

Sea Peoples of the Bronze Age Mediterranean c.1400BC-1000BC

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Sea Peoples in Sardinia c.1100BC (Sherden & Peleset warriors, Sardinian women)

Comments:

This is a good book and well worth reading but it is an odd book because so very little is known about the subject. As the sources section points out, the sources themselves are few, largely Egyptian and describe the Sea Peoples in fairly rudimentary terms. We don't know for sure who the various peoples were, where they came from and what ultimately happened to them. There are some surprises; most people -- myself included -- think that the Sherden (probably the most famous of the Sea Peoples) originated from Sardinia; the theory presented here is that they came from the Levant. The War of the Eighth Year section is an interesting Egyptian account of a campaign against the Sea Peoples covering a land and a sea battle.

So what do you get? A discussion of the (lack of) source material and a list of the various tribes of Sea Peoples. The Philistines, by the way, are here identified with the Peleset. The sections on tactics and military organisation are fairly vague & it left me with the

impression that the Sea Peoples were the Vikings of the Late Bronze Age. The section on clothing and equipment is interesting ó though we know very little and we can't even tell the difference between bronze and linen armour! Nevertheless the illustrations and colour plates are very informative (though the colour plate depicting a battle scene was too gory for my taste).

The take-away messages for me were:

- i. We don't know anything much about the period and it makes the Dark Ages look like 24-hour rolling news
- ii. Treat the Sea Peoples as you would Vikings in your games
- iii. When fielding armies on the tabletop, you can mix and match Sea Peoples figures as much as you like ó they often formed coalitions and no one really knows what anyone looked like anyway
- iv. Sea Peoples can feature as mercenaries in other Bronze Age armies and you can field them as either allies or enemies (or both) of New Kingdom Egyptians

A good book and worth a read if the Late Bronze Age is your thing.

