that in appearance they form a group which is unquestionably European in countenance. The faces are those of a race with delicate highly refined features, with a small nose often *retroussé*, small mouth and delicate well-developed chin. In almost all where the profile is presented it is obvious that the contour of the nose and forehead are in one continuous straight line, exactly as is found in the heroic sculpture of the Greeks. The shape of the head is uniformly long, it being a markedly dolicocephalic race with which we are dealing. To the Western European eye these portraits of a bygone race at once conjure up a vision of a kindred people of outstanding beauty.

As regards the dress and external character, certain points of importance must be mentioned. The XVIIIth dynasty portraits of Keftians are habited exactly as are those shown in the Cretan frescoes. The men are garbed in a highly ornamental kilt and wear sandals and puttees. The head is bare, but the hair is done in three plaits which hang down behind. As before mentioned, the men of Keftiu are carrying vases of Cretan design quite distinct from those of the native Egyptians, but absolutely similar to ware found in such abundance in Crete and in the Mycenaean deposits on the mainland. There is a further peculiarity about the Keftian portraits which is to be found in every single representation of Aegean and Cretan men. The waist is abnormally small and is surrounded by a tight, ornamented belt. On the Medinet Habu

representations of the Philistines and their *confrères* there are both important similarities and important differences. The Philistine warriors have the same delicate small features which the Keftian possesses, and wear the same kilt and belt, the same type of sandal and puttees, and display the same small waist which the Cretan youth cultivated. But in two important details they vary. Whereas in the Cretan and Keftian portraits the men have either no head-dress or a mere circlet round the head, in those of Medinet Habu they are shown wearing a helmet or headgear which is composed of a circlet of upstanding feathers. The second point of distinction is that the Philistines carry a small circular shield, whilst the Cretan shield was of an enormous size and shaped like a figure of eight.

These two differential features of dress, the helmet and the shield, give the clue as to the more immediate origin of these proto-Philistines, as we may call them. Both the headdress and the shield are typical of Caria, which was a Cretan settlement in the south-west corner of Asia Minor. Strabo (*loc. cit.*, XIV, ii, 27) speaks thus of the Carians and their origin: "The most generally received account is that the Carians, then called Leleges, were governed by Minos (= Crete) and occupied the islands. When removed to the continent, they obtained possession of a large tract of the coast and the interior, by driving out the former occupiers who were for the greater part Leleges and Pelasgi." Strabo proceeds to quote Alcaeus' expression "Shaking a Carian crest." Herodotus (I, 172), agreeing with the account given of the origin of the Carians, says that they, the Carians, invented the fastening of crests on helmets, putting on of devices on shields (*cf.*, the representations of the small circular shields on the Phaeustus disk), and of handles on shields. We may, therefore, with some confidence, see in the Medinet Habu reliefs portraits of Philistine men of the Cretan race, who had become incorporated within the Carian power subsequent to the overthrow of Cretan hegemony in 1400.

The Zakkala, allies of the Pulasati, of whose physical appearance we have no evidence, derive their name, in the opinion of Sir W. M. Flinders Petrie, from the town of Zakro in the north of Crete, and the Washasha may be equated either with the people of Ophiussa, which is the ancient name of the island of Rhodes and lies immediately opposite to the Carian coast, or, according to Dr. Hall, as quoted by Baikie,¹ with Axos in Crete.¹ And thus it appears that all the

¹ J. Baikie, *The Sea Kings of Crete* (1910), p. 164.

Philistine tribes have come from within a small radius, and all are people of kindred culture and in all probability of the same race.

Dr. Hall¹ has recently expressed the opinion that the original home of the Philistine tribes was the Carian Coast, although it is not improbable that they had occupied the eastern end of Crete after the fall of Knossos and before their descent on the Syrian coast. The name Captor is probably used in a generic sense and connotes both Crete, the immediate islands, and the S.W. coast of Asia Minor, the inhabitants of which enjoyed with the Cretan a common culture. Hall further points out that the Zakaray and the Washasha have both been regarded as genuine Cretan tribes, though their allies were not.

Before leaving the question of the facial character of the Philistines, it must be pointed out that, whilst in the representation of Cretans and Keftians the type is uniformly that small delicate angular one already described, amongst the faces of the Philistines at Medinet Habu there are a few which do not strictly conform, which are exceptions, *i.e.*, one finds some heads adorned with the Carian crest in which the nose is rather bigger and shows some rounding, indeed there is one distinctly Armenoid, which is not surprising seeing that in the interior of Asia Minor was living the Armenoid people, the Hittites. In fact, in many heads, whilst the features are characteristically small, refined and delicate, they would be more correctly described as subangular rather than severely clear cut and angular. In some full face views it is clear that the nose, though short, was of considerable breadth.

Sufficient has been said of the origin of the tribes which settled in lower Syria under the name of Philistines, and which gave their name to their new home. It is, however, of interest to see what evidences are to be found in Palestine itself of the origin of these same Philistines. At Gezer, Macalister unearthed pottery and other objects of Aegean culture, whilst the burials were of Cretan style and gold mouth-plates were found on the faces, as was common in Crete of old. In Gezer there existed, even as late as the fourth century of this era, a temple dedicated to Zeus of Crete, Certain legends which have clung to the Jaffa coast-line throughout the ages are of undoubted Cretan origin—especially the one associating the tale of Perseus and Andromeda with Jaffa itself, a legend which, in more recent times, becomes converted into the

¹ Hall, *Cambridge Ancient Hist.*, vol. ii, chap. xii.

heroic struggle of St. George and the Dragon, which finds its *locale* on the same spot. Indeed, the bones of St. George, the Patron Saint of England, are shown to the curious to this day in the church of Lydda.

The name Achish, which is essentially Philistine, and which occurs in the Bible, is found in a papyrus of the XVIIIth dynasty amongst a list of Keftian (Cretan) names which must have been composed some 300 years before the Philistines settled in Palestine. However, not only is there evidence in Palestine of the Cretan origin of the Philistines, but there is some which points to their derivation from Caria. The references to the Philistines as Carians in Samuel and Kings have been noted, and to these may be added the name of the place at which the pursuing Israelites at the battle of Mizpah halted—Beth Car, the Carian house, probably a village within the recognized Philistine border. Even the Zakkala are not without some memorial in the land, for it is most probable that the name of their tribe is to be seen in the place named Ziklag.

Of what race were the Cretans and the islanders, Pelasgians and Leleges? All authorities agree that they were a long-headed people. Macalister (*op. cit.*, p. 13) says: “It may be said at once that it is perhaps a little premature to call them [the Philistines] Aryans. On the whole, the probability seems to be against the Philistine being an Aryan tongue, it certainly was not, if (as is not unlikely) it had affinities with the Etruscan.” Hall (*op. cit.*, p. 86), speaking of the Pelasgoi, says that “. . . others [tribes] were certainly in no way related to that stock [Aryan] and were indeed very probably not of Indo-European blood, or at any rate, only very remotely connected with the Indo-European peoples. This seems to have been the case with the ‘Pelasgian’ tribes of Asia Minor, the Aegean Islands and Southern Italy.” And of the Carian he says, “The Carian, though they certainly belonged to the non-Aryan stock of Asia Minor . . . ”

Hogarth (*Ionia and the East*, 1909) seems to share the belief that the people who were responsible for Mycenaean and Cretan art were quite distinct from the Northern invaders who later developed Hellenic culture. Luschan,¹ from investigations both of ancient skulls and bones of middle Minoan period as well as from an anthropological survey of the present inhabitants of Crete, concludes

¹ “Beiträge zur Anthropologie von Kreta,” *Zeitsch. f. Ethnol. Jahrg. 45.* Vol. XLV (1913), p. 307.

that the oldest inhabitants of Crete were small, dark, long-headed and broad-nosed. Duckworth¹ found that the old Cretan graves of Middle Minoan period contained the remains of a predominantly dolicocephalic people with an admixture of 8·6 per cent. of brachycephalics, and he found no broadening of the nasal aperture. The average height of the male was 5 feet 4 inches. Hawes² confirms Duckworth's results, and, in his very interesting survey of the present-day inhabitants, finds that although the modern population is largely brachycephalic, due to invasions whose influence can be traced as early as the fall of Knossos, there yet remains on the mountain heights a population which exactly reproduces the old Cretan dolicocephalic inhabitants.

To this evidence we can add that derived from the discovery by Macalister of five apparently Philistine burials in Gezer. The method of burial and the accompanying objects found in their tombs are all strongly reminiscent of Aegean art and culture. The bony remains are best described in Macalister's own words. "The interesting bones from the Philistine graves are comparable with the types of ancient Cretan bones described by Duckworth and Hawes (see above) and with the Cretan bones in the Cambridge Museum. They represent a people of fairly tall stature (the man in grave 2 was 5 feet 10 inches, that in grave 3 was 6 feet 3½ inches). They were probably about or under forty years of age. In all the femora were not pilastered and the tibia not platycnemic. The skulls were ellipsoidal, mesatacephalic, orthognathous, megaseme (with large orbits), mesorrhine (with moderately wide nose) and microdont."³

J. L. Myres (*Q.S.*, 1907, p. 240), commenting on these graves, says that the structure agrees in general with that of the shaft graves of Mycenae and Knossos, which belong to the Late Minoan period (1300–1000 B.C.), and more closely with the Carian tombs at Assarlik Termero, of the very end of the Mycenaean or Late Minoan age. No such type is known in Cyprus. The contents, however, of the tombs recall the art of Cyprus in the period following the Mycenaean age. Though it is obvious that these burials were not

¹ W. L. H. Duckworth. "Excavations at Palaikastro." *Brit. Sch. Annual*, 1903. Vol. IX, p. 344.

² C. H. Hawes. A Report on Cretan Anthropometry. Report of Brit. Assoc., 1910.

³ *The Excavation of Gezer*, Vol. I, p. 64.

Semitic and were in all probability Philistine, it is of course not safe to conclude that the dead were typical members of the Philistine tribe.

H. Bossert (*Alt Kreta*, 1921), however, thinks that the Aegean race came from the Caucasus, but he gives no evidence for the suggestion.

The question of racial origin is so often confused with community of culture that it is not necessarily convincing that because the Cretan culture was in all probability not Aryan or Indo-European, the people who practised it were not of the same stock as those who exhibit such a culture, yet in this case the probabilities are all in favour of the theory that the Cretan and Aegean peoples of the 2nd Millennium B.C. were of quite distinct blood from the Germanic peoples of a later period.

The history of the Philistines in Palestine is too well known to need repetition. Briefly it records a life and death struggle for the mastery and possession of the land. Both the protagonists were newcomers, but each brought a culture illuminated from different angles by different spiritual forces. In material resource the Philistine was probably the better equipped. Not only had he always his ships and the rich coastal plane as his base, but he was in possession of an element as yet as good as unknown to the Israelite. Iron, which hitherto had been used but sparingly on the shores of the Mediterranean, and then only for tools, was developed by the Aegean peoples and their near relatives the Philistines as a weapon of offence. How inferiorly equipped the Israelites were in this respect is shown by the passage in 1 Sam. xiii, 19-23. It would certainly appear from this passage that whilst the Hebrews were only just beginning to make use of iron tools the Philistines were adepts in all matters of ironwork. Lang notes how, in the early epic of Aegean peoples, bronze was always used for weapons, and iron for tools, and nowhere else is such found in Central or Western Europe.¹ Macalister, however, at Gezer, disclosed an exactly similar state of affairs. The biblical passage might perhaps imply that Saul and Jonathan were the only persons in the Hebrew army who had sword or spear—that they were, in fact, the only ones who at that time had the modern iron form of weapon, the knowledge of which they had acquired from their enemy the Philistine.

¹ *Anthropology and the Classics*, p. 58 (1908).

The long struggle ended for all practical purposes with the victories of David, but the national feeling of the Philistine was not completely extinguished for some centuries to come.

There is very little evidence on which to base any conclusions as to the mutual relation of Philistine to Israelite after the defeat of the former. That it was not necessarily hostile is shown by the fact that the Shunammite, the friend of Elisha (2 Kings viii, 2) spent seven years in the land of the Philistines to avoid the famine. Gradually the distinctiveness as well as the national pretensions of the Philistine seem to have broken down before the rising tide of Judaean culture.

Doubtless the Philistine, no longer an enemy to be feared or even respected, came to be looked down on as of no account, much as in the Elizabethan age a Welshman was considered by an Englishman. The passage in Isaiah ii, 6, "For they (the house of Jacob) are replenished from the East and with soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the brood of aliens," points not only to the contempt in which the leaders held the Philistine, but to the fact that social contact was prevailing between the two peoples. Whilst the passage in Zechariah ix, 6, is obscure, yet it clearly shows that cultural differences, food tabus and the like, still divided Philistines and Israelites rather than geographical or military boundaries, and that the Prophet hopefully looks forward to the day when both shall be united.

In the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, about 450 B.C., we hear the last distinct echo of the Philistine, but it is one that is full of meaning. Nehemiah (xiii, 23 seq.) pours out his wrath on those who have contracted marriages with the women of Ashdod and whose children lisped in the Philistine speech still current, if only as a *patois*, and from that day onwards the Philistine as such is heard of no more, though traces of his culture and his religion dwelt on in places such as Gaza for many centuries to come.

What, then, became of the Philistine ? Is his fate for ever wrapped in mystery ? Must we suppose that a race once so vigorous has vanished without a trace ? Surely the answer to the question is to be found with the Jew of to-day. If the answer is inscribed in his blood, yet it is to be read in a text for ever fresh. The Philistine was gradually absorbed into the Israelite nation—he was never lost. His persistence with us to-day is proved by the existence of the Pseudo-Gentile type in our midst. The same delicate features,

the same subangular character of the features, the same Grecian brow leading in one straight line to the straight short nose are there in the Pseudo-Gentile Jew of to-day, as they were in the Philistine of the days of Medinet Habu.

If, however, we are satisfied that the Philistines and the peoples of Crete and the neighbouring islands and coastlands of Asia Minor are of the same stock (and the arguments deduced from the very numerous representations of these people we are able to examine to-day would seem to be amply convincing) and if, at the same time, we accept the almost inevitable conclusion that the Philistines were absorbed into the Israelitish population, then we must accept the further conclusion that the Jews of to-day, as the Israelites of the post-exilic period have, as part of their hereditary capital, a quota which corresponds to whatever was peculiar to that race of men from which the Cretans sprang. Further, that that blood represents a stock which is not Teutonic is, in the writer's opinion, absolutely proved by the fact that the Pseudo-Gentile type of face which occurs so constantly amongst Jews the world over, and which is identical with that of the Philistines of old, exhibits a "genetic" behaviour on crossing with the Hittite type of Jew diametrically opposite to that exhibited by a similar cross of Hittite and Teuton.

Moreover the dominance of the Armenoid or Hittite type over the Pseudo-Gentile (Cretan or Aegean) can be exemplified in other races besides the Jews. Luschan has observed how the Armenoid type has spread from Anatolia to the mainland of Greece and the Isles, so that a population which was originally dolicocephalic is mainly brachycephalic, and a people who 2,000 years ago delighted to represent itself in its statuary and on its pottery as one of the very same type as the Cretan and Philistine is now predominantly Armenoid or Jewish in appearance.

Still, remarks Luschan, can the heroic type be found springing out of the leavened mass of the Greek population. So is it with the Jews, who, predominantly Armenoid themselves, witness to the recessive Pseudo-Gentile type asserting itself, as the laws of Mendel would lead us to expect—a fact which gives us to-day Jews who are physically indistinguishable from their Philistine enemy of old.

In Palestine, during the war, the writer, as medical officer of the Judaeans, had manifold opportunities of observing the younger generation which is springing up in the Jewish colonies. Certain facts became clear as his knowledge of the people became more

intimate. In the first place the younger generation of colonists are physically well developed and muscular. In sports they held their own against all teams of gymnasts in the British Egyptian Expeditionary Force. Their average height was certainly greater than that of the Judaean soldiers recruited from Russia and America. It was, however, the facial type of the younger generation that was most interesting. The outstanding fact was that the Palestinian youths presented a very considerably higher proportion of Pseudo-Gentile faces than did their foreign brethren of the other battalions. Indeed, it would appear that some force was at work which was bringing into existence again the old Philistine type in the land of the Philistines.

Many years ago the writer searched about for correlations between mental character and the three physical facial types which have been discussed. It was clear that so elusive a problem as the correlation of mental and physical characters could not be solved by any statistical method, but in the various efforts to attain some satisfactory basis to work from, the writer was much struck by the following observation. An examination of a large collection of portraits of Anglo-Jewish worthies showed that those leaders who had been in their time outstanding philanthropists—and Jewish philanthropists are above all distinguished by that very lovable but formless type of charity which is so well known as "Rahamanuth"—were almost all of an outspoken Hittite type of countenance.

It may, therefore, be forgiven the writer if, when looking at the young home-born Palestinian Jews as they were marshalled under their Zionist banner on the plain of Sharon, and noticing the prevalence of the Pseudo-Gentile type of face, he fancied that here, too, perhaps was evidence of another correlation, a correlation between the spirit of adventure and the Pseudo-Gentile type of face, which would become active as a selection agent in respect to those immigrants who come to Palestine to found a new Judaea.¹

And so it may be that, in the old home of the Philistine, there is being recreated that ancient race from the bowels of its one time enemy and victor, a race which, be its faults or its virtues what they may, was certainly dominated by that spirit of adventure and hardihood which made the Aegean rover of old the Viking of his day.

¹ *Palestine Reclaimed* (1921).