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Pitkänen, Pekka M A ORCID logoORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0021-7579> (2015) Ancient Israel and Philistia: Settler Colonialism and Ethnocultural Interaction. Ugarit Forschungen, 45. pp. 233-263.

Official URL: <https://www.ugarit-verlag.com/>

EPrint URI: <https://eprints.glos.ac.uk/id/eprint/2887>

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Published in Ugarit Forschungen, and available online at:

<https://www.ugarit-verlag.com/>

We recommend you cite the published (post-print) version.

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Ancient Israel and Philistia: Settler Colonialism and Ethnocultural Interaction

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This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Ugarit Verlag in *Ugarit Forschungen* 45 (2014), 233-263 in February 2015.

Abstract

This essay, concentrating on the Iron Age I period, looks at the possibility of seeing the early Israelite and Philistine societies as two settler colonial societies formed through colonising migration. An important part of the processes of settler colonialism involves intermixing and mutual influence between colonisers and indigenes, and an analysis of these aspects will be included. Some reflection will be made on the interplay of textual and archaeological evidence in trying to construct a settler colonial model. The essay will also include reflection on broad patterns of group identity formation based on consideration of ethnicity.

Introductory remarks

The history of both the Israelite and Philistine societies is a much studied and disputed area of study. Practically every aspect of the history of ancient Israel has been subjected to rigorous study and debate, including as it relates to the origin of the Israelites.¹ As for the Philistines, main bones of contention include the questions of their origins and their mode of settlement in the southern Levantine coast.² In this essay, I will present a number of related considerations from a perspective of settler colonialism. It has to be stressed that the results suggested for this article can largely only suggest reasoned probabilities rather than definitive conclusions, but this should be in line with most if not all historical research.³ Also, the presentation will rely on the use of analogy in historical interpretation, but this is usual particularly for the study of colonialism.⁴

Migration and colonialism

Most academics agree that the rise of the Philistines in the southern Levant in Iron Age I can be seen as linked with a migration from the Aegean.⁵ This essay agrees with such an interpretation in broad terms, especially as proposed in detail in a recent book by Assaf Yasur-Landau.⁶ However, in contrast to the approach of Yasur-Landau

¹ On the differing approaches, for maximalist ones, see e.g. Kitchen 2003; Provan, Long and Longman 2003. For mainstream approaches, see e.g. Miller and Hayes 2006; Fritz 2011/1996. For minimalist approaches, see e.g. Liverani 2005/2003; Finkelstein and Silberman 2002. On the archaeological side, one may e.g. look at the recent Galil, Gilboa, Maeir and Kahn 2012 and Levy 2010 for some of the issues involved recently, including the debate about the differing chronologies that pertain to the Iron Age (the presentation here broadly assumes traditional chronologies).

² See e.g. Dothan and Dothan 1992 and Yasur-Landau 2012.

³ Cf. Burmeister 2000: 553.

⁴ It should be noted that all comparison is ultimately based on analogy (Owen 2005:9; Dietler 2010:42). In many ways, we are dealing with a comparative study where similarities and differences should be taken into account (cf. Dietler 2010:43).

⁵ See esp. Yasur-Landau 2010. For some further examples of ancient migrations, see e.g. Kitchen 2003: 254. For migrations in the context of world history as a whole, see e.g. Manning 2013.

⁶ Yasur-Landau 2010.

who sees the mode of settlement at the destination as consisting of peaceful immigration, this essay suggests that the mode should rather be seen as colonising, and, more specifically as settler colonial.

Migration theorists identify differing types of migration. One of these is home-community migration where individuals move from one place to another within the home community.⁷ This type of migration is essentially not cross-cultural and therefore does not pertain to the Aegeans when they settled in the southern Levant. Another type is whole-community migration. This consists of the displacement of all the members of a community.⁸ While humans do not have a pattern of community migration that is inherent or universal, some communities called as nomadic do migrate habitually.⁹ Even if not strictly speaking nomadic, the ancient Israelite texts do indicate a type of community migration from Egypt to the land of Canaan, even when one may not take this description at face value. As for the Philistines, it does not seem easy to say that their migration involved the whole community. A third type of migration is cross-community migration.¹⁰ This happens when selected individuals and groups leave one community and move to join another community. As they go, they adjust to the receiving community but also do bring their culture and customs with them.¹¹ A fourth category is colonising migration. This is where individuals from one community depart and establish a new community that, rather than adjusting to the new community, replicates the community of origin.¹² We can see that Yasur-Landau's peaceful immigration model is essentially in line with the third option above. I will now explore the fourth option and reasons for why the Philistine migration should rather be seen under it, together with resulting implications. A putative Israelite migration could also be seen as colonising, in addition to being portrayed as a whole community migration in the biblical documents.

Before looking at colonising migrations with the concept of settler colonialism, I will make a few remarks about colonialism. Related definitions already involve a number of conundrums. With the modern world primarily in focus, according to Osterhammel,

A colony is a new political organization created by invasion (conquest and/or settlement colonization) but built on pre-colonial conditions. Its alien rulers are in sustained dependence on a geographically remote "mother country" or imperial centre, which claims exclusive rights of possession of the colony.¹³

Colonialism is a relationship of domination between an indigenous (or forcibly imported) majority and minority of foreign invaders. The fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonized people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often

⁷ Manning 2013: 5-7; Harzig and Hoerder 2009: 10. Harzig and Hoerder categorise under six differing labels which ultimately can be encompassed within the four categories given below.

⁸ Manning 2013:5-7.

⁹ Manning 2013: 5.

¹⁰ Manning 2013:6-7.

¹¹ Manning 2013:6.

¹² Manning 2013:5-7; cf. Harzig and Hoerder 2009: 8-11.

¹³ Osterhammel 2005:10.

defined in a distant metropolis. Rejecting cultural compromises with the colonized population, the colonizers are convinced of their own superiority and their ordained mandate to rule.¹⁴

In contrast, especially with the ancient context in mind, Dietler defines the terms as follows:

I use the term *colonization* to indicate the expansionary act of imposing political sovereignty over foreign territory and people.¹⁵

By *colonialism*, I mean the projects and practices of control marshalled in interactions between societies linked in asymmetrical relations of power and the processes of social and cultural transformation resulting from those practices.¹⁶

Dietler adds,

Hence, colonization is, ultimately, solidified or maintained through colonialism, but colonialism can also operate without the formal subjugation of foreign territories that colonization implies. Or it may precede an eventual colonization. The nature and effectiveness of such practices defines as colonialism, and their potential permutations, may be extremely variable from one colonial context to another, ranging from such things as trade, to missionary activities, to warfare and raiding, to political administration, to education. Similarly, the processes of transformation are highly variable, and they always entail a host of unintended consequences for both indigenous peoples and alien colonists. Both parties eventually become something other than they were because of these processes of entanglement and their unintended consequences.¹⁷

It is the “interactions between societies linked in asymmetrical relations of power and the processes of social and cultural transformation resulting from those practices” that would fit with the context of colonising migration. The idea of “of imposing political sovereignty over foreign territory and people” does also fit. The idea of metropolis can be either discarded or its political role changed into a mere cultural metropolis where the influence from the metropolis is largely unidirectional in cases where the migrants do not keep links with their place of origin or do not return there. Interestingly, if there is no metropolis that continues to inject new people into colonies, any external cultural influences of the migrants are likely to come from their interactions with the local peoples, or from internal cultural change through innovations etc. In the longer term, this would suggest more assimilation with the wider environment that the colonisers are part of, and this seems to have happened with the Philistines especially from the end of Iron Age I on.

Settler colonialism

¹⁴ Osterhammel 2005:16-17.

¹⁵ Dietler 2010:18.

¹⁶ Dietler 2010:18.

¹⁷ Dietler 2010:18.

That migrants stay in their destination would suggest an affinity with settler colonialism in the case of colonising migration. Here we may draw in insights from recently developed studies of settler colonialism.¹⁸ Settler colonialism should be seen as separate from “ordinary” colonialism, even though the two often overlap and help define each other.¹⁹ As Wolfe describes it, settler colonialism is a specific complex social formation.²⁰ Settlers consist of people who remove into a new land and establish a new society of their own liking there.²¹ Settlers come to stay, whereas colonial sojourners, such as administrators, military personnel, entrepreneurs and adventurers return.²² There is also a crucial distinction between settlers and migrants.²³ Settlers are *founders* of political orders and carry their sovereignty with them, while migrants are *suppliants* who face a political order that is already constituted.²⁴ In addition, as Veracini describes it, “while settlers see themselves as founders of political orders, they also interpret their collective efforts in terms of an inherent sovereign claim that travels with them and is ultimately, if not immediately, autonomous from the colonising metropole”.²⁵

Two important issues must immediately be considered here. One is that, if the Philistine and Israelite migrations are to be analysed as potentially being settler colonial, there is no colonising metropole involved and therefore that part of settler colonial analysis is likely to not be involved. The second issue is that, until the present time, the study of settler colonialism has been confined to the modern world and, in general, there has been extensive discussion about whether and to what extent colonial analysis can be applied to the ancient world. Linked with this is the fact that for the ancient world, in many cases there is little textual evidence and many considerations will thus have to proceed based on an archaeological analysis.

In response to the first point, as already indicated, the main function of a metropole in many ways is to act as a source of power in favour of the colonists, especially in terms of people and physical and political resources. At the same time, the non-existence of a metropole in fact would emphasise the autonomy and independence of the settler collective, in case migration is colonial rather than of cross-community type where the migrants do not wrest political control, and we know from modern history that settler colonialism rather accelerated in northern America after the independence of the USA and Spanish Latin American countries.²⁶ Therefore the non-existence of a political metropole should not be a hindrance.

¹⁸ See Veracini 2010: 1-15 for the history of scholarship, largely in the last 10-15 years.

¹⁹ Veracini 2010: 1-15.

²⁰ See Wolfe 2006: 390, 401.

²¹ Veracini 2010: 4.

²² Veracini 2010: 6..

²³ Veracini 2010: 6. In terms of terminology, Veracini’s migrants correspond to Manning’s settlers as cross-cultural migrants, and Veracini’s settlers correspond to Manning’s colonisers if these colonisers come to stay (see Manning 2013:8 for further differences of definition). Here I will largely follow Veracini.

²⁴ Veracini 2010: 3, also with reference to the work of M. Mamdani. Note that varying terminology is used in relation to settlers. Manning (2013 : 10-11) refers to *settlers* as persons moving to a different community as part of cross-community migration and uses the word *colonist* for those that move in an act of colonizing a new territory by their home community. Note also that Veracini uses the word *migrant* to migrants in a wider sense who are not settlers.

²⁵ Veracini 2010: 53.

²⁶ See Veracini 2011: 184; Veracini 2012: 326-327.

In terms of applicability of settler colonialism to the ancient world, such issues as intergroup violence, access to resources (including land), the objectives of colonizers and migrations of peoples would not seem to be dependent on a particular social, technological or political formation.²⁷ In this, many of the examples in the ancient world that have been analysed recently that largely pertain to at least relatively peaceful models of colonialism are restricted to an analysis of colonies with a metropole.²⁸ None of them seem to extend to migratory situations. In terms of an archaeological based analysis, as will be seen below, a main problem is to try to detect any ideology related issues from archaeological evidence. It is a difficult task, but is worth attempting by analogy, even if the results of such analysis may have to involve hypothetical aspects.²⁹

We can then define settler colonial migration as migration where the migrating group manages to wrest political control from the indigenous population.³⁰ The incoming group establishes its domination on the indigenous population. We can suspect that this may have been the case with both the ancient Philistines and Israelites. If so, we can think that there is a settler colonial situation involved in the respective territories and societies, and can by analogy attempt to extend settler colonial theory to the situations, of course exercising proper caution about such application, and taking into account as much of particularities of each situation as possible.

Settler colonial analysis for colonising migration in ancient Philistia and Israel

The main issues in settler colonial theory are population economy, sovereignty, consciousness and narrative. I will next broadly look at these features for both the ancient Philistines and Israelites. It is typical for settler colonial societies to have a basic tripartite population.³¹ Typically, settler societies consist of the settlers and of indigenous and exogenous others. The settlers consist of the invaders who have established a new society in the territory of settlement. The indigenes are the members of the original pre-invasion societies. The exogenous others are made of immigrants and representatives of metropolis to this society.³² While indigenous others are a threat to the existence and legitimacy of the settler collective, there can be a selective inclusion of exogenous others as there is the possibility of collaboration.³³

²⁷ See Pitkänen 2013: 5-8.

²⁸ See e.g. Dietler 2010; Lyons and Papadopoulos 2002; Stein 2005, Aubert 2013; Hurst and Owen 2005.

²⁹ Note that archaeological criteria to be used to detect migration and related theoretical grounds have been acknowledged to not be clear (see Burmeister 2000; Lehmann 2013) and the same could broadly be said for acculturation (cf. Maeir 2013). In general, also, no comprehensive theory of migration exists, see Harzig and Hoerder 2009:72-73, 85.

³⁰ Note that if there can be settlement to virgin soil, no intergroup violence will be involved (see e.g. van Dommelen 2005: 130-133 for Phoenician settlement of Ibiza; cf. postulated initial human settlement in Manning 2013). Note also analogy in Yasur-Landau 2010: 317, 319 about initial European settlements in North America in the 17th century, these were in many ways based on initial peaceful coexistence, but relations fairly soon turned sour, and the incomers (and generally their British overlords) fairly soon developed an idea of a claim to a territory which was only later realised in a larger scale. A broadly similar process in Southern France in the first millennium BCE is suggested by Dietler, even if in this case apparently on a relatively small scale (see Dietler 2010, e.g. 23-24).

³¹ It should be noted that, in reality, these categories can involve more complexities and nuances.

³² Veracini 2010:123n13. This would include settlers coming from the metropolis who arrive after the establishment of a settler society.

³³ Veracini 2010:26.

However, there can also be undesirable exogenous others who may be subject to deportation or segregation,³⁴ and abject others who are permanently excluded from the settler collective and have lost their indigenous or exogenous status.³⁵ A “successful” settler society, then, “is managing the orderly and progressive emptying of the indigenous and exogenous others segments of the population economy and has permanently separated from the abject others”.³⁶ In many ways, the whole process involves replacing an old society or societies with a new one(s), and a settler colonial society can also be descriptively called a supplanting society.³⁷

In settler colonial theory, the concept of *transfer* describes the process where the indigenous peoples are made to “vanish”, whether by killing, expulsion or assimilation.³⁸ At the same time, indigenous peoples can also be exploited for the purposes of labour, either as such or as part of the process of getting rid of them. Interestingly, such exploitation can also be done without an express purpose of transferring such populations, however, the result can nevertheless be the same as if purposefully exterminating them, as happened with the indigenous peoples in the Spanish colonisation of the Caribbean in the late 15th to the early 16th century.³⁹ And yet, in terms of seeing explicit settler colonial features in the Spanish settlement,⁴⁰ in any case, some Spanish settlement instead of the natives would have taken place in the islands anyway, as was the case with the wider Latin American continent even when the colonisers were supposed to not destroy the natives. On the other hand, sometimes the colonisers cannot at least immediately implement their objectives of getting rid of indigenous peoples and at least some of them remain, as indicated e.g. in

³⁴ Veracini 2010:27. The African slaves in the Americas (segregation), and the French Acadians in colonies taken over by the British.(deportation) would belong to this category.

³⁵ Veracini 2010:27-28.

³⁶ Veracini 2010:28.

³⁷ See Day 2008.

³⁸ See Veracini 2010:16-17 and *ibid.*, 33-52, listing 26 different modes of transfer. Transfer relates to the concept of “logic of elimination” or “structural genocide” (rather than simply genocide) as expressed in Wolfe 2006: 401, 403.

³⁹ See Bakewell 2010: 109-125; cf. Stannard 1992.

⁴⁰ Note that it has been traditionally difficult to apply the settler colonial paradigm to Latin America due to the issue of hybridity due to the intermixing of populations into a new class of people, see Veracini 2010:30. However, if one extends the concept of transfer as including the idea that indigenous peoples could be given a role in the new settler society that relates to more than one possible class of people, then the concept of transfer and also settler colonial analysis can be applied to Latin America also. The resettlement of indigenes in *encomiendas* (together with such issues as forced Christianization) results in a status that is similar to the imported African slaves, and indeed the African slaves were brought in to the Caribbean to compensate for the rapidly declining population of the indigenes. When one sees indigenes in such a new role in the *encomiendas* that has been enforced by the Spanish, one can think that a transfer into a settler society has been achieved. The resulting intermixing between peoples can then simply be seen as ultimately an internal development to the settler society. Any natives outside the *encomiendas* and following their traditional lifestyles could be seen as still indigenous others for the purposes of settler colonial analysis. In this, even if the Spanish colonialism would have taken a franchise approach, as is attested by traffic and return traffic of people, silver and products between Spain and the colonies (cf. Bakewell 2010), there were also plenty of settlers and the creation of the *encomienda* system from early on. An analogous analysis can then be made in the case of ancient Philistia, without the assumption of metropolis and return traffic, in that if the colonizing Philistined settlement initially merely wrested control, even without killing the indigenes, this would have meant a change to the status of at least some of the indigenes they were now ruling over, and thus a settler colonial transfer in line with general settler colonial analysis, concomitantly implying that other aspects of settler colonial analysis might hold also. This would also apply to the Gibeonites in Joshua based on the biblical texts (see also below).

Judges 1 if this is based on a historical memory. That being the case, the analysis of the colonial mode is particularly complicated in archaeological contexts as it is not possible to gauge the intentions of the colonisers but only the effects of any putative colonisation based on a purely archaeological record.

Thus, based on analogies from elsewhere, the indigenes may be either put to labour as in franchise colonialism or made to disappear as in settler colonialism,⁴¹ or there can be a mixture of the two, at least in effect, such as in South America under Spanish colonialism.⁴² In some cases there can also largely be peaceful coexistence, such as with the colony of Massalia in the first few centuries of its existence⁴³ and the Assyrian trading colonies at Kanesh.⁴⁴ It would appear that the relative power of the two cultural entities and the objectives of the colonisers are paramount in determining the results, together with any unexpected developments. In the case of the Philistines, it is not possible to gauge the ideological intent of the migration due to a lack of textual evidence, but the depopulation of the countryside could be at least an unexpected result of the colonising migration. Also, the resulting societies do not need to be expected to be static, but can, and are likely to evolve over time, also in interaction with any (remaining) surrounding societies.⁴⁵

As already indicated, colonial situations can range from a case where the colonists are only a small segment of the population to one where they are very dominant. In the former case, while the colonists do affect the indigenous population, if they leave, once they have done so, the remaining indigenous population is likely to continue its life with only a relatively limited, even if not necessarily insignificant legacy. In the latter case, the indigenous populations are completely, or at least largely destroyed in a societal sense. Interestingly, there are also options between these two extremes, and an excellent example in between is Latin America.⁴⁶ In the case of Latin America, both the incoming and indigenous peoples intermixed and produced new Latin American entities and identities. Thus, we can suggest that each colonial situation will produce its own category of intermixing, and these link with the concepts of hybridity, *metisage* etc. In practice, even in close to “pure” settler colonial situations, the settlers always do adopt practices from the natives, colonising is never unidirectional. Keeping the Latin American example in mind as one example, complex ethnogenesis can also result,⁴⁷ in addition to other potential unexpected results of colonialism.⁴⁸ Of course, cultural heterogeneity in parts of the population may be involved at most if not all cases of intermixing, even if the intermixing may eventually result in a new, more homogenous cultural entity as a whole.⁴⁹

⁴¹ Note how archaeology might support settler colonialism in West-central Sardinia based on data presented in van Dommelen 2005: 127-130; also the Uruk expansion and other examples in Pitkänen 2013.

⁴² But cf. my comments in the previous footnote.

⁴³ See Dietler 2010.

⁴⁴ See e.g. Aubet 2013: 157-199.

⁴⁵ See e.g. Stone 1995 for the Philistines.

⁴⁶ Bakewell 2010: 500.

⁴⁷ See Hill 1996; Bakewell 2010.

⁴⁸ See Dietler 2010: 18 and *passim*; cf. Harzig and Hoerder 2009: 11.

⁴⁹ E.g. in Latin America here still exist a number of indigenous communities even if overall there is a new Latin American style “main” society or societies.

In the context of colonising migrations, then, when there is at least a relative loss of a connection to a metropole, one might imagine that *metisage* will in most cases result as there is a meeting of two (or more) cultural traditions. And, again, it would appear that the end result does have much to do with the relative power of the incoming and existing populations. In the case of the Kassites who ruled in Mesopotamia in the second millennium BCE, the incoming peoples seem to have been relatively few in number, being able to establish rulership but not able to induce major cultural changes in the society they ruled.⁵⁰ Of course, the extent of cultural difference between the colonisers and the colonised is also an issue. Bigger differences would seem to cause more complicated processes of cultural interaction, and the differing components of population can be easier to detect in the archaeological record as cultural differences may in thus cases be reflected in material culture that is attested the archaeological record. In contrast, if there was a (colonising) migration associated with early Israel, as the Israelite documents indicate, it is possible that any incoming peoples were culturally less distinct from the indigenes, as might be the case for example with Semites moving back from Egypt.

Coming to the Philistines, clearly their cultural background was distinctive in comparison to the Semitic populations in the Eastern Mediterranean. This distinctiveness that is linked with material culture has also enabled archaeologists to detect their intrusive presence in the Early Iron Age in the Southern Levant. And, destruction levels and subsequent new settlement patterns in such places as Ekron and Ashdod suggest that we are dealing with more than a peaceful migration.⁵¹ The Medinet Habu inscriptions describing fighting between the Egyptians and the incoming peoples also indicate that the Egyptians did not simply see the Philistines as merely cross-cultural migrants.⁵² Interestingly, as already indicated above, one could also see the depopulation of the countryside⁵³ as a result of the Philistine migration. This could either be something that was expressly pursued by the Philistines or a by-product of their arrival and consequent disruptions in the area.⁵⁴ Such an idea also fits with the tradition expressed in the bible (Dt 2:23). Also, the term *seren* is likely to be foreign to the area.⁵⁵ An interesting point to make here is that settler colonialism does not necessitate destructions everywhere. With settler colonialism, an initial invasion is followed by a prolonged process of eliminating the indigenous population.⁵⁶ It is just as feasible to consider that the incoming populations achieve a foothold in selected places and expand their influence from there. In the case of the Philistines, this influence would seem to be primarily centred in five urban centres, and, again, this would seem to be at least broadly in line with the biblical evidence about them. At the same time, especially as there was no political metropolis and if a good number of indigenes were left in place, eventually there might be intermixing, also through marriage between the incoming population and the indigenes, contributing towards a

⁵⁰ Cf. Burmeister 2000: 552 on a small group, even if establishing itself as elite, as not being enough to display a lasting influence on material culture. If the colonisers become acculturated, perhaps we can consider this broadly comparable to what has happened with decolonisations of modern countries that were under “franchise colonialism”.

⁵¹ See e.g. Barako 2013: 41. Note also the comments on monumental building in Philistine style at Ekron in Stone 1995: 19

⁵² See e.g. Yasur-Landau 2010: 174-184.

⁵³ See e.g. Yasur-Landau 2010: 284-285.

⁵⁴ Cf. the Spanish and the depopulation of the Caribbean as noted above.

⁵⁵ See Yasur-Landau 2010: 312-313 on the *seren*.

⁵⁶ See Wolfe 1999:2, 163; 2006:402; cf. Wolfe 2008.

new Philistine identity. If pots can at least to some extent be associated with peoples, perhaps the evolution with the Philistine monochrome and bichrome styles can be associated with the development of the Philistine society into something new that transcended the initial situation at the time of the main migration. The elimination of the native is likely to have succeeded fairly well, on the other hand, here it is not necessary to expect that transfers by killing or expulsion would need to dominate, but that there could have been a lot of assimilation, at the same time, the invaders and their descendants could also have adapted many features from the natives, including apparently change to a Semitic language later on in the Iron Age.

As regards the Israelites, the observation that colonization can produce “unintended consequences”⁵⁷ could be a key for understanding why and how a new entity arose in the highlands. The material culture can be seen as both a continuation of the preceding Late Bronze Age culture and a break from it. If the Israelites can be seen as having come from the outside, and if they had close connections with semitic peoples, which would be likely to be the case for any of them that might have been “return migrants” from Egypt,⁵⁸ they could have both adapted to the Late Bronze Age material culture and also created new forms of culture in the highlands. That very little is traceable to Egypt could be due to the Semitic background, on the other hand, any innovations could have been part of unintended consequences of colonization.⁵⁹ If the biblical materials are in any way indicative, they do suggest that the early Israelites did adapt to the local material culture (Dt 6:10-11), which also fits with the idea of colonial *metisage* and subsequent transformation. The use of e.g. four room houses can then perhaps be considered as a slightly unintended consequence, linked with the idea that the form of building would also have fit with the conditions of the highlands.

The multifaceted nature of the Philistine settlement⁶⁰ also broadly fits with the settler colonial concept of isopolities.⁶¹ In modern terms this is about polities that are related and have agreed to a transfer (not in a settler colonial sense) of people and their rights between such polities, such as might broadly be the case with the Anglo-Saxon settler polities.⁶² However, if we extend the concept a little and consider isopolities as related polities with a solidarity of some kind, we can see an analogy with the ancient Philistines and Israelites. Related to this is the idea that settlers can *subvert* recognised sovereign orders⁶³ or *establish* entirely new ones.⁶⁴ Or, settlers can accommodate their claim *beneath* an already consolidated or consolidating alien sovereign domain.⁶⁵ For example, a Welsh settler colony was established in Patagonia in 1865, well before

⁵⁷ Dietler 2010:18.

⁵⁸ It seems difficult to verify these matters based on archaeological evidence, even if indirect supporting evidence can be gleaned e.g. from Hoffmeier 1997 and Hoffmeier 2005.

⁵⁹ Note how the building of Spanish American towns was done in a grid pattern (see Bakewell 2010:220). This was different from medieval Spain, but no clear American (or other) model can be found either. Thus we may call this design as a kind of “unintended”, or at least “unexpected” development, if not consequence of colonialism.

⁶⁰ For this, see e.g. Maier et al. 2013; Yasur-Landau 2010.

⁶¹ See Veracini 2011.

⁶² See Veracini 2011:172-173.

⁶³ Veracini 2010:68, giving Texas as an example.

⁶⁴ Veracini 2010:68, giving Mormons and Utah as an example.

⁶⁵ Veracini 2010:68, giving the variety of European settler communities in Latin American as an example.

Argentinian control of the area in the 1870s, and it was only in 1910s that it was fully controlled and integrated into Argentina.⁶⁶ Such sovereign orders can also join, but only if their sovereign claims can be understood as compatible with the colonising project.⁶⁷ In the same vein, the regional variation between the Philistine entities⁶⁸ can be understood as the existence of “cultural enclaves”⁶⁹ or isopolities that are likely to feel part of a common Philistine “new world” but more or less independent of each other, with each potentially having a unique subculture within the broader encompass. One example of such cultural enclaves or isopolities could also be the five lords (*seren*) of the Philistines (e.g. 1 Samuel 5).⁷⁰ As for the Israelites, the textual evidence does not immediately call for the existence of cultural enclaves or isopolities, however, further reflection might identify the twelve different Israelite tribes as having at least a partially isopolitical, even symplolitical⁷¹ character (see Judges-Samuel; e.g. Jdg 5; 20; 1 Sam 11:1-11 etc.). These were then unified by both a myth of common descent (see below on this) and kingship at the time of David and Solomon at least to a certain extent, only to divide into two kingdoms after only a short time. In this, the Judean isopolity may be considered to have been more “independent” than the northern ones.

We may also comment more closely on the tripartite division between the settler colonial polity and indigenous and exogenous others. With the Philistines, indigenous others constitute the natives of southwestern Levant. These were not all destroyed,⁷² but, as already indicated, are likely to have been transferred in other ways into the Philistine polity, and some may have been left in as indigenous others, at least for a time. Further migrants from the Aegean and Anatolian regions might have constituted a supply of exogenous others. These would either live among the already existing Philistine societies or be transferred into them, and some may have been forming new isopolities or contributing towards their formation. However, this does not limit the possible extent of exogenous others. In all this, again, it has to be remembered that cultural influence would not have been unidirectional but the Philistines were as much, if not even more, affected by local culture than the other way around, and there would have been unexpected consequences of colonialism. While it is difficult to make further comments in this respect as little textual evidence exists that relates to the Philistines, and even the biblical texts only give relatively limited information, David can be seen as an example of an exogenous other during his sojourn in Gath based on his (temporary apparent) collaboration with the Philistines (1 Sam 21:10-15; 27). As for the ancient Israelite society, according to the biblical materials, whatever their provenance,⁷³ the seven nations, itself likely to be a formulaic description and

⁶⁶ Veracini 2010:68.

⁶⁷ Veracini 2010:68.

⁶⁸ See e.g. Maeir et al. 2013.

⁶⁹ Manning 2013:198-199, even if rather in the context of cross-cultural migration. Note also that, in general, migrants often draw to centres and flock together culturally (Burmeister 2000: 544, 549).

⁷⁰ Cf. however Niemann 2013:254 on plausible competition between these entities, even though this would ultimately not be a problem for the analysis here.

⁷¹ Veracini 2011:173 defines this as “common federal citizenship”.

⁷² See e.g. Yasur-Landau 2010; Fritz 2011/1996:192 who suggested that the Philistine style pottery vessels constitute a maximum of 30% of totals in excavated sites, of course, the question of pots vs peoples still applies here, but the ratios are at least indicative; cf. also our comments above about destructions and the Philistine countryside.

⁷³ Nothing should prevent us from examining what the texts “in themselves” indicate.

designation by the Israelites,⁷⁴ are the indigenous others that are to be transferred away by destroying them (e.g. Deuteronomy 7)⁷⁵ or by driving them out (e.g. Exodus 23:20-30)⁷⁶. The Israelites also explicitly have a policy of dealing with exogenous others (called *ger* in the Israelite literature; see e.g. Lev. 17-25; Dt 14:1-21). A special law in Deuteronomy 23:1-7 specifies that an Edomite and Egyptian can be uplifted into the Israelite community in the third generation, but an Ammonite or Moabite should for ever be an abject other,⁷⁷ and this relates to surrounding peoples who are known to be in the area already in Iron Age I.⁷⁸ In practice, however, indigenous and exogenous others can be transferred into Israel even according to the biblical documents, whatever their date and provenance. Such cases include e.g. Rahab in Joshua 2, 6, the Gibeonites in Joshua 9,⁷⁹ Caleb the Kenizzite in Joshua 14:6, and Ruth (as an ancestor of David). On the other hand, interestingly, according to the biblical documents, a member of the Israelite society can be transferred away from the settler polity if they do not meet certain of its norms. For example, in Lev 17:14 a person who eats blood presumably becomes an abject other, even though a transfer by killing is also a possibility, in analogy with Joshua 7. While the provenance and date of these biblical texts is disputed, they do perfectly fit with a settler colonial analysis.

From a more explicit processual perspective, the above analysis has already suggested that settler colonialism and accompanying supplanting may include a combination of peaceful settlement, displacement, subjugation, war and even genocide.⁸⁰ Such processes may take varying lengths of time depending on each case, and also for example involve lengthy periods of peaceful settlement with episodic bursts of violent expansion through war that may involve dispossession and genocide. But, in this respect, the resulting modes of settlement and supplanting can also be different in each case. For example, in North America indigenous peoples were almost completely displaced, in South Africa indigenous peoples were left largely intact in a proportional sense (even though there was a lot of conquest and also genocide involved), and in South America there was a mixing of conquerors and the indigenes, and with a new resulting Latin American identity.⁸¹ In the case of early America, the process took some 300 years and the vision of the conquerors was largely realised, in the case of the German eastern colonial project in the 1930s and 40s, events took place in less than 10 years, and the vision of the conquerors remained a programmatic ideal, beaten back by the victorious Russian and Allied war effort.⁸² In terms of ancient Israel and Philistia, the vision of the Israelites, or a part of it, is potentially preserved in the biblical documents, or at least somehow reflected in them. As for the

⁷⁴ Cf. the formulaic “nine bows” in ancient Egypt (see Poo 2005, 43-44). The identification of a number of these peoples has proven difficult.

⁷⁵ Veracini 2010:35 classifies this as a necropolitical transfer.

⁷⁶ Veracini 2010:35 classifies this as an ethnic transfer.

⁷⁷ Cf. Veracini 2010:26-28 for the concepts in settler colonial terms.

⁷⁸ Cf. e.g. Fritz 2011/1996:197-208 for a summary on this.

⁷⁹ In this case the people transferred apparently in many ways at least initially become more like traditional colonial subjects according to the biblical materials. Note also that what happens with both Rahab and the Gibeonites should be considered as “unexpected consequences” of colonialism.

⁸⁰ See e.g. Veracini 2010; Day 2008; Kakel 2011. Note that assimilation may amount to destruction, especially if it is forced, and can thus be seen as genocidal for practical purposes, cf. e.g. Wolfe 2008:105, 115-119)

⁸¹ See e.g. Stannard 1992, Day 2008; cf. Maer et al. 2013:2-3 for the idea of a possible complex ‘ethnogenesis’ with the Philistines (note also the references in *ibid.* to possible ‘transcultural’ processes and complex ‘hybridisation’).

⁸² See Kakel 2011.

Philistines, we cannot know what their vision may have been, even though the Egyptian documents in a broad sense refer to a “plan/conspiracy they had made in their islands”, “laying their hands upon the lands” and saying “our plans will succeed”.⁸³ Considering such variability of relationships between plans and actual realities, and also in the context of isopolities, transfer and the tripartite dynamic in the settled territory as discussed above, we should thus naturally expect that the settlement “mode” may exhibit local variations. That is, except for the special characteristics of the settlers themselves, there may be variation in migratory and colonial penetration depending on the character of the indigenous society and relative power between settlers and local indigenous entities.⁸⁴ This seems to be the case in reality based on archaeological evidence, in both the context of Philistia and in the wider context of the Levant as a whole, in some places the Philistines or the sea peoples seem to have gotten more foothold than in others in terms of political, cultural and temporal hold. It would also appear that differing peoples from the Aegean would have particularly favoured settlement in particular places, again in line with migratory and settler colonial theories.

In this connection, we should consider the likelihood, or at least a possibility, of a vision of a territory by both settler-colonial societies.⁸⁵ We have no idea thus far as to the thinking of the Philistines, even if the biblical documents indicate that they were bent on colonising the ancient Israelites towards the end of Iron Age I. On the other hand, but we have the territorial descriptions in the book of Joshua and in Genesis-Numbers, and, should they be early or somehow derive from an early tradition, much of these could also be considered as programmatic as with for example the Germans in the 1930s and 40s and the early Americans.⁸⁶ Interestingly, and as already noted above, in the former case of these two modern entities, the vision failed, but in the latter it succeeded.⁸⁷ It appears that both the Israelite and Philistine societies were spreading from their initial bases, i.e. Israelites from the highlands and Philistines from the southwestern seacoast,⁸⁸ and then the societies met, with conflict resulting as described in the bible. Interestingly, Faust suggests that there was a Canaanite buffer zone between the two in the Iron Age, which then was later conquered by the Israelites.⁸⁹ The power relations were apparently waxing and waning over time.⁹⁰ In

⁸³ See Fritz 2011/1996:184; ANET, 262.

⁸⁴ Cf. Day 2008, Kakel 2011 in a general sense, and e.g. Maeir 2012:350-351; cf. Stern 2012 as regards variety in the northern Philistine penetration. Cf. also Preston 2009:1-22 for differing processes on the Iroquois frontier in early America.

⁸⁵ Cf. Veracini 2010:54: “Most of the colonists who moved to the New Worlds did so individually, without a conscious determination to establish a new, ideal, society, and with no specific understanding of their inherent sovereignty. However, ideas about entitlements emanating from residing individually and collectively in a special space traveled, too, were available, or eventually became available”. The same might have been the case with a territory, or at least its conceptualization in detail.

⁸⁶ See esp. Kakel 2011.

⁸⁷ Cf. also two programmatic visions of German territory in the 1930s-40s by Darre and Himmler, quoted in Kakel 2011:130-131, versus two visions of the Israelite territory in Pentateuch-Joshua. The idea here is not necessarily to specifically draw a connection between these two as such, but just to illustrate that two different visions of a territory can arise and exist at the same time.

⁸⁸ Cf. Faust 2012:124; Stone 1995:22.

⁸⁹ See Faust 2012, Fig 1 on p. 121, and passim, incl. p. 135. If so, note also that Khirbet Qeiyafa was basically in this buffer zone but nevertheless seemingly with Judah in late IA I (see Garfinkel, Ganor and Hasel 2012), so apparently the Canaanite buffer area was diminishing little by little and perhaps becoming more like enclaves; if the biblical documents are of any use, perhaps David was active around this buffer zone when in Ziklag, even when the exact location of Ziklag is not known? (cf. Dietrich 2012). Note that David’s conquests as described in 2 Sam 8:1-14 could be considered as

IA I the Philistines appear to have largely had an upper hand,⁹¹ but apparently there was no full colonisation (of the settler-colonial type) and subjugation of the Israelites. Then from IA II the Philistines in a number of respects adopted the Semitic material culture even though they also kept their distinctive identity throughout Iron Age II,⁹² which may be in line with the related biblical descriptions according to which the Israelites at least broadly dominated the Philistines during the time.⁹³ Such acculturation would also be understandable in light of no replenishment from the (cultural) metropole for the Philistines, and, considering the likelihood of isopolities and other local cultural and political variations, it would be natural to think that acculturation would not necessarily proceed in the same way in all places (e.g. at Gath).

In terms of narrative, it is typical for settler colonial narratives to be teleological and seeking a destination rather than circular and returning.⁹⁴ Again, here we cannot comment due to a lack of textual evidence from Philistia, but the Israelite narrative in Genesis-Joshua is certainly oriented towards the land. Also, the setting of the tent of meeting at Shiloh (Josh 18:1) signals restoration of creation, tying with settler colonial ideas of Edenic conditions in the new land, especially if it is considered a land of return (here from Egypt).⁹⁵ Interestingly, settler colonial narratives may include contradictions. While in Genesis-Joshua, a vision of a rest that Israel is to achieve with Yahweh dwelling in its midst in the land that Yahweh has promised to their forefathers is seen to come to fruition at the end of the book of Joshua, at the

colonial, even if not necessarily settler-colonial activities, and perhaps (rather than as pure aggrandising which is also a possibility) we could consider 1 Kings 4:21 in this sense, too, i.e. as political/imperial/colonial, but not settler-colonial control in areas peripheral to the “core” Israelite area (again, the “core” area itself could be seen as having expanded outwards from the northern hill country [and apparently also from the hill country east of the Jordan; see Faust 2006] during Iron Age I and into Iron Age IIA as also confirmed by archaeological evidence).

⁹⁰ Cf. Dietrich 2012.

⁹¹ Cf. also 1 Samuel 13:19-22 in comparison with the Nuclear Proliferation treaty today, incl. the situation with USA and Iran). The claims of the biblical texts are however difficult to verify archaeologically, see Maeir 2012:367, but this would not be a surprise if the Philistine embargo lasted only for a short time, against the trend towards ironworking at the time.

⁹² Faust and Lev-Tov 2011 argues for a sudden change in the beginning of IA IIA, however, Maeir sees no such sudden change at the time but a more gradual and multifaceted process of change (see Maeir 2012:380-385; Maeir et al 2013), either way is not essential for the argument here.

⁹³ According to the bible, David subjugated the Philistines (e.g. 1 Samuel 8). Also, the Chronicles in particular suggest overall Israelite upper hand against the Philistines (2 Chr 14:14; 17:11; 26:6; 1 Kings 18:8), even though the Philistines could also have some success against the Israelites (2 Chr 21:16-17; 28:18), see Brug 2010:3. On that line of considerations, that the Philistines would be able to mount raids into Israelite territory would suggest that there was no permanent Israelite domination over them. In this vein, for example, it could be that David’s conquests were relatively short-lived, and also that the Philistine acculturation was more or less unrelated to any political domination by the Israelites. In this respect, for example, that material culture at Gath did not change substantially at the time of David (see Maeir 2012:380-385) would suggest that any Israelite dominance over Gath was at most only political in the time of David. It would appear from the biblical descriptions that, once the two societies were bordering each other, the border could be somewhat flexible/contested (e.g. 1 Sam 7:14; 2 Chr 28:16; cf. e.g. the border between Poland and Germany in the last few centuries, as described e.g. in Day 2008:211-215). In general, this waxing and waning could in a number of respects be seen in colonial (or imperial) terms (note the role of domination in a definition of colonialism quoted in the beginning of this essay).

⁹⁴ See Veracini 2010:96-104. Note that the narrative aspect relates to textual evidence so the following paragraph serves to illustrate difficulties with basing one’s considerations on archaeology alone. For more on the textual side of things, see Pitkänen 2013.

⁹⁵ See Veracini 2010:99.

same time, importantly, together with these expressions of fulfilment of promises, there is talk about the incompleteness of the conquest and encouragement for the Israelites to continue following Yahweh and to not join with non-Israelite peoples that remain in the land (Joshua 13:1-7; Joshua 23). Many commentators have seen these two at least apparently contradictory viewpoints as puzzling and difficult to interpret.⁹⁶ However, from the perspective of settler colonial studies, it is also typical that settler colonial societies generally somehow wish to “disavow” their violent origins. According to Veracini, as one part of such processes, “an anxious reaction to disconcerting and disorienting developments produces a drive to think about a pacified world that can only be achieved via voluntary displacement”.⁹⁷ Also, while “settlers are natural men engaged in building a settled life in an ahistorical locale, recurring representations of settler original idylls insist on a immaculate foundational setting devoid of disturbing indigenous (or exogenous) others”.⁹⁸ And, “ultimately, the fact that these images coexist with ongoing (explicit, latent, or intermittently surfacing) apprehension may actually suggest the activation of a splitting of the ego-like process, where two antithetical psychological attitudes coexist side by side without communicating, one taking reality into consideration, the other disavowing it”.⁹⁹ So, here again, the Israelite documents that portray the conquest and settlement are as such compatible with settler colonial theory, and in fact an overall process of settlement that is incomplete and concentrated on only certain areas is at least broadly in line with archaeological evidence. Of course, in general, these considerations fit with the idea that if the Israelite texts have any historical significance, they give a view of a coloniser, even if in some parts of the books, such much of the book of Judges and parts of Samuel they can also attest to the views of a colonised people. In any case, it has to be kept in mind that these texts give a partial and biased view of one society and particular writers within that society.¹⁰⁰ The issue of modern appropriation(s) of the texts and their “baggage” for interpretation should also be taken into account.¹⁰¹ Archaeology gives a material dimension that is at the very least potentially more “impartial”,¹⁰² however, it can also be said to also be partial and concentrate only on certain aspects of a society, usually an ancient one at that. And, as can be seen here, archaeological evidence can never really reveal these potential settler colonial concepts of consciousness and narrative.

⁹⁶ See e.g. Hess 1996: 284-286; Nelson 1997, esp. 12-13, 242-243; cf. Knauf 2008. The presentation in the book of Joshua is also considered to be in contradiction with the book of Judges which clearly describes an incomplete conquest.

⁹⁷ Veracini 2010:89.

⁹⁸ Veracini 2010:88. Note also the depiction of the time of Solomon, the second king of Israel, in 1 Kings 4:20-34, in contrast with 1 Kings 11 where a comparable cognitive dissonance appears to take place.

⁹⁹ Veracini 2010:89.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. similarly Dietler 2010: 43-44 for the role of Greek and Roman texts for first millennium BCE southern France. Note also the comments in related endnote 82 (pp. 352-353) which should also apply to the biblical texts, *mutantibus mutantibus*: “I am by no means rejecting the importance of Greek and Roman texts for the analysis of the ancient colonial encounter in the western Mediterranean. Quite the opposite. They are clearly essential for understanding Greek and Roman institutions, attitudes, agents and historical events. But as with any colonial document, they must be interpreted with proper ‘against the grain’ skepticism and be put in dialectical conversation with archaeological data”.

¹⁰¹ Similarly Dietler 2010:44 and *passim* (incl. pp. 27-43) in terms of the reception history and influence of Greek and Roman texts in Europe.

¹⁰² See e.g. Dietler 2010: 20.

A further issue that ties with sociological and colonial analyses is the role of elites as against the ordinary population in the articulation, existence and dissemination of ideologies. Such elites might typically consist of the colonisers, but there might be an elite segment in the (settler) colonial societies. The elite would be likely to act as a mythomoteur¹⁰³ and try to spread their ideology across the wider society. Again, it is difficult to analyse this in terms of the Philistines, but, in terms of the Israelites, at least some of the biblical documents, such as those relating to priests, whenever they were formulated, could be seen as products of an elite that tried to promulgate their ideas for the rest of the population. This would include both internal colonization where the Israelites are expected to follow a particular behavioural and ideological pattern within the settler society (e.g. Dt 13) or external colonization and the transfer of indigenous peoples (including by killing and expulsion, and in practice assimilation). The ideology of the elites and the settler colonial collective would however in reality be affected by the indigenes, and in a number of cases the resulting new patterns would involve reuse and readaptation of traditions.¹⁰⁴ And, indeed, the ancient Israelite documents attest such reuse and readaptation of pre-Israelite concepts plentifully. Of course, not all intermixing by the non-elite population would be necessarily considered as acceptable by the elite, or, even if the elite, or parts of it, agreed with a particular adaptation at some point, there could be a power struggle between such an adaptation and another adaptation, and the victory of one party could be accompanied by internal colonization. Thus, for example, the practice relating to Yahweh and his Asherah could reflect popular religious views in *metissage* with indigenous religious practices, a *metissage* that would be different from, and at some point also in conflict both in theoretical and practical terms with the specific *metissage* of the proponents of a religious system reflected in the biblical documents that have been preserved for us.¹⁰⁵

Group Identity and Formation

As was already indicated, it is typical for colonial encounters that not only do the colonisers affect the colonised, but also that the colonised also influence the colonisers.¹⁰⁶ In a number of cases, colonial situations may lead to sufficiently new identities so that an ethnogenesis takes place.¹⁰⁷ If this is the case, an examination of the features of ethnicity should be a useful analytical tool. More widely, an examination of possible distinctive influences that could be associated both the colonisers and the colonised should be useful, and, as we will see below, these may be tied with questions of ethnicity. Even though, it is also possible that some cultural features are not direct results of colonialism but may be result of (often long-term) cultural diffusion.¹⁰⁸ Below I will first look at some potentially detectable ethnic features of the Israelites and the Philistines and also see what if anything can be inferred about them in terms of any ethnogenesis and possible mutual cultural

¹⁰³ See Smith 1984:42-43.

¹⁰⁴ See Owen 2005: 20 in the ancient Greek context; Day 2008 in more modern contexts (e.g. Constantinople/Istanbul); cf. Dietler 2010:10; Gasco 2005:74-75.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Dietler 2010:10, according to who colonialism “is an active, historically contingent process of creative appropriation, manipulation and transformation played out by individuals and social groups with an variety of competing interests and strategies of action embedded in local political relations, cultural perceptions, and cosmologies”.

¹⁰⁶ See e.g. Dietler 2010, etc.

¹⁰⁷ See Hill 1996 for the Americas. See also Faust 2006 for the early Israelites.

¹⁰⁸ See e.g. Dietler 2010.

interaction in the area. The focus here is on Iron Age I, also considering that the biblical documents and archaeology indicate that a new entity was being born in the highlands at the time.¹⁰⁹

In general, we may ask what are the demarcating features that separate the invading group (colonising society) from the natives. While there are differing ways to construct group identities and not all of them need to be related to ethnicity, such as with nationality especially in the modern world, it would appear that considerations of ethnicity could help here as ethnicity tends to be fairly pervasiveness throughout societies.¹¹⁰ Also, in contrast to nationalism which might not entirely apply to ancient societies,¹¹¹ ethnicity does seem to fit them better.¹¹² There is also the question of how the peoples in question did get the ethnic features they had. In relation to our topic here, some of these may be result of a colonial encounter and accompanying ethnogenesis.¹¹³

Comparative colonial studies indicate that there may be peaceful interaction between individuals even when societies are on the whole, at least in terms of an overall historical process, in conflict and one may be subjugating the other.¹¹⁴ While the biblical description about the Philistines concentrates on conflict, aspects of the story of Samson and David also indicate peaceful coexistence.¹¹⁵

If there was peaceful coexistence included, except for demarcating differences, such as pork, pottery and circumcision,¹¹⁶ there may have been mutual flows of influence in issues that were not considered as “problematic”. Considering the likelihood that the Philistine immigrants were of Aegean, and probably partially Anatolian origin, or would at least had Anatolian influences,¹¹⁷ it might be possible that the Israelites were influenced by Greek/Anatolian cultural features. Conversely, and in any case, the Philistines would be likely to have been influenced by Semitic cultural features, even though to what extent this might have come from the Israelites is another matter. Mutual cultural influence could also apply to the later Iron Age II.

The field of studies of ethnicity is now quite extensive.¹¹⁸ Without going into details here, the definition of ethnicity by Hutchinson and Smith captures the related issues

¹⁰⁹ Cf. also the Merneptah stele, and cf. Faust 2006 which suggests that the Philistines acted as a catalyst for the emergence of Israelite ethnic identity.

¹¹⁰ See e.g. Smith 1986.

¹¹¹ Even though, arguably, if nationalism is defined in modern terms that include aspects that only apply to modernity (e.g. mass media), the nationality does not by definition apply to ancient societies. So the issue is also a matter of definition, as is the issue of modern capitalism versus ancient societies (on this latter issue, see recently Aubet 2013).

¹¹² See e.g. Smith 1986.

¹¹³ See Hill 1996 for the Americas.

¹¹⁴ See e.g. Preston 2009; Lamana 2008; cf. also anecdotally e.g. current Rhodesia and Zimbabwe.

¹¹⁵ This relates to the so-called “middle ground” (esp. White 2011/1991; cf. e.g. Gosden 2004), with Dietler’s (2010:354n124) apt comments that this refers to a specific colonial context(s). Otherwise, note the use of alliances in the story of David (cf. Dietrich 2012), which also fits with colonial and other history (e.g. Spanish conquest of Mexico and British conquest of North America; see e.g. Day 2008, *in passim*; Stannard 1992, *in passim*).

¹¹⁶ See e.g. Faust 2012:128-131.

¹¹⁷ See Yasur-Landau 2010, Yasur-Landau 2012.

¹¹⁸ See e.g. Kletter 2006:573-575.

very well in a succinct manner.¹¹⁹ According to Hutchinson and Smith, ethnic communities or *ethnies* “habitually exhibit, albeit in varying degrees, six main features:

1. a common proper name, to identify and express the ‘essence’ of the community;
2. a myth of common ancestry, a myth rather than a fact, a myth that includes the idea of a common origin in time and place, and that gives an *ethnie* a sense of fictive kinship, what Horowitz terms a ‘super-family’;
3. shared historical memories, or better, shared memories of a common past or pasts, including heroes, events and their commemoration;
4. one or more elements of common culture, which need not be specified but normally include religion, customs, or language;
5. a link with a homeland, not necessarily its physical occupation by the *ethnie*, only its symbolic attachment to the ancestral land, as with diaspora peoples;
6. a sense of solidarity on the part of at least some sections of the *ethnie*’s population”¹²⁰

We may also note here the differentiation between primordial vs. instrumental approaches. According to the primordial approach, ethnic ties are based on birth and other ‘givens’ and are seen as static and immutable.¹²¹ Relatively conversely, according to the instrumental approach, ethnic ties are socially constructed and a function of circumstances and expediency, including material gains.¹²² In practice, academic approaches are generally neither constructing purely primordial or instrumental ethnicities, but the matter is rather about emphasis.¹²³ For our purposes here, the likely malleability of ethnicity is a particularly pertinent feature to keep in mind, also as it relates to potential ethnogenesis.

It is difficult to reconstruct ancestral ties, historical memories, symbolic attachment and sense of solidarity from the archaeological record only, some textual information would be useful if that were available. In other words, it is necessary to go beyond archaeology “proper” for them.¹²⁴ As regards the first feature, both communities seem to have a unique name, i.e. Philistia¹²⁵ and Israel, certainly these names would serve to distinguish these two communities from each other in their local context, at least according to the biblical materials.¹²⁶ One cannot be certain of the origin of the names which are first attested in Iron Age I,¹²⁷ but it seems clear that these are the names with which these entities came to be called.

As regards the second feature, ancestry, it is possible that both entities saw themselves in terms of genealogies that described their descent in relation to the known surrounding world. The Israelites expressed this through the genealogies and stories in Genesis. As for the Philistines, they may have had similar concepts, even if this

¹¹⁹ Cf. Kletter 2006:574; Pitkänen 2004.

¹²⁰ Hutchinson and Smith 1996:4-7.

¹²¹ Hutchinson and Smith 1996:9.

¹²² Hutchinson and Smith 1996:9.

¹²³ Hutchinson and Smith 1996:9.

¹²⁴ Cf. comments in Pitkänen 2004; Kletter 2006:573-580.

¹²⁵ Even if the name Philistia may not have been entirely unique in a wider context, cf. the kingdom of Taita of Palastin/Palistin in the north (see Singer 2012, incl. p. 462).

¹²⁶ Again, cf. e.g. Singer 2012 on Palastin/Palistin in the north.

¹²⁷ Cf. Brug 2010

cannot be verified. Finkelberg suggests that relationships with surrounding countries were built into genealogy in Greek tradition.¹²⁸ Finkelberg further suggests that the extant Greek genealogies, even though dating from a late period, include reflections from the Bronze (Heroic) Age.¹²⁹ Israelite genealogies seem to work in a similar way. So, we may have influence from one system to the other. As one option, the Israelites might have constructed their genealogy based on the Aegean Philistine model, or both may be based on a tradition that was already essentially common to them.¹³⁰

In addition, in line with discussion above, in terms of descent, the Philistines would clearly appear to have traced their origins to the Aegean, but also there may be links to Anatolia to some extent. We cannot however construct a possible genealogy for them due to lack of textual evidence but can guess that they might have had one. As for the Israelites, at least at some point in their history,¹³¹ after a demarcation of various surrounding nations as having descended from Noah (who of course traces back to Adam) in Genesis 9-10, the Israelites consider the Patriarchs as the significant ancestors from which the nation proper descended (Genesis 12 ff.). The creation of the twelve-tribe system may at least partly have been a way to forge common ancestry for regional entities in the highlands, with the stories in Genesis and elsewhere in the Pentateuch assisting in the process.¹³² Interestingly, a comparison with early modern Latin America suggests that founders in new places could also be considered as ethnic ancestors,¹³³ rather than particularly looking at an earlier time, but this does not seem to apply to the Israelites, but could at least partly apply to any of the Philistine groups in their putative ethnogenesis.

As for the third feature, shared historical memories, both societies have some kind of link with migration. Again, based on archaeological interpretation of the rise of the Philistines as arising from migration, it seems fair to claim that the Philistines would in their foundation stories trace their origins to Aegean, and possibly partly to Anatolia.¹³⁴ The Israelites have Mesopotamia and then a sojourn in and liberation from slavery in Egypt as important components of their foundation story. One may also note that, in the (later) Greek foundation stories there was often an initial wave of settlement or exploration and then only later more extensive settlement (see Weinfeld 1993, pp. 6-9),¹³⁵ and this may have some similarity with the Patriarchal stories. If the societies considered themselves as new entities, then a link with a story of migration as part identity formation would be quite natural, also if they were settler societies as per our discussion above.

¹²⁸ See Finkelberg 2005:24-41.

¹²⁹ Finkelberg 2005:24-41.

¹³⁰ It would seem unlikely that the Israelites influenced the Philistines, as the Greek genealogy seems to include reflections of a time before the emergence of the Israelites.

¹³¹ The Song of Deborah, often considered as originating from an early time does attest the names of most of the tribes.

¹³² Cf. Hill 1996, *passim*, for some broadly comparable processes.

¹³³ See Bilby 1996.

¹³⁴ Cf. also Weinfeld 1993:2-9 which suggests comparable founder/migration traditions (note also grave traditions in Weinfeld 1993:14-15 in (later) Greek and Roman realm.

¹³⁵ Weinfeld 1993:6-9.

In terms of the fourth feature, elements of common culture, I have already noted above the pork taboo and pottery and circumcision differences in Iron Age I.¹³⁶ However, these are rather cultural demarcators than commonalities. It is difficult to identify influences that actually flowed between the two cultures as cultural diffusion and *metisage* with indigenes are also a possibility and more likely as main sources of influence, together with any unexpected consequences and innovations. While some of the narratives in Judges-Samuel, for example the David and Goliath story in 1 Sam 17, clearly seem to attest Aegean style features,¹³⁷ they do not really tell about any cultural diffusion. Or, while the Zalpa legend attested in the Hittite realm can be compared with Judges 10:3-4 and 12:8-9,¹³⁸ and the description of Samson as grinding as a punishment in Judges 16:21 is similar to a custom attested in Anatolia,¹³⁹ such cultural influence could have come through in other ways. Or, even if some of the style of Pentateuchal narration could have been influenced by proto-Greek type of narrative (or ways of oral storytelling), we have no written attestation of such narrative in the Greek realm until the Homeric Epic.¹⁴⁰ So, while some continuity may exist, it is difficult to be more precise.¹⁴¹

As regards the fifth feature, it mostly relates to diaspora peoples. Nevertheless, as already indicated, the Philistines would probably have had a link with a homeland in the Aegean (possibly also Anatolia). The Israelites do not seem to think of Mesopotamia or Egypt as their homelands all that strongly, even though there is some indication in the bible that the former is considered thus in some respects (Deuteronomy 26:5-8; Joshua 24:2-4 here). That is, it might be possible that any migrants from northern areas left their trace in the Israelite literature, even if it is difficult to be more precise.

In terms of the sixth feature, a sense of solidarity, we may surmise that both societies attested it, perhaps in an isopolitical sense as outlined above. With the Philistines, there were several differing groups that migrated from Aegean/Anatolia, such as Sherden, Tjekker/Sikel and a group called as Philistines “proper”.¹⁴² Certainly the Philistines themselves would seem to have exhibited solidarity in Iron Age I at least,¹⁴³ even though we do not at present seem to be able to tell what such solidarity might have entailed in detail, except possibly based on the biblical documents which indicate cooperation and collaboration amongst the Philistine *seren*. As for the Israelites, the biblical documents attest solidarity across twelve tribes that are all seen to descend from the patriarchs. Some of this solidarity attested in the biblical documents may be programmatic and also projecting current hopes into historical past, but it would appear that at least some of the tribes may have in actuality felt this way (e.g. Judges 5). The Philistine threat could have reinforced any existing solidarity further,¹⁴⁴ together with a merging of their respective genealogical traditions, even

¹³⁶ Referring to Faust 2012:128-131 for a summary. It should be kept in mind that the Philistines may have lost some of these boundary markers at the beginning of Iron Age II, very possibly at least partly due to at least partially being subjugated by the Israelites, see Faust and Lev-Tov 2011:23-26.

¹³⁷ See e.g. Stager 2006:381; Yasur-Landau 2012:557n31.

¹³⁸ As pointed out by Collins 2007:147-148

¹³⁹ See Collins 2007:123.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. also comments in Gordon 1965.

¹⁴¹ See Finkelberg 2005, incl. pp. 161-176.

¹⁴² See e.g. Yasur-Landau 2012:329.

¹⁴³ See e.g. Shai 2012.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Faust 2006, and Hill 1996, *passim*, in a broad sense.

though problems with other peoples that are described in Judges, and already the possible idea of patriarchal promises and the settlement process in the highlands in the early Iron Age in itself could already have reinforced such solidarity.

In broad terms then, there are some potential broad common patterns of ethnocultural identity. However, it is difficult to say much anything specific in terms of cultural interaction between the two entities as most of the features of ethnicity are ideological and thus often really outside archaeological verification and would need texts to assist in the process. Maybe some of the features of the Israelites were formed to distinguish themselves from the Philistines, but by and large actual cultural diffusion seems limited. This would fit with the idea that the two societies did initially develop relatively independently and only encountered each other later on in the course of Iron Age I and II. Most of the ethnocultural interaction would seem to be more likely to be in the realm of the societies interacting with the indigenous they encountered as part of their settlement, but the Israelite ethnogenesis could have been reinforced by the Philistine threat. Overall, if, as proposed above, both societies were based on migration and (ancient) settler colonialism, a number of broad similarities in terms of patterns would be understandable.

Summary and Conclusions

This essay has surveyed potential aspects of migration and settler colonialism in relation to early Israelites and Philistines. The evidence would seem to fit with a settler colonial model, suitably adapted to each local case. The societies would also be likely to exhibit certain similarities in terms of their putative ethnic formation, even if their respective societal modes would develop quite differently in their details. Both can be proposed to initially have been settler-colonial societies, tracing their origins to outside the land they were occupying, and their emergence also fits in the time around and after the collapse of the Late Bronze “world” of the area and accompanying migrations of peoples as a result of these upheavals, and migrations in the context of world history as a whole. A comparison of the societies in terms of broad patterns of migration and settler colonialism, can at least potentially reveal more about them in the context of similar patterns of society formation in world history through the use of analogy, here particularly in terms of settler colonialism, interpreted against the totality of archaeological and textual evidence the mix of which is different for each of them. In this, specifically, as archaeological evidence often cannot reveal ideological aspects, any possible help from texts should be welcomed, cautiously interpreted.

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