AN 'ETEOCRETAN' INSCRIPTION FROM PRAISOS
AND THE HOMELAND OF THE SEA PEOPLES

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The whereabouts of the homeland or homelands of the so-called Sea Peoples have been endlessly debated. This article re-examines this problem by looking at one of the 'Eteocretan' inscriptions from the town of Praisos. It is argued that this text is written in an Indo-European language belonging to the Oscan-Umbrian branch of the Italic language family. Based on this finding it is suggested that this language must have arrived in eastern Crete during the Late Bronze Age, when Mycenaean rulers recruited groups of mercenaries from Sicily, Sardinia and various parts of the Italian peninsula. When the Mycenaean state system collapsed around 1200 BC, some of these groups moved to the northern Aegean, to Cyprus and to the coastal districts of the Levant. It is also suggested that this reconstruction explains the presence of an Etruscan-speaking community in sixth-century-BC Lemnos. An interesting corollary of this theory is that the Sea Peoples were present in the Mycenaean world some considerable time before its collapse in the early twelfth century.

1. Introduction

The problem of the homeland(s) of the Sea Peoples, who attacked Egypt in the eighth year of Ramesses III (1176 BC),[1] has been debated from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards. As is well known, one of the most important pieces of evidence is an inscription from Ramesses' mortuary temple at Medinet Habu, which contains the following description of the migratory movements of the Sea Peoples prior to the decisive battles:

As for the foreign countries, they made a conspiracy in their islands. All at once the lands were on the move, scattered in war. No land could stand before their arms: Hatti, Kode, Carchemish, Arzawa and Alashiya. They were cut

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[1] I have followed Drews 1993 and Kuhrt 1995 in adopting the 'low' chronology for the Egyptian New Empire.

off. A camp was set up in one place in Amor. They desolated its people, and its land was like that which has never come into being. They were advancing on Egypt, while the flame was prepared before them. Their league was *Prst*, *Tjkr*, *Škrš*, *Dnn*, and *Wšš*, united lands. They laid their hands upon the lands to the very circuit of the earth, their hearts confident and trusting: 'Our plans will succeed'[2].

Another important text is the Great Papyrus Harris, which describes Ramesses' victories over the traditional enemies of Egypt, including some of the Sea Peoples:

I extended all the boundaries of Egypt. I overthrew those who invaded them from their lands. I slew the *Dnn* (who are) in their isles, the *Tjkr* and the *Prst* were made ashes. The *Šrdn* and the *Wšš* of the sea, they were made as those that exist not, taken captive at one time, brought as captives to Egypt, like the land of the shore I settled them in strongholds bound in my name. Numerous were their classes like hundred-thousands. I assigned portions for them all with clothing and grain from the store-houses and granaries each year[3].

Two of the peoples mentioned in these texts, the *Šrdn* and the *Škrš*, also figured among the motley group of allies employed by the Libyan chief Maryare in another attack on Egypt that took place in 1209 BC. Besides the *Šrdn* and the *Škrš* Maryare's allies comprised fighting men from three other non-Libyan peoples: the *Trš*, the *Ikwš* and the *Rwkw*. Interestingly, the non-Libyan troops are described as 'northerners coming from all lands' and as coming from 'the countries of the sea'. It has plausibly been argued that they were mercenaries (e.g. Kuhrt 1995, 386-387).

Some further valuable information is supplied by a group of letters that were found in the palace of the Syrian town of Ugarit. From these it appears that shortly before the destruction of Ugarit in *c*. 1190 BC the Syrian coast was raided from the sea, and that the raiders included a group of people called the Shikala. There can be no doubt that these are the same people as the *Škrš* of the Egyptian texts (Dietrich/Loretz 1978, 53-56).

As far as the identity of the other 'Sea Peoples' is concerned, it is generally agreed that the *Prst* referred to in the Medinet Habu text are to be identified with the Philistines who inhabited the coastal districts of South-West Palestine from the twelfth century BC onwards. Several passages in the Old Testament seem to refer to these Philistines as immigrants from 'Caphtor'[4]. Although this designation normally refers to Crete, many have interpreted the biblical texts in question as referring less specifically to the coastal districts of the Aegean (e.g. Sandars 1978, 166).

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[2] Edgerton/Wilson 1936, 53; Pritchard 1969, 262-263.
[3] Pritchard 1969, 262.
[4] E.g. Amos 9:7; Jeremiah 47:4.

Mainly on the basis of these few clues, at least four geographical areas have been identified as the homeland of the Sea Peoples:

1. During the mid-nineteenth century it was commonly agreed that the Sea Peoples came from the western Mediterranean[5]. Those who subscribed to this theory identified the *Šrdn* with the inhabitants of Sardinia, the *Škrš* with those of Sicily and the *Trš* with the Tyrsênoi, the Greek name for the Etruscans. In the case of the *Šrdn* there is some archaeological evidence to support this view: several Egyptian reliefs show them wearing horned helmets similar to those worn by Sardinian warriors in the ninth and eighth centuries BC (Sandars 1978, 196; Woudhuizen 2006, 112-113). Interestingly, the ships used by the Sea Peoples resemble the boat models found in the Villanovan settlements of mainland Italy. These arguments can, however, be countered by assuming migrations from East to West or by positing parallel but mutually independent developments in weaponry[6]. The Villanovan boat models are often explained as reflecting cultural influences from Central Europe, where strikingly similar specimens have been discovered[7].

2. A completely different theory is associated with the name of the distinguished Egyptologist Maspero. One of the building blocks of Maspero's alternative reconstruction was his assumption that the homeland of the *Trš*, whom he identified with the Etruscans, was near the west coast of Asia Minor. This led him to connect the *Šrdn* with the Lydian city of Sardes and the *Škrš* with Pisidian Sagalassos[8]. During the twentieth century this theory was taken up and further developed in countless publications[9]. A recent variant is to be found in the second volume of Amélie Kuhrt's *The Ancient Near East*. Her main argument is that Danuna was the name of a coastal area north of Ugarit during the fourteenth century BC. In her view, a likely location is Cilicia, where a people called DNNYM is referred to in an inscription of the early seventh century BC. On the basis of this identification she suggests that the Sea Peoples may have originated from southern Turkey[10].

3. According to yet another theory the Sea Peoples came from the Balkan peninsula. One prominent proponent of this view was Eduard Meyer, who placed the homeland of the Sea Peoples immediately north of the Aegean (Meyer 1928,

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[5] For a valuable survey of the views of nineteenth-century scholarship see Drews 1993, 54-55.

[6] Thus Sandars 1978, 161 and 199-200. Against the notion of large-scale migrations from East to West, see Drews 1993, 70.

[7] For the 'bird boats' of Central Europe and Etruria, see e.g. Hencken 1968, 107-110, 115-116 and 146-148; Wachsmann 1995, 178-181.

[8] For an extensive discussion of this theory see Drews 1993, 55-59.

[9] For a useful survey of research carried out between 1900 and 1970, see Barnett 1975, 359-378.

[10] Kuhrt 1995, 388-390. For the DNNYM of Cilicia, see ibid. 415. Cf. also Holst 2005 for the suggestion that the Sea Peoples originated from Anatolia and the Black Sea region.

544-607). In the 1980s a western variant of this theory was developed by Lehmann. After identifying the *Trš* and *Rwkw* with the Tyrsênoi and the Lycians and placing their homelands in western Asia Minor, he went on to argue that the *Šrdn*, the *Škrš* and the *Prst* came from the Adriatic coast of the Balkans. The main evidence adduced by him consisted of geographical names. In classical times Palaiste was a small town on the South-Illyrian coast, while Pliny's list of peoples inhabiting the more northerly parts of Roman Illyricum include the Siculi and the Sardeates (Lehmann 1985, 42-49).

4. Finally, it has been suggested that some of the Sea peoples came from Greece. An important argument in favour of this view is that the bichrome 'Philistine ware' that was produced in South-West Palestine from the twelfth century onwards was modelled closely on the Late Helladic IIIC pottery of the Aegean[11]. This has led some scholars to suggest that the *Dnn* and the *Ikwš* are to be identified with Homer's Danaoi and Achaioi, and the *Tjkr* with the Teukroi who are recorded in Crete, in Cyprus and in the Troad. It has also been suggested that the *Prst* were refugees from Pylos in the south-western Peloponnese (Margalith 1994; 1995)[12].

Instead of trying to pin down the homeland(s) of the Sea Peoples by rehearsing the well-known arguments that have been adduced for and against each of these four theories, I want to focus on a piece of epigraphic evidence that has been completely ignored in the debate. The inscription in question was found in 1901 when British archaeologists were excavating the ruins of the Cretan town of Praisos. Although the text was inscribed in Greek characters of the fourth century BC, it quickly became apparent that these had been used to write a non-Greek language[13]. Since in classical times Praisos was inhabited by people who called themselves the 'True Cretans' (*Eteokrêtes*), the natural assumption was that the language of the inscription was that of the pre-Greek population of Crete. This explains why most of those who have studied this text have done so with the aim of shedding some new light on the language of the Linear A tablets of the Second Palace Period (*c*. 1700-1450 BC)[14]. To the best of my knowledge these attempts have failed to produce anything resembling a coherent interpretation.

Given this bleak *status quaestionis*, it is tempting to conclude that the language and meaning of this obscure inscription are unrewarding topics. The principal

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[11] E.g. Snodgrass 1971, 107-109; Sandars 1978, 166-169; Finkelberg 2005, 152-156.

[12] Similarly, Zangger 1995 interprets the archaeological evidence as indicating an Aegean origin for the Sea Peoples. Woudhuizen 2006 argues that the *Trš* (Tyrsênoi) and *Prst* (Pelasgoi?) must have come from the islands of the eastern Aegean and from the west coast of Asia Minor.

[13] For the date see M. Guarducci in *Inscriptiones Creticae*, vol. III: *Tituli Cretae orientalis*, Roma 1942, 137, followed by Duhoux 1982, 69.

[14] For a survey of earlier attempts to make sense of *I. Cret*. III.vi.2, see Duhoux 1982, 208-233. Cf. also Duhoux 1998, 16-17 and 21; Bartonek 1992, 15-17.

aim of this article is to demonstrate that this initial impression is wrong and that the language in which this text was inscribed can confidently be identified. I will also argue that this language is different from that of the Linear A tablets. Finally I will argue in favour of the no doubt unexpected thesis that the text from Praisos has a direct bearing on the 'insolvable' problem of the homeland of the Sea Peoples.

2. I. Cret. III.vi.2: a new interpretation
The text with which we will be concerned in this article was first published by Conway in 1902 and most recently by Duhoux in his monograph on the Eteocretan inscriptions (Conway 1901-1902, 125-156; Duhoux 1982, 68-75). Although Duhoux usefully summarizes and discusses a number of variant read-ings proposed by twentieth-century scholarship, I have come to the conclusion that the most reliable edition of this text remains that of Margarita Guarducci in the third volume of the *Inscriptiones Creticae*, which appeared in 1942[15]. Since Guarducci's edition is accompanied by a good photograph, her readings can eas-ily be checked. Perhaps not surprisingly, nearly all of them are beyond dispute. Despite this, two readings are open to challenge. The most important of these concerns the fifth character in line 3, which she identifies as a N. A careful inspection of the photographs accompanying Guarducci's and Duhoux' editions shows that only the first vertical bar of the putative N can be discerned with cer-tainty. In my view the traces on the stone are compatible with alternative and more plausible readings, such as IO or even E. Secondly, I think that none of the characters following the N in line 7 can be identified. This means that Guarducci's tentative identification of one of these as an O is to be rejected[16]. A third problem that merits our attention is the identity of the character following the sequence φραισον in line 6. Judging from the photograph accompanying *I. Cret. III.vi.2* this character must have been either an *alpha* or a *delta*[17]. In my commentary on the text I will argue that the former reading is correct.

If these minor corrections are accepted, the text of *I. Cret*. III.vi.2 should be read as follows:

[-]οναδεσιεμετεπιμιτσφα
[--]δοφ[-]ιαραλαφραισοιιναι
[--]ρεστ[ε?]μτορσαρδοφσανο

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[15] Unlike Guarducci, Duhoux tentatively identifies the last character of line 2 as a *psi*, the first character after the initial lacuna in line 3 as a *phi*, the last characters of lines 10 and 11 as *phi* and *iota*, and the first character of line 12 as a *mu*. In my view, the first two of these read-ings are certainly incorrect, while the last three are extremely doubtful.
[16] Thus correctly Duhoux 1982, 70.
[17] The same conclusion is drawn by Duhoux 1982, 70.

[--]σατοισστεφεσιατιυν
[--]ανιμεστεπαλυνγυτατ
[--]σανομοσελοσφραισονα
[--]τσααδοφτεν[-------]
[--]μαπραιναιρερ[-------]
[--]ιρειρερειετ[---------]
[--]ντιρανο[------------]
[---]ασκεσ[--------------]
[----]οτ[-------------]

What hope then is there of identifying the language of this short and damaged inscription? In my view, at least the beginning of a possible answer can be found by looking at the first line, where all editions read [-]οναδεσιεμετεπιμιτσφα. At first sight this sequence is totally obscure. But what happens if we start from the arbitrary working hypothesis that we are dealing with an Indo-European language? I would suggest that such a reading of the first line makes it attractive to interpret the two Ms as endings of the accusative singular. If this interpretation is correct, it becomes tempting to interpret the sequence ετεπιμ as an adjective or a noun. Having reached this point, it is difficult not to be struck by the similarity between the hypothetical ετεπιμ on the one hand and the Oscan word *eitipes*, 'they decided' on the other. It may therefore be hypothesized that ετεπιμ means something like 'decision'.

Moving on from this point, it becomes tempting to take εσιεμ as an adjective qualifying ετεπιμ and αδ as a preposition governing the accusative. The phrase αδεσιεμετεπιμ would then mean something like 'up until the/a […] decision' or 'according to the/a […] decision'. Finally, the seemingly enigmatic sequence ιτσφα is remarkably similar to *eitiuva*, the Oscan word for 'money', while the initial [-]ον may be supplemented as [π]ον. Since Oscan *pon* is the equivalent of Latin *cum*, it would then become possible to interpret the first line as the first part of a temporal or motivating clause.

In light of these indications it is surely worthwhile to explore the counterintuitive hypothesis that (some of) the inhabitants of classical Praisos wrote and presumably spoke an Italic language. In what follows I will try to substantiate this theory by providing a word-by-word commentary on the inscription's first nine lines:

1.　　[π]ον: cf. *pon* (< q^uom-*de*), the Oscan equivalent of Latin *cum*.
2.　　αδ: cf. the Umbrian preposition and postposition *az* (< *ads*) and Latin *ad*. For the meaning required by my interpretation cf. the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v *ad*, 34: 'in obedience to, in accordance with' (e.g. *ad hanc legem*).
3.　　εσιεμ: acc. sg. of an adjective or pronoun accompanying *etepim*. One possibility which comes to mind is that we are dealing with the Praisian counterpart of the Umbrian pronoun *eso* (nom. sing. fem.) and *essu* (abl. sing. masc.), 'this' (< *ek-so*-; see Bottiglioni 1954, 124). The underlying form *ek(e)-so*- has been

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analysed by some scholars as a combination of the IE deictic particle *ek(e)*[18] and the demonstrative pronoun *so* (Bader 1982, 152; cf. Untermann 2000, 218). Unfortunately, this hypothesis does not explain the sequence *-iem*. This difficulty disappears if we assume that *esiem* goes back to an earlier form **ek-iŏm*, in which *ek-* is the deictic particle and *iŏm* the Praisian counterpart of Oscan *ion-k* (< **ĕom-k*) and Latin *eum* (Bottiglioni 1954, 125)[19]. Note that the development /kj/ > /sj/ required by this theory is attested in Umbrian and Oscan. Cf. e.g. Umbrian *façia* and *šihutu* (acc. plur. masc.), which correspond to Latin *faciat* and *cinctos*, and Oscan *meddixud*, which goes back to **meddikjud* (Von Planta 1892, 533-535; Bottiglioni 1954, 59; Meiser 1986, 200). The demonstrative pronoun *iam* (acc. sg. fem.) appears in the so-called 'Porta Urbica inscription' from eastern Sicily, which is generally held to be written in an Italic dialect[20]. In the Italic languages there seems to be no exact parallel for the development of final /iom/ to /iem/ required by my tentative interpretation. But note that -im (< -iom) was the regular accusative singular ending of the io-stem nouns in Umbrian (Bottiglioni 1954, 108), and that final /ios/ and /iom/ are thought to have developed to /es/ and /em/ in some of the Italic dialects of Bruttium and eastern Sicily (Agostiniani 1990, 139-140).

4.   ετεπιμ: accusative singular of a noun meaning 'decision'. Cf. Umbrian *eitipes*, 'they decided', in which the medial /p/ may represent /b/[21]. If this suggestion is correct, we may be dealing with a language in which medial /b/ developed to /p/ and in which /p/ became /p^h/ between vowels and before consonants. Cf. my comments on στεφεσ in line 4 and on μαπρα-ιν in line 8. For the ending -im various explanations come to mind: 1. ετεπιμ is a consonant stem noun and -im goes back to -em; 2. ετεπιμ is a io-stem noun and -im goes back to -iŏm (cf. above); 3. The text is written in a language in which final /ŏm/ had developed to /im/; 4. We are dealing with a dialect in which the o-stem nouns had adopted the accusative singular ending of the i-stem nouns. If εσιεμ goes back to **ekiom*, the first of these explanations is most likely to be correct. Cf. also my comments on [-]ανιμ in line 5.

5.   ιτσφα: nominative singular of a word meaning 'money'. Cf. Oscan *eitiu-vam* (acc. sing.) and *eitiuvad* (abl. sg.), 'money', originally perhaps 'movable

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[18] For this particle see e.g. Mann 1984-87, 236.

[19] Although the similarity between IE *ek(e)* and Latin *ecce* (< *ed-ke*?) may be coincidental (Walde-Hofmann 1964, s.v. *ecce*), the combination of a deictic interjection and a demonstrative pronoun is also exemplified by Latin *eccille*, 'that one (over there)', *eccistam*, 'her (over there)', and *eccam* (< *ecce* + *ham*), 'her (over there)'. A possible trace of the hypothetical pronoun *ek-i-* is Oscan *ekik*, (nom. sg. neutr.), 'this', in which the /i/ is enigmatic (Von Planta 1897, 217; Untermann 2000, 216-217). This form might go back to **ek-id-ke*.

[20] On this inscription see e.g. Parlangèli 1964-65, 222-226, Prosdocimi/Agostiniani 1976-77, 240-24; Morandi 1982, 166-167; Agostiniani 1992, 139-140; and De Simone 1999, 503-504. The sequence *iam akaram* in the first line is thought to mean 'this stronghold' or 'this town'.

[21] For this suggestion cf. Von Planta 1897, 357 n. 1.

property' (Untermann 2000, 211-212). I assume that *eituua* first developed to *eitwa* and then to *itsp^ha*.

6. [αρ]δοφ[-]: a composite noun the first part of which may be compared to Umbrian *arsie* (abl. sg.?), 'ritual' (Untermann 2000, 121). Although the etymology of this word is disputed, the underlying form is thought to be either *ad-* or *ard-*[22]. For the second part cf. Umbrian *ose*, which is thought to be connected with Latin *opus*, gen. *operis*, 'work' (Untermann 2000, 812)[23]. In light of these possible parallels it is possible to read [αρ]δοφ (with loss of final -ei/-e?),[24] and to interpret this hypothetical sequence as the dative singular of a noun meaning 'sacrificer, sacrificial priest' (*sacri-fex*).

7. [-]ιαρ. Although any interpretation of this sequence is necessarily deeply conjectural, it would be possible to read [δ]ιαρ and to interpret this hypothetical form as the Praisian equivalent of Umbrian *dia* (< *diar* < *dū-iā-r*?), third person singular subjunctive passive of a verb which means 'to give' according to at least some specialists (Meiser 1986, 191)[25]. As noted by Bottiglioni 1954, 145-146 and 176, all Oscan and Umbrian passives displaying the ending -r seem to have impersonal meaning. His examples include Oscan *ferar* and *ier*, which correspond to Latin *feratur* and (probably) *itum sit*[26]. But there are good examples of simple r-forms being accompanied by a subject in other Indo-European languages[27]. According to Schmidt (1963, 261-262), originally only the third person singular passive of strong verbs displayed the ending -or, -tor being the corresponding ending of the weak verbs[28].

8. αλα: cf. perhaps Latin *alias*, 'subsequently'. In the Porta Urbica inscription already referred to the sequence *toutoveregaieshekadoala* may well be an

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[22] Cf. the interesting discussion by Bader 1978, 148-149, who suggests that Umbrian *arsmor*, 'ritual, arrangement' – which is almost certainly cognate with *arsie* – may go back either to *ard-smo-* or to *ard(i)mo-*, and that it may be cognate with Latin *ars* and *arma*.

[23] The form *ose* can be explained as a *locativus* or as an *ablativus loci*. Cf. Meiser 1986, 242, who also considers the possibility that Umbrian *ose* is a genitive singular, in which case it should go back to an earlier form *opezeis*.

[24] Final /e/ seems to be retained in *este* in line 6. One possible explanation is that final /e/ disappeared only in words having three or more syllables in which the penultimate syllable did not have the accent.

[25] For alternative interpretation see Untermann 2000, 173-174 and 380. Untermann himself opts for a hypothetical meaning 'man soll' (instead of Meiser's 'er wird gegeben, man kann').

[26] On these forms see also Von Planta 1897, 387-388; Untermann 2000, 209. I have also considered the possibility that the sequence *ardof[s]iar* is an impersonal third person singular passive meaning 'sacrifices are made', but this alternative reading makes it difficult to account for the /i/ in the hypothetical ending -iar.

[27] E.g. Pedersen 1909-1913, II, 400-401; Szemerényi 1996, 242, both referring to OIr. *ber(a)ir*, 'is carried'. In some other IE language the ending -or(i) is found in the indicative present of deponential verbs: e.g. Hittite *es-ari*, 'he sits', and Venetic *didor*, 'gives' (?).

[28] Admittedly, the origin of the simple r-endings is disputed. Cf. e.g. Kuryłowicz 1968-1969, 16-17, for the hypothesis that such endings may have developed independently in various Indo-European languages.

ablativus absolutus meaning something like 'Toutos, the son of Veregaios, having been overthrown (?) from now on'[29]. Admittedly, this interpretation is vulnerable to the objection that Oscan *allos* seems to mean 'whole, entire' rather than 'other' or 'remaining' (Untermann 2000, 81). We cannot therefore rule out the possibility that Praisian αλα means something like 'under all circumstances' or 'in every case, always'[30].

9.   φραισοι: almost certainly a locative singular depending on the postposition ιν (Oscan -*in*, Umbrian -*en*, Latin *in*). In the Italic languages the normal locative ending of the o-stems was -ei, which developed into -i in Latin. But cf. Greek οἴκοι, 'at home'.

10.   αι[-]ρεσ: in view of αιρερ[-] in line 8 this mutilated word may tentatively be restored as αι[ρε]ρεσ. If this restoration is correct, we may be dealing with the genitive singular of a word meaning 'sacrifice' or 'sacrificial victim', -er (< -es < -eis) being the ending of the gen. sg. of the consonant-stems in Umbrian (Bottiglioni 1954, 113). For the meaning cf. Oscan *aisusis* (abl. pl. n.), 'sacrifices', and Volscian *esaristrom*, '(propitiatory) sacrifice', both of which are derived from the root *ais*-, 'sacred, divine'. For the development of intervocalic -s- into -r- see Bottiglioni 1954, 68-69.

11.   τ[ε?]μτορσ: perhaps nominative singular of a noun derived from the verbal root *tem*- by means of the suffix -*tor* and meaning 'cutter'[31]. Cf. Walde-Hofmann 1964, s.v. *aestimo*, for the view that the Latin verb *aestimare* (older *aestumare*) was derived from a noun *ais-temos*, 'bronze-cutter' (cf. Greek τέμνειν, 'to cut'). The final /s/ is anomalous but can be explained as reflecting the influence of the o-stems, the i-stems and many consonant-stems. If this interpretation is correct, the text refers to a specialist being employed to butcher a sacrificial victim[32]. Cf. my comments on μαπρα-ιν in line 8.

12.   αρδοφσανο: if my interpretation of [αρ]δοφ (?) in line 2 is correct, we must be dealing with the dative or ablative sg. of a verbal noun derived from the denominative verbal root *ardo^{h}sa*-. Cf. the Umbrian imperative *osatu* (corresponding to Latin *operato*) and the Oscan gerundivum *upsannam* (Latin *operandam*; cf. Bottiglioni 1954, 147 and 178; Untermann 2000, 242). Although the Umbrian and Oscan forms *osa*- and *upsa*- are derived from the same root as Latin *operari*, 'to work', they are the semantic counterparts of Latin *facere*. The form αρδοφσανο (< *ardopsando*?) may therefore be regarded as the Praisian equivalent of Latin *sacrificando*.

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[29] For references see above, note 21.

[30] In the Porta Urbica inscription the sequence *hekado ala* might mean 'completely overthrown'.

[31] A useful discussion of the suffix -*tor* in the Italic languages is to be found in Watmough 1995-96.

[32] For the use of such specialists in the Graeco-Roman world, see Ziehen 1939, coll. 613 and 619-621 (Greece), and Beard *et alii* 1998, 36, referring to Arnobius, *Adv. Nat.* 7.24 (Rome).

13.   [οφ]σατο: ablative singular of a passive participle meaning 'made, done, performed'. Cf. the Umbrian participle *oseto* (Latin *operata*).

14.   ισ: the Italic preposition *in* (< *en*). The final /s/ is the result of assimilation.

15.   στεφεσ: accusative plural of the Praisian counterpart of Latin *stips*, 'small payment, fee, small coin'[33].

16.   ιατιυν: This word seems to be related to ειετ[—] in line 9, and is strikingly similar to the Umbrian supinum *eh-iato* (Bottiglioni 1954, 140). The underlying verb *e-hiaom* is thought to mean something like 'to release' or 'to send away' (Bottiglioni 1954, 370; Untermann 2000, 200-201)[34]. The meaning required by my interpretation is 'to hand over'. Cf. e.g. Greek ἐφιέναι, 'to send forth, to release, to give (up), to hand over'. If these suggestions are accepted, Praisian ιατιυν should mean something like 'in order to give/to hand over'.

In the Iguvine tablets (*Tav. Iguv*.VIIb, 2) we find the expression *erom ehiato*, in which *erom* is the infinitive of the verb 'to be' (Latin *esse*). Although various interpretations of this phrase have been offered (Untermann 2000, 200-201), the prevailing view is that it represents the Umbrian form of the infinitive passive (Latin *vocatum iri*). It would therefore be possible to interpret εστε as the Praisian equivalent of Latin and Umbrian *est* (< *esti*), 'he/it is' (Bottiglioni 1954, 152). It is, however, even more attractive to take the Praisian form as the counterpart of Umbrian *est* (< *eiset* < *eiseti*), 'he will go' (Bottiglioni 1954, 155; Untermann 2000, 207-209). On this view the supinum ιατιυν depends on a finite form of the verb 'to go'. This use of the supinum is attested not only in Latin but also in Umbrian, for example in *Tab. Iguv*. VIb, 48: *avif aseriato etu*, 'he must go out to observe the birds' (*aves observatum ito*)[35]. If [δ]ανιμ is an accusative singular, our inscription contains a further example of this construction. However, since the supinum is a noun, we cannot perhaps rule out the possibility that ιατιυν is followed by a genitive here.

For the appearance of a secondary /i/ before /u/ cf. e.g. Oscan *tiurri* (acc. sg.), 'tower'; *niumsieis*, 'Numeridii'; *siuttiis*, 'Suttius' (Von Planta 1892, 124; Bottiglioni 1954, 33-34). The final /ν/ of ιατιυν can be explained as reflecting the influence of the initial /d/ of [δ]ανιμ, although this form is of course hypothetical.

17.   [δ]ανιμ: accusative singular or genitive plural depending on ιατιυν. The approximate meaning required by my overall interpretation is either '(slaughtered) sacrificial animal' or 'pieces, cuts'. Since no word resembling the hypothetical form *danim* is attested in Umbrian or Oscan, my restoration is highly conjectural. Nonetheless either of the hypothetical meanings just mentioned can be supported with excellent IE parallels. Cf. e.g. Old Norse *tafn* (< *dap-no-*),

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[33] For the religious connotations of Latin *stips* cf. Hackens 1963, 84: 'Que le mot *stips* doive être réservé aux offrandes monétaires à caractère religieux, cela ressort clairement des texts anciens.'

[34] The underlying IE root is disputed. For discussion see Untermann 2000, 200-201.

[35] For Latin *ire* + supinum see e.g. Kühner-Stegmann 1955, 722-723; Hofmann-Szantyr 1972, 381-382.

'sacrificial animal, sacrificial meal'; Armenian *taun* (*dap-ni-*), 'feast'; Skt. *dānam* (n.), 'partition, part'; and Greek δάνας, which is explained as μερίδας, 'parts', by Hesychius[36]. For the ending -im cf. my comments on ετεπιμ in line 1.

18.   εστε: cf. my comments on ιατιυν. The most obvious explanation for the final /e/ is that -te is a weakened form of the IE primary ending -ti. Note that the future indicative displayed the primary IE endings in proto-Italic[37].

19.   πα: cf. Latin *qua*, 'in so far as, wherever'.

20.   λυνγυτατ[—]σ: although the meaning of this sequence cannot be determined with certainty, it is possible to speculate that λυνγ(υ)- contains the same root as Latin *lucta*, 'struggle', and *luctari* (< *lug-tari*), 'to wrestle, to struggle' (cf. Greek λυγίζειν, 'to bend')[38]. The /ν/ in λυνγυ- might be explained as an n-infix (on the assumption that we are dealing with a verbal form), while the second /υ/ might be an example of anaptyxis. Cf. the sequence *akaram* (< *akram*) in the Porta Urbica inscription from Sicily[39]. If these hazardous suggestions are accepted, it is possible to read λυνγυτατ[οι]σ-α and to interpret this hypothetical sequence as the ablative plural of the participle of a (deponential) verb meaning 'to struggle, to be unwilling' (cf. Latin *luctans*, 'unwilling, reluctant'), followed by a postposition corresponding to Latin *a*, *ab*, *au*-[40].

Interestingly, the sequence [—]*epalu*[—] is also found on an inscription from Hybla Heraea in south-eastern Sicily. From this tiny clue some scholars have inferred that the language spoken at this town was related to that of Praisos (e.g. Schmoll 1958, 36). More recently Agostiniani has argued that the language of Hybla Heraea was related to Oscan and Umbrian (Agostiniani 1990, 140-141). My own findings open up the possibility that these seemingly contradictory theories may both be correct.

21.   νομοσ: cf. *numer* (abl. plur.), the Umbrian equivalent of Lat. *nummis*. Latin *nummus* is thought to be cognate with Greek νόμος, 'custom, law', and originally to have meant something like 'customary unit of payment' (Walde-Hofmann 1964, s.v. *nummus*). The ending -os points to a nominative or accusative plural (Bottiglioni 1954, 109-110). The syntax suggests to me that the former interpretation is more likely to be correct.

22.   ελοσ: cf. *ulleis* and *ullum*, the Oscan equivalents of Latin *illius* and *illum* (Bottiglioni 1954, 127). In the older literature Latin *ille* is usually explained as going back to *ŏl-se* (e.g. Walde-Hofmann 1964, s.v. *ille*), but in view of the Hittite particle *-ila*, '-self' (< *H_1ilo-*) it is also possible to assume an original form *il-ne* (Bader 1982, 119-120). The form *il-* may also lie behind ελ-οσ.

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[36] For these parallels and for a discussion of related words in other IE languages see Walde-Hofmann 1964, s.v. *daps*.

[37] See e.g. Lindsay 1894, 522; Von Planta 1897, 280-281; Meiser 1986, 139.

[38] Walde-Hofmann 1964, s.v. *lucto*.

[39] On this form see Agostiniani 1990, 140. See also Bottiglioni 1954, 48 for some Umbrian and Oscan examples.

[40] It would also be possible to read λυνγυτατ[ιφ]σ-α (*a luctantibus*).

Alternatively, the initial /e/ may be explained as a weakened /ŏ/. As in the case of νομοσ, the ending -os suggest that we are dealing with a nominative or accusative plural. For the former possibility cf. e.g. Oscan *ius-c*, which corresponds to Latin *ei*.

23. φραισονα: abl. sg. of an ethicon derived from the place-name Praisos with the help of the suffix -no- (cf. Bottiglioni 1954, 98-99). If we assume that the adjective is used substantively here, it may denote the territory controlled by the people of Praisos. Cf. e.g. Latin *Hirpinia*.

24. [αρ?]τσα-αδ: since the meaning 'rituals' or 'sacrifices' seems to fit the context, it is possible to think of Umbrian *arsie* (probably a neutral io-stem noun), for which see above. The hypothetical form *artsa* could go back to *ard-ia*. The ending -a can be explained by assuming that we are dealing with an accusative plural neutre governed by the postposition *-ad*. Cf. e.g. Umbrian *asam-ař*, 'to the altar' (Bottiglioni 1954, 160).

25. οφτεν[δερ?]: third person plur. subj. praes. of a verb derived from the verbal root *op-*, 'to desire, to choose' (IEW, 781). Cf. Latin *optare*, 'to desire, to choose'. For possible examples of Umbrian and Oscan words derived from this root, such as Oscan *ufteis*, 'chosen' (?), and Umbrian *opeter* and *upeto*, 'chosen, selected' (?), see Bottiglioni 1954, 404 and 447; Untermann 2000, 208-210 and 786. The meaning required by my overall interpretation is 'are demanded'. The first /e/ in the hypothetical conjunctive *op^h tender* can be explained as going back to /-aiē-/. See e.g. Von Planta 1897, 300; Bottiglioni 1954, 138.

26. μαπρα-ιν: perhaps the Praisian counterpart of Latin *membra*, 'limbs', followed by the postposition *-in*. Cf. e.g. Ovid, *Met.* 15.141: *boum … caesorum membra*, and Suet. Frag. 176: *laniat lanius, cum membratim discerpit*.

27. αιρερ[—-]: cf. my comments on αι[ρε]ρεσ in lines 2-3.

28. [—]ιρε: meaning unclear. My deeply speculative reconstruction is based on the idea that we may be dealing with the Praisian equivalent of Umbrian *pir-e*, which corresponds to Latin *quid* (Bottiglioni 1954, 129; Untermann 2000, 558-559). For the hypothetical *ni* (< *nē*) cf. Oscan and Umbrian *ni/ne* (Bottiglioni 1954, 28-29) and Latin *ne*.

29. ιρερ: cf. perhaps *erer* (also written *irer* < *eiseis*), the Umbrian equivalent of Latin *eius* (Bottiglioni 1954, 125; Untermann 2000, 355). It would also be possible to read *[ni p]ir e-irer eiet[er]*, 'none of them (i.e. none of the limbs) is to be handed over' (with *irer* < *eisois*), but this alternative reconstruction works only if we assume that /oi/ developed to /e/ before /r/ but not in final position (cf. *P^h raisoi-in* in line 2).

30. ειετ[—]: as noted above, this truncated sequence seems to be related to ιατιυν in line 4. It would be possible to restore ειετ[ερ], which could then be interpreted as a prohibitive subjunctive (< **ehiaietur*?). For the subjunctive ending cf. my comments on οφτεν[δερ?] in line 7.

On the basis of these thirty comments I propose the following reconstruction of the syntax and meaning of the first nine lines of *I.Cret.* III.vi.2:

Praisian text (transcribed):

[P]on ad esiem etepim itsp^ha
[ar]dop^h [d?]iar, ala P^hraisoi-in ai-
[re]res t[e?]mtors ardop^hsanō
[op^h?]satō is step^hes jatiun
[d]anim este. Pa lungutat-
[oi]s-a nomōs elōs P^hraisonā
[ar]tsa-ad op^htend[er, ---]
[--] mapra-in airere[s ------]
[ni p]ire irer ejet[er -------]
[--]ntir ano[----]
[--]askes[----]
[--]ot[----]

Latin translation:

Cum secundum hoc?? decretum pecunia
sacrificulo detur, alias in Praeso vic-
timae sectator sacrificio
facto in stipes traditum
victimam? ibit. Quā ab invi-
[tis] nummi illi Praisoniā
ad [sacra?] desideren[tur?, ab]
[eis?] in membra victim[ae caesae?]
[ne] quid eius concedat[ur -------]

English translation:
Because according to this (?) decree money is (to be) given to the sacrificial
priest, from now on (?) in Praisos after the sacrifice has been performed the
slaughterer of the sacrificial victim must go in order to hand over the butchered
animal (?) in return for coins. Wherever these coins are demanded from unwill-
ing people, […] in return for the limbs of the sacrificial victim no part of it is to
be given … [41]

On the linguistic front the inscription points to the following sound laws:
 1.   intervocalic /s/ > /r/ if followed by /e/: aiReRes, iReR. This development
is also found in Umbrian (Bottiglioni 1954, 69; Meiser 1986, 239). Among the
very few exceptions are some nouns and adjectives derived from the root *ais-*
(e.g. Bottiglioni 1954, 69-70)[42]. It has been suggested that both Umbrian/Oscan
aisos, 'god', and Umbrian *esune* (< *aisōno-*), 'sacred, divine', are to be regarded
as Etruscan loanwords (e.g. Untermann 2000, 68-70 and 239-240; cf. Etruscan
aisar, 'gods'), but as Meiser has pointed out, it is equally possible that the
Etruscans borrowed these words from their Italic-speaking neighbours (Meiser
1986, 252). In the Oscan dialect of Bantia intervocalic /s/ is written as /z/. See
Bottiglioni 1954, 68.
2.   medial /b/ > /p/: etePim, maPra
3.   /p/ > /p^h/ between vowels and before consonants, but not in initial posi-
tion before vowels: istP^ha, ardoP^h, P^hraisoi, steP^hes, P^hraisona

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[41] From the evidence collected by Ziehen 1939, col. 619, it appears that Greek priests often
received a leg or a thigh-bone of the sacrificial victim. Our text seems to forbid such 'pay-
ments'.
    [42] But see Meiser 1983, 253 n. 5, and Untermann 2000, 231-233 on Umbrian *erus*, which
seems to go back to *aisubhos*.

4.   /kj/ > /tš/ > /š/: eSIem? This development is also found in Umbrian and in the Oscan dialect of Bantia (Bottiglioni 1954, 59; Meiser 1986, 200; Von Planta 1892, 533-535).

5.   /dj/ > /ts/: arTSa? In Umbrian proto-Italic /dj/ appears as /ři/ or /ř/ (-rs) (Bottiglioni 1954, 59). Umbrian *arsie* may go back to *ardje.

6.   /twa/ > /tsfa/: istP^{h}a. This development is reminiscent of the development /ti/ > /ts/ in the Oscan dialect of Bantia: e.g. *Bansae* (loc. sg.) < *Bantiae*, and in Marsic: *Martses* (gen. sg.) < *Martieis* (Von Planta 1982, 386). But the form *iatiun* strongly suggests that in the Praisian language /ti/ with secondary /i/ survived before vowels.

7.   initial and medial /h/ > /-/: Iatiun, eIet[er]

8.   unaccented /ei/ > /e/: Etepim, airerEs, irEr?

9.   accented /ei/ > /i/: Itsp^{h}a, Irer

10.   accented short /i/ > /e/: etEpim, stEp^{h}es, Elos?

11.   weakly accentuated /e/ > /i/ (?): In (< en); etepIm?; danIm?. This development is also found in Oscan. Examples include the postposition *-in* (Umbrian *-en*), 'in', and the conjunction *inim* (Umbrian *enem*), 'and'[43].

12.   final /e/ > /-/: (ar)dop^h?

13.   final /iŏm/ > /iem/: esiEm? As pointed out above, this change is also attested in the Oscan dialect of Bruttium.

In view of the shortness of our text this list of hypothetical sound changes is rather long. This may seem to undermine the viability of my overall reconstruction. On the other hand, even though some of my readings and interpretations are consciously speculative, the linguistic similarities between the Praisian language and the language of the Oscan-Umbrian language group are so numerous that they are unlikely to be purely coincidental. Needless to say, this argument is reinforced by the fact that an 'Italic' reading of the text from Praisos results in an interpretation which is both linguistically coherent and semantically plausible. For both these reasons it remains a reasonable conclusion that the language of *I. Cret.* III.vi.2 is an Indo-European language belonging to the Oscan-Umbrian branch of the Italic family.

Since the surviving part of the inscription contains no more than two sentences, it is extremely difficult to assign the Praisian language any specific place within the Oscan-Umbrian language group. On the one hand the ablative singular ending displayed by *ardop^{h}sano [op^h]sato* in lines 3-4 has exact parallels in Umbrian but not in Oscan[44]. Another 'Umbrian' feature is the development of intervocalic /s/ to /r/, although the development /s/ > /z/ is attested at Oscan-speaking Bantia. On the other hand, the appearance of a secondary /i/ before /u/

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[43] For discussion of this sound change see Meiser 1986, 110-111. Cf. also Untermann 2000, 225.

[44] In Oscan the corresponding endings were -ād and -ōd (-ud, -od). See Bottiglioni 1954, 108-109.

and the raising of /i/ in the preposition/postposition *in* are 'Oscan' features. Similarly, the accusative plural ending of *step^hes* is closer to the Oscan ending -s than to its Umbrian counterpart -f (Bottiglioni 1954, 112-113). Finally, we have seen that the sequence *ala* is paralleled in the Italic dialect of eastern Sicily but not in any other Italic language. In light of these contradictory indications it is not possible to go beyond the conclusion that the Praisian language is closely related to Umbrian, Oscan, and Eastern-Siculian.

Of course it would be interesting to see whether this finding allows us to make sense of any other texts written in 'Eteocretan', especially those from Praisos. No other 'Eteocretan' text seems to display features that are *certainly* Italic[45]. In my view, this negative finding does not undermine the validity of the foregoing linguistic analysis. It simply confirms the well-known fact that several non-Greek languages continued to be spoken in Crete until the early Hellenistic period.

3. The inscription from Praisos and the homeland of the Sea Peoples

For ancient historians and archaeologists the most important question posed by the foregoing discussion is how the presence of an Italic-speaking community in fourth-century-BC Crete can be accounted for. This problem is all the more urgent because there is no evidence whatsoever for large groups of people migrating from Italy to Crete in archaic or classical times. Moreover, if any unrecorded commercial contacts between Italy and Crete existed before Hellenistic times, the inland town of Praisos is surely a most unlikely destination for Italian merchants. As far as I can see, the only realistic solution to this problem is to assume that a fairly large-scale migration from Italy to Crete took place at an earlier date. This leads us almost automatically to the migrations of the Sea Peoples during the thirteenth and early twelfth centuries BC. As we have seen, several specialists in the field of Late Bronze Age studies have identified Italy, Sicily and Sardinia as the most likely places of origin of most of these peoples. In my view, the inscription from Praisos provides strong support for this theory. By contrast, our text makes it very difficult to maintain that the homeland of the five peoples referred to in the Medinet Habu text is to be placed in Cilicia, in western Asia Minor or immediately north of the Aegean. At most it remains possible to argue that some of these migrants originated not only from Italy but from the coastal districts of the region later called Illyricum. There can, however, be little doubt that the inscription from Praisos puts the onus of proof firmly on those who might wish to argue in favour of this theory[46].

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[45] *I.Cret*. III.vi.3 contains some sequences that are reminiscent of Latin and other Italic languages (e.g. *dedikar* in line 9) but also some odd features that are not easily squared with an Italic interpretation. These include the appearance of the sequences /dn/ and /ks/ (represented by the Greek character *ksi*), neither of which is found in *I.Cret.* III.vi.2. The sequence /kles/ is found not only in *I.Cret*. III.vi.3 but also in *I.Cret*. III.vi.1, which is almost certainly not written in an Italic language.

[46] Cf. above, at note 6, for the positive indications linking the *Trš* with Etruria and the *Šrdn* with Sardinia.

The finding that one of the so-called 'Eteocretan' languages of classical Crete was an Italic dialect also affects our interpretation of certain categories of 'foreign' artefacts that turn up in the Aegean in the thirteenth and early twelfth centuries BC. For our purposes the most interesting of these artefacts are the so-called 'handmade burnished ware' of the late Mycenaean period, the Naue II sword, and the violin-bow fibula.

From the late 1960s onwards there has been a tendency among specialists in Mycenaean archaeology to attribute the collapse of Mycenaean civilization to internal causes. This tendency can be seen clearly in the recent debate concerning the historical significance of the appearance of limited quantities of handmade burnished pottery throughout the Mycenaean world from the thirteenth century onwards[47]. Initially many specialists argued that this undistinguished pottery was made by people who had migrated to Mycenaean Greece from the Balkans (e.g. Rutter 1975; Deger-Jalkotzy 1983; Bankoff/Winter 1984; Laslo 1999). An important weakness of this theory is that the geographical distribution of the handmade burnished ware is co-extensive with that of ordinary Mycenaean pottery of the LHIIIB and LHIIIC periods[48]. This seems to suggest that the people producing this type of pottery came from the central areas of the Mycenaean world rather than from its northern periphery. It is partly this peculiar distribution pattern that led David Small to question the assumption that these seemingly foreign ceramics had been made by people originating from outside the Mycenaean world. In his view, this type of pottery may equally well have been produced by the impoverished lower classes of late-Mycenaean society (Small 1990; 1997). It must, however, be emphasized that Small's revisionist theory has met with stiff resistance. Interestingly, some of those who regard the 'barbarian' ware as an intrusive element have advanced the hypothesis that it may have been made by immigrants originating from the western half of the Mediterranean. In an article which appeared more than twenty years ago, Hallager drew attention to the fact that the handmade burnished ware of late-Mycenaean Greece is strikingly similar to certain types of domestic pottery that were produced in South Italy during the Late Bronze Age (Hallager 1985). This interpretation has recently been endorsed by Dickinson, who thinks that the closest parallels for the handmade burnished pottery found in Crete and in various Mycenaean centres on the mainland are South Italian and Sardinian. In his view, 'its appearances seem most likely to represent trade links and possibly small groups of (specialised?) migrants' (Dickinson 2006, 52)[49].

During the past fifty years a very similar debate has raged over the appearance of the Naue II sword and the violin-bow fibula in late Mycenaean Greece. Since both

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[47] In western Crete (Chania) handmade burnished wares seem to have appeared as early as the Late Minoan IIIA2 period, which is usually dated to the late fourteenth and early thirteenth century BC. See Schnapp-Gourbeillon 2002, 336 n. 10.

[48] For this important point see Schnapp-Gourbeillon 2002, 79.

[49] Cf. also D'Agata 2001, 346 and Schnapp Gourbeillon 2002, 81.

types of artefact have clear antecedents in the northern Balkans, they were initial-
ly interpreted as evidence for the arrival of an immigrant population from the
north. One weakness of this theory is that swords and fibulae very similar to those
found in the Balkans were also produced in North-Italy, so that there is nothing to
contradict the alternative hypothesis that these artefacts came from the western
shores of the Adriatic[50]. In the case of the Naue II sword, the theory of a non-
Mycenaean origin runs up against the difficulty that all examples that have been
found in Mycenaean Greece (including Crete) came from normal Mycenaean
tombs and were accompanied by Mycenaean pottery. Most of them seem to have
been made locally (Snodgrass 1971, 310-311; Hiller 1985, 139). These clues have
been interpreted as indicating that these swords were made by Mycenaean crafts-
men who took their inspiration from a handful of artefacts that reached the
Mycenaean world through commercial contacts (Desborough 1964, 54-58).
However, as Robert Drews pointed out fifteen years ago, the archaeological evi-
dence is equally compatible with the theory that Mycenaean craftsmen used mod-
els that had been brought to Greece by western mercenaries (Drews 1993, 64)[51].
As I have already explained, the discovery that an Italic language was spoken in
fourth-century-BC Praisos can only mean that eastern Crete received a substan-
tial group of Italian immigrants during the Late Bronze Age. This is surely a
powerful argument against the views of those anti-diffusionist archaeologists
who have tried to eliminate migration as part of the explanation for the appear-
ance of foreign artefacts in Mycenaean contexts. At the same time the inscription
from Praisos supports the views of those who have identified Italy rather than the
Balkans as the most likely place of origin of the migrants who introduced new
metal artefacts and a new type of pottery in the late-Mycenaean world.

4. Mercenaries from the West and the problem of Etruscan origins

If speakers of an Italic language moved to Crete during the late Bronze Age, it
is surely most economical to interpret the names of the Sea Peoples – or at least
the names of the five peoples mentioned in the Medinet Habu text – as refer-
ring to geographical areas in or near Italy. It has already been noted that the
Šrdn and *Škrš* of the Egyptian texts can plausibly be assigned to Sardinia and
Sicily[52]. It is then perhaps not far-fetched to identify the *Prst* either with the
Palaistênoi of North-East Sicily or with the inhabitants of Interamnia Palestina

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[50] Harding 1984, followed by Drews 1993, 64. Cf. also Snodgrass 1971, 307, on the appear-
ance of the so-called 'Peschiera daggers' in Mycenaean contexts (especially in Crete) from the
thirteenth century onwards. It is generally agreed that these daggers are of Italian origin.

[51] Cf. also Schnapp-Gourbeillon 2002, 81: 'On pense alors à des groupes de mercenaires'.

[52] As noted above (at n. 6), the identification of Sardinia as the homeland of the *Šrdn* is
supported by archaeological evidence. Cf. also Hvidberg-Hansen 1992.

in South Picenum[53]. Similarly, the *Dnn* may be identified with the inhabitants of Daunia and the *Wšš* with the Ausonians or the Oscans[54].

If these identifications are correct, it follows that the migrants who first went to Mycenaean Greece and then attacked Egypt as the Sea Peoples came from many different areas[55]. How then do we explain their simultaneous migration to the East? To the best of my knowledge there is nothing to suggest that the explanation lies in the operation of a common push factor, such as a wave of invasions affecting not only central and southern Italy but also Sicily and Sardinia. At the same time there can be no doubt that the various homelands of the migrants were united by one common feature: they were all in direct contact with the Mycenaean world[56]. This suggests to me that at least initially the emigration of substantial groups of Italians, Sicilians and Sardinians was triggered by a common pull factor, which I would identify as Mycenaean demand for western mercenaries.

As we have seen, this theory is in line with the recent view that the presence of 'Italian' artefacts in many parts of the Mycenaean world reflects the arrival of 'barbarian' immigrants who had been recruited for service in the armies of the Mycenaean world. If this reading of the archaeological evidence is accepted, we must abandon the traditional notion that these migrants, whom I would identify with the Sea Peoples, were always and necessarily a destructive force. In fact, we should seriously consider the possibility that, at least initially, the arrival of mercenaries from the West made some of the rulers of the late-Mycenaean world more powerful than ever before. In other words, even if *some* Italian immigrants may have played *some* part in the destruction of *some* Mycenaean palaces (e.g. as mercenaries employed by competing Mycenaean rulers), the archaeological evidence suggests that their migration to the eastern Mediterranean was a gradual process that was initially coordinated and controlled by interested parties within the Mycenaean world.

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[53] For the Palaistênoi of NE Sicily see Appian, *Bella Civilia* 5.117; for Interamnia Palestina see *Liber coloniarum* II, p. 259 Lachmann. Drews 1993, 67-69, detects evidence for people fleeing from Crete to South-West Palestine and also thinks that the indigenous population of South-West Palestine appropriated the story of the refugees' flight. Somewhat curiously this does not keep him from interpreting *Philistia* as an indigenous Canaanite toponym. If the Canaanite inhabitants of SW Palestine came to regard themselves as 'the remnant of Caphtor', why should not they have also appropriated the ethnical designation of the Cretan refugees?

[54] For the latter identification cf. Woudhuizen 2006, 115-116. While some classical authors identified Ausonians and Oscans, others seem to have regarded them as two separate peoples. See e.g. Salmon 1982, 10 and n. 40.

[55] A corollary of this inference is that only *some* of the Sea Peoples were speakers of an Italic language. Despite this caveat the similarity between the Philistine name Goliath and Latin *galeatus*, 'wearing a helmet', may not be coincidental. Cf. 1 Sam. 17:4-5: 'A champion came out from the Philistine camp, a man named Goliath, from Gath; he was over nine feet in height. *He had a bronze helmet on his head* …'.

[56] See e.g. Drews 1993 and Dickinson 1994, indices s.vv. Italy, Sardinia and Sicily, and the valuable survey by Buchholz 1999, 78-84.

A final point concerns the migration of the *Trš*, who have often been identified with the Etruscans. In my view, the majority of modern scholarship is absolutely right in placing this people in Italy during the Italian Bronze Age[57]. Yet the view that the Etruscans already lived in Italy at this early date has always run up against one major difficulty. If the Etruscans did not come from western Asia Minor, how do we explain the curious fact that a language closely related to Etruscan was spoken in the island of Lemnos in archaic times? The answer given by some specialists in the field of Etruscan studies is that the languages of the Etruscans and the Lemnians must represent two isolated remnants of a non-Indo-European language that was once spoken in large parts of Mediterranean Europe[58]. A fatal weakness of this theory is that it fails to explain how two languages can remain so similar after developing independently for at least 2000 years[59].

In my view, the inscription from Praisos suggests a plausible solution to this old problem. If the presence of an Italic dialect in classical Praisos can be explained as reflecting a migration from Italy to the Mycenaean world that took place during the Late Bronze Age, why should not precisely the same explanation hold for the Tyrsênoi of Lemnos?[60] In short, like the similarity between Praisian and Umbrian, that between Etruscan and Lemnian can be explained in terms of a migration of people from Italy to the East rather than by any movement of Tyrsênoi from East to West.

The exact circumstances in which a group of Etruscan-speaking people ended up in the northern Aegean cannot be recovered. According to Herodotus (6.137) the Pelasgoi received land in Attica in return for building the wall surrounding the acropolis of Athens. Although the historical reliability of this legendary tale is extremely doubtful, there is at least a remote possibility that it preserves a dim recollection of the arrival in Attica of a group of foreign immigrants and of their subsequent departure to another part of the Aegean world. Regardless of the value of such stories, it does not seem unlikely that mobility in the eastern Mediterranean increased as a result of the political disintegration which affected large parts of mainland Greece from about 1200 BC onwards. It does not seem

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[57] As many specialists have pointed out, there is no archaeological evidence whatsoever to support the theory of migration from the East. See e.g. the brief but useful survey of Aigner-Foresti 2001.

[58] Pallottino 1955, 62-63. Recent proponents of this view include Rix 1995 and Aigner-Foresti 2003, 19.

[59] On this point I am in complete agreement with Beekes 2003, 26, who estimates the time depth between Etruscan and Lemnian at some 2500 years and raises the question of 'whether so long a time distance is linguistically possible for these languages'. Cf. also Briquel 1992, 22: 'la proximité, très étroite, du lemnien et de l'étrusque nous paraît rendre douteux qu'il puisse s'agir de deux sortes de blocs erratiques, remontant à une lointaine préhistoire'.

[60] During the past thirty years only Gras 1976 has tried to explain the similarities between Etruscan and Lemnian along these lines. De Simone 1996 also argues that Lemnos was settled by Etruscans from Italy but assigns the arrival of these migrants to the archaic period. Cf. also Briquel 1992, 22.

far-fetched to speculate that at least in some cases this led to the expulsion or vol-
untary departure of groups of foreign mercenaries who had been recruited by var-
ious Mycenaean rulers during the thirteenth century. In other words, both the
Italic-speaking population of fourth-century Praisos and the Pelasgoi inhabiting
Lemnos in the sixth century BC may have been the descendants of groups of
Italian mercenaries who had migrated to various parts of the Mycenaean world
during the Late Bronze Age.

An advantage of this speculative theory is that it helps us to explain why the
material culture of the coastal area of South-West Palestine, which was con-
trolled by the Philistines in the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC, displays so
many 'Mycenaean' features. As many scholars have pointed out, the simplest
explanation for this is that both the Philistines and most of the other Sea Peoples
were immigrants from Mycenaean Greece and Crete. It would, however, be com-
pletely wrong to infer from this that these newcomers must have spoken a Greek
dialect. In my view, we must at least reckon with the possibility that most of them
spoke one the languages which were used in Sicily, in Sardinia and on the Italian
mainland during the Late Bronze Age.

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