

Chapter 8

The Late Bronze Age Collapse and its Aftermath

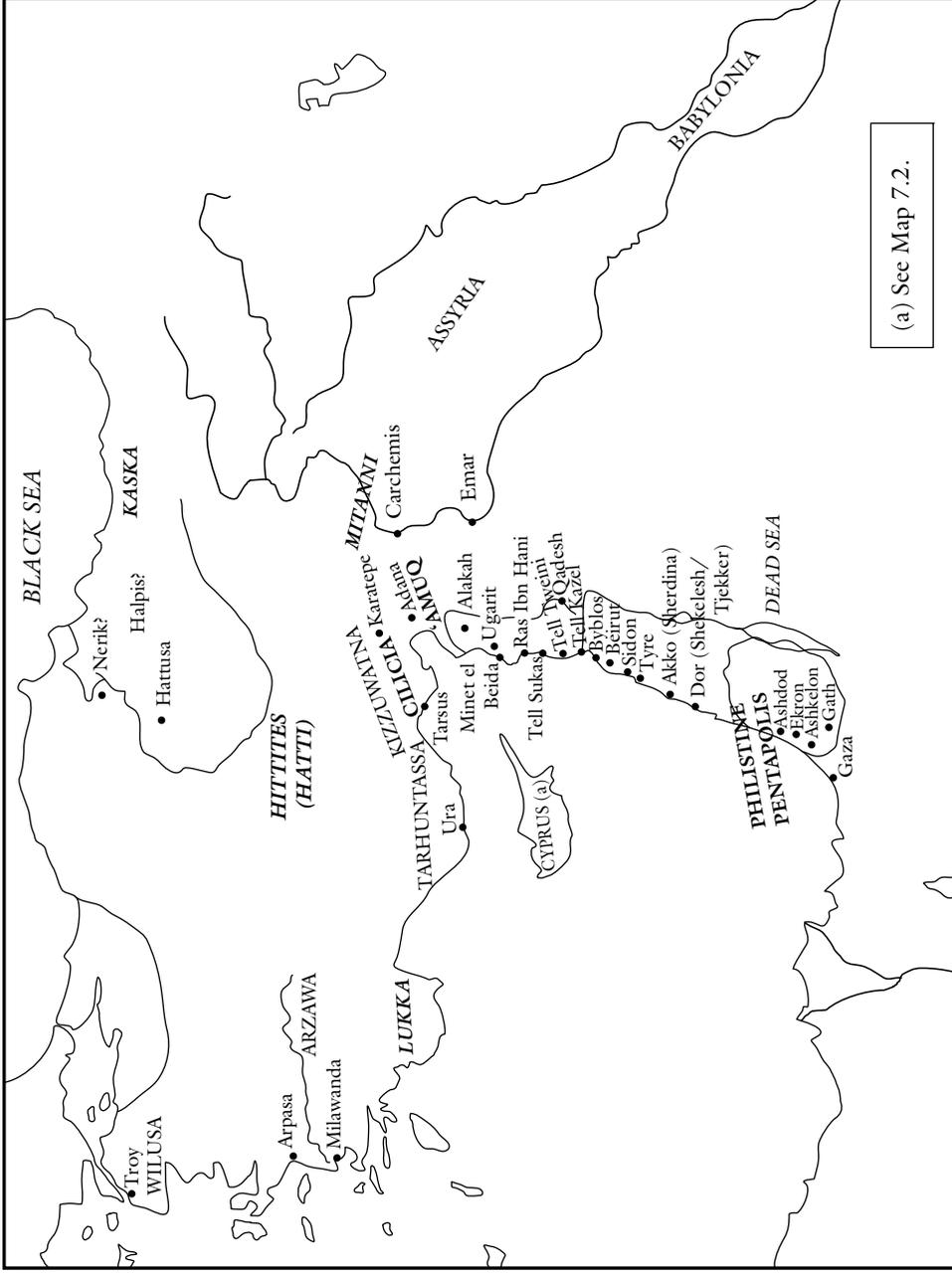
Collapse and Destruction

The complex system of exchange structured by the interactions of palatial states in the Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean collapsed at the end of the second millennium. The collapse took many forms and all the events did not occur everywhere at once. The system was so interwoven, however, that an explanation for its collapse has been framed in terms of catastrophe theory (Renfrew 1979): the failure of one minor element started a chain reaction that reverberated on a greater and greater scale, until finally the whole structure was brought to collapse. But while such an overarching general model is tempting, more can be learned by considering the smaller specific elements of failure that cumulatively produced the general, system-wide collapse.

Some of the specific factors that have been suggested as causes of the collapse, either alone or in combination, include (in no particular order), overextension of states, internal dissolution of states, climate change, famine, earthquakes, and hostile attacks. Of these, the last, in particular, the attacks of the infamous “Sea Peoples,” is the most dramatic and has certainly received the most attention. Nevertheless, seaborne attacks can only have been a contributing factor; asking what set these attackers in motion brings more fundamental elements into play. Thus, considering the other individual possible causes seems to provide the best starting point for considering the collapse as a whole. A number of these can be seen in the case of the Hittite kingdom.

The Hittites: overextension, drought, internal problems

The Hittites provide a compelling picture of a kingdom suffering from a series of interrelated problems. The kingdom at times covered vast areas, but most were almost entirely dependent on rain-fed agriculture and herding, and thus were especially prone to drought. The situation was complicated by the fact that the Hittite kingdom lacked strong trade connections that could have supplemented these resources.



Map 8.1 The Hittites and the Levant.

That famine was a persistent problem for the Hittites is suggested by a number of letters from the Hittite king urgently requesting assistance, directly from Egypt or through the intermediation of Ugarit (Singer 2006). As early as the reign of Ramesses II a letter tells of a Hittite expedition to Egypt to organize a consignment of grain to be shipped by sea.¹ Another letter, the Tel Aphek letter from Ugarit, which also dates from the reign of Ramesses II (1230 BC), deals with an unpaid transfer of wheat by Adduya, probably the representative of the governor of Ugarit, to an unidentified person, probably at Joppa, an Egyptian administrative center known to have maintained royal granaries (Singer 1983, date from Singer). The writer requests restitution of the same amount of grain to Adduya. The pharaoh Merneptah also boasted of having given aid to the Hittites.²

As Klengel (1974) has pointed out, however, not every mention of famine in the royal letters need indicate a catastrophic situation; at times it may have been no more than a *topos* of correspondence about royal “gift” exchange or a reference to a commercial shipment for a land chronically short of grain. More specific mention of famine conditions provides stronger evidence, such as the demand by the Hittite queen during the reign of Ramesses II that the dowry for a Hittite princess be expedited because her country has no grain, and the request, in the last days of the Hittite kingdom, of the Hittite king to the king of Ugarit – either Niqmadd or Ammurapi – to send a ship load of grain to the Hittite harbor of Ura in Cilicia as a “matter of life and death.”³ Convincing textual evidence of famine also comes from the private records of Emar (Adamthwaite 2001; Singer 2006: 734–6),⁴ a Hittite provincial town and commercial center located at a strategic point connecting Mesopotamia with the Mediterranean coast and with Anatolia. These texts record a large number of individual sales of family members and houses “in a year of war/famine,” or made with the intention that the family members should live. The analysis of Anatolian tree rings also provides evidence for a severe drought in central Anatolia in roughly the same period.⁵

Klengel (1974) has pointed out that one of the characteristics of states dependent on rainfall agriculture is a tendency to be aggressively expansive: ever seeking to extend their supply base, they tend to expand beyond their capacities to govern the territory they “control” This was clearly the case with the Hittites. The Hittite realm at its greatest extent, under Tudhaliya I/II (ca. 1400) (Bryce 2005: 121–9), reached west to the Aegean coast, where Ahhiyawans/Mycenaeans had settled and continually fomented trouble by encouraging rebellious Hittite vassals (Moran 1992: EA 38: 7–12; Bryce 2003: 69). To the north, Hittite control extended to the Black Sea, infringing on the territories of hostile tribal peoples, most notably the Kaska, who carried on intermittent cross-border forays. The conflict turned more serious during the reign of Tudhaliya III (ca. 1330 BC) when, suffering from famine, the Kaska joined with neighboring tribal peoples and burned the Hittite capital Hattusa to the ground (Bryce 2005: 145–7).

After the burning of Hattusa, the king and his court probably took refuge in a nearby cult center while the capital was rebuilt. Later, during the reign of Muwatalli, the capital was moved south to the region of Tarhuntassa, which had access to the sea and perhaps offered better security from Kaskan raids. Muwatalli did not abandon the north, however, but entrusted important sites to the jurisdiction of his brother, Hattusili,

including the city of Hakkis and the holy site of Nerik, home of the storm god, on the route from Hattusa to Kaska territory. He thus reasserted Hittite control in the north, but also virtually partitioned the kingdom. Although the capital was later moved back to Hattusa, Tarhuntassa was subsequently governed by a branch of the royal family and became increasingly independent. The situation at Tarhuntassa underlined the fragmentary connections that held the kingdom together and the dynastic problems caused by a sometimes unruly royal family.

Along the southwestern coast in Lycia another troublesome group were the Lukka. Hittite texts describe them as a rebellious and warlike people who lived in scattered communities without any formal organization, existing mostly by piracy (Bryce 2005: 54–5. 124–7). They had a fluctuating relationship with the Hittites. In one Hittite prayer, they are referred to as denouncing the Hittite sun goddess of Arinna and joining with other tribal peoples to attack Hittite territory (Pritchard 1974: 396). During the mid-fifteenth century they were part of an alliance of 22 countries that fought against the Hittites, the Assuan Confederacy, which was defeated by Tudhaliya I (Bryce 1986: 4–6; 1993: 128–9; 2005: 124–70). But in the Battle of Qadesh (ca. 1274 BC), the Lukka fought on the Hittite side, and Artzy (1997: 5) has suggested that they probably provided much of the shipping for the Hittites. By the end of the thirteenth century (1208 BC) the Lukka had ventured farther afield, as “Sea People” taking part in an attack by the Libyans on the western Delta defeated by the pharaoh Merneptah, a victory recorded on the Great Karnak Inscription.⁶

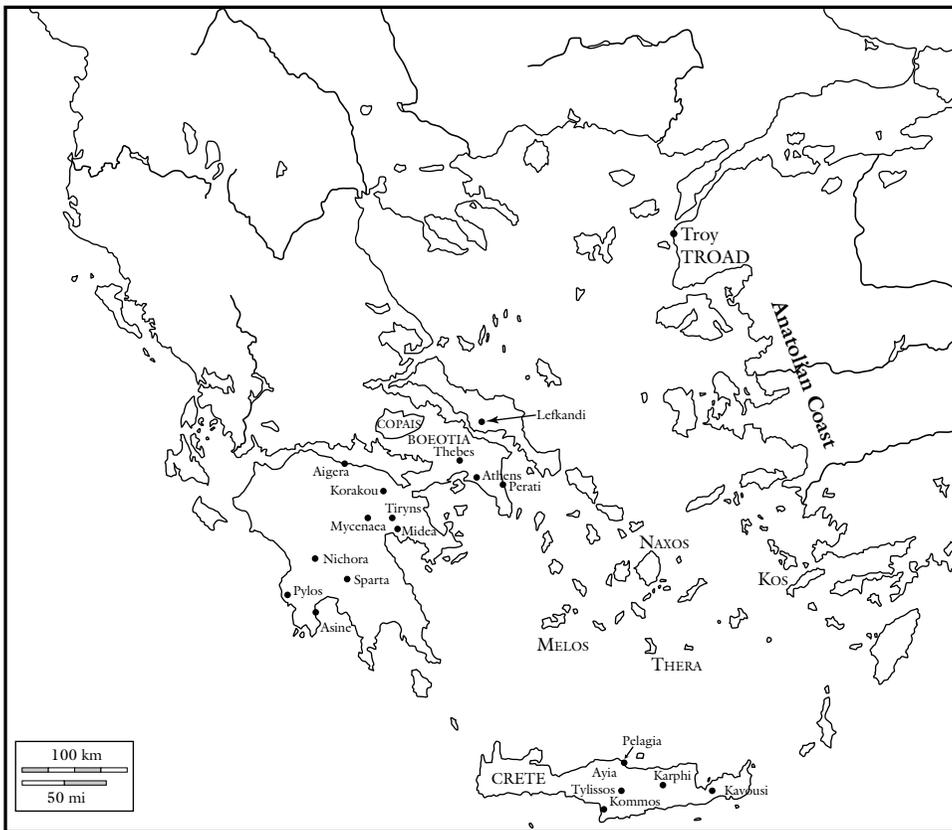
Along the northern Levantine coast as far as Ugarit, the Hittites exercised control by support of vassal kingdoms in competition with Egypt, although these vassals eventually favored Egypt as Hattusa was less and less able to offer them aid. Finally, to the east, the Hittites had an uneasy border with Mitanni territory, again, in competition with Egypt.⁷

In the face of these external threats, the members of the Hittite royal family fought each other. Muwatalli, the king who moved the capital to Tarhuntassa, was succeeded not by his brother Hattusili, but by his nephew Urhi-Teshub, the son of a secondary wife, who took the throne-name of Mursili. Although there were some objections to the succession, at first Hattusili supported the new king. Mursili moved the capital back to Hattusa, but Tarhuntassa remained a restless area. Relations between the new king and his uncle, Hattusili, became strained, and the king began to strip powers from his uncle, leaving him with only Hakkis and Nerik. But when Mursili moved to take even this jurisdiction from him, Hattusili rebelled. Joined by members of the Hittite nobility, some exiled by Mursili, Hattusili prevailed in the ensuing struggle. Mursili was formally deposed and his uncle seized the throne. But the nephew did not go quietly. He first conspired with the Babylonians and the Assyrians. Hattusili ordered him removed to a new place of exile, but Mursili remained defiant, appealing next to the pharaoh, Ramesses II, and eventually ending up in the Egyptian court. Ramesses refused to hand him over, but at some point the fugitive left Egypt. He surfaced again in Hatti, in the south, probably in the region of Tarhuntassa, where, Bryce speculates, he may have set himself up as Mursili III, king of the Hittites, in a kingdom in exile. But the attempt came to nothing in the upheavals at the end of the Bronze Age. Yakar has suggested that a major factor in the collapse of the Hittite kingdom was the disruption of supply routes caused by these dynastic problems (Yakar 2006).

At some point, roughly in the early twelfth century, Hattusa was abandoned and the kingdom fell into ruin, leaving a number of small independent states, the neo-Hittite kingdoms, in Cilicia and northern Syria (Hawkins 1995).

The Mycenaean Aegean: overextension, poor management, drought, earthquakes

While drought certainly figured in the ultimate collapse of the Hittites, in 1966 Rhys Carpenter proposed that it also played a significant role in the collapse of the Late Bronze Age in Greece. At first widely rejected, Carpenter’s hypothesis has gained increasing support over time (Bryson, Lamb, and Donely 1974: 50; Moody 2005a; 2005b), and it now seems more likely than not that extreme weather and drought did severely affect many areas in the Aegean in the thirteenth and twelfth centuries BC (Moody 2005b; MacGillivray 2005). The study of weather patterns shows a repeated instability in global weather patterns in the LB III period, with significantly warmer temperatures in the Aegean and Crete (Moody 2005a; 2005b; MacGillivray 2005; contra Dickinson 1974; 2006: 243).⁸ There is significant evidence for the effect that



Map 8.2 The Aegean.

these extremes of weather had on Greece, where efforts to cope with drought conditions can be seen in the building of water-control works: dykes and channels in the Copaic basin, earthworks to trap water at Pylos, and enclosed and protected means of access to water sources at Athens, Mycenae, Tiryns, and Midea.⁹

Mainland Greece also offers an example of a state (or states) that suffered from over-extension and poor management. In the case of the Mycenaeans, this cannot be attributed to an exclusively agricultural economy. The palaces produced trade goods, notably pottery and textiles, and, while there is no sign that the rulers of the palaces themselves engaged in trade, someone must have been exchanging those goods abroad and thus might have had access to food imports. Nevertheless, home grown grain was apparently not sufficient, for Vermeule (1960) attributes Mycenaean expansion to dependence on imports, notably grain from Anatolia. This may account for Mycenaean activities in coastal Anatolia, where they engaged in attempts to subvert local Hittite vassals, and at one point even attacked Cyprus (Moran 1992: EA 38: 7–12; Bryce 2003: 69).

Earthquakes were another disrupting factor in Greece, causing serious damage to the Mycenaean palaces. The Aegean region, in which a number of tectonic plates come together, is especially earthquake prone, a situation that at times results in clusters of earthquakes, or an “earthquake storm” (Nur and Cline 2000; Nur and Burgess 2008). The quakes may be spread over a number of years, as has happened in recent history in northern Turkey.¹⁰ The widespread destructions at many sites in the Aegean and Near East around the end of the twelfth century BC (Stiros 1996)¹¹ suggest that an earthquake storm may have occurred at that time. In mainland Greece destructions occurred at many palace centers, severely damaging the main palaces and central administrative buildings. Often the damage can be specifically attributed to earthquakes by the presence of buried bodies or patterns of structural collapse.¹² Thus, at Mycenae, earthquake destruction was first recognized in the Panagia Houses when the skeleton of a woman covered with fallen stones was found in a doorway in House I, and a horizon of destructions identified as contemporary with the house destruction was dated to Middle LH IIIB (ca. 1250 BC) (Shear 1987: 17–19, 154–5, Plate 5B; E.W. French 1996).¹³ Destructions at Tiryns have also been attributed to earthquakes,¹⁴ and recently other mainland sites have been added: Kynos, in East Locri (Dakoronia 1996); Thebes (a woman buried in a collapsed two-story building) (Sampson 1996); and Midea in LH IIIB2 (ca. 1190 BC). The inhabitants of Midea appear to have fled the site, possibly taking refuge in Tiryns (Åström and Demakopoulou 1996), part of a number of *synoikismoi* to larger sites that occurred at the time (Kilian 1988: 134).

At many earthquake-afflicted sites there was recovery and rebuilding at first, with the construction of underground water supply systems at palatial sites, drainage works in the Copaic basin in the north, and the wall begun across the Isthmus, presumably intended to ward off an invading force and to enable the defenders to withstand a siege. It has been argued that these measures do not seem to have been rational responses to earthquake threat; however, such defensive constructions could have been intended to ward off raids from neighbors intent on looting a damaged palace or attempts by dissident elements within the population to overthrow their masters.

There is little direct evidence about hostile relations or attacks between the individual palace complexes, although the close proximity of some of them to their neighbors,

their massive size, and their cyclopean fortifications, do suggest a general atmosphere of hostility. Moreover, the construction of such monumental buildings and fortifications probably aggravated the problem by overtaxing the worker population, itself heavily made up of captives seized abroad, mainly in raids on coastal Anatolia. Overburdened workers with grievances could have been expected to seize any opportunity to revolt.

Mycenaean coastal sites were also vulnerable to increasing seaborne attacks, to some of which the Mycenaeans themselves may have contributed. The Pylos tablets calling up rowers and sending watchers to watch the coast (Ventris and Chadwick 1973: 188–94, 427–30; Chadwick 1976: 175–7) have been seen by some as anticipating a seaborne invasion that brought down the palace (Baumbach 1983). Although this interpretation has been rejected by experts on the tablets (Hooker 1982 and Palaima 1995),¹⁵ the text does indicate a situation in which seaborne attacks of some sort were expected. Such an uneasy anticipation of attack, even if the actual attacks were minor, must have hindered trade by sea, and thus contributed to the problems that finally brought down the palatial system. Moreover, lawless conditions at sea would also have hindered any assistance reaching Greece from abroad, if any of its neighbors had even been inclined to help.

The destruction of Ugarit: poor management, external attackers

Probably the most consequential destruction of a coastal site in terms of long-distance trade, was that of Ugarit, now dated to ca. 1160 BC (Lipinski 2006: 36). The fall of Ugarit can be attributed at least in part to government mismanagement. The city had reached its greatest extent and prosperity in the fourteenth–twelfth centuries BC, largely as a result of its key position linking inland and maritime trade routes. A city of palaces, grand houses, temples, and libraries, it was a center of business and learning. A new form of writing, alphabetic cuneiform script known as Ugaritic, was invented there and used, with Akkadian, the standard language of international affairs, to record commercial dealings, internal political affairs, relations with neighboring powers, and religious texts. At the end of the Late Bronze Age, the population in the city center is estimated to have been 6,000–8,000; some 25,000 are estimated to have lived in the countryside in agricultural villages and in the surrounding hills, which provided pasture for animals and wood for building (Calvet 2007: 208).

Many of the affairs of the kingdom were in the hands of corporations made up of merchants and, while there was a king, governance seems to have been to a large extent corporate (see Chapter 7). Ugarit's last king, Ammurapi, however, who was young and inexperienced, increasingly centralized and concentrated power in his own hands until he became the sole decision maker. He emphasized his royal power by iconography, as in a gold cup decorated with the royal hunt (Yon 2006: Cat. of Artifacts No.7), and the stele of "Baal with Thunderbolt," on which a small figure appears in priestly dress, probably representing the king as thunder god (Cat. of Artifacts No. 18).¹⁶ He withdrew more and more from contact with the common people, associating mostly with the *maryannu*, the wealthy elite who were supported by the palace in return for military service. As a result of the king's favoritism, the *maryannu* were able to accumulate large amounts of property and were allowed to replace the military service they owed in return for their property by payments in silver. Meanwhile, large numbers of workers and villagers, living meager lives in the countryside, crowded into the city in

the hope of obtaining assistance, subdividing houses in the effort to find living space. As a result, the kingdom became increasingly dysfunctional, adding to its natural weakness as a commercially oriented state that relied for security on the delicate balance of relations with its larger neighbors and allies.¹⁷

The exalted status held by some of the *maryannu* can be seen in the largest private house in the city, identified in the 1992–3 seasons of excavations. It is known as the house of Urtenu because it contained the cuneiform documents of a high-ranking official named Urtenu (Yon 1995; 2006: 87–8). His library, which contained more than five hundred texts, second in number only to those found in the palace, reflected the varied activities of this wealthy household. Urtenu can be identified as one of the *maryannu* by numerous references to horses and chariots, marks of this high status, as well as by a Syrian cylinder seal portraying a chariot hunt, and finds of horse and chariot gear (alabaster pulleys or knobs). His high rank is also evidenced by the many letters he sent to the queen, as well as to the king of Cyprus, whom he addressed by name (Kushmashusha) and as son (possibly in this case an actual family relationship). Other letters attest to the business dealings of Ugarit with Emar and Tyre, in which he sometimes served as representative of the queen and whose kings he addressed as “brother.” He dealt with shipments of grain and oil and disputes about this trade, including with three non-royal businessmen with particular ties to Tyre and Sidon who specialized in the maritime trade of wheat between the Hittites and Egypt. Dealings with foreign powers are also attested by imported treasures: large serpentine and alabaster vases, Syrian ceramic craters decorated with geometric motifs, and Minoan and Mycenaean pottery, including “Pastoral” or “Rude Style” vases that date the collection precisely to the last years of the thirteenth century.

A letter found at Ugarit presaged the disaster that was to come: dating to ca. 1200–1185, it was sent by the Hittite king and was addressed not to the king of Ugarit but to the prefect. Notably, it sought information about “the Shikila who live on boats,” and expressed concern about the youth and lack of knowledge of the king.¹⁸ These Shikila were probably the Shekelesh/Sheklesh/Shikala, who were part of the combined force of “Sea People” who attacked Egypt in 1208 BC, and again in 1176 BC. Since Ugarit was suffering from royal mismanagement, and was soon to be destroyed by an attack, probably attributable to the “Sea Peoples,” the Hittite king’s concern was not without basis.

The destruction of the city was complete, but there is no evidence of a massive slaughter. Rather, it seems that the people left in an abrupt and disorderly fashion during the attack (Liverani 1979: 134–6; Yon 1992: 114). There is, however, no basis to the idea that a hasty and dramatic departure had left the “last tablets” warning of attack still unbaked in the ovens, for there is no evidence for ovens, or for the baking of tablets (Millard 1995).

Migrations and Resettlements

In the face of increasing unrest, many people looked for avenues of escape. The resulting settlement changes shaped the coming Iron Age. They were especially marked in Greece, where many died or fled in the face of repeated attacks and destructions, some

joining the rabble that collectively became known as the Sea Peoples, to find new homes, some in Cyprus, some on the southern Levantine coast.

The Sea Peoples

Many people must also have seen the first sign of trouble in the form of raiders approaching from the sea, as did those in Ugarit. As early as the reign of Akhenaten there were sporadic attacks on various coastal sites. Some of the earliest of these were carried out by Ahhiyawans/Mycenaeans who had settled on the western Anatolian coast and made at least one attack on Cyprus. Such attacks occurred with growing frequency and destructiveness. Assaults on Egypt were reported in the written records of that country: inscriptions during the reign of the pharaoh Merneptah name the attackers on Libya and Egypt as the Lukka, Sherden/Sherdena, Ekwesh, Teresh, Shekelesh, Labu, and Meshwesh.¹⁹ Other groups attacked Libya in Year 5 of Ramesses III's reign and were defeated (Breasted 1927: vol. 4 nos 35–8). But the most famous assault on Egyptian territory was the one he attributed to the Peoples of the Islands, or the Sea Peoples, which occurred in Year 8 of his reign (ca. 1190 BC) and was memorialized in his mortuary temple at Medinet Habu (1927: vol. 4, nos 59–92; O'Connor 2000; Redford 2000: 8–13). In this inscription, aside from the Shekelesh, a different group of attackers are identified from those who attacked in the reign of Merneptah: the Weshesh, Danyen, Tjakker, and Peleset. As Cifola (1988) has pointed out, Ramesses' inscription conflates a number of smaller attacks by various peoples at various times into one grand tale, and lends them an unlikely degree of organization and common purpose. Even the portrayals of the fighters, which seem to provide information about their customary dress and equipment, probably resulted less from an intention to represent them accurately than from a propagandistic emphasis on their fearsome and bizarre appearance, which further bolstered the greatness of the pharaoh's accomplishment in defeating them (Oren 2000).²⁰

During this period raiders also attacked Crete, sending many of the local peoples to refuge sites high in the mountains from which they could keep an eye out for an approaching enemy (Nowicki 2000, 2001). Small settlements and shrines of the twelfth to tenth centuries have been found at such refuge sites, such as Karphi (Nowicki 1987b; Cadogan 1992) and Kavousi (Preston Day and Snyder 2004). The harbor site of Kommos on the southern coast, which had been a major international port in the Bronze Age, seems to have undergone a hiatus after ca. 1250, with the town and the civic buildings deserted (Shaw 2004: 48). Habitation continued, however, at the lowland site of Knossos (Warren 1982–3; Coldstream 1991), which was well inland.

Who were the "Sea Peoples"?

As for the "origin" of the migrating "Sea Peoples" who attacked Egypt in Year 8 of Ramesses III, Barako and Yasur-Landau, in a debate about the specific route by which they travelled, have recently resurrected the hypothesis that their original home was Greece and the Aegean coasts (Barako 2003a, 2003b),²¹ but they have not agreed on the route they took. Yasur-Landau (2003, 2010) argues for land routes. Barako (2003a; 2003b), on the other hand, proposes that they came mostly by ship, arguing that overland travel would have been physically challenging and politically forbidding, while a

sea route offered no such obstacles to a population with maritime experience. Moreover, travel by sea was faster. He suggests that they moved in stages, making use of coastal bridgeheads. As for ships, he estimates that a fleet of perhaps 100 penteconters, plus a few cargo ships, would have sufficed (Barako 2003a; 2003b). The ships required were fairly simple and rapidly constructed, and most people living near the sea had ship-building experience. Homer describes building a boat (Homer, *Odyssey* 5.244–61), and even today in any coastal village you will see people building boats. The groups, according to this scenario, came together at a point in Canaan, with the women and children moving on by land in ox carts, while the men, prepared to fight, proceeded by sea.

On the other hand, Yasur-Landau (2003; 2010: 190–2) holds that the Sea Peoples traveled mostly overland. He argues that they were refugees, not from the Palatial stage of Mycenaean culture, but from the Post-Palatial period, when, despite the palatial destructions, a good deal of social structure remained (as at Tiryns) which allowed them to achieve a high level of organization in the migration. Nevertheless, he suggests that they would have found it very difficult to meet the costs of providing a large fleet of ships and would have lacked the organizational ability, as well as the navigational skills, to manage such an enormous naval undertaking – despite the fact that the Egyptian records describe them as “the people who live on boats.” In contrast to the difficulties of a sea-based attack, he argues, moving overland would have been made possible by the widespread destructions at the turn of the century, and especially by the collapse of the Hittite empire, which would have removed many political obstacles to overland passage. Moreover, the Medinet Habu inscription does picture some refugees arriving in ox carts (although it emphasizes their ships) (Yasur-Landau 2003). Yasur-Landau, however, fails to take into consideration the very difficult natural terrain of Anatolia. The south coast is dominated by mountains, with sharp cliffs dropping precipitously to the sea. Only very recently has a highway been constructed that allows easy passage along the coast. Inland, the few passes that give access to the sea (Cilician Gates into Cilicia, and the Amanian Gates into the Amuq) would have been difficult to negotiate without modern roads, especially with ox carts! After all, the central plain, surrounded on all sides by formidable mountains, had earlier delayed the westward spread of the Neolithic revolution for generations (see Chapter 3).

The question of the route and mode of travel of the Sea Peoples probably does not have a single, simple answer. The movement was not a well-organized, monolithic expedition (Cifola 1998; Birney 2008) but was made up of already disorganized and desperate people. Probably starting from various locations, not only in mainland Greece, but along the Anatolian coast, they must have proceeded by whatever means they could muster, either by sea or by land.²² A few even seem to have originated in non-Aegean areas: the makers of Handmade Burnished Ware, who settled mostly in Cyprus and in Tell Kazel on the Levantine coast. Any who came from mainland Greece must first have taken to their boats and moved across the Aegean, with many stops along the way, proceeding from island to island, perhaps even testing areas for their potential as permanent homes as they moved. It seems unlikely that, having reached the Anatolian coast, they would have proceeded inland: they already had boats, and the route eastward along the coast was well known and traveled. It seems from the archaeological evidence that many reached Cyprus and that some settled there, while others appear to have stopped long enough to learn the Cypro-Minoan script, which they took with

them as they traveled on (Cross and Stager 2006). Those who moved on were brought to a stop by Egyptian resistance if not by outright defeat, as the pharaoh portrayed it. They eventually settled on the southern Levantine coast, where they established several well-planned and urbanized settlements.

Most scholars, however, now attribute not a Greek but a basically Anatolian, or western Anatolian origin to the Sea Peoples, as Bryce argues for the groups that attacked Egypt in Merneptah's reign (Bryce 2005: 334–40; Singer 1988). This is clearest in the case of the Lukka, who are securely located on the south coast of Anatolia, roughly in what is today Lycia. It is probably also the case for the Denyen (Danuna), who seem to be associated with Cilicia, based on the name of the city of Adana, which is called Adaniya by Telepinus, an early Hittite king whose reign is now dated to 1525–1500 BC.²³ Later evidence has been found in the Karatepe Inscription, a bilingual Luwian-Phoenician inscription found at Karatepe in Cilicia in 1946–7, and dated to ca. 700 BC. The person speaking in the inscription, 'z-t-w-d (Phoenician)/Azatiwataš (Luwian), professes to be king of the d-n-y-m/Danuna and describes his dynasty as “the house of M-p-š/Mukšuš/Mopsus” (Younger 1998). Bryce suggests that the Teresh were probably the Trysenoi, whose original home was in Lydia according to Herodotus. The Ekwesh were probably Ahhiyawan/Mycenaeans, remnants of the Mycenaean settlements left along the western Anatolian coast after the Mycenaeans lost their influence in the region. The Peleset may also have originated from Western Anatolia (Singer 1988), and the Tjekker have speculatively been associated with Teucer, ancestor of the Troad people known as the Teuceri.

Greece

Whether or not any significant number of people from mainland Greece joined the Sea People, mainland sites suffered from the destructions of the period. At some sites, such as Pylos, the destruction was total and lasting. At others, however, desertion was followed by short-lived reoccupation (by whom is not always clear), only to be followed by desertion again, in a cycle sometimes repeated more than once. At still other sites, people remained in place, and temporarily achieved some degree of recovery, or had a second chance at new sites far distant from the mainland of Greece.

Tiryns belonged to the last class of responses. On the citadel, the Great Megaron was replaced by another megaron, Building T, and the Great Court was cleared and the altar transformed from a round to a platform-like structure (Maran 2000: 13–16; 2001: 113–16). The Lower City, after destruction by a flash flood, was extensively rebuilt in the early LH IIIc period, and a flood-control project was carried out by the construction of a 300-meter long lasting dam consisting of a huge earthen embankment lined with Cyclopean blocks and a 1.5-kilometer long canal (Maran 2001, 2002–3, 2006). The excavator, Klaus Kilian, called the revival of the Lower City “Mycenaean city life,” to contrast it with earlier Mycenaean palatial life (1988: 135; 1978: 467–9. 135). It offers considerable evidence to support the hypothesis that the Mycenaean survivors possessed organizing and urbanizing skills that belie the model of mainland Mycenaean states as elites ruling over subservient masses of simple peasants. But the recovery did not last, and life in Mycenaean Tiryns became only a faint memory preserved in palatial ruins and Homeric tales.