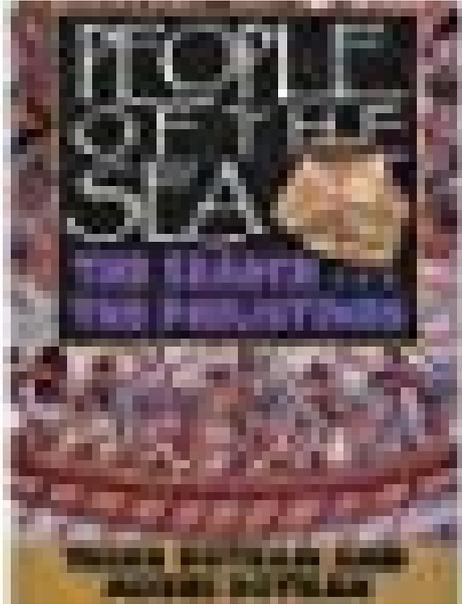


# People of the Sea: The Search for the Philistines



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The Philistines are among the most maligned peoples of ancient history. The Bible characterized them as cunning pagan warmongers, the ancient Egyptians as pirates and marauders. In today's language, a "philistine" is an uncouth, uncultured person. Thanks to the work of Trude Dothan and Moshe Dothan, three thousand years of bad press are at last giving way to a wholly different picture of the Philistines. Through their excavations and other studies, these two eminent archaeologists have unearthed startling answers to some of the great mysteries of biblical history, revealing the Philistines as a highly civilized people. They were advanced artisans and craftsmen, sophisticated architects and ecologically minded town planners. One of the Aegean Sea Peoples who settled on the southern coast of Canaan at the end of the twelfth century B.C., the Philistines entered history as the main adversaries of the Israelites, stigmatized by the wicked Delilah and the arrogant Goliath. While the nature of their written language is still a mystery, the nature of their civilization is not. The remains of monumental buildings, a flourishing olive-oil industry, cast bronze, iron, and ivory artifacts, weaving looms, wine presses, and a wide range of artistically distinctive pottery urge us to make a historical reassessment. In *People of the Sea*, the world's preeminent authorities on Philistine history and culture provide the first popular account of their ground-breaking work. Handsomely illustrated with line drawings, photographs, and maps, the book interweaves a fascinating history of the rise and fall of the Philistines with the first-person experiences of archaeologists at work. The result is a work that not only dramatically changes our understanding of an important and legendary era but also serves to illuminate an ancient civilization long lost to history.