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THE ROLE OF THE RULER IN THE PREHISTORIC AEGEAN

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'MY BROTHER, MY SON': RULERSHIP AND TRADE BETWEEN THE LBA AEGEAN, EGYPT AND THE NEAR EAST*

Anthropologists have noted that in many preindustrial societies, "trade partnerships" are formed specifically to solve the problem of trading without kinship ties or state-supervised markets. As Harris has stated:

"The members of trading expeditions deal exclusively with their trade partners, who greet them as 'brothers' and give them food and shelter. Trade partners try to deal with one another in conformity with the principle of reciprocity, deny an interest in getting the best of the bargain, and offer wares as if they were gifts" ¹.

This is precisely the situation recorded in various Late Bronze Age Near Eastern texts such as the Amarna letters. Such documents record extensive quantities of goods traded between Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Cyprus, and Arzawa. The trade is, however, disguised as reciprocal "gift-giving" between "brothers", or "fathers" and "sons" ². Virtually all exchanges at the palatial level are recorded in terms of such reciprocal gift-giving; apparently the status of the royal participants precluded "normal" commercial exchanges. For example, an Amarna Letter (EA 17) sent by Tušratta, King of Mitanni, to Amenhotep III, Pharaoh of Egypt, provides testimony to the existence of exchanged goods:

"Say to Nibmuareya [Amenhotep III], the king of Egypt, my brother: Thus [says] Tušratta, the king of Mitanni, your brother. For me, all goes well. For you, may all go well. For Kelu-Hepa, [your wife], may all go well. For your household, for your wives, for your sons, for your magnates [chief men], for your warriors, for your horses, for your chariots, and in your country, may all go very well...

I herewith send you one chariot, two horses, one male attendant, one female attendant...As the greeting-gift of my brother, I send you five chariots, five teams of horses. And as the greeting-gift of Kelu-Hepa, my sister, I send her one set of gold toggle-pins, one set of gold earrings, one gold *mašhu*-ring, and a scent container that is full of 'sweet oil' " ³.

Another such royal letter (EA 14) consists of more than 300 lines of goods sent as a "gift" (*šulmānu*) from the King of Egypt to the King of Babylon ⁴. Included are objects of gold, copper, silver, and bronze, containers of perfume and sweet oil, finger-rings, foot-bracelets, necklaces, thrones, mirrors, linen cloth, stone bowls, and ebony boxes. At various places in the letter, totals are given. We see that objects weighing a total of 1200 *minas* of gold, 292 *minas* of silver, and 860 *minas* of bronze were given, along with 1092 pieces of cloth, several thousand stone vessels full of "sweet oil" and 163 empty stone bowls. The letter is by no

* The paper published here is a slightly revised version of that presented in the original colloquium. I would like to thank Paul Rehak and Nanno Marinatos for inviting me to participate. I am also grateful to Ellen Davis and members of the audience for their comments.

1 M. HARRIS, *Culture, People, Nature: An Introduction to General Anthropology* (1988) 286. See also M. MAUSS, *The Gift* (1950 [1990]); K.G. HEIDER, "Visiting Trading Institutions", *American Anthropologist* 71 (1969) 462-471.

2 See now M. LIVERANI, *Prestige and Interest: International Relations in the Near East ca. 1600-1100 B.C.* (1990) 197-202.

3 After W.L. MORAN, *The Amarna Letters* (1992) 41-42.

4 MORAN (*supra* n. 3) 27-37.

means unique; there are several others just like it in the Amarna archive in which the wares are offered "as if they were gifts".

During such exchanges, the kings involved frequently referred to themselves as relatives, in what may be recognized as the "trade partnerships" described by Harris and other anthropologists. For example, Amarna Letter EA 16 begins:

"Say to...the Great King, king of Egypt, my brother. Thus (says) Aššur-uballit, king of Assyria, Great King, your brother" ⁵.

Some kings pretend that this relationship is a physical reality. In one letter (RS 17.166:21'-28'), a king of Amurru says to the king of Ugarit:

"My brother, look: I and you, we are brothers. Sons of a single man, we are brothers. Why should we not be on good terms with each other? Whatever desire you will write to me, I will satisfy it; and you will satisfy my desires. We form a unit" ⁶.

Not all kings appreciated such presumptions, for rarely were the two kings really brothers in a genetic sense. One Hittite king replied in a huff (KUB XXIII 102: I 10-19):

"Why should I write to you in terms of brotherhood? Are we sons of the same mother?..." ⁷.

It is not always clear what merits use of the term "Brother", as opposed to "Father" and "Son". Is the older of the two kings referred to as "Father" while the younger is "Son"? If so, does the term "Brother" mean the kings are equal in age? Or, is the superior king called "Father", while the inferior is "Son"? If so, does use of the term "Brother" imply that the two kings are equal in status, regardless of age? Liverani, in his new book entitled *Prestige and Interest*, feels that "Father" is used as a term of respect only [for age] and should not be seen as a sign of dominance or superiority ⁸.

The Hittite kings used the terms "Father" and "Son" more frequently in their correspondence than any other major Near Eastern power. In the Amarna letters, the term "Father" is used only twice; "Brother" is the term employed in virtually every letter, whether it is addressed to the mighty King of Assyria or the less-powerful King of Cyprus. Moreover, "Brother" is used in these letters both to Kings who have reigned many years and to Kings who have recently attained the throne. The Egyptian Pharaohs, apparently, regarded the other Near Eastern Kings, their "trade partners", as members of a "brotherhood", regardless of age or years on the throne. They thus conform to the anthropological definition of a "trade partnership".

In such a partnership, as stated, "trade partners try to deal with one another in conformity with the principle of reciprocity". The Amarna letters show that the royal gifts were rarely given freely, for an obligation to reciprocate was immediately placed on the king receiving such a gift ⁹. Frequently, the goods desired in exchange were spelled out. In one such letter (EA 4), probably from Kadašman-Enlil of Babylon to Amenhotep III of Egypt, Kadašman-Enlil says:

"Moreover, you, my brother...as to the gold I wrote you about, send me whatever is on hand, as much as possible, before your messenger [comes] to me, right now, in all haste...If during this summer, during the months of Tammuz or Ab, you send the gold I wrote you about, I will give you my daughter" ¹⁰.

⁵ After MORAN (*supra* n. 3) 38.

⁶ After LIVERANI (*supra* n. 2) 200.

⁷ After LIVERANI (*supra* n. 2) 200.

⁸ LIVERANI (*supra* n. 2) 197-202.

⁹ LIVERANI (*supra* n. 2) 211-217; cf. I. KOPYTOFF, "The Cultural Biography of Things", in A. APPADURAI, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* 1986) 69; C. RENFREW, "Verna and the Emergence of Wealth in Prehistoric Europe", in APPADURAI, *op.cit.*, 161.

¹⁰ After MORAN (*supra* n. 3) 8-9.

Sometimes the Egyptian and Near Eastern kings reneged on promised gifts or sent a gift that did not match expectations. For example, in Amarna Letter EA 3, Kadašman-Enlil of Babylon complains to the King of Egypt:

"...you have sent me as my greeting-gift, the only thing in six years, 30 *minas* of gold that looked like silver" ¹¹.

In Amarna Letter EA 7, another complainant, Burna-Buriaš, King of Babylon, writes to the King of Egypt:

"Certainly my brother [the King of Egypt] did not check the earlier (shipment of) gold that my brother sent to me. When I put the 40 *minas* of gold that were brought to me into a kiln, not (even) 10 *minas*, I swear, appeared" ¹².

This, apparently, was a common problem for Burna-Buriaš, for he registers a very similar complaint in Amarna Letter EA 10:

"...the 20 *minas* of gold that were brought here were not all there. When they put it into the kiln, not 5 *minas* of gold appeared. The (part) that did appear, on cooling off looked like ashes. Was the gold ever identified (as gold)?" ¹³.

In some preindustrial societies, where goods are exchanged by "silent trade", such an inadequate gift would be left lying in the clearing where it had been deposited, signifying dissatisfaction on the part of one side or the other ¹⁴. Obviously, such action is not possible when the trading partners are separated by hundreds of miles. The kings could only demand further compensation in subsequent letters, and frequently did so.

Gift exchanges between Egyptian and Near Eastern kings often involved objects with prestigious histories, which had been in the trade loop previously. In one letter (KBo II 11 rev. 11'-14'), sent by Hattušili III to an unknown king (perhaps the king of Arzawa in southwestern Anatolia), Hattušili III says:

"Now then: I have taken a rhyton of silver and a rhyton of pure gold from the gift of the King of Egypt and I have sent them to you" ¹⁵.

As numerous scholars have discovered previously, cross-cultural comparisons between an existing culture and one long-dead can frequently provide explanations for behavior not otherwise understood. Here we may cite the Kula Ring of the Trobriand Islanders, first studied by Malinowski in 1922, as an example of a modern-day preindustrial society which exchanges objects which vary in value according to their history of ownership ¹⁶. In the case of the Trobriand Islanders, armbands and necklaces are traded between the chiefs of each island, with the value of each object increasing and decreasing depending upon its lineage and past history of ownership. The prestige of the trading partners also increases and decreases according to which armband or necklace is currently in their possession. If our cross-cultural comparison holds true, the King of Arzawa must have seen it as a sign of respect and honor that the Hittite King was sending him rhyta of gold and silver which had originally belonged to the King of Egypt.

11 After MORAN (*supra* n. 3) 7.

12 After MORAN (*supra* n. 3) 14.

13 After MORAN (*supra* n. 3) 19.

14 HARRIS (*supra* n. 1) 285; C.S. COON, *A Reader in General Anthropology* (1948) 594.

15 After C. ZACCAGNINI, "Aspects of Ceremonial Gift Exchange in the Near East During the Late Second Millennium B.C.", in M. ROWLANDS, M.T. LARSEN, and K. KRISTIANSEN, eds., *Centre and Periphery in the Ancient World* (1987) 58; cf. also LIVERANI (*supra* n. 2) 227.

16 B. MALINOWSKI, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922); cf. also MAUSS (*supra* n. 1); J.P. SINGH UBEROI, *Politics of the Kula Ring* (1962); J.W. LEACH and E. LEACH, eds., *The Kula: New Perspectives on Massim Exchange* (1983).

Now, it is clear that much trade in Egypt and the ancient Near East was conducted in the guise of "gifts" sent on a court-to-court basis and that "trade partnerships" were formed between the king of Egypt and the king of Babylon, the king of Egypt and the king of Cyprus, and so on. Ignoring all other forms of commerce for the moment, is there any evidence that the rulers of Egypt and the Near East ever practised gift exchange or formed "trade partnerships" with the rulers in the Aegean? In order to answer this question, we must first ask: did Egypt and the Near East *recognize* kings or rulers in the Aegean area?

The answer appears to be "Yes". In the Egyptian tomb of Menkheperesenb, we are shown the "Prince of Keftiu", that is, the Prince of Crete, in the company of the Prince of the Hittites, the Prince of Tunip and the Prince of Kadesh¹⁷. The title used to identify the figures, *wr*, meaning "Prince" or "Chief", is the same in each case. The *Annals* of Thutmose III (42nd Year) similarly refer to the "Prince of Tanaja", that is, the Prince of Mainland Greece:

"Tribute from the Prince of Tanaja: a silver *shawabti*-vessel in Keftiuan workmanship together with four bowls of iron (copper?) with handles of silver. Total: 56 *deben* 4 *kite*"¹⁸.

In Anatolia, Hittite texts frequently refer to the "King of Ahhiyawa", using the same word, "LUGAL", as is used to describe other Great Kings. Indeed, in the well-known Šaušgamuwa Treaty (KUB XXIII 1 IV 3) dating to the time of Tudhaliya IV ca. 1250 B.C., "the king of Ahhiyawa" is mentioned in the same breath as the king of Egypt, the king of Babylonia, and the king of Assyria, though his name was later crossed out, for reasons which are still debated¹⁹. Assuming that Ahhiyawa is Mainland Greece, an equation which I accept, it is clear that the Hittites, like the Egyptians, *did* recognize the existence of various rulers in the Late Bronze Age Aegean.

Now we may ask: did the rulers of Egypt and the Near East exchange gifts with the rulers of the Late Bronze Age Aegean? Again, the answer appears to be "Yes". In the letter (KBo II 11 rev. 11'-12') sent by Hattušili III to an unknown king (perhaps the king of Arzawa) about 1275 B.C., we find mention of a possible gift from the king of Ahhiyawa, presumably sent to Hattušili himself:

"Concerning the gift of the king of Ahhiyawa, about which you wrote to me, I do not know how the situation is and whether his messenger has brought anything or not..."²⁰.

In numerous Egyptian tombs, men from Keftiu are shown carrying objects meant for the Pharaoh. The word identifying these objects in the accompanying inscriptions is usually identified as "tribute", which does not sound much like a gift. However, Schulman says that while this word, *inw* (Wb. I, 14), is regularly used in the sense of tribute, it also has a secondary meaning of "gifts"²¹. The same word is used in the *Annals* of Thutmose III (Year 33 and 41) to describe goods given by the Hittites. As Schulman says,

"there is no evidence that Egypt's relations with Hatti at this early period were of such a nature that Hatti paid tribute to Egypt. This is what a vassal state does to its overlord and Hatti certainly never was a vassal of Egypt. What is involved here is clearly an allusion to some kind of embassy from Hatti to the

17 J. STRANGE, *Caphtor/Keftiu* (1980) 50-51.

18 After STRANGE (*supra* n. 17) 96.

19 F. SOMMER, *Die Ahhiyawa-Urkunden* (1932) 320-327, Tafel VIII 2; C. KÜHNE and H. OTTEN, *Der Šaušgamuwa Vertrag* (1971).

20 After T.R. BRYCE, "The Nature of Mycenaean Involvement in Western Anatolia", *Historia* 38 (1989) 8; cf. also LIVERANI (*supra* n. 2) 227.

21 A.R. SCHULMAN, "Hittites, Helmets and Amarna: Akhenaten's First Hittite War", in D.B. REDFORD, ed., *The Akhenaten Temple Project* vol. 2: *Rwd-Mnw, Foreigners and Inscriptions* (1988) 57-58. Note that LIVERANI (*supra* n. 2) 255-266, prefers the technical translation of *inw* as "supply", rather than as "gift" or "tribute".

Egyptians which included the presentation of gifts. The Egyptians, however, with their characteristic egocentric sense of superiority, would have represented such gifts as tribute" 22.

Surely the same case holds true for the goods pictured coming from Keftiu; they were not "tribute", but were meant as gifts from the ruler of Crete to the ruler of Egypt.

Thus, the Keftiu represented in the Egyptian wall paintings bearing gifts for the Pharaoh are clear examples of commerce conducted under the guise of gift (or tribute) giving. The Amarna letters attest to the popularity of such transactions between the Pharaoh and various Near Eastern rulers. Virtually all such exchanges at the palatial level are recorded in terms of reciprocal gift-giving. It would be no surprise to learn that the Mycenaean and Minoan envoys to the Pharaoh followed the same principles and practices as the envoys from the Kassite, Babylonian and Hittite kings of that time.

The above instances all document gifts from Aegean rulers to Egyptian and Near Eastern rulers. Is there any evidence for such gifts being sent to the Aegean? I have suggested in previous papers that the 14 Amenhotep III/Queen Tiye objects in the LBA Aegean area are the only recognizable remnants left of a royal gift sent from Egypt 23. Such a gift would originally have included perishable goods and luxury objects without royal cartouche, such as stone bowls, linen cloth, ebony furniture, and other items frequently listed in the Amarna tablets. Similarly, Porada has suggested that the Near Eastern cylinder seals found in LH IIIB contexts at Boeotian Thebes represent a royal gift, one mina of lapis lazuli objects, sent by Tukulti-Ninurta I of Assyria to the Mycenaean king at Thebes 24. The numerous alabaster vessels found at Knossos, Isopata and Katsamba on Crete may also be the remnants of royal gifts.

We should also note that most of the 857 Egyptian and Near Eastern objects in the Late Bronze Age Aegean are found at the major Mycenaean and Minoan centers, such as Mycenae and Tiryns on the Greek Mainland, Knossos, Kommos and Kato Zakro on Crete, and Ialysos on Rhodes 25. This is by no means an indication of royal gift giving, but it may indicate directional trade in action, in which a ship sails from a specific point of origin to a specific destination. The distribution pattern suggests that these major Mycenaean and Minoan centers initially received the Egyptian and Near Eastern goods, and subsequently redistributed some to the surrounding villages and smaller communities.

There is also a little textual evidence, but we must use it cautiously. Finley has pointed out that in the *Odyssey* (IV.610-620), Menelaus offers Telemachus his finest and most valuable treasure 26:

"...a well-wrought mixing bowl. All of silver it is, and with gold are the rims thereof gilded, the work of Hephaestus; and the warrior Phaedimus, king of the Sidonians, gave it me (says Menelaus)" 27.

The silver bowl apparently arrived in the Aegean as a gift specifically from the King of Sidon, in Syro-Palestine, to Menelaus, the King of Sparta. There are other examples of gift exchange to be found elsewhere in Homer as well, including numerous gifts received by Odysseus as he made his way home to Ithaca from the Trojan War.

22 SCHULMAN (*supra* n. 21) 73 n. 55.

23 E.H. CLINE, "Amenhotep III and the Aegean: A Reassessment of Egypto-Aegean Relations in the 14th Century B.C.", *Orientalia* 56 (1987) 1-36; IDEM, "An Unpublished Amenhotep III Faience Plaque from Mycenae", *JAOS* 110 (1990) 200-212; IDEM, "International Trade in the Amarna Period: Egyptian and Near Eastern Imports at LH III Mycenae", in G.D. YOUNG and B.J. BEITZEL, eds., *Tell el Amarna: 1887-1987* (in press).

24 E. PORADA, "The Cylinder Seals Found at Thebes in Boeotia", *AfO* 28 (1981) 68-70, 77.

25 E.H. CLINE, *Orientalia in the Late Bronze Age Aegean; A Catalogue and Analysis of Trade and Contact Between the Aegean and Egypt, Anatolia, and the Near East* (UMI Microfilms: 1991).

26 M. FINLEY, *The World of Odysseus* (1956) 121.

27 After A.T. MURRAY, *The Odyssey*, v. 1 (Loeb trans.:1919) 150-153.

Homer also describes (*Odyssey* IV.120-128) a silver basket belonging to Helen, Menelaus' wife:

"which Alkandre, had given her, the wife of Polybos, who dwelt in Thebes of Egypt, where greatest store of wealth is laid up in men's houses" 28.

Apparently, Alkandre of Egyptian Thebes gave Helen other items as well, while her husband Polybos gave Menelaus two silver baths, two tripods, and ten talents of gold (*Odyssey* IV.128-131) 29. We must not forget the role that women played in such gift exchanges; Malinowski completely underestimated the role of the women in gift exchange during his classic study on the Trobriand Islanders 30. In the Amarna letters, gifts to wives are frequently mentioned, and daughters are seen as the consummate commodity available for exchange 31. Thus, in correspondence (EA 1) between Kadašman-Enlil I, king of Babylon, and Amenhotep III of Egypt, we read:

"Here you are asking for my daughter in marriage, but my sister whom my father gave you was (already) there with you, and no one has seen her (so as to know) if now she is alive or if she is dead... It is a fine thing that you give your daughters in order to acquire a nugget of gold from your neighbors!" 32

We may note that Homer's descriptions of gift-giving mirrors what we know of Late Bronze Age practices in the Near East. It is certainly possible, therefore, that the gift-giving found in the *Odyssey* is a dim reflection of Late Bronze Age practices within the Aegean itself. Thus, to judge from both archaeological and literary evidence, we may answer, "Yes", there *is* evidence that the rulers of Egypt and the Near East practised gift exchange with the rulers of the Aegean during the Late Bronze Age. The sheer numbers of the Orientalia found in the LBA Aegean area suggest, however, that there must have been numerous voyages made during this period. Surely the official embassies and diplomatic missions were far outnumbered by transactions conducted on a more mundane, commercial level. Most of the 857 Orientalia found in the LBA Aegean area offer little to aid in resolving the situation, however, for they proffer no clue as to the sponsors of their voyage to the Aegean 33.

We may now ask a further question: is there any evidence that the various palaces *within* the Aegean practised gift exchange among themselves? Unfortunately, Linear B doesn't tell us much about gift exchange, although Killen has pointed out that *xenwia*, an adjective related to *xenia* of Classical Greek and probably meaning "for guest-welcoming" or "for guest-gifts", is found describing both cloth and olive-oil in various Linear B tablets at Knossos 34. However, if we use Homer, once again very cautiously, it does seem that gift exchange was practised within the Aegean itself. As Killen and Finley have pointed out, both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* provide evidence that gift-giving existed in Greece during the Iron Age and probably during the Late Bronze Age as well. We have already seen the example of the great silver bowl offered by Menelaus to Telemachus. The bowl was not the first gift Menelaus offered to Telemachus: he had previously offered (*Odyssey* IV.590-592):

"...splendid gifts, three horses and a well-polished car; and...a beautiful cup, that thou mayest pour libations to the immortal gods, and remember me all thy days" 35.

28 After MURRAY (*supra* n. 27) 114-117.

29 MURRAY (*supra* n. 27) 116-117.

30 HARRIS (*supra* n. 1) 432-434; A. WEINER, *The Trobrianders of Papua New Guinea* (1988) 4-7.

31 A.R. SCHULMAN, "Diplomatic Marriage in the Egyptian New Kingdom", *JNES* 38 (1979) 177-193; now also LIVERANI (*supra* n. 2) 274-282.

32 After MORAN (*supra* n. 3) 1-2.

33 CLINE (*supra* n. 25).

34 J.T. KILLEN, "The Linear B Tablets and the Mycenaean Economy", in A. MORPURGO-DAVIES and Y. DUHOUX, eds., *Linear B: A 1984 Survey* (BCILL 26: 1985) 263-264.

35 After MURRAY (*supra* n. 27) 150-151.

It is also clear that the same standards held in Egypt and the Near East were present in the Aegean as well. For instance, the giving of a gift usually created an immediate sense of obligation to reciprocate. This comes as no surprise, for as we have noted above, anthropologists have found that "trading partners" usually deal with one another in conformity with the principle of reciprocity. Thus, in Book One of the *Odyssey* (I.315-319), Athena (who has appeared in the guise of Mentos, a Taphian chieftain) says to Telemachus:

"Stay with me no longer, when I am eager to be gone, and whatsoever gift thy heart bids thee give me, give it when I come back, to bear to my home, choosing a right beautiful one; it shall bring thee its worth in return" 36.

Such gift-giving in the Aegean frequently involves objects with great lineage. As Finley has said, concerning the silver bowl offered by Menelaus to Telemachus,

"a trophy with such a history obviously shed greater glory on both donor and recipient than just any silver bowl" 37.

Thus, again, as with the Trobriand Islanders and the Kings in Egypt and the Near East, in the Homeric Aegean an object with a prestigious lineage meant more to both the giver and the receiver; the status of both rose accordingly.

What, then, in conclusion, can we say about the role of the ruler in the Aegean world in connection with trade during the Late Bronze Age? For one thing, it is apparent that there *were* rulers in Crete and Mainland Greece, who were recognized as such by the Great Kings of Egypt and the Near East. It is further apparent that the Kings of Egypt, Hatti, and elsewhere in the Near East practiced the most elevated form of commerce, gift-giving, with the Mycenaean and Minoan rulers.

The 857 Egyptian and Near Eastern objects found in the Late Bronze Age Aegean and the wealth of objects found on board the Ulu Burun (Kaş) shipwreck were already good indications that we cannot study Bronze Age Greece in isolation, for those objects indicate that the Aegean was obviously in frequent contact with Egypt and the Near East during the latter half of the second millennium B.C. Such contacts ranged from the commercial transactions of independent merchants to emissaries sent from one royal court to another. Now, we may add the literary evidence as further indications that the Late Bronze Age Aegean was firmly within the commercial orbit of Egypt and the Near East and that some of these Orientalia reached the Aegean via gift exchanges.

Moreover, we cannot forget that these high level gift exchanges were merely the tip of the iceberg. Malinowski found, in the case of the Trobriand Islanders, that while the chiefs were in the ceremonial centers exchanging their armbands and necklaces according to traditional pomp and circumstance, the men who had served as crew on the canoes which transported the chiefs were busy trading with the locals on the beach for food, water, and other necessary staples of life 38. Such mundane commercial transactions were the *real* economic motives underlying the ceremonial gift exchanges of the Trobriand chiefs, but they would never admit to that fact. Similarly, we must not underestimate the importance of the merchants and sailors who were transporting the royal gifts across the deserts of the ancient Near East and overseas to the Aegean.

It is clear that there was much contact between Egypt, the Near East and the Aegean during the Late Bronze Age, and transfers of ideas and innovations no doubt occurred. We must imagine that such transfers of ideas took place not only at the upper levels of society, but

36 After MURRAY (*supra* n. 27) 26-27.

37 FINLEY (*supra* n. 26) 121.

38 MAUSS (*supra* n. 1) 27-29; HARRIS (*supra* n. 1) 287-288; G. IRWIN, "Chieftainship, Kula and Trade in Massim Prehistory", in LEACH and LEACH (*supra* n. 16) 71-72; G. SCODITTI, "Kula on Kitava", in LEACH and LEACH (*supra* n. 16) 265.

also at the inns and bars of the port cities in Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean. Where else would a sailor or crew member spend the long weeks waiting for the wind to shift to the proper quarter, or waiting for a diplomatic mission to conclude its sensitive negotiations, but in taverns and bars, swapping myths, legends and tall tales? I can readily envision such mundane events taking place; resulting, occasionally, in dramatic cultural influences reaching Greece from Egypt and the Near East.

Finally, we should note that gift exchanges between Near Eastern rulers frequently included physicians, sculptors, masons and skilled laborers (cf. KUB 367, KUB 366, KUB 367, KBo I 10+, KUB 3 71), who were exchanged between the various royal courts³⁹. It is perhaps no wonder that there are certain similarities between architectural structures in Egypt, Anatolia, Syro-Palestine, and even the Aegean, if the same architects, sculptors and stonemasons were working in each area. The recent finds of Minoan wall-paintings and painted floors at Tell Kabri in Israel and Tell el-Dab'a in Egypt indicate that Aegean artisans may well have made their way to Egypt and the Near East in just such a manner⁴⁰.

Eric H. CLINE

39 See especially C. ZACCAGNINI, "Patterns of Mobility among Ancient Near Eastern Craftsmen", *JNES* 42 (1983) 250-254; LIVERANI (*supra* n. 2) 227-229.

40 W-D. NIEMEIER, "Minoan Artisans Travelling Overseas: The Alalakh Frescoes and the Painted Plaster Floor at Tel Kabri (Western Galilee)", in R. LAFFINEUR and L. BASCH, eds., *Thalassa. L'Egée préhistorique et la mer. Actes de la troisième Rencontre égéenne internationale de l'Université de Liège, Station de recherches sous-marines et océanographiques (StaReSO), Calvi, Corse (23-25 avril 1990)* (*Aegaeum* 7: 1991) 189-201; M. BIETAK, "Minoan Wall-Paintings unearthed at Ancient Avaris", *Egyptian Archaeology* 2 (1992) 26-28.