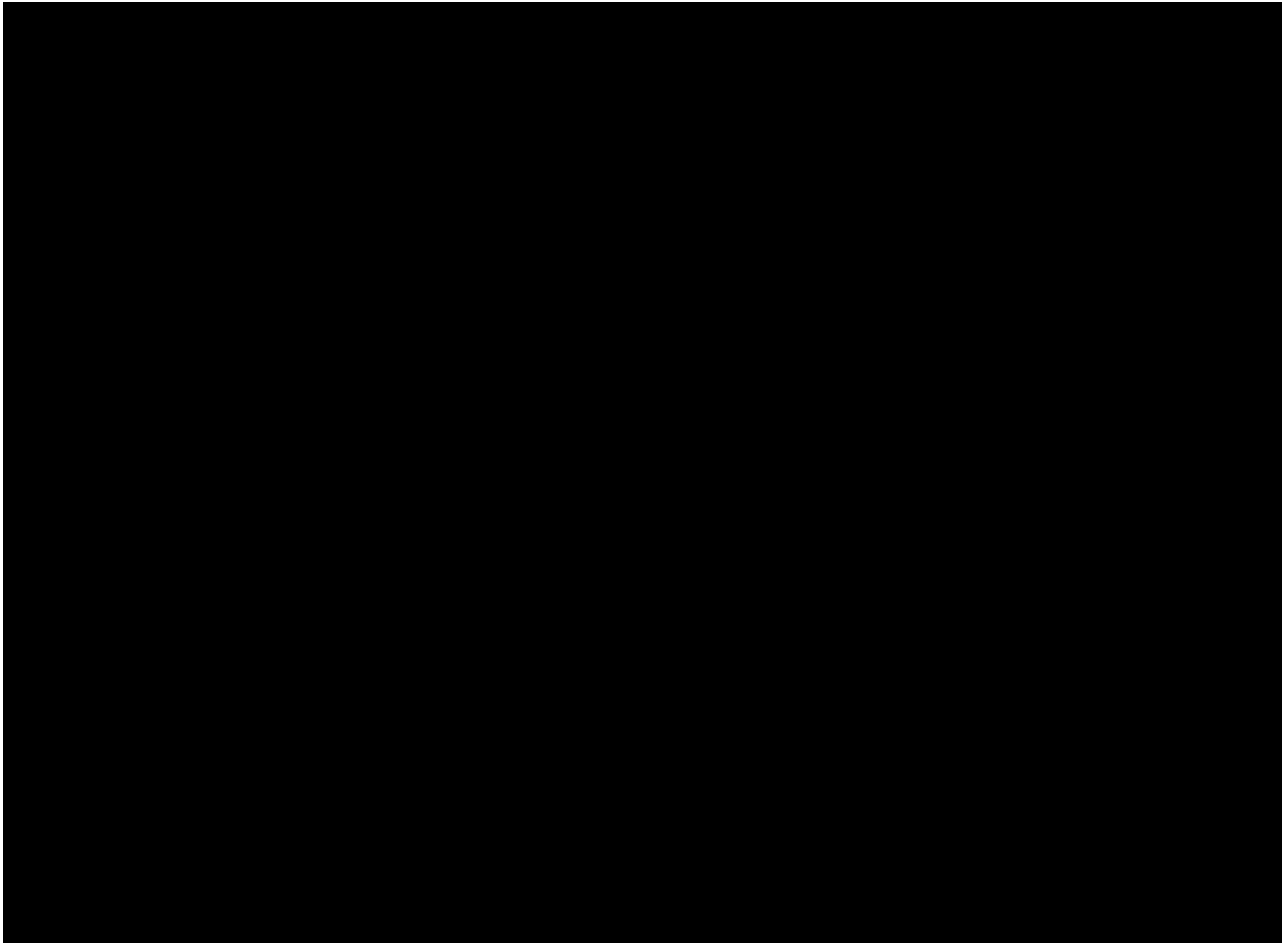# The Transmission of Courtly Lifestyles in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at University College London

I, Carl Robert Walsh confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

The Transmission of Courtly Lifestyles in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean

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This thesis offers and applies a new theoretical and methodological framework for understanding the diplomatic relationships between the ancient court societies in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean (Egypt, Upper Nubia, Levant, Anatolia, and the Aegean) with particular focus on the Middle Bronze Age covering first half of the 2nd millennium BC. Previous scholarship on diplomacy has largely concentrated on the philological analyses of Late Bronze Age diplomatic texts and the artistic styles of luxury visual arts, attempting to identify the origins of specific artistic styles and correlate gift lists with actual material objects. This thesis departs from these prior studies by adopting a more firmly sociological and anthropological approach, focusing on the social and ceremonial contexts of diplomatic activity. In particular, the role of etiquette (ritualized and codified forms of behavior) in diplomacy is the primary focus. Via a holistic analysis incorporating material culture, texts, and art, the thesis discusses how forms of etiquette can be reconstructed from the archaeological record, if forms of etiquette transmission can be identified, and the extent to which these transmissions can be used to reconstruct diplomatic relationships.

Acknowledgements

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I would also of course like to thank my parents and siblings for all their love and support. Particularly my mom whose work at the Getty when I was a kid sparked my interest in the ancient world (though I never grew to love pots, sorry mom).

Lastly, to Juan, whose support and love kept me sane.

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INTRODUCTION: HOLD ON TO YOUR SEAT

By the end of this reading this thesis you may find that you can no longer sit comfortably and that chairs will be given a more skeptical eye before being sat in. While this might seem rather alarmist, what few realise is that gestures and behaviours, which we consider natural physiological adaptions or 'second nature', often trace their origins in our own social past, having been modified and transmitted between societies over thousands of years. In this PhD thesis I examine how some of these gestures played important roles in modes of courtly comportment and were transmitted through inter-regional diplomacy conducted between court societies of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. Looking in particular at the Middle Bronze Age (2000-1550 BC), I demonstrate the ways in which court societies used material culture, architecture, art, and the human body in the construction of social etiquette and ceremony, which was used as a means of expressing and regulating social hierarchy and identity. Social etiquette can take culturally distinctive forms, and by examining its manifestations within the archaeological, textual and artistic records, this thesis traces the transmission and propagation of elite behaviours among court societies in the Eastern Mediterranean through the lens of diplomacy.

The decision to explore the subject of gesture, behaviour and diplomacy largely arose from the dearth of anthropological and sociological approaches to diplomacy and the study of court societies in the Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean. Most of the past and current research utilised philological and art historical approaches exclusively analysing diplomatic archives (Cohen and Westbrook, 2000; Liverani 1990; Mynářova 2007) and/or tracing the origins of artistic motifs (Crowley 1989; Feldman 2006; Kantor 1947). While these studies certainly provide original contributions to diplomatic research, they also brought with them chronological, geographical and theoretical limitations, further discussed in Chapter 3. This has largely lead to a degree of stagnation on how scholars approach and address diplomacy, and how they interpret both older and newly excavated material. In addition, the limitations of these studies on diplomacy had resulted in the obvious exclusions of certain societies, particularly the Kerma Culture in Upper Nubia (modern Sudan). These limitations of past and current research on diplomacy lead me to decide that there was a particular need to address these problems, but to do so through providing a new and engaging theoretical approach that would hopefully inject new interest and attention to the subject.

To this end I have constructed a theoretical model that examines the role of gesture and etiquette, in diplomatic relationships between court societies. The construction of this new theoretical model forms the subject of the first three chapters of the thesis. Here I clarify exactly what I mean by the term 'etiquette' and its underlying mechanics and concepts; examining a variety of sociological, psychological and anthropological theories, such as socio-cognitive theory, social learning theory, and agency. This examination provides a background on the main body of research that has been done on how human behaviour can be actively shaped, manipulated and constructed by human beings into forms of etiquette. I apply these conceptions to a case study in Chapter 1 of a recently invented form of etiquette, netiquette; the prescribed and expected ways in which human beings behave through the online digital world.

This discussion establishes that etiquette, as a highly complex and context specific set of behaviours, could be an important way of marking social status and prestige, aspects which were essential in the operation of royal courts. Court societies, famously discussed by Norbert Elias in his work *The Court Society*, are social constructions comprised of select group of people whose interactions are managed and structured through etiquette. Working with such a definition allows us to consider that courts of the Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean must also have had similar forms of etiquette that can be explored.

Having established the important role that etiquette plays in managing and navigating the social hierarchy of court societies, the logical conclusion was that these behaviours must have also structured and managed the relationships and interactions *between* courts. Chapter 2 discusses the use of etiquette by courts and diplomats in early modern Europe in expressing status and prestige, highlighting how diplomats were liminal and plenipotentiary agents who roved around different courts often creating mayhem. Further, this would lead to the finding of similar concerns and mentions of etiquette in diplomatic archives of the Bronze Age, demonstrating that at this time, diplomacy, as a court activity was indeed structured and managed by forms of courtly etiquette.

Chapter 2 also outlines a review of the past and present scholarship on eastern Mediterranean diplomacy during the Bronze Age, highlighting the problems that were mentioned above, and indicating the areas that need to be addressed. In particular, I stress that the large amount of discussion of diplomatic archives has lead to these sources completely dominating our geographical and chronological parameters regarding diplomacy, and that texts are seen as the primary source from which we can reconstruct diplomacy. I

question this entirely, providing a detailed critique of the role of literacy in eastern Mediterranean diplomatic systems and court societies, firmly shutting the door on the notion of literacy and texts being the primary mechanism and aspect of diplomacy. I then conclude the chapter through exploring if societies without a writing system, namely the Kerma Culture, can participate that uses written communication. The results of this were surprising and will re-evaluate how we view interactions between literate societies and those who do not use a written script. This of course also opens the door to allowing us to finally incorporate the courts of Kerma in a wider eastern Mediterranean diplomatic context.

The result of this theoretical discussion is the context from which we can begin to address the main research questions of the study. Can etiquettes be traced in the archaeological record? And if so can we use these material traces as evidence for the transmission of forms of behaviour between courts? In Chapter 3 I return to the idea of an archaeology of etiquette, particularly noting pieces of recent research that have picked up on how forms of gesture and behaviour can be reconstructed from material, textual, and artistic sources, and how foreign objects can be material markers of transmission of these gestures and behaviours. Building on these ideas, I put forward a methodology that examines the role of architecture and material culture in tracing the transmission of foreign courtly etiquettes. To achieve this I constructed two datasets. The first was a set of specific building types, palatial buildings and royal/elite residences, which I could examine comparatively to identify similarities and the presence or foreign architectural features and designs. The second was a select corpus of court objects relating to specific type of gestural techniques (sitting, cosmetic application, and drinking), which had been identified as being foreign to their find contexts. These objects would be analysed in regards to how they facilitated forms of etiquette, and if these etiquettes were foreign in origin. The analysis of these datasets would then allow the identification of transmissions in etiquette between courts, which could then be explained through the mechanism of diplomacy.

In the following chapters I outline the results of my analysis, demonstrating how my approach is able to reconstruct forms of behaviour being transmitted between royal courts during the Middle Bronze Age. These results are then explained in relation to the mechanics of diplomacy, highlighting that only this form of interaction would have facilitated the type of transmissions and exchanges of courtly lifestyles which were found.

CHAPTER 1: ETIQUETTE AND COURT SOCIETIES

In this chapter I establish a working definition of the concepts of etiquette and court society, as well as examining some of the theoretical concepts and models regarding the relationship between these two social phenomena. In this manner, I will seek to demonstrate how etiquettes are active social constructions, utilizing socio-cognitive processes, which require personal and collective decisions to employ behavior; rather than being passive subconscious ways of acting. To this end I place an emphasis on human agency and cognition in constructing and performing behavior, with choices to conform or deviate from prescribed ways of acting. Building from this argumentation, I will continue by discussing the concept of 'court society', in which I will determine how court societies employ etiquettes are a means of expressing and negotiating power relationships. Here I will put forward my own model of court sociology adapted from the work of the German sociologist Norbert Elias (1969), in which to examine the courts of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. Bearing this model in mind I will then examine what evidence we have for court societies and structures in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean, determining if my proposed model can be applied to the varied societies within this region and time period. The chapter will then conclude with a discussion of the ways in which we can reconstruct court etiquette from the archaeological record through a holistic approach which considers and utilizes all of the available evidence and sources.

1.1 ESTABLISHING THE PROPER ETIQUETTE

Etiquette refers to an interconnected web of behaviours that can be employed in various different ways to produce codified forms of comportment within specific social settings. A variety of different terms have arisen to describe such forms of behaviour: *manners*, *courtesy*, *civility* and *politeness* being the most prominent. These terms have their own history and sociocultural context, but scholars have often used them interchangeably or perceived specific differences between them, resulting in a rather confused set of terminologies. Further, the specific contexts where these terms originate also bring sociocultural preconceptions, which can be inappropriate in a cross-cultural study. We therefore need to ascertain and critically consider our terminology.

As this study will examine behaviour types found in court settings, *courtesy*, with its etymological root in *court,* seems the most appropriate place to start. The term is derived from the prescribed ways of behaving in the presence of a royal personage within the courts of Renaissance Europe (Goodwin 1999, 19). However, this term resonates with preconceived sociocultural connotations of behaviour that are European in historical origin, particularly notions of being "graciously polite and respectful of position and feelings of others" (www.oed.com). *Manners*, *civility*, and *politeness* also suffer from the same preconception, being grounded in moralistic modes of behaviour within European courts.

The term *etiquette* offers more potential. It is derived from the French *l'estiquette*, referring to a ticket or instructions, and which is used to designate the prescribed ceremony of court and the conventional rules of personal behaviour (Goodwin, 1999.19). This term is preferred here because it is free from inherent implications of behaviour (Goodwin 1999, 10, 43), but rather, refers to the nature and process of the behaviour being codified and/or ritualised within specific ceremonial social contexts. *Etiquette* places emphasis upon social processes used to construct behaviour within social contexts rather than on behaviours with moralistic origins in European history.

Etiquette is a mechanism by which behaviours are ritualised, codified and regulated within certain sociocultural groups and delineates social identities and interactions between and amongst such groups (Elias 1939; Goffman 1956, 476-7; Rossano 2012, 532; Wright 2004b, 90). 'Codified and ritualised' refers to the way in which gestures are bound as a group of procedures within a given context, becoming a distinct mode of performance and behaviour in select settings and at certain times (Goffman 1956, 476; Bryson 1998, 12-3; Gomes 2003, 362). *Etiquette* governs and structures the way people behave and conduct their bodies within social settings; creating codified forms of behaviour that express hierarchy and inclusion/exclusion (Douglas 1971, 61). For example, commensal events often involve codified modes of behaviour termed 'table manners'; involving a variety of ways of comportment such as seating arrangements, modes of speech and address, topics of conversation, ways of eating, types of food and drink consumed, and timings for serving food and drink. All types of etiquette help to structure the ways people behave within a certain context (in this case, the act of eating) while also marking social hierarchy and identity. The word *mechanism* is useful when defining *etiquette* because it implies that etiquette is not only a corpus of rules for employing behaviour, but also it is an active process in which these behaviours are formulated.

1.2. Constructing Etiquette: Socio-Cognitive Theory and Agency

Etiquette as a mechanism through which behaviours are selected, as well as repressed, involves deliberate decisions to employ or avoid specific behaviours. As such, etiquette construction involves active human cognition regarding behaviours to select or avoid and how to employ and teach said behaviours. I believe that elements of socio-cognitive theory from social psychology can be useful in explaining how behaviours can be selected for the construction of etiquette. Such an approach, with a focus of human agency, demonstrates that etiquettes are dynamic social constructs, subject to continual potential for change.

As a set of context specific behaviours, etiquettes are not natural and instinctual behaviours (Rossano 2012, 529). Instead they must be constructed, learned and taught by people. Thus the construction and performance of etiquette involves personal agency, that is, personal and collective decisions on how human beings will act within these specific contexts. But how are these behaviours selected and established as a set of codified behaviours?

Social psychology can provide some models on how specific behaviours used in the development of etiquette can be constructed, accepted and replicated through socio-cognitive learning and behaviour selection processes. Social cognitive theory (Bandura 1977; 2001; Rosenthal and Zimmerman 1978) (initially known as social learning theory) is concerned with how people learn behaviour from one another. It mainly explains behaviour selection and learning through the processes of imitation (Miller and Dollard 1945), observational learning, and modelling (Ormrod 2008, 118). These processes stress the personal agency and cognition that underlies many aspects of human behaviour (Bandura, 2001, 2006), requiring intentionality, forethought, self-regulation, motivation and self-efficacy (Bandura 1997; 2006, 164-5). Socio-cognitive psychologists see learning and behavioural selection and construction as being based on human beings being able to think, plan, evaluate and execute some aspects of their own behaviour. They also recognise that human beings are not autonomous agents, but rather that there is a reciprocal causation between behaviour, personal cognition and the environment (Triadic Reciprocal Causation) (Bandura 1989, 1175; 1997, 6).

These decisions to learn and perform behaviour are largely based on awareness of outcome expectations based on response-consequence contingencies (positive and negative reinforcements resulting in response-reinforcement and response-punishment associations) which develop through personal experience or observation of the consequences of other people's behaviour (Ormrod 2008, 119). Taking an example using learning through

modelling, an individual may observe a model performing a certain behaviour and subsequently observe the consequence of this behaviour on the individual (rewards or punishments). Decisions to imitate and replicate this behaviour are then influenced by the observed consequences, with positive consequences leading to an increased likelihood of performing the behaviour. This is due to the formation of a response-reward contingency, the expectation and incentive of a reward in replicating the behaviour (Bandura 1977). However, this type of learning is not confined to just learning from others, it can also result from personal experience and performance and largely depends on a person's self-efficacy, their perception of their ability to perform behaviour.

The socio-cognitive approach to behavioural selection and learning is relevant in discussing etiquette construction in the way that it underlines the personal agency in human behaviour, stressing how personal decisions and individual cognition lead to the learning and performance of behaviour. However it also recognises that environmental factors, particularly other people's behaviour and responses, are also essential elements in behaviour selection and performance. It is also useful in explaining how completely new behaviours can be accepted and replicated by others. Modelling works particularly well in teaching and learning new behaviours, as it is an interactive and involved process that requires both learner and model to actively interact with one another, often using motor reproduction and providing reinforcement through guidance and correction (Bandura 1977; 1986; Schunk 1981). For example in the case of learning sports techniques, learners can observe and then reproduce techniques from a teacher, who can then continue to provide reinforcement through corrections and positive feedback. This leads to a response-reinforcement association, making it more likely that the behaviour will be replicated by the learner. As such new forms of behaviour can be taught and replicated quite easily.

Socio-cognitive researchers such as Bandura have focused on how behaviours are learned and selected, but they have not widely discussed how these socio-cognitive processes can provide a means to repress and avoid behaviours. From what I can gather it has been implied that behavioural repression and avoidance are largely accomplished as a side product of selecting desired forms of behaviour. But I believe that behaviours can also be intentionally repressed through the formation of response-punishment associations, in a similar way that behavioural conditioning operates. In this case forming a response-punishment contingency for a specific behaviour would result in this behaviour being unlikely to be replicated by individuals. Returning to the example of learning sport

techniques, incorrect techniques are repressed or avoided through providing feedback and correction from a model. As etiquettes can include specific avoidance of behaviours, in forms such as taboos, the formation of response-punishment associations can be a useful method for achieving these behavioural repressions. In these cases individuals can learn to avoid behaviours not only through modelling and personal experience but also through verbal instructions, without ever observing or performing the said behaviour (Ormrod 2008, 128). In this manner, socio-cognitive processes can also enable etiquettes to include behavioural taboos and specific ways of *not* acting within certain contexts.

I purpose that socio-cognitive processes provide a appropriate method through which behaviours can be selected, replicated and repressed in the construction of etiquettes within societies. This has been noted by Gomes (2003, 369), who mentions modelling as a means of reproducing etiquettes in medieval court societies in the Iberian Peninsula. Such an approach underlines the personal and collective agency involved in etiquette construction and regulation. Furthermore it demonstrates that etiquettes are not static, they are social constructions that can be subject to continuing modification through the innovation, adaption and repression of the behaviours that constitute them.

1.3 CASE STUDY: NETIQUETTE AND ONLINE BEHAVIOUR

A relevant example of etiquette construction in modern society is the development of 'netiquette'. Netiquette refers to a number of different sets of etiquettes regarding social interaction over online networks (Pręgowski 2009, 354). These etiquettes are a very recent phenomenon in modern society, and as such provide an interesting example of how behavioural selection and repression continue to be essential aspects of modern social life.

Computer mediated communication (CMC), refers to any form of interpersonal communication that takes place over the Internet or intranet networks, and was developed in the 1960s (Christopherson 2007, 3039; Pręgowski 2009, 355). Originally there was no perceived need did not have a perceived need to regulate behaviour, as the early Internet users were small in number, in similar professions and conformed to etiquette tied to their profession (Keisler et al 1984, 1126; Castells 2001; Pręgowski 2009, 354). However, with the massive development of technology and global accessibility of the Internet, came an equally massive online audience and participants from a variety of cultures and social contexts who were interacting through CMC (Christopherson 2007). Chatrooms, forums, blogs, online

gaming, emails and other forms of CMC provided venues for individuals to interact. However, these forms of interaction faced problems on two levels.

Firstly new members of this online community had little awareness and knowledge of the already established etiquette used amongst veteran Internet users. This lack of awareness could cause conflicts between established users and new users in perceived breaches in behaviour e.g. lack of technical knowledge, carelessness and irresponsibility (Pręgowski 2009, 362).

Secondly, as the conflicts between users demonstrated, there was also the fact that CMC is completely divorced from physical social contexts and the senses of the human body (Keisler et al 1984, 1125; Christopherson 2007). Without supporting non-verbal social and paralinguistic cues, such as gestures, speech, spatial positioning and increasing deindividuation, disinhibition and social anonymity, these interactions had the potential to cause and exacerbate social conflicts (Barak 2007, 305; Christopherson 2007, 3041; Dyer et al 1995; Lapidot-Lefler and Barak 2012, Zimbardo 1969). They also allowed the potential development of unwanted antisocial forms of behaviour, which were perceived as uncooperative, deceptive (Barak 2007, 314-16; Hancock 2007), abusive/aggressive (Coffey and Woolworth 2004; Lapidot-Lefler and Barak 2012; Zimbardo 1969) or resulted in miscommunication (Pręgowski 2009, 362-3).

To address these problems, online communities and users who encountered such behaviour began formulating their own indexes of specific types of desirable and undesirable online behaviour (Pręgowski 2009, 354). These etiquettes provided efforts to reduce antisocial behaviour, miscommunication and conflicts in CMC. Such efforts from different communities resulted in heterogeneous sets of rules and procedures, as communities and individuals formulated their own context specific etiquettes regarding online behaviour (Pręgowski 2009, 365). While these etiquettes varied they were enforced through similar procedures of response-punishment contingencies for non-conformity (such as social stigmatization, condemnation, and exclusion) that helped to repress and regulate unwanted behaviour, while supporting selected pro-social behaviour (Pregowski 2009).

The construction of netiquette is therefore a recent example of the selection, repression and regulation of behavior using etiquettes. The conscious decisions for behavior selection and repression highlight that etiquettes are active social constructions. Individuals most make decisions on what forms of behavior are desired and how these can be enforced as a set of normative procedures, using socio-cognitive processes to enforce them. However, the role

of human agency in behavior selection and repression also opens etiquettes as being vulnerable to decisions not to conform. If the sanctions against undesirable behavior are not deterrent enough or there is some incentive to deviate in behavior then the etiquette can be resisted or even rejected. As we will explore below there is even the possibility that modifications and 1new forms of etiquette can be produced through non-conformity.

1.4 DEVIATING FROM ETIQUETTE: REWARDS AND RISKS

Participating in scenarios which adhere to codified forms of behaviour can be a risky endeavour (Schieffelin 1996, 80). There is always the opportunity for mistakes to be made within such environments, which might have social, psychological, cosmological, political or economic repercussions for participants (Howe 2000, 69-70; Hüsken 2007, 350; Schieffelin 1998, 198). Deviations in behaviour during events involving etiquettes, such as rituals or ceremonies, may result in a number of different responses but are often particularly influenced by the implications they have on established social hierarchy (Bell 1992, 196; Brown and Small 2007, 21-32; Howe 2000, 69-72; Polit 2007, 199). Breaches of rules of behaviour may in some cases be unavoidable and may be forgiven, overlooked, corrected, or unnoticed (Snoek 2007, 102-103; Weinhold 2007, 64, 68; Wulff 1998, 113-5). In some cases they may even be encouraged or deemed constructive or innovative (Hüsken 2007, 346; Wulff 1998, 114). In other cases, even slight deviations could be labelled as 'mistakes' and result in impacts on an individual's or social group's status and position within social hierarchies (Schieffelin 1996; Hauser-Schäublin 2007). This is a particular risk, as etiquettes are commonly used in important social contexts, such as rituals and ceremonies, which can involve a large number of participants and audiences with competing agendas. Deviations in such situations can be open to criticism and contestation, allowing perceived transgressions to facilitate the questioning of authority and status, possibly even the renegotiation of position within social hierarchies. In this manner, participating in interactions governed by etiquette requires a constant attention to prescribed etiquette in order to prevent and minimise status damaging deviations.

While breaching behavioural rules may result in repercussions, in certain contexts it may actually have greater benefits than costs, incentivising different ways of acting. Deviations from established etiquettes can be a mark of status and authority within social hierarchies, particularly when the deviator has an already established high position within the hierarchy (Hüsken 2007, 344-45). In these cases individuals can portray themselves as being those who

are competent, eligible and licenced to diverge from prescribed behaviour (Hüsken 2007, 345). Rudolph (2007) demonstrated that competing members of the elite, who used modifications of ritual practice in order to gain social prestige and political power, instigated deviations and modifications in ritual performance in modern Taiwan. In this case breaking or modifying established codified behaviour was used as a tool in which to gain power and prestige. Similarly Snoek's (2007, 104) examined the introduction of a new gesture in a Masonic ritual by a Master of Ceremonies. In this case the individual was complimented by members of the congregation for the inclusion of the gesture, leading to increased respect and recognition of the deviators status. These examples highlight that deviations in prescribed behaviour provide opportunities for individuals to acquire social prestige and power and that individuals who are perceived by others as being figures of authority can dictate forms of behaviour and modify forms of etiquette (Hüsken 2007, 344-45).

Deviations in behaviour can also be used as subversive acts of established power structures and social hierarchies. In these cases they might be attempts to renegotiate power relationships through modifications in prescribed ways of acting. Merz (2007) has noted how deviations in possession rituals, *puja*, in Nepal can result in the renegotiation of status. Merz describes a particular *puja* ceremony in which three mediums, a *guru* and an older and younger student, performed a possession ritual. The three usually were possessed by three hierarchal deities; a mother (the teacher) her eldest daughter (the eldest student) and the youngest son (the youngest student). During the ceremony the eldest student expressed an unusual behaviour in prolonged weeping and subsequent explanation by the deity that she had reached maturity and could take the responsibilities of the her mother, the higher ranking goddess. The deviation here did cause a questioning of the authenticity of the medium but actually resulted in an overall increase in her perceived status (Merz 2007, 220). In this case the medium's deviation in prescribed behaviour acted to subvert the hierarchical relationship between herself and her *guru*, raising herself to the same status as her teacher. This example demonstrates how deviating from codified behaviour can result in renegotiating social hierarchy, resulting in this case in a rise of social standing.

However, intentional deviations are inherently risky endeavours that can have negative social consequences (Durkheim 1893; Elias 1939. These can entail a loss of respect and social status as well as invoking emotional responses such as fear, anger and disgust (Smith and Phillips 2004; Durkheim 1893; Elias 1939). In the above example we can see that although the medium had a long term rise in status, her deviation still caused a negative reception in

her authenticity. If this deviation had not been eventually accepted by the audience then she no doubt would have found herself facing social repercussions. Thusly the ability for individuals to successfully deviate is largely based on their ability to convince others in their performance, which can based on a number of factors such as status, identity, agenda and intention, and degree of deviation (Chao 1999, 526; Hüsken 2007, 349; Schieffelin 1996, 80; 1998, 198, 202-03). Snoek (2007, 105) noted in another example of Masonic ritual, a case in which a candidate for 'Master of Ceremonies' was given the chance to fill this role on a singular occasion to demonstrate his capability. During the ritual he intentionally deviated from Masonic ritual etiquette regarding the non-expression of interpretation, and proceeded to talk on this subject. This backfired when the audience rejected his deviation, subsequently resulting in him failing to be elected and ever acquiring the position (Snoek 2007, 105). In this case a single intentional deviation in etiquette had profound implications on the individual's social status.

The participation in events and contexts involving etiquette therefore presents a dynamic social game in which behaviours are continually being innovated, adapted and resisted. Players must pay continual attention to any changes in established etiquette, and chose to conform to or contest/resist new forms of behaviour. Failure to do so could result in loss of status and prestige and possible renegotiation of position within established power structures. Additionally modifications of etiquette and additions of new behaviours can present individuals with opportunities to renegotiate their position within social hierarchies, gaining potential social and material rewards. However such deviations in established ways of acting are also fraught with risk, as these deviations can result in failure and subsequent loss of status and position. These aspects to etiquette become particularly important to consider in the following section, where we will determine the role etiquette plays in expressing and negotiating the social hierarchy of court societies.

1.5 THE COURT SOCIETY: ETIQUETTE AS A MEANS TO POWER

The majority of etiquette research has focused on the etiquettes used in the social arenas of courts, particularly royal courts and elite communities of early modern Europe (Elias 1939; 1969; Bryson 1998; Duindam 2003). These studies have highlighted that etiquette formed an essential part of constructing court and elite identities, and of expressing and negotiating status and rank within the court social hierarchy. However, it was the work of the German sociologist Norbert Elias (1939; 1969) who first really demonstrated that etiquettes could be

a primary ways for regulating and manipulating behaviour and managing the power relationships (particularly between the king and the court) in courts societies (Asch 1991, 3).

What exactly defines a 'court'? Elias gives an interesting description in *The Court Society* (1969), which outlines some of the key concepts modern scholars attribute to courts:

> At such a 'court' hundreds and often thousands of people were bound together in one place by peculiar restraints which they and outsiders applied to each other and to themselves, as servants, advisers and companions of kings who believed they ruled their countries with absolute power and whose will the fate of all people these people, their rank, their financial support, their rise and fall, depended within certain limits. A more or less fixed hierarchy, a precise etiquette bound them together. The necessity of asserting themselves within such a figuration gave them all a special stamp, that of court people. (Elias, 1969.35)

This description provides us with some key definitions of a court. Firstly, a court consists of a group of people who hold a variety of roles and positions but are bound together as members of that court. Within this collective group there are three main categories of social actor: the ruler/rulers and their immediate family, a wider court elite, and a service industry (who provide more menial labour and services but nonetheless are an important part of the social milieu). Secondly, there is a physical setting in which a court operates. This is usually a palace but can involve other types of buildings which could provide physical settings for reception. Elias (1969, 42-4) saw that the social dynamics of 'the court' were not confined to the single physical context of the ruler but had wider participation amongst the urban and rural homes and venues of the court elite; hence his discussion of 'court society' rather than 'the court'. This has been elaborated in later research which emphasises that court structures can be replicated and imitated in the entourages of courtiers and members of the royal family outside of the royal court, leading to a plurality of 'courts' (Gomes 2003, 274-75). Lastly, courts are bound together by a social hierarchy and etiquette. Within this framework attempts to influence and control decision-making and acquire power and status leads to a particular "theatricality", pomp and ceremony, which we associate with courts (Spawforth 2007, 3).

Elias recognised that court society was more than just a form of outmoded consumption but rather was a distinct social entity with a crucial formative role in European society. His work, *The Court Society,* has been hugely influential because he was the first to formulate a sociology of court society, where courts were constructed by concrete social mechanisms

that could be analysed. Etiquette was the primary mechanism through which the social hierarchy of court society was expressed and regulated. Careful attention to etiquette both demonstrated an individual's position within a hierarchy and was the means by which individuals could negotiate and manoeuvre for position within the hierarchy. Etiquette, through its myriad ways of construction, offered a means by which court members could formulate ways of behaving which evidenced inclusion and position within the court while also differentiating courtiers from those who did not belong to court society. Elias exemplifies etiquettes through modes of speech, differentiating language of a female member of court from a man of lower social position:

> 'I am much obliged to you Madame", he says "for the trouble you are taking to instruct me, yet it seems to me that the term 'deceased' is a well established word used by a great many well-bred people". "It is very possible", the lady answers " that there are many well-bred people who are insufficiently familiar with the delicacy of our language...a delicacy which is known to only a small number of well-spoken people and causes them not to say a man is deceased in order to say that he is dead' – (Elias 1939, 95)

This example demonstrates how the language of etiquette can facilitate inclusion and identity-making as well as delineate the respective behaviour of court and non-court individuals. Etiquette acts as a means to construct and formulate the social fabric of court society and its members, which Elias saw as a means to power. In this way, rulers could formulate etiquettes which centred around the royal body and daily activities, placing themselves in a central position as the providers of royal favour and patronage. Competition for prestige, status and rank amongst the court was regulated therefore through forms of etiquette that often centred upon the body of the king, and the practice of these forms of behaviour became a mark of status and rank amongst the court. Elias' (1969, 84) evidenced this through the *levée* of the French kings, the morning rising and dressing of the king. A mundane and ordinarily perceived private act became transformed into a ceremonial activity, which offered a privileged inclusion into the king's intimate sphere and an hierarchical division of entrants to assist the varied stages of the king's dressing (Elias 1969, 84). The decision to include and exclude certain members of the court in this ceremony provided a means for rulers to manage court etiquette and hierarchy. For members of the court it presented the opportunity to acquire and express prestige, status and rank. Thus,

position and rank were structured by a regulated corpus of etiquettes, with competition for prestige being a means of control for rulers.

Elias' conception of the court as one structured by etiquette and driven by competition for status and prestige through royal favour is the key issue relevant for this study. I believe these elements are particularly useful in exploring concepts of court society within the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. To this end I adopt a model of court society based on these basic concepts. However, there are a few further clarifications and elaborations needing to be encompassed in the conception of court society before we can proceed to examining court societies within the Bronze Age.

Firstly, is a point that refers to one of the man critiques of Elias's model; his portrayal of the court operating through an absolute monarchy, in which the king is the sole wielder of power and the court elite are effectively disempowered through a perceived slavish conformity to court etiquette surrounding the body of the king (Asch 1991, 3; 2003, 133; Duindam 2003, 10-11). In fact this approach underplays the role of courtiers in etiquette construction and their ability to chose to conform or resist court etiquettes. As I determined above, deviations from established etiquette can also bring rewards and renegotiate status, something which Elias did not take into account. Recent research into courtiers has highlighted that in fact members of the court elite had considerable power to modify and resist court etiquette, and that the adherence and construction of etiquette allowed an on-going discourse of status negotiation between and amongst the king and courtiers (Asch 1991, 4; Duindam 2003, 7-10; Elliott 1999, 7; Spawforth 2007, 5). Smith (2009, 16), for example notes that French courtiers could resist the etiquettes of Versailles through nonattendance of ceremonial events at court and through propagation of their own forms of etiquette. A similar situation occurred at the Vienna royal court, where members of the elite would resist etiquettes tied to courtly titles through non-attendance at court (Asch 2003, 97). In some cases the rulers might find themselves pressured into conforming to modified or introduced etiquettes made by courtiers, or having to accept the rejection of etiquettes by courtiers. For instance attempts to modify court etiquette by Philip IV of Spain were heavily resisted by courtiers who felt such modifications infringed on their status and prestige (Elliott 1977, 175). Subsequently modifications to court etiquette by the ruler were quite rare, highlighting the power of courtiers in choices to resist and reject etiquettes imposed by rulers (Asch 2003, 99-100). In light of this evidence I would clarify that I perceive the use of etiquette to not be the sole monopoly of the ruler but to be a part of a continuous

process of status negotiation in which both the ruler and the court were able to participate in. In this way the ability of courtiers to influence and manipulate court etiquette, and the ruler, is recognised. This will become particularly important on discussing the role of diplomats in transmitting foreign types of etiquettes between courts later on.

Additionally, due to the nature of Elias' study and the questions he was attempting to answer, some aspects of court societies were underplayed in his study. Of particular note is the role that divine kingship and cosmology plays in the structure of court societies. Elias did indeed note that there are many forms of ceremonial events that take place within court societies, but he mainly viewed this from a sociological viewpoint, not taking into account the role of cosmology in the formation of etiquette. Modern anthropological research has demonstrated that cosmology and ritual practice can hold prominent places in the structure and mechanisms of some court societies. Geertz's (1980) work on the Negara courts of Bali emphasises the role of cosmology in the formulation and structure of court ceremony, ritual and hierarchy. Ceremony and pageantry, he argued, formed the central purpose of the court, as such ritual action materialised cosmic order and through such symbolism sustained it. Within this symbolic framework the ceremonial and ritual activities of the king and court, particularly etiquettes relating to royal and elite cremations (Geertz 1980, 117), enabled competition for status and prestige (Geertz 1980, 123). Ritual practice and etiquette have also been seen to play an essential part of the structure of court society of the Imerina state on Madagascar (Bloch 1987) In particular the ritual of the royal bath involves a number of ritual stages, which involves very precise ritual practices and etiquettes involving the purification and bathing of the ruler which is then manifested and amplified through similar yet different ritual actions and etiquettes by the entire population (Bloch 1987).

These examples demonstrate that Elias' basic approach to the structure of the court, with its basis in 17th Century Europe, needs to be adapted to take into account not only the sociological, but also the cosmological underpinnings of court structures, etiquettes and hierarchies. Doing such enables us to take into account historical and cross-cultural differences in court societies, recognising that etiquette is used not only for socio-political goals but also for ritual action, with the distinction between the two often blurred. Such an approach will be essential in examining the ancient court societies of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean, as we will see below.

A final point that I need to emphasise is the implications of using analogical inference in regards to Elias's model to the context of the Bronze Age in the eastern Mediterranean. The

critiques outlined above and the examination of the evidence for court societies in this study region below make clear that while I believe an adapted version of Elias's model can be used to examine these societies, I am not implementing an uncritical transplantation. Elias's underlying research questions in this work in *The Court Society* and *The Civilizing Process* are very different to those of this study, with his interest in the long-term development of modern European society and perception of courts as being 'gilded cages' intent on disempowering courtiers (Duindam 2011, 5-7). Additionally, Elias restricts himself in his range of sources, with *The Court Society* being largely based on the writings of Saint-Simon (Spawforth 2007, 5). As such, the processes and conclusions he comes to are very rooted in the Eurocentric bias and context of his sources. These I fully recognise and instead the model I use is based on the sociological conceptions of how etiquette can be used in expressing identity and regulating social hierarchy within court societies. I see certain similarities and analogies between the formal attributes of Elias' court society of early modern Europe and the court societies of the Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean, but at the same time, put forward and embrace a number of formal differences (for further discussion of the role of analogy in archaeology see section 3.1.2). To this end I put forward a model that uses some analogical inferences from Elias, but treats the court societies of the eastern Mediterranean as distinct and unique social entities rooted in the context of the Bronze Age.

1.6 COURT SOCIETY IN THE BRONZE AGE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

The region of the Eastern Mediterranean region encompasses such a variety of geographically and chronologically distinct societies that adopting a single model of court structure would not only be impossible but risk ignoring the various unique elements of such courts which made them so dynamic and interactive. In this section, I want to outline some of general types of courts that we can see within the region; though this is not intended to be a comprehensive review of all Eastern Mediterranean court societies. Instead I wish to underline that the court societies within the Eastern Mediterranean all shared a concern for the management of intra and inter-regional social interactions and power relationships.

It has been argued that the majority of Bronze Age societies in the Eastern Mediterranean were orientated on socio-political structures dominated by a monarchy. Spawforth (2007, 14) suggests even a certain courtly koiné in the region of the Near East with a shared concept of sacred monarchies. This has led to modern views of Bronze Age power in which central authority is invested in a singular ruler, usually male, within the framework of sacred

or divine monarchy. A more explicit model of this is that of the 'patrimonial household', first suggested by Weber (1976; 1978) but later developed for Bronze Age Near Eastern kingship by Schloen (2001). In this model Schloen (2001, 51, 208) suggests that Near Eastern society typically consisted of a pyramid of patrimonial households, with the topmost being that of the king and all lower households being notionally part of an extended royal household. In this way the court became the extended family of the king who in turn was thought to act as a father figure. In this manner relationships between the king and court are negotiated through individual patronage and real or invented ties of kinship. Such an approach certainly has resonance in many of the court structures in the Near East and Egypt where we do have power structures based around a (usually) male ruler, with institutions organised as extended elements of the king's household (Schloen 2001, 313). In addition looking at inter-regional diplomacy we find usage of familiar terms such as 'my brother', 'my father', 'my son' used to express social position and revealing that family relations, even if artificial, had important psychosocial underpinnings in realising and expressing power relations. In addition, the central figure of a male ruler is often linked to cosmological organisation of human bodies in relation to divine spheres. In Egypt, this is particularly apparent where the divine king was not only the head of the social household at the court and head of state but also the cosmological figurehead and interface between the material and the divine (Frankfort 1948; Silverman 1995, 67). As such, relationships between the king and court were structured through social mechanisms within a cosmological framework.

However, the patrimonial household model, while useful in recognising that many court structures in the Eastern Mediterranean operate using a patriarchal monarchy, cannot be generalised to the entire Eastern Mediterranean (Fleming 2004, 79). Indeed, within the Near East we find a number of examples of different court structures, such as group collective power structures manifested in city assemblies. Fleming (2004, 236) notes that collective groups appear to have held a certain degree of power and influence in Near Eastern courts, pointing to mentions of assemblies (which appear to have been heavily affiliated on different tribal lines) in the Mari Archives, particular at the Middle Bronze Age (MBA) city of Emar which had no king but instead a city assembly. Powerful and influential collective groups are also paralleled at MBA Assur and in Old Babylonian society (Seri 2005, 188). Here power seems to have been shared between a king who acted as a ceremonial and religious figure, while economic and political power were held by a city assembly consisting of members of prominent merchant families (Larsen 1976, 152-9). While the king acted as the head of this assembly, power and decision-making were shared with the rest of the

assembly (Dercksen 2004, 76). In a slightly more hybrid situation we also find political structures of coalitions and confederacies which may involve power shared between peer rulers or involve a ruler with more authority than others but reliant on the cooperation of other rulers, as evidenced for the kingdom of Yamkhad which appears to have been organised more as a confederacy of kingdoms. In these situations we may have multiple competing but cooperating court structures.

In addition there is evidence to suggest that court structures may have been more diffuse, especially when the society could be divided by tribal identities and power structures. For instance in northern Sudan we have evidence for a permanent court with a singular ruler, who may have been considered divine (Kendall 1997, 50) at the huge urban centre of Kerma, demonstrated through monumental royal burials, palatial and ceremonial buildings, and Egyptian textual references to a King of Kerma (Kendall 1997, 48-9; Redford 1997, 15; Säve-Söderbergh 1949). However, the power relationship between Kerma and the regional hinterland might have been different from what we find in typical patrimonial monarchies or collective groups. Part of the population outside Kerma itself where likely nomadic pastoralists, judging from the importance of cattle and caprines in daily life and funerary culture (Chaix and Grant 1992; Bonnet 2004a, 75) and therefore probably highly mobile. The leaders of such local mobile groups probably held a certain degree of power within different areas of the region. Trigger (1985, 470) and Hafsaas-Tsakos (2009, 66) suggest that the kings of Kerma probably exerted control and dominance over these pastoralist groups through the formation of alliances or military action. In this manner, while there was a central permanent court and ruler at Kerma itself, we may find that there were a plurality of court-like structures (e.g. entourages) in the region that were based around more mobile nomadic groups and their leaders.

Similar situations might be found in the Near East, particularly at Mari in southern Syria, where there is considerable evidence documented in the Mari Archives for a number of powerful, mobile, tribal groups (Matthews 1978; Fleming 2004). The support of these groups was vital for the king of Mari to maintain control of his territory, and there appears to have been a great deal of interaction between the court and these local tribal rulers (Fleming 2004, 24-5, 62). In fact Zimri-Lim, a king of Mari, was himself a member of one of these tribal groups (Fleming 2004), demonstrating the intimate and complex relationships between permanent courts linked to fixed, urban, architectural spaces and more mobile elite groups using more ephemerally constructed, semi permanent, architectural spaces (e.g. tents and

modular furniture that can be deconstructed and carried easily). We therefore must take into account the more diffuse court structures that accompany a more tribal society, in which these nomadic groups are not peripheral, but are active agents with court like structures of their own in the form of mobile entourages (Fleming 2004, 231-2).

These different examples indicate a situation where court structures could vary across time and space within the region, with patrimonial monarchies, collective peer groups, and more diffuse court structures based around tribal groups, used in a variety of configurations that were often culturally specific.

On the other hand the Aegean, particular the 'Minoan' culture on Crete but also including the Cyclades and Dodecanese, presents a situation where the identification of court societies is problematic. MBA Crete is unusual in that it lacks both deciphered written records and prominent royal art recording the presence of an individual ruler, but does contain monumental buildings termed 'palaces' or 'court compounds'. The very idea of Minoan kingship and court society is largely based on the Eurocentric romanticism of Arthur Evans's identification of 'priest kings' from the Prince of the Lilies fresco and the assumption that the large monumental buildings termed 'palaces' must have been the homes to such rulers and princes (Koehl 1995, 24, 27). Deconstruction of such assumptions has lead to varying theories and focuses as to how Minoan society was organised, particularly in relation to issues of gender and matriarchy (Koehl 1995). Indeed, the very nature and identification of palaces as the central seat of authority has been brought into question, particularly when considering that some major non-palatial centres such as Archanes-Tourkogeitonia, Kommos, and Ayia Triada nevertheless have high profile buildings (Schoep 2002, 16; Day and Relaki 2002, 224). The artistic evidence from sealings and frescos has also been contentious, with some trying to identify imagery of kings and queens and royal iconography (Marinatos 2007). Such identification is difficult to convincingly argue, but there is evidence to suggest that there were authoritative and commanding individuals in Minoan society in some cases associated with buildings that resemble 'palaces'; particularly the heraldic figures seen in some sealings from Knossos and Khania (Krattenmaker 1995, 50).

Given the ambiguity of the archaeological evidence the political structure of Crete has therefore been a topic of much debate. A number of models are currently being debated, but three in particular should be mentioned here; that of a unified state under Knossian domination (Weiner 2007), that of peer polities, with regional centres that controlled a hinterland (Cherry 1986; Schoep 1999, 2000; Warren 2002), and heterarchical societies. The

first two models have received a great deal of attention and discussion, with variants and combinations of aspects from each being suggested throughout the Bronze Age period on Crete. As such there is no real consensus on which of these models or their variants are appropriate, though there does seem more of a gravitation of thought towards increasing centralisation at Knossos by the LBA (Hamilakis 2002a, 181). However, these models still largely operate under the implicit assumption of some kind of individual ruler or perhaps collective ruling group over a highly stratified society. The factional model on the other hand suggests a different theoretical approach based on the idea of informal leader based heterarchical structures in society that are vertical rather than horizontal (Hamilakis 2002a). In this manner there are no stratified pyramidal power structures but rather leader based groups comprising of a variety of backgrounds but who share common cosmologies and ideologies. Within these factions competition is a primary driving factor in society (materialised in 'material culture wars' based around conspicuous consumption at social gatherings) in the desire to acquire followers and prestige (Hamilakis 2002a, 186-188).

In total these three models form the main theoretical approaches to how society was organised on Crete during the Bronze Age, highlighting that there is still much work to be done before any agreement can be made. Given this, is it appropriate to view Bronze Age Crete as a court society in the same degree as other eastern Mediterranean court societies? I don't believe at this time that we can say Crete was in any way conforming to a social structure transplanted say from Egypt or the Levant. However, I do believe there is reason to believe that some kind of hierarchical or heterarchical social system was in place and that the 'palaces' were places for ceremonial social gatherings that would have been governed and managed through similar constructions of etiquette found in other court societies of the region. In fact I think it is both important and fascinating that we recognise the potential for something quite different occurring on Crete politically and socially, and that perhaps the underlying reason for the Aegean's rather odd interactions with the rest of the eastern Mediterranean during the Bronze Age may be down to these differences.

We can therefore see that within the Eastern Mediterranean there is a great deal of potential variety in the configuration of court structures, but that the two main elements used appear to be patrimonial monarchies and collective groups and assemblies. What is key in these power structures is the way in which power and social relationships are formulated and regulated between and amongst rulers and court members. This is where Elias' concepts of etiquette come into play, emphasising the way in which codified forms of behaviour both

define and delineate power relations and identity. For example Bernbeck (2008, 166) has suggested that instances of divine kingship in Mesopotamia were attempts by the king to use new etiquettes as means of forging new social and cosmological relations between king and court. Examining the Akkadian king Naram-Sin, Bernbeck suggests that by moving himself into the sphere of the divine the king was able to change the nature of the relationship between himself and the court, placing himself in a more exalted and elevated position which required more ritualised interaction and etiquette. This may have been the case in many instances of king's claiming divine status in Mesopotamia, which were likely politically and socially motivated (Winter 2008, 88) In this way we can approach the court structures of the region, even if we might not know for certain their exact configuration, from the point of view of examining the role that etiquette can be used to manage and define court interaction on both intra and inter-regional levels.

1.7 CASE STUDY: OLD KINGDOM COURTLY TITLES AND ETIQUETTE

At this point it would be useful to provide an example of the role etiquettes played in structuring and regulating court hierarchy and interaction in the court societies of the Eastern Mediterranean. To illustrate my model, adapted from Elias, I have chosen to examine a specific corpus of material, courtly titles, within the context of Old Kingdom (2750 BC – 2150 BC) Egypt. These titles demonstrate the essential role that etiquette surrounding the body of the king played in managing, negotiating and expressing hierarchical relationships between and amongst the Egyptian king and court during this period.

The Old Kingdom provides a variety of textual, material and artistic evidence for a highly elaborate set of court etiquette. The diverse pictorial and textual sources, as well as funerary material culture, which accompany the monumental burials of courtiers and rulers in royal and elite cemeteries at Saqqara and Abydos are particularly elucidating on the expanding repertoire and expression of court etiquette. Within these tombs courtiers began to provide complex lists of titles and epithets relating to their position within the court hierarchy (Strudwick 1985). These titles have been very useful in helping to reconstruct models of the administrative hierarchy of the Early Dynastic and Old Kingdom bureaucracy (Baer 1960; Strudwick 1985). However, in addition to administrative roles many of these titles and epithets also refer to roles relating to ceremonial and ritual interaction with the body of the king and the management of courtly activities and architectural spaces. As such they offer a

useful insight into the roles and positions of courtiers within the court social hierarchy and ways in which they interacted with the king.

A number of Old Kingdom court titles refer to the overseeing of specific social spaces, people and activities within the royal palace. These titles, while appearing perhaps more administrative in the provisioning and maintenance of the palace, would probably have also included supervision of such spaces and people during certain courtly activities. For example, 'director of the dining hall of the king' (*hrp sh nswt*) (Jones 2000, 737) and 'director of the hall of the king's throne' (*hrp sh st-nswt nbw swt (irr wdt)*) (Jones 2000, 738) may have involved duties in coordinating and managing proper social etiquettes employed by courtiers within these spaces. In this manner the titles are more than simply administrative but imply a certain level of interaction and participation in events within these spaces. Additionally, some of these titles indicate management of different etiquettes relating to specific spaces, times, and material objects. An example might be in the seen in the different titles 'custodian of the throne' (*iry st pr-aA*) and 'director of the hall of the king's throne' (*hrp sh st-nswt nbw swt (irr wdjt)*). Within a single architectural space (the throne room) we have potentially two individuals or more who are involved in the coordination of different etiquettes regarding the management of space (such as the timing and order of entrance of individuals into the room and their spatial positioning inside) and material objects (coordinating interaction with the enthroned king, the movement and placement of different pieces of the king's furniture).

In addition other titles indicate that some couriers were also coordinating and monitoring other courtiers. Titles such as "overseer of the nobles" (*imy-r špsw*) (Jones 2000, 246) and "overseer of the srw officials (*imy-r srw*) (Jones 2000, 229) indicate that certain courtiers were responsible for overseeing members of the court in some way. These positions could have involved the monitoring and regulation of behaviour of courtiers both inside the palace and outside, as well as coordinating their movement and positioning within the spatial context of the palace.

Many of the titles and epithets in Old Kingdom honorifics express close relationships with the king through social, ritual and physical interaction. The majority of these titles concern the overseeing of aspects of the king's dressing, grooming, and provisioning of materials used in these activities. A few examples include "retainer of the robing room" (*šmsw djbAt*) (Jones 2000, 993), "overseer of the king's regalia" (*imy-r hkrw*), "keeper of the oil of the

king's adornment of the great house" (*iry mrht hkrw nswt pr-aA) (*Jones 2000, 317*),* "manicurist of the great house" (*ir(w) ant pr-aA*) (Jones 2000, 308) and "hairdresser of the great house" (*ir(w) šn pr-aA*) or "hairdresser of the king" (*ir(w) šn nswt*) (Jones 2000, 310-11). In a few instances these titles and epithets even name specific actions of dressing, such as the placing of crowns on the king's head (Jones 2000, 311; Tassie 2009, 103). In a number of cases we also find that courtiers held more than one title relating to interactions with the king's body. The barber Nekhetsas who served the 5th Dynasty king Niusere, held a string of barber titles as well as 'Intimate of the King in the Works of Hair', 'Adorner of the God's Brow (front) with Works of Hair' and 'Keeper of the Headdress' (Tassie 2009, 110). These titles highlight the ways in which certain courtiers were involved in a number of activities, on both an irregular and regular basis, which involved social, physical and ritual interaction with the king's body. That the participation in these interactions were a source of prestige is clear from their inclusion in the honorifics of court officials.

A particular epithet that rose to prominence in the Old Kingdom is that of 'privy to the secret of the House of Morning' (*hry sštA pr dwAt*) (Jones 2000, 620; Tassie 2009, 114-5). The House of the Morning, which was likely located in the palace or perhaps in temples, appears to have been a ritual space in which purification rituals and the ritualised dressing of the king took place at the start of the day (Blackman 1918; Helcke 1954, 43; Nuzzolo 2010, 294; Spence 2007, 318; Tassie 2009, 111-2). It had a particularly religious association in the 5th Dynasty, taking place in the morning with the rising of the sun, a time associated with solar and royal regeneration (Blackman 1918, 155; Nuzzolo 2010).

What is of key interest is that some of the highest ranking members of the court were involved in the performance of these rituals within the House of the Morning (Nuzzolo 2010, 295). This is indicated by the presence of this epithet in their honorifics, and is notably present in the titles and epithets of a number of Old Kingdom viziers (Jones 2000, 620; Nuzzolo 2010, 295). Of further relevance is that these courtiers also usually held titles relating to roles in the palace, of close friendship or family ties, and priestly duties (Blackman 1918, 151-155; Nuzzolo 2010, 294). An example can be seen in the honorifics of the vizier Ptahshepses;

> Local Prince, sole companion, Ruler of Nekheb, Guardian of the Diadem, Privy to the
> Secret of the House of Morning, Beloved One of his Lord, Chief Justice, Vizier,
> Overseer of the Royal Works, Servant of the Throne, Lector-Priest, Privy of the
> Secret Sacred Writings of the God's Words, Ptahshepses (Verner 1977, 109)

Here we can clearly see the variety of titles which refer not only to the viziers participation in the rituals of the House of the Morning but also to close ties of friendship with the king (sole companion), other aspects of the kings dressing (guardian of the diadem) as well as priestly duties (lector priest). Indeed, Blackman (1918, 152) has noted that these other titles held in conjunction with this epithet seem to suggest that these courtiers participated in ceremonial and ritualised acts of dressing and preparing the body of the king in the House of the Morning, as well as other ceremonies in the palace. These rituals would have involved very specific etiquettes in how the king's body was interacted with, prescribing set procedures of behaviour such as what parts of the body are touched and by whom, who dresses certain types of clothing etc. (Nuzzolo 2010, 297-298). In this manner the rituals in the House of the Morning presented both king and court with opportunities to negotiate and express hierarchical power relationships and social status, as well as reaffirming the position of these individuals within a larger cosmological framework through ritual performances.

This brief example highlights to relevance of using Elias's model in examining the court structures of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. The titles and epithets from the Old Kingdom reveal that courtiers were tightly bounded in ceremonial and ritual activities focusing around the body of the king. In addition it seems clear that access to the body of the king was tightly regulated through a number of different activities such as dressing, purification rituals, and grooming which were performed by only a select few individuals, often of the highest social standing. In this manner the interactions between the king and court were managed by certain forms of etiquette, which dictated who interacted with the king and in what manner. Likewise the highly ritualised nature of these activities highlight the way in which etiquette functioned not only to manage social interaction and express hierarchy but also reaffirmed and materialised the cosmological position of courtiers in relation to the king and the gods.

1.8 AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF ETIQUETTE

The example above not only established the appropriateness of using a model of court society emphasising etiquettes in reconstructing the court structures of Bronze Age societies, but also that these social constructions could be examined through ancient sources. Current and past research on etiquette has demonstrated this, as the focus on 17th-

18th Century Europe is largely due to the variety of artistic and textual sources recording and depicting how etiquette was used to structure court relations and identity. These sources have proven invaluable, particularly the genre of etiquette instruction texts, which allowed detailed reconstructions of the way that etiquette was formulated in specific contexts and demonstrated changing patterns of etiquette across time (Bryson 1998; Elias 1939). In addition artistic sources such as portraits and paintings also have proven instructive, providing images of the human body and material objects, which can be correlated with written descriptions. For ancient societies these sources can prove similarly invaluable in reconstructing forms of etiquette. For example Olko (2005) has made an extensive study of Aztec elite behaviour and court etiquette, particularly through costume and gestures illustrated and described in 16TH /17TH documents of Spanish colonists as well as Nahuatl literature and sculpture. In these cases this type of examination is possible because of the wealth of available sources, particularly the pictorial manuscripts (Olko 2005, 27-32). Comparing this situation to the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean we find a much more difficult picture, as the nature of the surviving textual and artistic sources are not anywhere near as detailed and rich as the in the early modern period, particularly concerning written documents. Indeed in some cases these bodies of evidence may be completely lacking or inaccessible, such as the lack of native written language and limited figural art in the Kerma Culture or the fact that the writing systems of Minoan Crete, Linear A and Cretan Hieroglyphic, still remain undeciphered. In light of this we have to take an approach which utilises all available sources, not only texts and art, but also material culture and architecture present in the archaeological record.

With this in mind how does one go about reconstructing etiquette using the archaeological record? As Goodwin (1999. 4) pointed out we cannot excavate a curtsey, nor a toast, nor a particular gesture. However, etiquette can leave material traces in the archaeological record, because it is often built around relationships between the human body and material objects and architecture (Briault 2007; Goodwin 1999). Indeed, the material aspect of etiquette is outlined in many aspects of Elias's work on a history of manners in *The Civilizing Process*, for example in the changing etiquette of nose blowing. During the Medieval Period etiquette dictated the nose be blown into the left hand while using the right to eat. With the introduction of the handkerchief from Italy this was instead used to blow the nose, it being considered more prestigious and sign of status and wealth (Elias 1939, 126). In time the adoption of the handkerchief for nose blowing became widespread and subsequently nose blowing etiquette became more specialised with new rules (Elias 1939, 114-21). The

development of cutlery in Western Europe was tied to a desire to differentiate the body techniques of eating between the court elite and those of lower social status (Elias 1939, 107). Further specialisation of utensils allowed further embellishment on etiquette surrounding them and thus further differentiation as the practice became more commonplace over time (Elias 1939, 104). Thus the fork and other forms of cutlery became important status symbols in themselves for they represented elite body techniques and etiquettes.

Such examples emphasise the ways in which material culture is used in the ritualization of court behaviours and the choreographing oh human bodies (Briault 2007, 294-5). Further encouragement is offered by the work of Treherne (1995) who looked at the way toilet items such as combs, tweezers and razors influenced behaviour through the manipulation of the human body, extrapolating a lifestyle and body culture that was used to express status and identity in the European Bronze Age. Similar approaches have appeared in recent research conducted into etiquette of feasting practices in Aegean archaeology. An appreciation into how the body relates and interacts with material culture and architectural spaces and how these relationships can be manipulated to express hierarchy and status has been increasingly recognised (Bendall 2004, 112; Wright 2004a, 117; Hamilakis 2008, 10-12; Simandiraki, 2008, 33-4; Fox 2012). Etiquettes around drinking practices have been explored by Wright's (2004b) work on incorporating foreign drinking practices into local drinking etiquette through hybrid vessels in the Shaft Graves at Mycenae and by Sorensen (2012) in regards to the role of cups and toasting.

The recent work on etiquette in the Bronze Age Aegean has used an approach which takes into account all the available evidence, material, textual and artistic, and have used them to help reconstruct some aspects of court etiquette in Aegean palatial centres. In this regard I will take a similar approach, using a synthesis of evidence from all available sources, though recognising that in some cases some of these sources may be underrepresented. In this way we can gain a more complete understanding of the ways in which these sources, but particularly material culture and architecture, can be used to reconstruct the etiquettes that played an important part of the court societies of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean.

1.9 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

I have now established a working definition of etiquette; defining these as a set of ritualized and codified behaviors within specific social contexts, which are used to regulate behavior

and express status and identity within social hierarchies. As a set of active, constructed behaviors I have proposed that socio-cognitive processes and human agency are the key methods for selecting and repressing behaviors for etiquettes. In addition, these behaviors can be replicated and transmitted between individuals and groups through socio-cognitive learning strategies (the formation of response-consequence contingencies) such as modeling and imitation. This approach was explored through the example of netiquette, a modern example of the formation of etiquette to regulate behavior in new social venues through CMC. On the other hand I have also recognized that as a set of constructed behaviors selected by individuals and groups, etiquettes are open to resistance and innovation through deviation and non-conformity. In these situations deviance from prescribed ways of acting often are influenced by relationships to power structures in society. They have the potential to result in both rewards, such as increased status and prestige and an upward shift in established social hierarchies, or punishments, such as subsequent losses of social prestige and potential downwards shifts within social hierarchies. Therefore, both deviation and conformity to etiquettes present opportunities for individuals and groups to renegotiate their positions within societies.

These aspects of etiquette underscore the manner in which these behavioral rules can be employed to manage social interactions within the social hierarchies of court societies. Elias recognized this in his purposed model of court sociology, in which etiquette played a primary role in status competition amongst the court elite and served to regulate and structure the interactions between the ruler and court. However, I noted some of the key weaknesses of Elias' approach that may find problems in addressing ancient court societies. Firstly, the underplaying of courtiers' ability to manipulate, modify and resist court etiquette as part of ongoing negotiations of status between and amongst the ruler and court elite. Secondly, the way in which power structures can be interlinked with cosmology, working to incorporate people not only into social but also cosmological hierarchies through ritual and ceremonial performance. Incorporating these aspects into my approach allow a more appropriate framework in which to address court structures and etiquettes in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean.

An examination of the evidence for court structures within the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean highlighted that court structures could display a number of different configurations. Additionally the current debate on Minoan political structures highlights that in some cases we still are unsure on the way society was organized, and what potential court

structures could be present. However, there did appear to be a general tendency for court structures within the Eastern Mediterranean to be based around patrimonial monarchies and oligarchic collective groups, often with a degree of variation and overlap in their configurations. An examination in detail of Old Kingdom Egypt demonstrated not only an example of a court structure, in this case a patrimonial monarchy, but also that etiquette played an important role in structuring and managing the interactions between rulers and court members. In this manner the validity of using a model of court society based around the role of etiquette was clearly demonstrated.

Considering the evidence from Bronze Age societies and Elias' model for court sociology I have taken an approach which takes three basic points which I believe can be used in examining court societies of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean.

1. Courts structures are heterogeneous but usually incorporate three main groups of social agents who identify themselves as members of court society; a ruling individual or collective group, a wider court elite, and a service industry consisting of those who perform more menial tasks but are still part of the social milieu of court. In many cases the distinction between courtiers and service industry might be difficult to ascertain due to the important ceremonial role of many 'menial' aspects of court life.

2. There is a physical context for courts, usually a palace, but also incorporating other permanent and semi permanent architectural spaces that facilitate social gatherings such as elite houses, temples, and mobile structures such as tents. In this manner we recognize that court society is not limited to a single fixed architectural space.

3. Etiquettes acted as a key means of expressing identity and inclusion in court society as well as a way for managing and negotiating social and cosmological status and hierarchy within court society.

Using these main points will allow an examination of the role of court etiquette which takes into account the huge potential for variation in court structures and practices within the societies of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. In this manner we depart from the more restrictive model which Elias proposed which was culturally specific to certain courts in early modern Europe.

The last section of the chapter began considering the way that we can examine social constructions within the archaeological record. I drew attention to the dominance of textual and pictorial sources in reconstructing these aspects of behavior, noting how etiquette

studies focusing on early modern Europe have relied almost entirely on the rich literature of etiquette books and pictorial sources in the form of paintings in reconstructing etiquette. While textual and pictorial sources are exceedingly useful, we are not always so fortunate to have all of these sources available from prehistoric societies. Poor preservation and lack of writing or written sources or figural art can lead to the study of etiquette in past societies being quite difficult. However, Elias demonstrated that etiquettes have an intimate relationship to the human body and material culture, as demonstrated in etiquettes surrounding bodily processes such as eating and nose blowing which lead to the development of specialized material culture to facilitate etiquette performance. Increasingly this relationship has begun to be explored in the archaeological record, demonstrated particularly in the current interest in etiquette in Aegean archaeology. My study will adopt an approach which incorporates the material record as well as the textual and artistic, in order to obtain a more holistic view of etiquette in the court societies of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean.

CHAPTER 2: DIPLOMATIC SYSTEMS IN THE BRONZE AGE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

In the previous chapter I established a model of court societies based around etiquette, with specific forms of behaviour arising within certain social contexts. This model forms a basic parameter on how court societies were structured and the mechanisms through which they operated. However, court societies were not isolated and introverted social constructions that were solely engaged with intra-regional power relationships. It is clear that part of being a court society involved interaction with other societies outside of the power structures and social hierarchies of the familiar home. Of particular interest is how different court societies could interact with one another. Such interaction could take a number of different, but often related, forms, such as military conflict, trade, and diplomacy. These forms of interaction achieved a variety of means for court societies including territorial, economic, social, cultural and political gains. They all involved however, the ability to interact with a foreign 'other'.

As this thesis is concerned with the means through which courtly behaviours could be transmitted between court societies, and the construction of larger supra-regional courtly identities, diplomacy presents an especially engaging avenue of enquiry into how etiquettes managed not only the social hierarchies and forms of social interaction within individual courts but also between them. In this chapter I will spearhead an examination of the role of diplomacy in the court societies of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean, highlighting how these diplomatic systems operated and how diplomacy has been approached by past and current scholars. Starting with a discussion on the nature and definition of diplomacy, I determine what types of interactions and actors are involved in such an activity. In addition I discuss the manner in which modern definitions, practices, and conceptions of diplomacy might not be entirely appropriate for the Bronze Age, highlighting the need to take into account different forms and intentions of diplomatic interaction that might not be obvious to a modern reader.

This will subsequently be followed by a detailed examination of the general concepts, players, and requirements for diplomatic systems in the Eastern Mediterranean, drawing primarily from evidence from the various Bronze Age diplomatic archives. Appropriately, this

leads to a general discussion of the past research on diplomacy in the region, focusing on how two approaches, textual and art historical, have lead to limitations and problems in reconstructing diplomatic systems. In particular I argue that there has been a concentration of academic thought on the LBA, at the expense of earlier periods and geographic regions, as well as a primary place held for textual sources in reconstructing diplomatic activity. In order to demonstrate this fixation of the written word and texts I discuss the role of literacy in Eastern Mediterranean diplomatic systems, highlighting that other forms of communication such as orality, have equal if not greater importance on how diplomacy operated in the Eastern Mediterranean throughout the Bronze Age. This will be further explored through the case of the MBA Kerma Culture in northern Sudan, which provides not only an example of a non-literate society but also a region and period that has been largely excluded by the aforementioned focus on the LBA. This will build into the following chapter which will discuss the methodology of the project, focusing on the holistic nature of my approach which builds on new research which is increasingly taking into account the role of material culture, the human body and behaviour.

2.1 DEFINING DIPLOMACY

In his study of court societies, Elias made very little mention on the ways in which courts could interact with one another through diplomacy and what effect diplomats might have on the structure and everyday activities of courts. However, we know from the practice and study of modern international relations that diplomacy is one of the primary means for facilitating interaction between political and social entities (Satow 1917). The Oxford English Dictionary defines diplomacy as "*the profession, activity, or skill of managing international relations, typically by a country's representatives abroad*". This definition demonstrates that diplomacy is the primary means of managing high-level interactions between political entities, encompassing a variety of ancient and modern social constructions including court societies.

The definition of diplomacy has changed over time according to historical context (Iucu 2008, 15), but the definition supplied by the Oxford English Dictionary gives us the basic concepts. Firstly, diplomacy is a profession, a specialized role held by individuals involving specialized skills and knowledge. These individuals are termed *diplomats*, though they may have further titles and honorifics such as *ambassador*, *envoy*, *consul* etc., which denote more specialized roles. A diplomat serves as an authorized and legitimate representative or

agent of a larger political or social entity (Morgenthau 1948, 64-65). In terms of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean, such individuals have been identified in historical documents such as the Amarna Archives by the use of the term *messenger* or *envoy*. However, while *envoy* is an acceptable term, I prefer to use the term *diplomat* instead of *messenger* to designate specifically individuals who would be involved in high-level elite and royal diplomacy. While this may not be the most perfect term, with its modern connotations of diplomacy, it implies that these individuals had roles that go beyond the simple delivery of a written document, incorporating other specialized skills and knowledge as an agent and representative of a political or social group.

Diplomacy also describes an activity, the actual sending of diplomats from one political or social entity to another. The function of this is to engage in a range of different types of interactions, such as the conveying or oral, non-verbal and written messages, exchanging gifts, negotiating agreements on war, peace, trade, and marriage, collecting information, and participating in ceremonial and social events (Cohen 2001, 25; Jönsson and Hall 2003; Morgan 2012). In this manner diplomacy acts as a means of managing inter-regional and, to an extent, intra-regional interactions and communications (Bull 1977) between independent polities and social groups (Constantinou 1996, 25). Most scholars agree that the most basic function of diplomacy facilitating communication.

This role of diplomacy as facilitating communication and interaction is one of the primary aspects of a working definition for this study. However, there are some conceptions regarding diplomacy that should be addressed before proceeding. Firstly, modern diplomacy (shaped through a number of international agreements in 1815, 1918 and early 1960's (Sofer 1988, 197) is mostly seen as an alternate means to military force of managing interactions between different nation states (Bull 1977; Morgenthau 1948; Satow 1917). Thus in many ways diplomacy is seen primarily as a way of preventing or resolving military conflict. However, this concept is largely shaped by historical relationships between diplomacy and past military conflicts, particularly with the realisation that a change in diplomatic practice was desired after the outbreak of the First World War (a conflict which, arguably, has been blamed on the failure of diplomacy) (Gilbert 1951, 1; Sofer 1988, 197). This view obscures other functions and aims of diplomacy, such as establishing social and cultural relations and expressing status, prestige and hierarchy. This is particularly evident when considering ancient and historical diplomatic systems, which can operate according to different parameters and with different intent, as well will see below. Secondly, most

modern definitions and research of diplomacy has treated nation or state as the primary actor. However, increasingly, scholars in international relations have recognised that diplomacy is a form of human interaction that both precedes and transcends modern sovereign states (Sharp 1999, 51). In light of this scholars have attempted to incorporate non-governmental and social entities (such as business firms and non-government organisations) into models of diplomacy, highlighting the way in which these entities interact with each other and with the central state (Cooper and Hocking 2000; Hardy, 1968; Strange 1992). In addition some scholars have even abandoned terms such as *state* and *nation* in favour of more inclusive terms such as *polity*, which work to recognise the interaction across boundaries of human identity (Jönsson and Hall 2003, 195; Constantinou 1996, 113) In this manner they have attempted to move away from solely discussing interaction between sovereign territorial states, instead broadening diplomacy as an activity and experience incorporating other social and political entities which are a broader part of human societies.

In terms of examining the Bronze Age societies of the Eastern Mediterranean I think these are important points to bear in mind. Not only does Bronze Age diplomacy appear to have different priorities and functions than modern diplomacy, but it also would not have been entirely restricted to inter-regional communication (I use inter-regional rather than international as it avoids the term *nation* which a modern political entity and term), with some potential for operating on intra-regional levels. For instance diplomacy can occur on an intra-regional scale in more nomadic and pastoral societies, such as at Mari and possibly Kerma, where sovereign rulers may have had to negotiate power relations with more local rulers, probably involving the sending of diplomats, written correspondence, gift exchange and royal visits. In this manner we should expand our conception of diplomacy to incorporate intra-regional interactions when considering the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. A such, while this project is chiefly concerned with inter-regional interactions, where appropriate I will also discuss appropriate examples where we might see intra-regional diplomacy, a fact that might be particularly important when discussing regions which are not always dominated by a single political entity, such as the Levant, or in cases where power might have been more dispersed, such as at Mari or Kerma.

In summary, I view diplomacy as the management of the various high-level forms of interactions between political and social entities. In this manner I attempt expand modern concepts of the function of diplomacy, (as an alternative to war in the resolution of conflict

or for the establishment of economic relations) and instead take an approach which incorporates and distinguishes the anthropological and sociological aspects of diplomacy. This will be done through determining the role of etiquette, highlighting how codified and ritualised forms of behaviour are, and were, particularly important methods of structuring ceremonial diplomatic events, while also serving as a primary means of expressing social status and rank. However, before jumping straight into an outline of my particular approach we need to establish in more detail the basic outline of how diplomacy operated in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean and past and current research approaches on the subject of diplomacy in this period. Doing so will allow a greater appreciation and understanding on why my approach focusing on etiquette brings a significant contribution to the current body of research on diplomacy in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean.

2.2 EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN DIPLOMATIC SYSTEMS

It has long been known that the court societies of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean conducted diplomatic relations between one another. Texts from ancient diplomatic archives across regions and periods such as from Amarna, Hattusha, Ebla, Mari, Ugarit, Alalakh and Qatna as well as other textual sources such as treaties, royal inscriptions and administrative records, all shed light on a dynamic interconnected world. Within this world diplomats, their entourages, and sometimes even kings visited the courts of palatial centres across the Eastern Mediterranean and Near East during the Bronze Age. These sources have been particularly useful in reconstructing in detail the exact institutional mechanisms of diplomacy as well as identifying the agents who participated in such activities.

Who participated in diplomacy? The textual sources, particularly the diplomatic archives show that the primary figures in diplomacy were rulers and to some extent their immediate family. This is evident from the way that diplomatic letters were usually directly addressed to kings from kings, even though the message may have been spoken by a representing diplomat. Interestingly they use familiar terminology, addressing rulers or perceived equal status as 'brother' while addressing subordinates or rulers of lower status as 'son' while they in turn addressed them as 'father' (Munn-Rankin 1956, 71, 81; Lafont 2001, 42-43). In some cases, inter-dynastic marriage made these titles actually appropriate, but in many cases they appear to have been a method of consolidating an extended family identity and relationship based on psychosocial power relations in patrimonial household structures (Liverani 1990, 1345; Podany 2010, 28; Zaccagnini 1987, 62). This is clearly expressed in the manner in

which they describe their relationships in terms of 'brotherhood', 'love' and 'friendship', as well as using terms such as 'sorrow and 'grief' in relation to complaints and dissatisfaction. In addition, we often find additional lines in the opening address ascribing to well wishes to other members of the recipients family and household, even extending to animals and objects such as chariots, in addition to assuring that the senders family and household are also well. These aspects of the letters seem to express a clear method of describing exclusive social bonds and identities with one another in terms of a kind of extended household (Podany 2010, 10; Zaccagnini 1987, 62; 2000, 144-145). In this manner the rulers of court societies within the region often sought to create extended family structures that incorporated the vertical intra-regional hierarchies of individual court societies with a wider horizontal inter-regional hierarchy (In the manner that analogy was often sought in establishing equal status between kings) (Feldman 2006, 161; Liverani 1990, 135). Inclusion in such an extended family structure appears to have been something that rulers actively sought and jealously guarded. This is especially evident in letter EA 15 of the Amarna Archives (Moran, 1987, 37-38) which documents the first diplomatic letter sent to Egypt by the king of Assyria in regards to establishing diplomatic ties and therefore joining this extended royal family. Assyria's desire to be recognized in this inter-regional community as well as the resulting furore by the Babylonian king on allowing Assyria entry highlights how valued these constructed social and political ties were to these rulers.

However, while rulers were the primary figureheads of diplomacy, they rarely traveled to foreign courts, perhaps even never actually meeting their 'brothers' face to face. The account of the trip Zimri-Lim's trip to the palatial centres in the kingdom of Yamkhad is one of the rare instances we have a documented royal visit to foreign courts (Podany 2010, 107-109). Instead, the majority of cases kings sent official representatives who traveled on the king's behalf. These individuals, often termed messengers, a term translated from the Akkadian *mar šiprim* (Munn-Rankin 1956, 99), are well documented in many of the Bronze Age archives, often being mentioned by name (Berridge 2000, 217; Sharlach 2005, 19). As I have noted previously I prefer to call these individuals diplomats, as often they appear to have been individuals who were valued for their ability to represent the king in an official capacity at foreign courts (Lafont 2001, 47-48; Liverani 1990, 71; Munn-Rankin 1956, 99). These are different individuals to whom messenger is a more appropriate term, couriers who simply delivered written or oral messages (Liverani 1990, 72). Evidence from the Mari and Amarna archives as well as administrative archives from the Ur III period at Ur (Sharlach 2005, 18) highlight that many of these diplomats had established careers and were sent on

numerous missions, which could sometimes last years (Berridge 2000, 216; Charpin 2010; Sharlach 2005, 19). As such many of these individuals were well known in foreign courts, to the extent that they could develop personal relationships with foreign rulers. For instance in Letter EA 20 of the Amarna Archive we find Tushratta, the king of Mittani, writing to Amenhotep III of Egypt regarding the treatment of a particular diplomat;

> I have honored Mane, my brother's messenger, [and] all my brother's [tr]oo[ps] who accompanied Mane, and I have treated them with great distinction. Mane will indeed arrive and my brother should enquire carefully from him whether I showed him very great honours. EA 20, Amarna Archive (Moran 1987, 48)

These individuals are therefore clearly people of high status (Munn-Rankin 1956, 99) mentioned by name, whose well treatment was of the upmost importance in order to maintain good relations between courts. I say 'courts' in the plural because diplomacy was not solely the interaction between rulers and diplomats, but involved the court at large. As such, diplomats found themselves not only interacting with the king but also with members of the king's court as well as other visiting diplomats (Lafont 2001, 47; Charpin 2010). A diplomatic letter concerning the exchange of horses between a high official of Ebla and an envoy from Hamazi from the Ebla Archive even documents that courtiers and diplomats wrote to one another, using the same familiar terminology used by the kings, addressing each other as 'brother' (Lafont 2001, 40; Podany 2010, 27).

> Thus (says) Ibubu, the steward of the palace of the king to the envoy: I am am (your) brother and you are (my) brother. What is (appropriate) to brother(s): whatever you desire you express, I shall grant and you, (whatever) desire (I express), you shall grant. (Michalowski 1993, 13-14)

This letter demonstrates that diplomats not only interacted with rulers but also other diplomats and courtiers. In this manner diplomacy offered opportunities for the court at large to participate in diplomatic correspondence and ceremonial events, formulating their own social relationships and identities on an inter-regional scale. To this end I distinguish Bronze Age diplomacy having three main types of actors; rulers, diplomats, and courtiers. I place a distinction between diplomats and courtiers in this context in order to demarcate the way that foreign diplomats are plenipotentiary agents of other courts, and thus more susceptible of acts of political and social brinkmanship than courtiers of hosting courts, who are more tightly bounded by the etiquettes and power hierarchies of their resident court. Diplomats, therefore, are in a unique position in which they have a higher degree of

independence from the will of a hosting ruler as an 'outsider', a temporary resident of the court, and as a symbolic representative of another ruler. This is apparent from the way that diplomats were capable of causing major disruptions and incidents at court if they felt they were being mistreated (or perhaps for other ulterior motives) (Lafont 2001, 47), a fact recorded in a number of letters in the various archives. To this end we also need to appreciate that diplomats were not only concerned with enacting their sovereigns will, but were also pursuing their own self-interested goals in establishing relationships and identities within other courts, as seen in the Ebla letter.

Having established the actors of diplomacy, what of the operation and functions? Relations were always established and maintained through the continual reciprocal sending of diplomats (Lafont 2001, 43), who often were accompanied by entourages that could consist of a variety of individuals, depending of the purpose of the mission, such as members of the central administration, specialists (entertainers, doctors, craftsmen, translators), royal women, and military escorts. In order to establish relations a diplomat and their potential entourage would arrive and communicate, usually through the presentation of a written letter, gifts, and oral greetings, the intention of establishing formal relations, 'brotherhood', between the two rulers. An actual example of this is seen in the aforementioned letter from the Assyrian king Aššurubalit:

> Say to the king of E[gypt]: Thus Aššuruba[lit, the king of As]syria. For you, your household, for your [coun]try, for your chariots and your troops may all go well. I send my messengers to you to visit you and your country. Up to now, my predecessors have not written: today I write to you. [I] send you a beautiful chariot, 2 horses, [and] 1 date-stone of genuine lapis lazuli, as your greeting gift. Do [no]t delay the messenger whom I send to you for a visit. He should visit and then leave for here. He should see what you are like and what your country is like, and then leave for here. (Moran 1987, 38)

The letter above documents some of the key aspects in the operation of the diplomatic system, that diplomats be allowed to visit and interact with foreign courts, and that relations are maintained between rulers through the exchange of greetings, in the form of gifts, written correspondence, and oral messages (Lafont, 2001, 45).

While we have no written source laying out rules regarding the treatment and rights of diplomats, there does appear to have been a concept of respected diplomatic deontology, etiquette, or personal inviolability. That such expectations were in effect is apparent by the numerous reassurances by rulers of good treatment of diplomats while they are guests at court. Paramount in such treatment was the way in which diplomats were afforded gestures of high status and rank, through the bestowment of prestigious gifts, meals, and accommodation (Munn-Rankin 1956, 105; Charpin 2010, 100; Podany 2010, 72), as well as continual access to audiences with the ruler and invitations to court social and ceremonial events. As we explored in the previous chapter, much of these forms of interaction between diplomats and the hosting court were mediated through forms of etiquette. It is apparent that diplomats were highly aware of the etiquettes that operated at foreign courts and what types of behaviour and interactions were expected. In some cases they take obvious pride in the manner that hosting courts used etiquettes such as seating arrangements at diplomatic meals, to express status, rank and respect towards visiting diplomats. An example can be seen in a letter sent to Zimri-Lim from a diplomat on a mission to Jebel Sinjar;

> Having left Andarig, I entered Kurda. At nightfall, I was called for the meal and I went there. None among the auxiliary forces had a place seated before him (i.e. the king of Kurda), except me. And Yashub-Dagan, servant of my lord, was with me, but he remained apart, on a seat at the side (Charpin 2010, 101)

This example demonstrates that even simple types of etiquette such as seating arrangements were extremely important in diplomatic ceremonies in expressing social hierarchy, and that diplomats were very keenly aware of how these etiquettes were being employed in order to do this. However, If there were any perceived slights or breaches in how etiquettes were employed, diplomatic delegations could often cause and exacerbate petty disputes amongst the court, a fact that is well documented in the court societies of early modern Europe (Duindam 2003, 199-20). An example from the Mari Archives demonstrates that even small perceived slights regarding etiquette could solicit a strong response from diplomats:

> We entered for the meal in front of Hammurabi. We entered the palace courtyard. Then Zimri-Addu, myself, and Yarim-Addu, only the three of us, were dressed in garments, and all the Yamkhadeans who entered with us were so dressed. Since he had dressed all the Yamkhadeans who entered with us, whereas he had not done so for the secretaries, servants of my lord, I said to Sin-bel-aplim regarding them: "Why

that segregation of us on your part, as if we were the sons of swine? (Charpin 2010, 101)

In this example the Mari delegation seems to protest loudly and angrily at the manner in which material gifts were given to the entire Yamkhad delegation, while only the highest ranking members of the Mari delegation were presented with gifts. As these gifts could have also related to dress etiquette at the meal, the exclusion of gifts of garments to the rest of the Mari delegation appears to have been taken as a double deviation in etiquette for gift giving and dress at the ceremonial meal. Such an example documents that diplomats were often disruptive to court etiquette and hierarchy and that managing different delegations was often a difficult and potential embarrassing affair. This also has to do with the manner that diplomats were, as Duindam (2003, 184) states, "…professionally committed to ceremonial brinkmanship as they sought to defend and enhance the prestige of their masters.". I would also add that diplomats were also pursuing their own agendas for the acquisition of status and prestige and thus could be disruptive over etiquette on a personal level. It is these facts which lead court societies of early modern Europe to often make the rules and etiquette for receiving diplomats fluid and adaptable in an effort to minimise the disruptive nature of diplomatic visits (Duindam 2003, 184). Similar options might have been employed by courts of the Bronze Age, as rulers often seem to have been quite concerned in the way that diplomats might cause embarrassing incidents that would harm their prestige.

Conversely, there is plenty of evidence to demonstrate that hosting courts often breached the expectations and etiquettes regarding the treatment of diplomats. This is most frequently found in complaints of diplomats denied audiences and the detention and even imprisonment of diplomats. These were no doubt methods of expressing displeasure at current relations or even severing relations all together. They may have even been attempts to control forms of information being transferred between courts, information that may have been potentially more damaging to the reputation of rulers and courts than the act of detention. Therefore while we have evidence to suggest that etiquette was a primary means to facilitate the establishment and maintenance of relations, these etiquettes could also be broken in order to express malcontent and displeasure with foreign courts and rulers, while also potentially managing the flow of sensitive information which could damage relations and reputations.

Another essential aspect of diplomacy is that diplomats required freedom of movement across the shifting political landscape of the Eastern Mediterranean. As such, rulers were expected to protect and facilitate diplomatic delegations travelling through their territory, even if these delegations were only passing through (Munn-Rankin 1956 106). An example can be seen in letter EA 30 of the Amarna Archives which documents travel arrangements for a Mittanian diplomat through Egypt's vassal kingdoms in the Levant;

> To the kings of Canaan, servants of my brother, thus (says) the king. I herewith send Akiya, my messenger, to speed posthaste to the king of Egypt, my brother. No one is to hold him up. Provide him with safe entry into Egypt and hand him over to the fortress commander of Egypt. Let him go on immediately! He is not bringing with him any present. (Moran 1987, 100)

This freedom of movement, is of course important as diplomats often had vast distances to cover, and as such it could take months to travel between courts. Expeditious travel was therefore of paramount importance in order to maintain relations, and the desire for this is clear from the numerous efforts to achieve this in the diplomatic correspondence.

Relating to this idea of free movement and access is the concept of diplomatic reciprocity. Diplomatic relations were not primarily established as a short term reaction to the resolution of certain political situations, but appear to have been more valued through the way in which they allowed the continual expression of hierarchy, status and rank through forging intimate personal relationships between rulers and courtiers (Zaccagnini 1987, 63). Ethnographic accounts of reciprocal exchange, such as by Mauss (1925), have highlighted that such exchanges can create intimate social bonds that lead to further cycle of exchanges until those ties are deliberately broken (Mauss 1925, 17). Such exchanges, such as gifts, act as a means to create and maintain close social bonds between otherwise unrelated individuals. Also reciprocal exchanges can materialize notions of parity and equality (though they can also be used to express inequality and asymmetrical relationships), which as we have seen were important concepts in the formation of relations between rulers and courts, particularly through the metaphorical framework of 'brotherhood' (Zaccagnini 1987, 63). That reciprocity in sending diplomatic delegations was expected is clear from a number of the letters in different archives that complain of interruptions in such exchange and in the way that long-term relationships were a source of pride and prestige. It also can be seen in the manner that reciprocity in gift exchange features heavily in the archives, with continual references to gifts sent, received and requested along with a plethora of complaints

regarding gifts that have been perceived as inadequate in terms of quality, bit especially quantity. However, the idea of reciprocal gift exchange is something that is still widely debated, particularly in regards to determining the "rational elements" (transactional, commercial, commodified and profit-seeking) from the "irrational" (reciprocity, moral, "pure gifts", prestation) (Avruch 2001, 161; Cline 1995, 143). In my opinion this debate largely suffers from similar problems regarding the study of ancient court societies, in the way that ceremonial and social aspects (the irrational) are divorced from institutions, administration, and economy (the rational). Instead we should appreciate that the lines and definitions between these two concepts are heavily blurred, and that attempting to disentangle these elements mat actually hinder a full appreciation of the intent and functions of these systems. In this manner my concept of diplomatic reciprocity refers more on the manner in which Mauss recognised that acts of reciprocity can enable the construction of social bonds between individuals, and that in the case of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean this reciprocity refers not only to objects but also people, ideas, art, architecture, and behaviours involved in long-term cycles of reciprocal exchange (Feldman 2006, 163; Zaccagnini 1987, 63-64). In this I relate to the work of Zaccagnini (1987, 62-62) who suggested that diplomatic gift exchanges document a type of 'ceremonial exchange' that was more concerned with gifts acting as material expressions of social relationships as well as facilitating the construction of these social bonds. Thus the continuing reciprocal sending of greetings in the form of gifts, correspondence and delegations, was a means to maintain and express these prestigious social relationships, couched in notions of 'brotherhood'. This concept of 'ceremonial exchange', (Zaccagnini 2000, 148) can be seen in the letters themselves. For example in EA 9:

> From the time my ancestors and your ancestors made a mutual declaration of friendship, they sen[t] beautiful greeting gifts to each other, and refused no request for anything beautiful. (Moran 1987, 63)

Here it is apparent that there is a direct association between the act of gift giving and the maintenance of good diplomatic relations. In this manner the continual reciprocal sending of delegations was essential in maintaining good relations, with expectations that whenever a delegation left the court, a return visit would occur. Such expectations are particularly evident in the letters in regards of expectations and requests of the next greeting gift that would be sent. In this manner, reciprocity was an expected essential element of starting and maintaining diplomatic relationships. However, I use 'expected' deliberately because as

noted above, the denial and interruption of this reciprocal exchange did occur (detention of diplomats). In these cases the breaking or threat of breaking reciprocal exchanges was a powerful tool in expressing and resolving acts of political and social brinkmanship, ultimately working as a means to negotiate status and hierarchy (Avruch 2001, 160).

In summary, the operation of diplomatic systems on the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean involved a number of key players and requirements. Firstly diplomatic relations between courts involved three main social actors: diplomats, courtiers, and rulers. The identification of diplomats as a separate category as opposed to courtiers highlights their liminal status as 'outsiders' and plenipotentiary agents who were not entirely bound to the etiquettes and practices of hosting courts. All of these agents interacted with one another using a metaphorical, and in some cases literal, framework of "brotherhood", which acted as a means of establishing an extended kinship network underpinned by familiar terminology. Such a framework allowed the incorporation of the vertical intra-regional hierarchies of individual court societies with a wider horizontal inter-regional hierarchy, facilitating a framework in which courts could interact and in which social hierarchy could be expressed.

In order for such a system to operate some basic requirements were needed and expected. Diplomats were expected to be treated well, and receive honours and respect in accordance to the status of the rulers they represented. In this manner etiquettes played a prominent role in managing the social interactions between diplomats and hosting courts in order to both fulfil this expectation and to avoid potentially embarrassing incidents. However in some cases deliberate deviations in etiquette could be perpetrated by diplomats or hosting courts in order to express displeasure or dissatisfaction with current diplomatic relations, conflict or previous etiquette breaches. Diplomatic delegations also had to have freedom of movement in order to reach hosting courts, who had to provide proficient protection and respect to traveling delegations. Such delegations also had to be reciprocal and continuous in order to maintain relations, with interruptions and threats of cessations of this exchange acting as means of expressing malcontent.

2.3 BRONZE AGE DIPLOMATIC SCHOLARSHIP

Having established the core aspects of the diplomatic systems in the Eastern Mediterranean, we should address now how we reconstruct these aspects of diplomatic activity. The primary sources used in the previous section have been ancient written sources. Texts are directly accessible sources, which document in the words of ancient rulers and courtiers

exactly how some of these systems operated. As such, much of the past and current research on diplomacy of the period and region has focused on and utilised written documents as the primary form of evidence. However, as the most direct and easily referred to sources they are also seductive, and can cause us to overlook some of their limitations or additional sources which, while more difficult to interpret, might provide additional, unlooked for information.

Be that as it may, not all approaches to diplomacy have focused on the written sources. Art historians have made extensive studies on the artistic repertoires and styles used throughout the region on both small portable objects and on static architectural features, often attempting to reconstruct possible diplomatic activity between regions through identifying 'foreign' artistic motifs and styles (Kantor, 1947; Feldman 2006, 29). Tracing the origins of these foreign influences leads to the eventual identification of the perpetrator of this transmission, using diplomatic exchange of craftsmen and decorated objects as the primary mechanism for such cultural transmission. However, these approaches have limitations of their own, in the same manner as those that have relied solely on texts. While giving more attention to the material record they have often become more interested in determining artistic styles and have largely divorced art from the physical and social contexts in which it was consumed. As such we are often left with conclusions that use diplomacy as a mechanism for artistic transference but don't really determine how and why that transference occurs.

Some of these limitations have begun to be addressed by scholars, with new approaches incorporating a wider range of available evidence and sources, particularly in the material record. Increasingly the role of the human body and material culture in diplomacy is being recognized and approaches utilizing these sources are becoming more common. In line with the increasing trend in scholarship, this study takes a step further by combining all of these aspects of diplomacy, art, texts, material culture and the human body, to gain a more holistic view of how we can reconstruct and explore diplomatic activity in the ancient world. However, first we need to address some of the problems that past research has left us, allowing us to then put forward a methodology that will address and build on these limitations.

2.3.1 ART HISTORICAL APPROACHES

Firstly I would like to summarise much of the research that has focused on art in reconstructing diplomacy, before moving onto textual approaches. Art historians often have attempted to trace inter-regional connections in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean through the transmission of artistic styles and motifs. However, such artistic transference on an inter-regional scale has primarily focused on two bodies of evidence, small luxury objects (especially ivories) and architectural features such as wall paintings. This academic focus has lead to a large body of research into the artistic and technological transfer of wall paintings (Bietak et al 2007; Koehl 2013) and object decoration (Crowley 1989; Feldman 2006; Kantor 1947) between the varied societies of the Eastern Mediterranean.

In terms of the role of small object decoration, the most interesting and relevant body of research in regards to diplomacy has focused on the concept of artistic internationalism. Art historians such as Kantor (1947; 1956; 1960), Smith (1965) and Crowley (1989), have recognized that certain supraregional artistic styles had developed in the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. In particular, an 'International Style', as it was termed by Smith (1965, 18), was loosely recognized as an iconographic style found on certain small portable luxury objects, such as vessels, textiles, weaponry and furniture, whose archaeological contexts were usually associated with royal or court spheres of activity, such as tombs and palaces. The iconography of this style was generally defined by what it did not contain, namely specific cultural motifs from regional artistic repertoires (Smith 1965, Crowley 1989). In this manner the style was vaguely determined by its visual hybridity and the difficulty in determining an affiliation or origination in any of the regional artistic styles of the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean.

This hybridity has been the focus of much scholarly interest in international style. Kantor's (1956; 1960) initial studies of Levantine and Mycenaean ivories highlighted that a number of ivories were so hybridised that it was impossible to determine if they were Levantine with Mycenaean influences or the other way around (Kantor, 1960, 169). Smith (1965) expanded on this by identifying a larger corpus of objects and wall paintings which feature visual hybridization of motifs and styles which he terms as 'international style', without really giving a specific definition of what he means by such a term. However, he proposed that the style developed through the interchange of motifs resulting from diplomatic activity between palace centres in the region (Smith 1965, 32). While vague, Smith's work established both a specific, albeit borrowed (International style originates as a term to describe forms of supra-regional architecture between 1920-1930 (Hitchcock and Johnson

1966), terminology to describe this phenomenon of visual hybridity and a mechanism through which such transference occurred. Crowley (1989, 192-199, 225) built on Smith's work in her discussion on artistic transference in the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean, by suggesting an 'international repertoire' consisting of a number of specific motifs which appeared in a number of societies within the Eastern Mediterranean as well as elaborating and subdividing Smith's definition of international style in 'severe' and 'ornate'. While her subdivision of the style is not particularly convincing (Feldman 2006, 27), her work was the first to critically evaluate and attempt to extrapolate a more precise definition of international style.

Smith's proposed explanation of diplomacy acting as the primary means for the establishment of an International Style has largely been accepted without question. Despite this, there has been little further exploration or critique of this proposal. Instead, the majority of the aforementioned art historians have devoted intellectual thought to determining the exact artistic origins of specific motifs in an attempt to deconstruct the style into the various component parts. This was particularly the case in Crowley's work, which was solely concerned on the origins of artistic motifs and styles. In this manner, research has primarily been focused on identifying specific regions as points of origin for different aspects of this international style. However, Feldman (2006, 25) has rightly pointed out that such attempts offer little potential, as the hybridity of the objects are often too complex to deconstruct into component parts that can be attributed to specific regions. Most importantly though, Feldman (2006, 29) notes that such avenues of enquiry overlook the social roles of the objects and their decoration. To this end, current art historical research on International Style has largely decontextualized objects and their decoration, resulting in little consideration intent and consumption (Feldman, 2006). This is largely due, she argues, on the nature of modern research in art history, which places an emphasis on the individual artist in order to extrapolate their meaning, psychology, and agency. Such a mentality has subsequently resulted in an overbearing emphasis on these aspects. In light of this, Feldman departed from previous art historical approaches on international style and instead attempted to reconstruct the consumption of the style in relation to the objects they were placed on and the social contexts in which they were used.

This shift in focus, looking at the corpus of objects with their decoration as a whole as an international koiné, (the change in terminology reflecting a departure away from questions of artistic origination) (Feldman, 2006, 58), certainly was a step in the right direction to

gaining a better understanding of this phenomenon. Further, Feldman attempted to explain the purpose and consumption of this style through the mechanism of inter-regional diplomatic gift exchange. While this had been hinted at by previous scholars, Feldman actually turned to the primary written material, diplomatic letters from Amarna, Hattusha, and Ugarit, and identified that the types of gifts recorded in the letters were of the same types found in the corpus of objects in her international koiné. In this manner she argued that inter-regional diplomacy was a not only a mechanism for the transmission of this koiné but also that these objects and their decoration were intended for the expression and creation of a distinct supra-regional royal and court identity during the Late Bronze Age.

However, Feldman's approach has a number of difficulties. One of the main problems is that the actual corpus of objects and their materials does not seem to directly reflect a sole purpose for inter-regional diplomacy. Indeed some of the objects featuring the international decoration also had additional decoration that was culturally distinctive, in opposition to the proposed characteristics and intent of the international decoration. An example can be seen in a travertine cosmetic vessel from Tutankhamun's tomb, which featured international style decoration alongside Egyptian style decoration. These objects seem less convincing as part of an overall specific corpus (Wengrow 2007, 121). In addition the typology and material of objects in the koiné are quite varied, which may be due to preservation factors, but ultimately throws into question the validity of all of Feldman's corpus as a coherent group intended for diplomatic gifts (Panagiotopoulus 2011, 44). Further, the koiné was not really discussed in conjunction with the role of other objects besides written tablets, which may have been included in gift exchange. In particular what was the relationship between those objects which feature culturally distinctive artistic styles (eg. Egyptian, Mycenaean etc.) but share object typologies (furniture, vessels etc.) and materials to objects within this international kione? This remained unclear in Feldman's examination.

Be that as it may, Feldman's study is immensely useful in the manner that it has shifted the art historical intellectual thought away from questions of artistic origination and style, and towards a consideration of the actual contexts, consumption and mechanisms of transmission of art and images. Such considerations have been discussed in greater detail regarding the presence of Aegean style wall paintings at different palatial centres in the Levant (Tell Kabri, Qatna, Alalakh) and Egypt (Tel el-Dab'a). In these cases more attention has likely been paid due the extraordinary nature of these wall paintings, with clear connections to the Aegean in terms of technology (fresco construction and painting

techniques) and artistic styles (Bietak 1995; Bietak et al 2007; Brysbaert 2002; Feldman 2007a; 2007b; Niemer and Niemer 1998; Pfälzner 2008). In addition as large static architectural features within palatial buildings they have clear contexts, which can be discussed with ease, as opposed to the often ambiguous or contentious contexts of disembodied portable objects. In any case, the modes of transference and consumption have been more widely discussed, with a number of different hypothetical situations being made. The two most prominent ideas are that the paintings are the result of the movement of Aegean artists, probably from Crete or the Cyclades, to palatial centres in the Levant and Egypt or that the paintings were the result of Levantine or Egyptian artists trained or overseen by Aegean artists (Cline 1995; Pfälzner 2008). The nature of this movement is still debated, with the main suggestions being either as part of formalized interactions such as diplomatic gift exchange or as free-lance itinerant craftsman (Koehl 2013; Niemer and Niemer 1998).

A more detailed discussion of the role of these wall paintings will follow later in Chapter 4, but for now we should note that the approaches to the Aegean wall paintings have benefitted from a more holistic approach that takes into account multiple forms of evidence and considers not only elements of artistic style but also patterns and mechanisms of consumption. Such a wider approach has been lacking in discussions of international style, but Feldman's research, while bearing a number of problems, still proves innovative in the way that it attempts to bridge the divide between art history and archaeological and textual approaches in the study of Bronze Age diplomacy in the eastern Mediterranean. The need to incorporate different bodies of evidence and fields of research is of key importance here, as will be outlined below in the review of other approaches to diplomacy.

2.3.2 TEXTUAL APPROACHES

Written sources have always held the most prominent position in terms of evidence for diplomatic relations in the prehistoric societies of the Eastern Mediterranean and Near East. This is due to the remarkable quality and vivid detail which the sources illustrate the personal relations and interactions between ancient rulers and courts through the written word. Such sources incorporate a broad range of typologies of written documents, including letters, administrative documents, treaties, and royal and elite monumental inscriptions. The way in which these sources provide 'snapshots' of the types of rhetoric and discourse we would expect in social interactions relating to diplomacy, which has naturally lead many

to place them as the evidence par excellence for reconstructing and documenting this type of activity in the ancient world. However, as mentioned above, the reliance on texts has resulted in a number of key problems, largely to due with the nature of the sources and the resulting impact this has made on scholarship.

Firstly, a note about the way these sources are 'snapshots' of diplomatic activity. As a source of evidence they are inherently limited by what types of information are deemed appropriate for content of diplomatic letters. Do the diplomatic texts really document the full range and types of interactions and events involved in diplomacy? Are there only certain types of interactions being documented by them? These are questions we need to bear in mind, particularly in the way that it influences the focus of diplomatic scholarship. For example I would question the way that some scholars have applied the lists of gifts in the letters to ideas that diplomatic gift exchange is just a form of high level trade and that in essence diplomacy is just a form of exchange (Avruch 2001, 161; Cline 1995, 143). While exchange is no doubt part of diplomacy, I think such an uncritical analysis misses some important aspects of the nature of written information in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. The importance of lists of commodities and the documentation of the movement of goods in the diplomatic texts actually follows a long history of the use of writing for the composing of lexical lists and accounting in the Near East (Civil 1995; Krispijn 1991–1992, 12-14; Postgate 1994, 66-67). As such, might the presence of many lists and references to commodities be more in line with perceptions and practices relating to writing and recording information, rather than being reflective of the primary nature of diplomacy? In addition might we also be underplaying the more 'irrational' aspects documented in the texts, such as the role of social and ceremonial interactions? The questions need to be seriously considered when utilising these sources, something which I don't believe is regularly picked up upon in past and current diplomatic scholarship.

Secondly, is the matter of chronological context of these ancient archives. While a number of different archive sources have been found across all periods of the Bronze Age (MBA Mari Archives and EBA Ebla Archives), a particular concentration has appeared in the LBA. This is mainly due to the discovery in 1887 of the diplomatic archives at Ahketaten, modern Tel el-Amarna, Egypt (Moran 1987), at Hattusha, modern Boghazkoy, Turkey in 1906/1907, and of smaller and more varied archives at Ugarit (Schaeffer 1936), Alalakh (Wiseman 1953), Nuzi, (Maidman 2010) and Qatna (Richter and Lange 2012). These archives were extraordinary in the manner in which they documented the inter-regional diplomatic correspondence and

gift exchange between rulers of different status and position (Cohen and Westbrook 2000, 1). The Amarna Archives, in particular, became the center of attention with their publication in English as a single volume in 1992 by Moran, making them more accessible to a wider general audience and scholarship. They were also extraordinary as they, at the time, presented for the first time, written evidence of a polycultural diplomatic system in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean (Cohen and Westbrook 2000, 10-11), in which court societies from completely different cultural backgrounds established formalized relations with one another. On the other hand the Hattusha archives also received much attention due to the preservation of a treaty between the Hittite and Egyptian kings after a famous military battle at Kadesh, which has largely been hailed as one of the first 'international peace treaties' (In fact a replica of the treaty found at Hattusha is on display in the United Nations building in New York City as a kind of enshrined example of diplomatic conflict resolution). In this manner the extraordinary nature of the finds combined with some of the first evidence for certain aspects of diplomacy which were perceived as being similar to modern international relations (International diplomacy and diplomacy as an alternative to war), lead to these sources being at the forefront of ancient diplomatic research. The problem with this is that it has, in my opinion, lead to a distinct focus and entrenchment of academic thought and research in the LBA, which has in turn lead to a number of assumptions that are increasingly being challenged by new evidence and approaches to Bronze Age diplomacy.

One of the problems with the current focus on the LBA archives is that they have lead to a perceived division in the nature of diplomacy between the LBA and earlier periods. The main criteria for such a division has been on the idea that the LBA archives document the first truly 'international diplomatic system' in the Eastern Mediterranean (Cohen and Westbrook, 2000, 11; Liverani 1990, 2). At the core of this concept is the notion of polyculturalism; how societies with completely different cultural backgrounds interact with one another on equal terms (Cohen and Westbrook 2000, 10). The LBA archives, with their range of diplomatic participants from culturally diverse regions (The Aegean, Egypt, Anatolia, Mesopotamia, Cyprus, and the Levant) appears in many ways to demonstrate a polycultural diplomatic system in operation. Most of these regions use unrelated languages and written scripts, display variations in power structures and social hierarchies and have different cultural practices and cosmologies. Despite this they are able to interact with one another on a fairly equal level, though the archives document plenty of cases for posturing and attempts to subvert status from other participants. The archives even demonstrate that the diplomatic

system operated through a shared *lingua franca,* Peripheral Akkadian (which in itself has variations in form), which acted as an 'official' script through which diplomatic correspondence was written (Mynářova 2007).

In essence, the idea of polycultralism is what gives the LBA diplomatic systems their 'international' aspect. However, the main difficulty with this concept arises when we use it as a defining factor on the nature of diplomacy during different periods. This is evident in the comparisons of the LBA archives with the earlier EBA Ebla archives and MBA Mari archives; approaches which have attempted to asses the earlier archives degree of polyculturalism and thus how 'international' they are. Such comparisons have lead to conclusions that while the geographical range of participants in these cases is distant, incorporating a number of different political entities in Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and the Levant, these regions have largely shared similar cultural backgrounds. They used similar, often related, languages and written scripts (cuneiform), had similar cosmologies and power structures and therefore were seen to share a roughly similar culture. This is particularly the case when discussing the MBA Mari Archives, which Lafont (2001, 42) notes as illustrating "…a closed and homogenous world in which numerous kingdoms share the same Amorrite culture". According to such conclusions the earlier archives do not display sufficient polycultralism in order to be considered 'international'. Hence we have a situation in which only the LBA archives are seen to document a 'first international diplomatic system', while earlier EBA and MBA archives display more regionally and cultural bounded diplomatic systems.

The problems with this is that it has lead to implications that the LBA was the apogee of diplomatic relations in the Bronze Age, and thus the diplomatic systems of this period are more 'developed'. In this manner diplomatic systems of the EBA and MBA are viewed as substantially different in terms of geographic range and complexity of interaction from those in the LBA. They are effectively seen as less advanced antecedents rather than as equally developed and complex systems in their own right. Liverani (1990, 2) stated such a thought in his influential work, *International Relations in the Ancient Near East*; that the range of sources, including treaties, letters, and literary and administrative texts, as well as the range of participants from around the Eastern Mediterranean, marked the LBA diplomatic relations as being more complex and formalized in nature from earlier periods, in essence being a "fully fledged diplomatic system". Similar mentalities are documented in Cohen and Westbrook's (2000) edited volume *Amarna Diplomacy, The Beginning of International*

Relations, which sought to explore the extent to which the Amarna Archives demonstrated a first international system, bringing in scholars from social and political sciences, particularly international relations. While such an approach was novel and made an interesting and applaudable interdisciplinary contribution to the study of Bronze Age diplomacy, it continued to establish an academic thought that bound a more 'developed' diplomacy to the specific context of the LBA.

This nature of the division between LBA and earlier periods has a number of obvious flaws. Firstly the reliance of texts as the primary means of reconstructing diplomacy is the real reason we perceive such a difference in diplomatic relations between the periods of the Bronze Age. By relying on texts alone we become bounded by the occurrence of their preservation, which of course leads to limitations and restrictions in the extent we can reconstruct the chronological and geographical distributions of diplomacy. These archive discoveries are always exceedingly rare and exceptional, and never document the full range of interactions and activities. For example in the Amarna archives we only have a few preserved letters that were actually sent from Egypt, the majority of the correspondence is received letters from the foreign courts. Thus we are actually missing a large part of the correspondence sent from the site in which the archive was actually found! So we have to bear in mind that making generalized comments about the extent and nature of diplomatic relations at a given time based solely on what written sources tell us can lead to misleading assumptions.

That these chronological divisions on diplomacy are largely artificial and based on archive preservation is clear from the manner in which we describe these periods of diplomacy. There are frequent usages of terminology such as 'Amarna Age', or 'Mari Age' used to describe specific periods in time relating to the occurrence of a diplomatic archive (Cohen 2001, 34; Podany 2010, 13). An even clearer indication of these divisions is when we find new archives or written documents which open the whole situation to reinterpretation. Such a discovery was made within the last few years with the unearthing of a fragment of a Old Babylonian letter, presumed to be a diplomatic letter, found in a MBA palatial context at the site of Avaris, modern Tell el-Dab'a in the Egyptian Nile delta (Bietak and Forstner-Müller 2010, 115-118). This fragment seems to display an example of the polycultural diplomacy mentioned above, as the letter is written in Akkadian cuneiform, in an Egyptian MBA palatial context no less! The discovery of this tablet has exposed the extent of this artificial divide

made between the EBA/MBA diplomatic systems and those of the LBA, needing scholars to reconsider the nature of diplomatic contacts in these earlier periods.

The artificial chronological divisions, with their implications on the geographical range of diplomacy in the EBA and MBA, as well as the focus on written documents has also lead to the potential exclusion of specific regions within Eastern Mediterranean diplomatic systems. This is largely the result of the emphasis placed on the role of the written tablet in reconstructing diplomatic activity. Such an emphasis has naturally excluded the participation of societies that have little evidence of written scripts or may have used writing differently, such as the absence of writing systems at Kerma and the more restricted usage of Linear A and Cretan hieroglyphic on Crete. But in reality how essential is literacy and writing for participating in diplomacy? Were those who were illiterate or non-literate unable to participate in diplomatic systems and excluded by default? In the next section I want to address these questions in more detail looking specifically at the role of literacy in court activities and diplomacy in the Near East before examining a case study of how a non-literate society, in this case the Kerma Culture in modern northern Sudan, might be integrated as a participant in wider Eastern Mediterranean diplomatic systems. In this manner I hope to illustrate clearly the shortcomings of relying on written documents while also opening the discourse on diplomacy to incorporate additional modalities of communication, setting the scene nicely for my purposed methodology.

2.4 Is the Pen Mightier than the Voice? Literacy and Diplomacy

To the modern audience literacy as a concept predominantly relates to the ability to read and write in a written script. This is largely due to the dominant position that literacy plays in educational and national policies. Within such frameworks educators and policy makers have been pressurised into defining an essentially pure definition and concept of 'literacy' (Havelock 1991, 21; Collins and Blot 2003, 3). However, that literacy can refer to other abstract concepts and modalities of communication besides that bound by the written word has begun to be highlighted in recent debates. Collins and Blot (2003) have pointed out that there are many different types of literacies, not all of which are directly connected to texts and written scripts. For example cultural literacy was a concept suggested in the 1980's over concerns with multicultural education; referring to a body of shared knowledge for an envisioned common national culture (Collins and Blot 2003, 2). Literacy they suggest refers loosely to any body of systematic useful knowledge and is not restricted to the ability to

read and write texts (Collins and Blot 2003, 3). Be this as it may, the role of the written script has continued to loom large in modern definitions of literacy.

Within the context of archaeology and anthropology, literacy has predominately come to refer to the ability to read and write in a written script. In this regard ancient societies have been viewed largely in the light of the dichotomy of literate (being able to read and/or write in a written script) and illiterate (being unable to read and write in a society that uses writing). Such terminology, while useful in some regards, places the written script in a position of prominent importance over other forms of communication and veils and misrepresents the use of writing and levels of literacy within societies. In addition some aspects of communication such as the orality of writing (Goody 1968; Ong 1982), the interactive role of material culture, and the communicative element of body techniques have been overshadowed by the dominance of the written word and linguistics. This has become particularly apparent in the realm of ancient diplomacy where the prominent position of the written tablet has dominated research (Cohen 2001, 24; Cohen and Westbrook 2000, 3). In some cases there have been even divisions between the types of diplomatic interactions available to literate and non-literate societies, with those involving the written word being perceived as more complex due to the apparent increased ability to record and transmit information through writing (Cohen 2001, 24). In this light it is vital that the seemingly essential role of literacy and the written word in Eastern Mediterranean diplomacy be re-examined, making it possible to recognize other modes of communication and interaction.

2.4.1 CASE STUDY: LITERACY AND DIPLOMACY IN THE BRONZE AGE NEAR EAST

The levels of literacy (the ability to read and write) in the Near East is a topic still being debated. The traditional view is that literacy was restricted to a professional scribal class who served an illiterate elite and general population (Liverani 1990, 71; Sasson 1995, 607; Pearce 1995, 2265; Podany 2010, 10). However a number of scholars have argued for a more widespread level of literacy amongst Near Eastern society, pointing to the widespread use of writing in many aspects of life (Postgate 1994, 69; Vanstiphout 1995, 2188). This debate into matters of literacy amongst the elite has important implications into how we perceive the operation of diplomatic systems in the Eastern Mediterranean and the role of literacy and written documents in diplomacy.

Wilcke (2000) has attempted to use both archaeological and textual data to demonstrate more widespread literacy rates in Mesopotamia. Looking at a number of multi-period sites such as Ur and Assur, Wilcke documented the find contexts of written tablets, noting that their was a proportionally high distribution of such tablets in houses across all periods. In addition he also looked at the use of the first person in texts and the use of specific expressions to allude to the author's ability to read. For example "upon seeing my present tablet" alternates with "in listening to my present tablet", with the first expression implying that the author was able to read himself rather than having the tablet read aloud. Lastly he also sought to identify irregularities and deviations in grammatical structures of texts to suggest the presence of unprofessional authors. In general he concluded that the evidence suggested that writing was not restricted to a scribal class but was present amongst the elite as well. Additionally he asserted that a passive knowledge of writing (knowing how to read) was more developed than an active knowledge (being able to write).

Wilcke's study, while engaging and using a variety of different evidence, encounters a number of problems. Charpin (2010, 12) notes that the sources used by Wilcke were old excavations reports, which are subject to the prerogatives and excavation techniques of the time. In addition most of the excavated houses belong to the elite and therefore do not demonstrate generalized literacy levels amongst the population. The presence of tablets within houses does not demonstrate the ability to read or write, particularly since such documents were often property deeds and debt records. However, his study does raise interesting questions about the levels of and relationship between active and passive writing.

In some respects Charpin (2010) builds upon this question of active and passive writing in his examination of the Mari Archives, raising a number of vital points on the role of literacy in Near Eastern diplomacy. An especially important aspect that he examines is the issue of the reading, writing and recitation of letters. Letters in general, put particularly in diplomatic correspondence, usually begin with the expression "Say to…" which has been noted as referencing the practice of reading letters aloud (Wente 1995, 2211). This has largely led to the belief that the recipients of these letters were illiterate and had to have them read aloud by other literate individuals (Sasson 1995, 607; Feldman 2006, 148). Conversely this has also lead to the assumption that kings and officials were not able to compose their own letters and were reliant on orally transmitting correspondence to scribes who then composed the

message in a letter (Mynářová 2007, 92-3, Podany 2010, 4-10). Charpin challenges these assumptions by noting a number of instances in the Mari Archives where there are indications that the authors and recipients of these letters, usually important court officials and kings, often did have the ability to read and write.

Charpin notes that a number of the Mari court officials bore titles that indicate a scribal background, as evidenced on a number of their seals. For instance in the era of Yahdun-Lim the highest court official, Hamatil, bore the title of 'scribe' on his personal seal (Charpin 2010, 13). Another official during the reign of Zimri-Lim, Yassim-Sumu, bore the title 'scribe' on an early seal which later progressed to 'chief book-keeper' on a later seal. The presence of such titles used by palace officials indicates that some officials and courtiers were trained in scribal traditions. This situation is also paralleled later at Amarna, where a number of court officials bear titles relating to scribal positions such as royal scribe (*sš nswt*) and royal secretary (*sš nswt maat*) (Mynářová 2007, 95). Indeed, the title of scribe in Egypt may have been an indicator that the individual was literate rather than directly involved in scribal duties (Wente 1995, 2211). Hittite officials and members of the royal family also bear titles relating to scribal practices such as 'Chief Wood Scribe' and such titles are often found following the names of witnesses on international treaties (Hoffner Jr. 2009, 7). What such titles do not tell us is how proficient these individuals were in reading and writing. It is likely that there was likely a great deal of variability in people's proficiency, particularly in regards to the ability to read versus the ability to write. Indications of hierarchical levels of literacy can be seen in some of the distinctions that appear to be made between those who could compose complex documents (such as reports and letters) and those who composed bookkeeping documents, with the latter being indicated as less educated (Charpin 2010, 13).

That some officials were able to compose these bookkeeping documents is clear from a letter from the governor of Mari, Bahdi-Lim, concerning a census of tribal chiefs to the king of Mari;

> So I've written a tablet concerning their people, locality by locality, and have just sent it to my lord (Charpin 2010, 14).

Charpin (2010, 14) notes that the use of the infinitive for "write" (*šaṭārum*) in this statement implies that Bahdi-Lim wrote the document himself and that if he had used a scribe, as he does elsewhere, he would have used the factitive form (*šuṭṭurum* or *šušṭurum*). The writing of more complex letters by officials is also documented in the Mari Archives and is similarly indicated by the distinction between using *šaṭārum* and *šuṭṭurum* or *šušṭurum*. Itur-Asdu, a

governor of several cities within the Mari kingdom appears to have personally written a letter to the king of Mari;

> Thus far I have not sent any message to my lord. [At present], I shall write the news on a tablet (Charpin, 2010, 14)

Another letter sent to Darish-libur, a highly placed official at the Mari palace, uses the same verb construction to suggest that a return letter would be written by Darish-libur himself (Charpin, 2010.14). A particularly interesting letter from Zimri-Lim to a general, Yasim-El, also documents the ability to read letters. In this letter Zimri-Lim writes;

> These tablets, read them yourself and read them out to Himdiya (Charpin 2010, 15)

That kings had the ability to read is also suggested from one letter in the Mari Archives in which Zimri-Lim decides between two inscriptions that will be placed on a statue. In the letter he requests that the inscriptions be sent to him so he can decide;

> Hence, as for the votive inscription to have written [on the statue], quickly send me the votive inscription that [PN] made, as well as the one made by Nab-Eshtar, so that I may see them and have the votive inscription I have chosen taken [to you]. (Charpin 2010, 18)

A comparable indication of a king's ability to read can be seen in the Amarna Archives. Letter EA 20 from Tushratta of Mittanni implies that the king himself was able to personally read the letter from Amenhotep III brought to him by an Egyptian diplomat;

> I read and reread the tablet that he brought to me, and I listened to its words (Moran 1987, 47)

Of particularly note here is that Tushratta mentions both the reading and listening to of the tablet, implying that while he had the tablet read aloud he also personally read the tablet himself. In addition to this evidence there are a number of Near Eastern kings who claimed to be literate. The Ur III king Shulgi claimed to be literate, making specific notes in Hymns A and B on how he was able to write tablets better than any other students (Pearce 1995, 2276; Charpin 2010, 9). Lipit-Eshtar, a contemporary king of Larsa to Shulgi, is also mentioned in Hymn B, which describes the goddess Nisaba guiding the kings hand as he wrote on a tablet (Charpin 2010, 9).

The fact that kings would have listened to a great deal of diplomatic letters also suggests that they would be intimately familiar with the rhetoric, structure, and composition of letters. While it has been argued that kings would not compose or write their own letters, instead giving an oral message that was dictated or noted and then composed by a scribe, we should perhaps not underestimate the ability of these individuals in being able to compose their own correspondence. I would certainly argue against the assumption that kings had no knowledge of how letters were composed (Mynářová 2007, 92, Podany 2010, 10). In fact, after listening to possibly hundreds of such letters they were probably quite knowledgeable on how to compose them!

These pieces of evidence demonstrate that at least some of the kings and highly placed officials in Near Eastern courts were able to read and write their own letters. To this end it can be seen that the ability to read and write in the Near East was not confined to a small scribal class but was distributed amongst a wider elite sphere. What implications then does this have on matters of diplomacy?

The fact that many of the letters in the Mari archives (To PN, say: thus speaks PN) (Charpin 2007, 403) and other diplomatic archives such as the earlier Ebla archives (Thus PN to PN listen) (Pettinato 1981, 46) and later Amarna and Hattusha archives (Say to PN, thus PN speaks as follows or Thus PN says, speak to PN) (Beckman 1996, 119-43; Moran 1987, xxii, xxix) emphasize an oral element to the letters would suggest that the recipients did not read these letters in the first instance. The fact that in the letter which Zimri-Lim specifically instructs Yarim-El to read the letter himself (rather than have someone else read it to him) and then read it aloud to another implies that the oral reading of letters was a standard practice. This bears the question that if Yarim-El and other members of the court were able to read, why then did they have their letters read aloud?

Perhaps having a letter read aloud presented a distinct opportunity for members of the elite to express social status and prestige. The impact of having someone else read something out loud would be particularly effective within the context of the social arena of the court or within the audience chamber of an elite household. Transforming the written correspondence into oral recitation allows the reception and reading of letters to be transformed into a ceremonial activity with opportunities for the expression of rank and status. For instance it allows the recipient of the letter to have their status expressed by having another read it for them. In addition it can a prestigious etiquette to be the one allowed to read the letter. Within international diplomacy it was probably the responsibility

of diplomats to read letters, though this was probably contextual variably depending on the linguistic knowledge of diplomats, but the event does present a possible opportunity for the receiving king to express favour by deciding on the reader, particularly if a translator would be needed. Letter E32 from the Amarna Archives presents the possibility that there was some flexibility on who read the letter:

> May Nabu, the king of wisdom, (and) Ištanšu of the gateway graciously protect the scribe who reads this tablet, and around you may they graciously hold the(ir) hands. You, scribe, write well to me; put down, moreover your name. (Moran 1987, 103)

The importance of the oral and social aspect of the diplomatic correspondence has perhaps been understated in the context of the examination of the linguistic and lexigraphic content and the political and economic implications of the letters. It is important not to underestimate these elements, particularly when we consider that the primary purpose of letters is not for the storing of knowledge but for transmitting oral communication across space (Goody 1968, 1; Charpin 2010, 23). As Ong (1982, 8) has noted writing can never dispense with orality and in the case of letters this is particularly true, as letters are themselves primarily a material manifestation of oral discourse (Haffron Jr. 2009, 2). While it seems clearly important in the diplomatic system of the Near East to be able to read and write and to produce physical clay tablets, it is also important to prevent these elements from dominating our perception of how this system operated. In many ways written tablets are just another opportunity for extracting rank and prestige out of a social event. Letters can only be seen to be part of the oral discourse which would take place between a diplomat and the recipient ruler. The letters themselves often refer to further interaction between diplomat and recipient such as complaints regarding behaviour and treatment of diplomats. Such complaints are well evidenced in the Amarna archives, for example in E1 Amenhotep III complains to Kadeshman-Enlil;

> And as to for your writing to me, "You said to my messengers, 'Has your master no troops? The girl he gave to me is not beautiful.'" – these are your words, (but) it is not so! Your messengers keep telling you what is not true saying things like this. (Moran 1987, 2)

This letter in particular involves a whole string of complaints about how diplomats report events and allude to a deal of discourse which is only partially included in the letters. In addition a number of letters from the Mari Archive document further discussions about the content of tablets and the asides and whisperings of diplomats during audiences (Charpin,

2010, 100, 103-4), highlighting that the tablets themselves only document a small proportion of the discourse involved in diplomatic receptions.

However, the ability to produce and send written correspondence was still vital to the Near Eastern diplomatic system. The presence and receiving of tablets not only lent authority and validity to diplomats, but were also important material aspects of diplomacy, operating alongside other interactions with material objects such as gift exchange. An example from the Arzawa correspondence of the Amarna Archives demonstrates such importance:

> Behold, (concerning the fact) that Kalbaya has spoken this word to me, "Let us establish a blood relationship" in this matter I do not trust Kalbaya. He has (indeed) spoken it as a word, but it was not confirmed on the tablet. If you really desire my daughter, (how) should I not give her to you? I give her to you! See to it now that Kalbaya returns quickly with my messenger, and write back to me on a tablet concerning this matter. (Moran 1987, 103)

The above example gives us a documents that there was an obvious desire to receive a written tablet, which could be used to physically and tactilely manifest these social and ceremonial relations. Other letters in the Amarna archives also reference previously sent tablets such as inventories of gifts, and even advise recipients in checking such tablets (EA 24). Such references indicate that the ability to produce and send written correspondence was still an expected and desirable aspect amongst the participants of the diplomatic system. Interestingly though, the Arzawa letter also demonstrates that diplomats were sent without written correspondence, which suggests that while desirable objects, written tablets were not absolutely essential and always sent with diplomats, who could transmit their messages orally.

In this manner we must recognise that literacy only formed one aspect of the various types of interaction modalities in diplomacy, and that some of these other modes of communication, such as oral discourse and rhetoric as well as interactions with material objects as we will see below, were of equal importance. To this end literacy, writing and written documents, while desirable in expressing status, were not core to the operation of the Near Eastern diplomatic. The ability to read and write presented individuals with increased opportunities within this diplomatic system to acquire rank and prestige; perhaps through the deployment of prestigious etiquettes involved in the reception of diplomats. Thusly the more widespread pattern of literacy amongst the court might be partially explained, particularly those who might serve in foreign courts. That diplomats were able to

read and write is referenced in a Mari letter which documents that Zimri-Lim made two copies of a letter, one which was sealed inside an envelope to be opened in front of the king of Babylon and another for the diplomat Ibal-pi-El to consult on his way to the city (Charpin 2010, 99-100). The fact that we have a number of letters from Ibal-pi-El to Zimri-Lim from Babylon also demonstrates his ability to write. Be this as it may, it does not appear that literacy was an essential and defining skill amongst the elite of the court. Clearly the use of other literate individuals was not only traditional but might have been an expression of social status.

2.4.2 CASE STUDY: KERMA, A NON-LITERATE SOCIETY IN A LITERATE WORLD?

Having established that literacy was not a essential and core factor in determining a societies ability to participate in diplomacy, rather it being an additional means of expressing status and rank, do we have any examples in which we might actually document this? I have chosen an appropriate case study which I believe illustrates both how writing and literacy cannot act as criteria to exclude non-literate societies, and how such perceptions have lead to the exclusion of a key area of the Eastern Mediterranean. The Kerma Culture in northern Sudan presents an unusual case of a society in the Eastern Mediterranean world that appears not have developed or used a written script. Despite this there is evidence to suggest a complex administrative system and diplomatic relations within the framework of Eastern Mediterranean diplomacy. While I have stressed that the oral, social and material elements of diplomacy played a much more important part than the current focus and emphasis on written correspondence would suggest, it is also clear that the production of such written correspondence was an important aspect of participating in this system. How then would Kerma have been able to interact in such a diplomatic framework and what evidence is there for the use and knowledge of writing at Kerma?

A native written script has still not been identified at Kerma (Valbelle 2004, 5; Gratien 1993, 41). The Kerman sealings have no evidence of writing that we can identify, and are particularly absent in written names. Of interest, we do have evidence to suggest that tablets were in use at Kerma (Gratien 1993, 41; Bonnet 1999, 61). A number of fragments of clay tablets have been found in ditches in the north and east of the city, which bear incised grid patterns on them. These tablets are intriguing but currently offer no real evidence of a written script, though they perhaps suggest the idea of recording information on tablets. Additionally their presence in ditches makes their context difficult to ascertain.

The main body of epigraphic data at Kerma comes from seals and sealings. Reisner (1923, 70) excavated 102 seals and nearly 1000 mud seal impressions at Kerma, with a number of additional seals and sealings having been excavated by Bonnet in his excavations, particularly between 1991-1999.

The seals themselves are perplexing. Of the 102 excavated by Reisner the bulk majority were Egyptian imports dating from the Middle Kingdom to Second Intermediate Period (Reisner 1923, 70). Most of these are scaraboid and are predominately made of steatite. Some bear royal names of Middle Kingdom and Hyksos kings and many bear hieroglyphs. The rest of the seals comprise 30% of the total amount and appear to be manufactured locally at Kerma with nearly all dating to the Kerma Classic period (Markowitz 1997, 83). Markowitz makes two important points. The locally made seals were mostly made of ivory with linear and geometric designs on their plinths and backs and while domed shaped did not usually display any scarab designs. A few were also made of local clay and featured the same types of design, a pattern also found the seals found by Bonnet (Gratien 1993, 41-2). The numbers of locally made seals also appears to have remained at a constant level throughout Kerma Classic levels (Markowitz 1997, 83-4). Conversely the number of imported seals showed a deal of fluctuation across the Kerma Classic levels, with low numbers in KCI, the highest in KCII, and a drop of in KCIII (though still higher than KCI) (Markowitz 1997, 83-4).

Reisner's seals were almost all found in the tumuli, specifically those of KIII, KIV, KX, and KXVI. They were distributed mainly in the subsidiary graves and sacrificial corridors of the tumuli with only a few in the main chambers of KXVI, though this may be due to looting (Reisner 1923, 81-5). Bonnet's excavations have uncovered a number of seals within the town, often found discarded in ditches (Gratien, 1999, 41-2).

The distribution of the seal impressions found by Reisner seems to have been around the royal tumuli and funerary chapel K XI of the Eastern Cemetery and in the vicinity of the Western Deffufa in the main city. Reisner (1923, 81) mentions that about 600 seal impressions (made by 101 different seals) were found in rooms of the Western Deffufa, including some bearing the names of Hyksos kings. They are presumed to be mostly Egyptian type sealings based on the fact that Reisner mentions they were all of the same type and included the Hyksos sealings. A further 250 sealings were found outside and to the east of the outer doorway of chapel KXI and appear to have been used to seal the doors to the funerary chapel and then discarded (Reisner 1923, 81; Gratien 1991, 21). Reisner mentions

that many of the seal impressions found here bore geometric designs, which are now attributed to the locally made Kerman seals (Reisner thought they were Egyptian). About 16 different seals are identified in this group but one in particular appears to have been used repeatedly. Reisner (1923, 86) also found seal impressions on the entranceway to the main burial chamber of tumulus KX.

Bonnets excavations have also found a number of sealings within the city (Gratien 1993). At the town itself sealings have been found around or in houses in the north (House M 95) and the south-east (Houses M166 and M167) sections of the city, all dating to Classic Kerma (Gratien 1993, 39; Bonnet, 1999, 61). The sealings found by houses M166 and M167 were found in a nearby ditch and were presumed to be associated with these two houses and a larger building to the north which is presumed to be some kind of warehouse (Bonnet 1999, 61).

The seals and sealings tell us a number of interesting facts about the consumption of writing at Kerma. Gratien (1991; 1993) has noted that the use of seals to seal doors and mark objects is a sign of a complex administrative system based on Egyptian models and probably involving knowledge of the Egyptian language. That the sealings were used in an administrative function does seem to be evident from the number of broken and discarded sealings, including the large number found near the entrance of chapel K XI. In addition a very large number of small clay blocks were found within the latest palace that show signs that they were kept moist; suggesting that they were used for sealings (Gratien 1993, 41). However, Gratien's assumption that the Kerman administration is based on Egyptian models is hard to fathom, presumably she is referring to the use of Egyptian seals and the presence of royal names on them. However, the nature of the Egyptian seals at Kerma is rather enigmatic. A sealing tradition may have already been present at Kerma since the Kerma Ancient (Bonnet 2004a, 83) and even with the presence of Egyptian seals there is a continuation of native seal production. The use of seals is not something exclusively Egyptian in nature and therefore the idea that the Kerman administration was based on Egyptian models and used Egyptian language based on the presence and use of Egyptian sealings is unsupportive. In addition many of the Egyptian seals date to the Middle Kingdom and bear the names of officials and kings from this period. That they were found in later Classic Kerma levels seems to suggest that they do not necessarily document administrative and diplomatic contacts from the Middle Kingdom as currently thought (Gratien 1991, 21). In light of the Sobek-Nakht inscription documenting Kerman raiding parties into Egypt during

the Second Intermediate Period (Davies 2003, 52-4) and the presence of stela and statuary from the Middle Kingdom found in the Kerma Classic tumuli it might be more likely they were acquired through plundering Middle Kingdom tombs in Upper Egypt rather than through trade and diplomatic contact. The antiquity of the seals may also be explained through possible curation and hoarding, which would in itself point to a use beyond just administration. To this end it appears that the seals were not used and valued exclusively as administrative tools.

The importance of the seals may be explained through the division in materials and decoration between the Egyptian and Kerman seals. While some Kerman seals show some imitation of hieroglyphs there appears to be very little interest in replicating the Egyptian steatite scarab seals, even with a developed faience industry at Kerma itself (Reisner 1923, 134-75). The emphasis on the Egyptian scarabs may therefore have been more linked with the consumption of Egyptian language in social display and status expression. The fact that large numbers of Egyptian seals are found in the royal tumuli and that seal impressions were found on important monumental buildings suggest they were important status items. Of interest as well is that in some cases the Egyptian seals show signs of modifications usually in the addition of gold foil or plating that covers the scarab side (Markowitz 1997.84). The fact that the seals were not copied using a similar material which was a major industry at Kerma (faience), that the scarab design could be covered, and that the scarab design itself was not often copied on Kerman seals seems to suggest that it was the actual seal design and impression that was the focus of attention. This may be supported by the fact that some of the Egyptian sealings show signs that they may have been affixed to rings (Gratien 1991, 21), perhaps suggesting that the visual element of Egyptian script was being displayed.

Despite lacking a written script there is evidence that some individuals at Kerma had a knowledge and application of Egyptian hieroglyphic. Prior to the Kerma Classic, there appears to have been a long history of contact between the region of Kerma and Egypt. If the identification of Yam as Kerma in Old Kingdom autobiographical texts is correct then Egypt was interacting with Kerma for hundreds of years (Kendall 1997, 39-40). A passing familiarity with Egyptian hieroglyphic therefore seems likely, particularly in light of the nature of the recorded Old Kingdom diplomatic missions to Kerma, as documented by the autobiography of Harkhuf (Lichtheim 1973, 25-27). Such an assumption is not proof in itself but highlights that the nature of interaction and the length of time over which it was

conducted favour the transmission or at least an awareness of Egyptian language and written script.

The strongest piece of evidence to suggest that Kerma had a knowledge and application of Egyptian hieroglyphic come from the recording of a diplomatic letter from the Hyksos king Apophis to the king of Kerma on the Second Kamose stele. This stele is a highly biased recounting of the 17th Dynasty reunification of Egypt but it does seem to record and reference genuine sources and facts (Redford 1997, 41). The letter is one of these and is recorded as follows;

> *Aawsr-ra*, son of Re, Apophis greets my son the ruler of Kush. Why have you arisen as ruler without letting me know? Do you see what Egypt has done to me? The ruler which is in her midst – Kamose the mighty, given life! – is pushing me off my (own) land! I have not attacked him in any way comparable to all that he has done to you; he has chopped up the Two Lands to their grief, my land and yours, and he has hacked them up. Come north! Do not hold back! See, he is here with me: There is none who will stand up to you in Egypt. See, I will not give him a way out until you arrive! Then we shall divide the towns of Egypt, and [Khent]-hen-nfr shall be in joy. Wadj-khep-ria-the-mighty-Punisher-of-Missdeeds (Redford 1997, 15)

While the letter shows sign of modification such as the addition of the epithets to Kamose's name, the letter bears remarkable similarity to the genre of diplomatic letters found in the Mari and Amarna archives. The emphasis on etiquette between rulers is demonstrated by the traditional greeting using familiar terminology and titles ("Apophis greets my son the ruler of Kush") (Podany 2010, 29; Mynářová 2007, 125-31). Of interest is the use of the term 'son' (a term implying social inferiority in correspondence in the Late Bronze Age archives) rather than the traditional 'brother' (which implied equality). This use of terminology may be due to the next sentence ("Why have you arisen as ruler without letting me know?") which may indicate that the use of the term son refers to the seniority of the Hyksos king as an established ruler or perhaps to underpin the fact that relations between the two kings have not yet been established and therefore the term 'brother' is not yet appropriate. This sentence also exemplifies the common complaints of breach of etiquette and maintenance of relations found in the Mari and Amarna archives. The implication that the Kerman king should have notified the Hyksos king that he had become ruler also alludes to previous relations in which this was standard practice. That this rhetoric is present and well developed clearly demonstrates that diplomatic correspondence involving written tablets

was in place between Avaris and Kerma. Further credence is given to this by the fact that Kamose records that he obtained this letter by intercepting the diplomat who was on the way to Kerma, referencing the physicality of the letter and the person carrying it.

If such diplomatic correspondence was in place using a written script, it documents that at least some individuals at Kerma had the capability to read such letters, though as we will see this does not necessarily mean these individuals were Kermans. In addition the reference to previous relations and the reciprocity expected in sending the letter indicate that Kerma was actively producing written correspondence in some manner and maintaining such diplomatic relations. Without a native written script it is likely the letters were written in Egyptian hieroglyphic, though we cannot completely exclude the possibility they were written in one of the dialects of the traditional diplomatic language of Peripheral Akkadian cuneiform (though this seems unlikely to me)(Mynářová 2007, 45). This raises the question of who was reading and writing these letters in a society that appears to have no written script?

A possible explanation is that the kings of Kerma employed the skills of Egyptian scribes who were based at Kerma (Valbelle 2004, 5; Kendall 1997, 42). That Egyptians were present at Kerma seems likely given the length of contact since the Old Kingdom. The best evidence documenting the presence of literate Egyptians at Kerma and serving the king of Kerma comes from personal stele at the fortress of Buhen. A number of these stele, notably those of Ka and Sopedhor, record that they served the ruler of Kerma. Ka's stele in particular also seems to indicate that he travelled to Kerma and served the king;

> I was a valiant servant of the ruler of Kush. I washed <my> feet in the waters of Kush in the following of the ruler Nedjeh, and I returned safe and sound <to my> household> (Säve-Söderbergh 1949)

These stela provide evidence that Egyptian officials at Buhen not only served the king of Kerma but also travelled to Kerma itself. In light of this it seems very likely that the king of Kerma would have access to literate Egyptians in which to write diplomatic correspondence. That these Egyptians were resident at least on a part time basis at Kerma is implied by Ka's inscription and by the allusion of long-term relations in the Apophis letter.

An interesting question that this evidence raises is to what degree the Kermans were able to read and write in Egyptian? We assume that any written documents were produced by literate Egyptians but why not literate Kermans? To this I would make note of two points. We appear to have little evidence for Egyptian documents at Kerma; most of the instances

of Egyptian written script come from the seals and statues, which seem to place little emphasis or requirement on actually being able to read Egyptian (Valbelle 2004, 6). In addition what imitation we have of hieroglyphic appears to be rather crude such as in the case of some seals or incomprehensible in the case of an inscription on an incised vase found in chapel K XI (Lacovara 1985, 216). This seems to suggest little application or adoption of Egyptian language and script by the Kermans (Valbelle 2004, 6), though it may have been valued on a visual and aesthetic level. However, the lack of inscriptional data cannot rule out the possibility that some Kermans were able to read Egyptian hieroglyphic.

If the Kermans in general were not able to write in Egyptian, diplomatic correspondence must have been dictated to literate Egyptians who then composed these letters. Dictation of letters is a practice which is documented in the Mari Archives where a few letters show signs of dictation (some letters remain unfinished, have incorrect verbal positions, and convey emotion that references orality) while in others we have explicit mention of the practice (Charpin 2007, 401). In addition notes can be taken from a conversation/instruction and then drafted into a letter (Charpin 2007, 401; Mynářová 2007, 92-3). This raises the question of the native language and knowledge of the spoken Egyptian language. We must presume that the Kermans had knowledge of Egyptian or that the Egyptians knew the native language. We have little to no direct evidence to illuminate this situation but given the need for multilingual scribes in diplomatic correspondence (Hoffner Jr. 2009, 21; Mynářová 2007, 47) it is likely that the Kermans and Egyptians were able to communicate effectively though use of either languages or a possible as of yet unidentified Nubian dialect.

The case of Kerma raises some engaging challenges to the prominent position that literacy plays in diplomatic activity and on broader patterns of inter-regional relations. It would appear from the evidence that Kerma had the capability to manage a complex administrative system and diplomatic correspondence without the use of a native script. In addition while having contact with a well developed and established written tradition from Egypt they did not themselves invent or adopt a written script. This is particularly interesting given their evidently active participation in a well-established tradition of inter-regional relations that placed an importance on the ability to produce written correspondence. The seeming resistance in adopting a written script is further emphasized by the circumventing of the problem of the literate element of diplomatic relations by possibly using multilingual Egyptians.

This resistance to written script is perhaps not unusual. Ethnographic studies have found that the introduction of written scripts in non-literate societies is often met with anxiety and distrust. Such an example can be seen in the case of the Tolowa in northern California, where a language preservation project found difficulty in documenting the native language without the presence of a written script (Collins and Blot 2003, 12). A phonetic alphabetic script called Unifon was used to record the language but the introduction of the script received a mixed reaction. Some, notably those involved in the project, embraced the script as part of their cultural identity while others found the script alien and difficult to learn, preferring to learn and use English (Collins and Blot 2003, 14). The case of the Tolowa highlights that the introduction and adoption of written scripts in societies who have a strong oral tradition and other methods of mnemonics such as dancing and the curation of heirlooms and stories can encounter a number of problems. Conflict with written and oral traditions can also be documented in the case of the Veda hymns in India, where even after the introduction of writing there was a preference for the use of oral communication in the teaching of the Rig Vedas. This has been attributed to the desire to preserve traditional mediums of communication and a preference for the oral nature of teaching (Goody 1968, 12-3). In the case of Kerma the apparent resistance to written script may have been due to similar preferences to a strong oral tradition or other modes of recording that played a large part of Kerman cultural identity.

2.5 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This chapter has sought to bring forward a working definition of diplomacy, highlighting that such a term has a number of modern associations and concepts which we need to be critical of in applying to past societies. As such we now have a much clearer understanding of which aspects were important and those that were perhaps not as important or relevant in the Bronze Age. I have also clarified the terminology regarding diplomats, abandoning the term messenger which has been widely used in diplomatic literature in favour of a term which, in my opinion, gives a greater appreciation of the technical skill and knowledge, often incorporating different languages, scripts, and cultural practices and etiquettes, that must have been required for the successful implementation of diplomatic missions. In this manner we have a better understanding of how diplomacy could be a long-term profession and source of status and prestige for members of the court who pursued such an career.

Building on this a broader discussion on Eastern Mediterranean diplomacy identified a number of key aspects. Diplomacy involved three principle actors (diplomats, courtiers, rulers) and utilised a metaphorical framework of extended kingship and 'brotherhood' through which the whole system was able to operate buy establishing courts within broader inter-regional patrimonial hierarchies. While this ideology with its pyscho-social underpinnings provided courts with the means to establish analogy and a sense of shared identity there were also certain key requirements into the maintenance of this system. These requirements consisted of specific expectations regarding the etiquette and treatment of diplomats at court (in essence a diplomatic protocol) and that the act of sending delegations was expected to be a long term reciprocal process that was only discontinued in the event of deliberate withdrawal from the diplomatic system (which appears only to happen in the event of political collapse and outside conquest such as in the case of Mittani). As long as these requirements were met the diplomatic systems had a basic framework in which to properly function, though of course other mechanical elements such as what exact etiquettes and expectations were involved with diplomatic activities must have been contextual and subject to variation across space and time.

Having established the basic parameters of Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean diplomacy I moved on to discuss some of the current focuses of research on diplomacy within the region and time period. This led to a number of important conclusions regarding some of the limitations of this work, highlighting that diplomatic scholarship has largely (though not exclusively as we will see in the following chapter) been entrenched in two academic approaches, art historical and textual. The art historical approaches have mainly focused on the topic of international styles and Aegean wall paintings. While the discussion on wall paintings has benefited from being very contextual driven and easily accessible, as well as attracting a substantially larger research base, research on international style has been markedly smaller. As such it has become subject to a number of critiques that highlight the way in which art historians have divorced art from the objects, contexts and people for which the were intended. However, approaches such as Feldman's are beginning to address this division and to contextualise art in terms of its spatial, material, social and ceremonial contexts. While still problematic, particularly in the way that the functions and relationships with the human body are underplayed, Feldman's approach is something that can be built upon in this thesis and will be explored further in the next chapter.

The textual approaches on the other hand have led to a number of problems that we need to directly address. The focus on written documents in reconstructing diplomacy has led to increasing artificial divisions and classifications of diplomatic activity in the Bronze Age on a spatial and diachronic scale. These artificial divisions have become largely centred around the distribution of preserved diplomatic archives, which are subsequently compared against one another in order to identify how diplomatic systems operated through the Bronze Age. Unfortunately this reliance on preserved written archives has left us in a situation where we perceive diplomacy very differently according to which period of the Bronze Age we are looking at. The diplomatic systems of the EBA and MBA, which have limited textual sources outside of the Ebla, Ur III and Mari archives, have been noted as being less 'international' than those of the LBA, whose diplomatic systems are richly illustrated by the dynamic archives of Amarna, Hattusha, Ugarit, Alalakh, Nuzi and Qatna. Notably the issue of polyculturalism is the key factor in determining the level of 'internationalism', with the various different LBA societies of the Eastern Mediterranean documenting a diplomatic system that is perceived as being much more geographically and culturally diverse than those of the EBA and MBA archives. However, the appearance of the possible Old Babylonian diplomatic letter found in the 15th dynasty palatial complex of a Hyksos king at Avaris in Egypt has provided a poignant example that illustrates the artificiality of these classifications and divisions. In light of these issues we clearly need to employ a new approach which is not bound by the limitations of relying on solely on textual sources.

Building on these limitations and issues regarding the tyranny of texts, I put forward the question of how important in reality are written documents, and for that matter literacy, in court societies and in the participation of diplomacy? In answering this I found that many of the perceptions modern scholarship has made about an illiterate rulers and court elite and the prominent position of the written tablet, were not actually accurate. Instead we have a picture of a much more fluid and dynamic distribution of literacy amongst the court elite and not at all as a skill restricted to a small professional scribal class. Being literate at court supplied distinct advantages to rulers and courtiers and opportunities for expressing status and prestige through the construction of etiquettes around the writing and reading of letters. Despite this, literacy was a skill that, while advantageous, would not have been essential, particularly in light of the tradition of oral reading of letters by other individuals. In addition, the proficiency of literacy amongst court members probably displayed a degree of variation.

Deconstructing these assumptions about literacy, and finding some interesting dynamics regarding how literacy could be a tool in which to express status and prestige, allowed us to reassess the capability of non-literate societies (or those who may have used writing differently) in participating in diplomatic interactions with literate societies. In the case of Kerma we see that there were possibilities in surmounting the barriers of written communication, and that in actuality other forms of communication, particularly spoken rhetoric, offered equally important avenues of expression and interaction. By breaking free of the shackles of the written word we are free to explore these additional modalities of communication. In particularly in opens the door to exploring how things like material culture might be provide complementary forms of interaction to writing and orality. This will be built upon in the following chapter, where I outline a methodology that seeks to address the noted limitations and problems of past research while also building on some of the concepts I have explored further here.

CHAPTER 3: EXCHANGING ETIQUETTES: A NEW METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The previous chapter demonstrated that past approaches to diplomacy have placed an intellectual premium on certain bodies of evidence, particularly written sources. Such approaches have subsequently led to artificial chronological and geographical divisions when considering the nature and extent of diplomatic relations. A different approach is therefore required, one which examines all forms of evidence holistically. This allows us to appreciate all of the potential modalities of communication and interaction involved in forms of cross-cultural interaction (Lilyquist 2013, 268). In particular there is a burgeoning consensus amongst more recent diplomatic scholarship that the lists of gifts in diplomatic texts cannot be used as a substitute for looking at the material culture itself (Lilyquist 2013, 268). As a result, new approaches have been formulated, which address how material culture and its interactions with the human body, along with texts and art, might provide interesting and engaging avenues of enquiry into how diplomacy operated and might be reconstructed in the archaeological record.

Sorensen (2012) has examined the role of drinking activities in diplomacy, noting the way that banquets formed an integral part of diplomatic ceremonies, particularly in the instances of 'royal summits' in which rulers met face to face. Her work picked up on the notion that drinking events allowed the expression of status and rank through the formulation of etiquettes surrounding acts of drinking, such as the seating arrangements, the order of serving, and especially the use of different typologies and materials of drinking vessels. The special position of the cup(s) in these events was noted, in the way that the object itself was an expression of status (material, size, shape, decoration, contents etc.) but also in the manner in which it was handled and used, namely through toasting practices. Toasting, she argued, was a means of expressing rank and power; placing emphasis on the body of the individual(s) included in the toast as well as the material object (which in the case of uplifted vessels would be in prominent visual display) (Sorenson 2012). As such being involved in toasts were important ways of expressing status and inclusion. In the context of diplomacy, Sorensen correlates instances of Cretan-style portable artefacts (specifically ceramic cups and jugs) in Cyprus and the Levant, with mentions of 'royal summits' (gatherings of kings and diplomatic receptions) and prestigious metal cups within the Mari archives and analogies

through the Ugaritic mythical texts. She suggests that such cups and jugs (incorporating both painted ceramic and metalware) were Minoan diplomatic gifts (Sorenson 2012, 717-721), which were subsequently used in diplomatic banquets. In this manner, Sorenson sees diplomacy as a means of facilitating not only the exchange of objects, in this case cups, but also practices, in the form of certain etiquettes surrounding toasting.

Sorenson's approach considers diplomacy in a fresh way. By focusing on interactions and relationships between the human body and material culture, along with artistic and textual sources, behaviours which might have been considered largely invisible in the archaeological record can be examined. A similar approach is also advocated by Caubet (2013) who examines ritualised banquets at Ugarit, through the corpus of drinking vessels and table furniture, ritual texts and epics, and instances of images of banqueting activities there. Her study came to similar conclusions as Sorenson's, that banquets were venues in which courts were able to enact different etiquettes for drinking. Caubet saw this exchange in practices and behaviour between Ugarit and the rest of the Eastern Mediterranean materialised in the archaeological record through the same means as Sorenson; namely foreign types of drinking vessels appearing in palatial or royal contexts. In Caubet's case she noted the presence of Aegean vessel forms, such as Mycenaean craters and zoomorphic rhytons as well as Egyptian travertine vessels inscribed with the name of Egyptian kings and carinated bowls of the 'tazza' type (see also Bevan 2007, 145-150). She interpreted the presence of these types of objects as evidence of the Ugaritic court adopting foreign courtly drinking etiquettes, most likely through diplomatic activities (Caubet 2013, 236).

These two examples give us an idea of how more holistic approaches to etiquette and behaviour can flesh out diplomatic relationships in terms of what types of exchange, interactions and activities were involved. Particularly, by adding sensory and embodied aspects to diplomatic activities and interactions, we are able to better understand the phenomenological and experiential aspects of such activities in past court societies. It is these qualities which made diplomacy so effective in maintaining inter-regional social relationships and court identities. Indeed, the recent work of Steel (2013), influenced by Marcel Mauss' work on gifting networks, has highlighted that interregional interactions and the formation of long range social networks and identities are heavily mediated through human agency and material objects in the form of gifts. Steel emphasised how gifting objects were important participants in inter-cultural encounters, particularly if they facilitated certain forms of behaviour and activities. In this manner objects are transformed

into actual physical participants in diplomatic events and practices. This type of theoretical approach is much in line with more current research methodologies of studying cultural transmission and interaction within the Eastern Mediterranean, which have emphasised the role of human agency (Clarke 2005, 3; Maran 2012; Maran and Stockhammer 2012; Steel 2013; Stejn 2002).

Taking these factors into consideration, it is clear that the study of diplomacy in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean is beginning to explore how specific forms of behaviour, gestures, and material culture were used in expressing status and identity within ancient court societies. This thesis will take the next step in the direction these studies have begun, by providing an expansive cross-cultural examination on the role of etiquette in diplomacy in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean, and how these forms of behaviour could be transmitted, adopted, and rejected by different court societies.

3.1 METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

Building upon these approaches focusing on etiquette and diplomacy, I have developed a methodology which will provide a larger comparative theoretical framework through which diplomacy can be studied, and which can be used to address my main research questions in this thesis:

- What forms of court etiquette can be reconstructed and examined from the archaeological record in the Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean?
- Can types of etiquette transmission be identified in the archaeological record between different court societies?
- Can these cases of etiquette transmission be used in reconstructing diplomatic relationships between ancient court societies?

In order to address these questions I have constructed two approaches, which will examine architecture, material culture, written texts, and art using a holistic analysis and discussion. In addition, I outline a workable timeframe within the Bronze Age and a geographic range in the Eastern Mediterranean to establish a specific context for the thesis.

3.1.1 PALACE ARCHITECTURE: A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

Court societies inhabit an actual physical space, ranging from monumental palaces to semi-permanent structures such as tents. However, in the archaeological record the most visible and tangible evidence for this 'court space' comes from the remains of monumental buildings usually termed 'palaces'. Using these architectural remains,

a comparative examination of palatial and royal/elite residential architecture will determine the relationships between human bodies and architectural features and design in constructing forms of behaviour and social hierarchy. This section of the thesis will look at the way in which architectural features (such as doorways, upper floors, porticoes, courtyards, daises) and decoration (such as wall paintings and statuary) could be used to formulate ceremonial spaces and routes facilitating and enforcing specific forms of ritualised behaviour. In this manner, the placement of features within architectural spaces had specific implications on the behaviour and gestures of individuals navigating said spaces, acting as physical mnemonic device or triggering affect for old and new forms of behaviour (Kent 1990; Rapoport 1982). These architectural features can be employed in a variety of ways to manipulate the postures and movements of the human body, allowing the expression of status and identity through different forms of body etiquettes.

In addition, the delineation and/or incorporation of different ceremonial spheres, can demonstrate how architecture can be utilised in creating social hierarchies and differing levels of accessibility according to status and identity. This is unsurprising as architecture is largely concerned with creating boundaries where none exist in nature, creating spatial divisions between people based on a number of different concepts such as inner/outer or public/private (Korosec-Serfaty and Bolitt 1986), sacred/profane, ours/ theirs (Rodman 1985). Within this thesis such divisions and physical boundaries are particularly relevant for examination, as they elucidate methods for distinguishing divisions in social hierarchy at court, between the ruler, the royal family, the court, and the rest of society. As such, not only are the architectural features within buildings of interest but also the actual larger urban context of the court buildings in relation to one another and to buildings of lower tiers of society. The interplay and divisions of space, between royal, court, and other can produce significant attempts to manage the levels of interplay between all of these parties. For example, places for social reception and mortuary practice can co-occur within the same overall architectural space (Western Palace Q at Ebla, Royal Palace at Qatna), suggesting less a desire to separate the world of the living and the dead, and more a desire to sharply maintain a division between the space in which the court operates and the one the rest of

society occupies. Meanwhile other royal/court mortuary spaces are located outside the palace (Mycenae) or the palace complex (Egypt, Kerma) and would have required greater interaction with non-court spaces and people, offering a higher degree of interplay between court and non-court communities. In some cases there might even be deliberate blurring of court and non-court spaces, with no clear delineations between the two (examples include the palaces at Zakros and Gournia on Crete (Day and Relaki 2002, 221) and Palace G at Ebla, discussed below).

Of course the main aim of this section is not only to underline the physical context of court activities and to determine potential ways in which architecture can be employed to direct behaviour, but also how these concepts might relate to diplomacy. By comparing palatial buildings it becomes possible to identify possible 'foreign' architectural features and decoration and perhaps shared architectural features (as in a distinctive origin is difficult to pinpoint and might be a result of a more widespread usage). The presence of such foreign or shared elements could document the transference of concepts of choreographing the human body through architectural design and decoration.

In order to compare palatial architecture, a corpus of palatial buildings was required from across the Eastern Mediterranean. Palatial sites were chosen based on two main criteria;

a) Does the building provide features that can identify it as a 'palatial building' or royal/elite residence? This denotes the incorporation of monumental architectural spaces and features that can facilitate social gatherings (both large and small) and architectural features that denote a royal or upper elite status, such as elite and royal iconography, inscriptions, material culture and architectural decoration.

b) Does the building have sufficient material remains to at least partially reconstruct the building layout and facilitate an examination of how the surviving architectural spaces were used?

In regards to the first criteria, a further clarification needs to be made about the terms 'palatial building' and 'royal/elite residence'. In many cases, an identification and differentiation between palaces (which are not necessarily residential) and royal/ elite residences can often be difficult, particularly in places like Egypt. Indeed in the case of Egypt many of the 'palatial' MBA buildings that have been excavated have an uncertain identification and have been argued by different scholars to be palaces (with subdivisions of ceremonial, temple or residential palaces) or royal/elite residences (for distinctions between temple and residential palaces see Stadelmann 1996 and Lacovara 1997; for the difficulty in

identifying these distinctions see Eigner 1996 78-80). Similar problems of distinguishing the nature and functions of palaces also occur regarding Minoan Crete (Day and Relaki 2002; Driessen 2002; Hagg 1996), and to a lesser extent the Mycenaean mainland (Galaty and Parkinson 1999), where the function of the palace complexes is still highly debated due to their relationship to models of political and social organisation (see section 1.6 for further discussion of Minoan models of political and social organisation).

Increasingly in this case the architectural features so intimately tied to modern Eurocentric conceptions of palaces (such as thrones and throne rooms) are being critically reassessed. Indeed, it is important to be careful in our interpretation of certain features such as platforms and courts and identifying these as specific types of features such as throne diases. For example in many of the Minoan palaces there is no evidence for a throne or throne room, a fact which in itself is very interesting. However, we still need to be careful in our identification of such features within palatial buildings where traditionally we have felt much more secure, such as Egypt and the Levant. In this way we open the door to new interpretations and discoveries rather than conforming to uncritical stereotypical assumptions of what constitutes a palatial building based on Eurocentric coneptions of court soceities.

As such, many of the buildings which are included in this corpus of data may have a debatable and controversial function. Where possible I have attempted to use either the term 'palatial building', which denotes a more formal ceremonial multi-functional building complex, or royal/elite residence, which denotes a primarily residential building. In both cases there may not be a huge distinction, however it is important to allow a notion on hierarchy and differentiation between ceremonial and residential buildings and also between royal families and members of the court elite. I suspect that the reason why it is difficult to differentiate between the two is that there was an intentional blurring of distinctions and functions between different court buildings due to the competing and malleable relationships between royal and elite groups.

While still rather generalised, the above definitions of court buildings still refer to a specific type of architectural form, and are not at all a comprehensive definition of what constitutes a 'court building'. We should also be aware that there are a variety of other buildings that could be important court spaces, as Elias noted in his examination of court societies. Besides royal and elite residences and ceremonial buildings, temples and other cultic and mortuary buildings must have also been important venues for court activities. Many of these cultic

buildings and complexes were of enormous size and monumentality, dominating urban centres alongside the palaces and royal/elite residences. In many cases their close proximity to palaces and ideological and religious relationships to rulers and kingship open these buildings and their staff as part of the larger court society, and were certainly an intimate part of court life. This seems particularly evident in places like Egypt, where courtiers could also be important members of the priesthood, as evidenced by the priestly titles they often held (Readler 2011). Indeed, given that courts were not only social and political entities, but also cosmological and ritual entities relating to divine and sacred kingship, it is not surprising that temples and cultic buildings would have also been important court spaces. In many cases palaces and royal/elite residences also had cultic and religious functions, particularly in relation to kingship, a further blurring of distinctions between these different monumental buildings. This is especially clear in cases where palaces incorporated mortuary spaces like tombs and hypogeum, such as the previously mentioned examples at Qatna and Ebla. Therefore, we need to be aware that the activities of the court were not confined to palatial buildings and royal/elite residences but would have also incorporated other building types.

However, due to the scope of this thesis it is not possible to include a detailed study of all buildings types, but it is important that we recognise that by restricting the data selection to palace and royal/elite residences we are excluding certain other buildings that would also have been important. In addition we should also bear in mind that other as of yet unidentified building types or physical spaces that do not preserve well, such as gardens, were likely of equal importance. At present there is insufficient data on such potential spaces to allow detailed analysis and discussion, but they undoubtedly presented further opportunities in constructing court ceremonial spaces.

In regards to the second criteria for the selection of sites, it needs to be noted that the preservation of palatial and royal/elite residences is not expansive or equally distributed across regions and periods in the Eastern Mediterranean. Some areas have a number of examples, while others have limited sites to discuss. In many cases this may be due to the fact that we are missing examples of palatial and royal/elite residential buildings which have not yet been excavated or simply have not survived. Future excavation work will hopefully, in time, address this imbalance by bring to light further examples, particularly in areas such as the southern Levant, but at the present time it is difficult to produce a equally representative sample from all regions within the proposed timeframe. In addition, not all sites provide architectural remains that match the selection criteria, being only partially

preserved. Such examples do not facilitate a comprehensive analysis for this study but may be appropriate as points of comparison.

By adhering to these criteria, as well as recognising their limitations, we should be able to provide a comparative analysis that will demonstrate that forms of palatial and royal/elite residential architecture were designed to facilitate the construction and manipulation of specific types of etiquettes. In addition, the comparative nature of this analysis should also identify foreign architectural features that might suggest the transference of these architectural etiquettes between different court societies.

3.1.2 BODY TECHNIQUES: GESTURES IN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD

Having established the physical and social contexts in which court society operated and how architecture may have been used in manipulating the human body, we can and should drop down in scale to look at how etiquette might be constructed within such spaces using smaller portable objects. This section will examine the way in which specific body postures, what Marcel Mauss (1934) termed 'techniques of the body' (such as ways of drinking, eating, sitting), were shaped through relationships with material culture, and how these body postures were used to construct courtly etiquettes. In this manner certain object types are considered through the way in which they manipulate the human body and construct forms of gesture and posture. Examples of such body techniques include the manner in which a handled cup requires a specific form of holding and drinking from the vessel (in much the same manner as how Sorenson (2013) examined toasting) or how the design of a chair determines the way one sits.

In establishing these bodily aspects to specific forms of material culture it will then be possible to examine if distributions of certain object types might be indicative of transmissions of not only objects but also the body behaviours which were required in their use. This becomes particularly relevant when instances of courtly objects are found outside of their original cultural sphere, (perceived by us or by their past users) as foreign objects. Such cases could point to the transmission of forms of courtly behaviour between court societies. Therefore this section not only attempts to reconstruct forms of courtly behaviour from material objects used at court but also to see if the exchange of such objects also indicates the transmission of courtly body postures and etiquettes.

In order to examine these body techniques, I will be examining a wide variety of sources relating to specific body postures. As mentioned earlier this corpus of data will primarily be composed of material culture, but will also be complimented with available written and artistic sources. The typology of objects being examined will be furniture, drinking equipment, and cosmetic tools and vessels. Texts such as didactic literature, royal and elite private and monumental inscriptions, administrative records, and royal and elite correspondence will be used selectively where appropriate, with a particular emphasis placed on descriptions or allusions to the use of specific body postures and their associated material culture. The artistic sources include royal and elite private and monumental art, sealings and glyptic, and even hieroglyphic writing, with selection based on depictions of body postures and the object categories listed above. In addition, since we are particularly interested in examining relationships between different courts, selection will also take into account attributes that indicate foreign influences. 'Foreign' in this case refers to indications of not being part of the established material culture for the context in which the material is found or if it displays influences or characteristics that emulate, imitate, reference, or originate from another culture. As such, a qualitative selection criterion was used for the data collection as follows;

a) Does the object, image, or written description facilitate the examination of a specific courtly body technique?

b) Does the object, image, or written description also relate or allude in some way to foreign influence?

This data will be collected from contexts relating to court activities, in order to provide a representative picture of court behaviour. These contexts include the previously examined palatial buildings and royal/elite residences, but also temples, cultic buildings and royal and elite cemeteries. While I restricted the examination of architecture to palatial and royal/elite residences, in the case of small portable objects a wider range of court contexts was required. This was due to preservation distribution patterns, as many of these objects are not exclusively, or even often, solely found in palatial buildings and royal/elite residences. Widening the available contexts for the data collection allowed for a more representative corpus of data, while also highlighting the relationships between the palatial buildings and royal/elite residences and other court spaces and buildings.

However, sampling from these court contexts naturally provides a bias, excluding how the material might be used in the lower tiers of society. Importantly, it might overlook ways in which etiquettes could be transferred and transmitted vertically across social strata within societies. Therefore the full distribution of the objects types needs to be taken into account, noting whether they are found exclusively in the court contexts or if they are also found in non-royal/elite contexts such as domestic settlements and cemeteries. To this end, any conclusions on the nature of courtly behaviour are also taking into account how these relate to the non-courtly spheres of society. In some instances objects found throughout society could be used very differently and have different meanings according to the social context and strata in which they are in. Therefore, while I am restricting myself to my defined courtly contexts, I am also keeping a wider awareness of the distribution and use of the material outside of said contexts.

3.1.3 ANAOLOGY IN ARCHAEOLOGY

A quick word needs to be made in relation to the role of analogy in this project. In many cases in archaeology finding similarities in types of material, visual and textual sources and then suggesting connections or similarities based on analogy has been met with suscpicion. This is largely due to the way that such anaological anaylsis, particularly ethnographic analogy, was used in early archaeological research. Such uses lead to models of cultural evolution that are largely deemed as oversimplistic and uncritical in modern research (Wylie 1985). While the use of analogy certainly needs to be treated carefully, Wylie (1985) has argued that its use within archaeological anaylsis is still benefitial, leading to creative interpretations of archaeological amterial. However, it needs to be used selectively and logically, awknowledging both strnegths and weaknesses of the comparison.

Within this study analogical inference is used in a number of instances as a tool of comparative analysis between the material culture of different societies and cultures within the eastern Mediterranean during the Bronze Age. In these cases the use of analogy is carefully considered and its justification is due to the roughly contemporary nature of these societies and the similar contexts of the data, which argue against convergent developments and indicate transmission and adoption. These types of inference are not therefore not subject to the same types of problems and critiques used in analogical inferences between the past and the present. In many cases distinct differences and adaptions are also noted, avoiding the trap of simply transplanting conceptions uncritically. To this end selective and

critical use of anaological inference is actually an incredibly benefitial tool for teasing out both similarities and differences in the use of forms of material culture and art within the study region.

3.2 CHRONOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC PARAMETERS

Having outlined the methodology, an overview of the chronological and geographic parameters for this study is required. Discussions on chronology can naturally be quite complex but I provide here a somewhat brief overview of the main problems facing establishing chronology in the Eastern Mediterranean, something that has recently come into spotlight recently with the important discoveries at Abydos in Egypt. In addition, given the nature of past diplomatic scholarship, I feel it is necessary to give an explanation on my choice of timeframe for the thesis.

I also discuss the geographic range and include a brief overview of the historical context of the Eastern Mediterranean at this time. Additionally, a summary of the historical and archaeological context of the Kerma Culture, which I examined in Chapter 3, is also included, as this region has traditionally been excluded from Eastern Mediterranean scholarship and is therefore not widely known.

3.2.1 TEPHRA AND TIME: EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN CHRONOLOGY

While I have outlined the problems of periodization in diplomatic scholarship, it is necessary on a number of levels to narrow the chronological scope. Firstly, the entirety of the Bronze Age in the Eastern Mediterranean is far too expansive to be able to cover in any detail within the bounds of this thesis. A workable timeframe needs to be established.

Another point to consider is that the LBA has received a disproportionate level of study compared to the earlier Bronze Age phases and their associated geographical regions. In order to address this imbalance in scholarship it would be more suitable to examine one of the earlier phases rather than simply rework the majority of past scholarship on the LBA material. To this end I have opted to examine the MBA, as it offers a rich material, textual and artistic record within the region in which to apply my methodology while offering a context with a lesser degree of focus in diplomatic scholarship. In addition, it allows the incorporation of some regions which have been geographically and temporally isolated from the Eastern Mediterranean; namely the Kerma Culture in northern Sudan.

However, examining a specific phase in isolation could result in further emphasis on categorising and differentiating diplomacy by chronological phases. Instead, I want to be able to place these relationships within a context of wider and long-term processes and practices throughout the Bronze Age. This is not to say that I view these diplomatic practices and relationships as being unchanging or progressive from the EBA to the LBA. Rather, I see these relationships and practices being continually shaped by the shifting social and political conditions throughout these periods. While this thesis will focus on the MBA, where appropriate I will bring in material and comparisons with EBA and LBA material to highlight potential areas of interest or comparison, as will be demonstrated in the case study below.

In terms of dates for the MBA in the Eastern Mediterranean, these are still widely debated. As the region is divided into a number of different geographical and cultural regions (often along borders of modern nation states) with their own archaeological fields and methods of dating and approaches to chronology, there has yet to be formed an overarching Eastern Mediterranean chronology for the second millennium. In addition a number of different approaches to dating have left distinct divisions over chronology within the academic scholarship. Manfred Bietak has been leading the international project *The Synchronisation of Civilisations in the Eastern Mediterranean* (SCIEM) since 2000, which has been attempting to formulate an established chronology for the region during the second millennium B.C. The main difficulty that became apparent within this project was that there was a fierce debate and division between two particular chronologies for the second millennium. The first was the historical chronology, which was based on the Egyptian and Assyrian historical records and their interrelationships, reconstructed largely from astrochronology (Sothis and lunar dates), partially complete/corrupted king lists, incomplete regnal years of rulers and genealogies of officials and members of the elite. The second is the chronology based on radiocarbon dates from early LBA material in the Aegean (Höflmayer 2009, 187; Manning *et al* 2014), which have attempted to precisely date the eruption of the Thera volcano on Santorini using a variety of materials such as pumice, glass particles in Greenland ice cores, and tree rings. These two chronologies have found most conflict in the area of synchronising exact dates between the Egyptian historical chronology and the Aegean high chronology based on radiocarbon dates which has resulted in differences in about 100-150 years between certain dates in the 16th and 17th centuries B.C. These have currently left the state of chronological studies at an impasse for a number of years, though much dialogue and

attempts to find a solution are still currently being pursued (Cherubini et al 2014; Manning et al 2014; Weiner and Earle 2014).

However, the ^{14}C dating seems to be building a large amount of evidence to support the Aegean high chronology, despite continuing critiques (Weiner and Earle 2014), which is beginning to correlate with a number of archaeological sources (Manning et al 2014; Ramsey et al 2010), particularly regarding the sealings of Khayan found at Edfu in Egypt, which seem to support an earlier date for this king (Moeller & Marouard 2011). This suggests that there is some revision in the chronology of the Second Intermediate Period in Egypt needed, given the earlier date for Khayan. Indeed, the historical chronology of the Second Intermediate Period is undergoing such revisions as we speak, with the recent excavations at Abydos having unearthed physical evidence for a new Abydos dynasty contemporary with the 15th and 16th dynasty kings at Avaris and Thebes (www.penn.museum/press-releases) that was, until this time, only hypothesised by some scholars (Ryholt 1997). As such we can expect some important reworking of the chronology of the late MBA and early LBA in the near future.

As such, the state of these two chronologies at the present time does not lead to any firmly agreed specific dates in which to use for the MBA, though this will certainly change in the following years thanks to the increasing breakthroughs with ^{14}C dating and the correlation of this data with archaeological material emerging from Egypt. In addition it is not the mission of this thesis to determine exact dates for the MBA, and in many ways it is not particularly helpful in establishing exact dates for the study of the nature of diplomatic relations, as this might actually be detrimental in reinforcing generalised conclusions of diplomatic periodisation. However, as we need some form of chronological parameters for this study, I have opted to use the rough timeframe of 2000-1550 B.C. in the Eastern Mediterranean, which roughly incorporates generally accepted timeframe for the MBA but also including the very early LBA; which using the Egyptian historical record broadly correlates to the Middle Kingdom, Second Intermediate Period, and very early New Kingdom. In this manner I am not too bounded by a specific phase but still have a workable timeframe.

3.2.2 REGIONS OF THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

The stage at the start of the second millennium was one of a remarkable reconfiguration and development of societies and political relationships throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, with the proliferation of cities and polities based around monumental palace buildings being a notable region wide phenomenon. While such palace based societies were nothing new to the Bronze Age, they display an astounding and extensive development throughout the region during the MBA; being adapted to a variety of different environments, landscapes and cultures. At the heart of these court societies were hierarchical power structures, which we have already discussed previously; patrimonial monarchies and oligarchical/tribal court structures. These court structures saw an equally impressive diversity of forms and configurations, and in some cases like Crete, continue to perplex us in how society and power was organised. The palaces and the people who used them in many ways acted as the social and political hub of societies, being much more than just the dwelling place of the upper tiers of society but also providing a symbolic, ceremonial, cosmological and physical space for the collection and storage of material wealth, information, and esoteric knowledge (Broodbank 2013, 356).

The MBA therefore offers an extensive range of different court societies which can be included in this study. As I am looking at larger inter-regional processes I have defined my study area according to broad geographic terms. This does not imply that such areas have a cultural or socio-political unity, but they do allow us to navigate the expanse of the Eastern Mediterranean over the entire timeframe of 2000-1550 BC and facilitate discussion on inter-regional interactions. Discussing the court societies according to a regional basis facilitates not only a discussion regarding inter-regional diplomacy but also intra-regional diplomacy and hierarchy, providing an idea of different levels of interaction between and within different court societies. I have therefore selected the following regions to be included in this study.

- The Aegean (mainly Crete, but incorporating The Cyclades and Greek Mainland)
- Anatolia
- Levant (Including inland Syria and Upper Euphrates region)
- Egypt
- Upper Nubia

This list is by no means the full list of major regions within the Eastern Mediterranean, notably missing Cyprus and southern Mesopotamia. However, the scope of the thesis is already quite expansive and as such, it was necessary to have a limit in the scope and quantity of material discussed. However, where possible material from these areas will be brought in for discussion. In addition the range of societies here also offers some interesting new orientations in diplomacy that have not been fully realised, notably a north-south axis that includes more direct linkages into Africa. Therefore I believe the selection of these areas in the study should offer up some original and intriguing new avenues of inter-regional interaction and communication.

There is a great deal of scholarship dealing with the historical background of the Eastern Mediterranean (Broodbank 2013) and each of these regions during the MBA and as such I will not provide a detailed account of each of them (For Middle Kingdom Egypt see Callender 2003; for Second Intermediate Period Egypt see Bourraiu 2003; For the Levant see Akkermans and Schwartz 2003; for Anatolia see Bryce 2002, Dercksen 2008; for the Aegean see Shelmerdine 2008). However the area of Upper Nubia is certainly not well know to most archaeologists outside the field of Nubian and Egyptian Archaeology and I therefore feel that it is appropriate to give a very brief overview of the history and archaeology of this area for the reader. In addition, the Kerma Culture is rarely discussed as a participant in the wider Eastern Mediterranean and a certain amount of information is required to demonstrate why it should be.

3.2.3 INTO AFRICA: MBA UPPER NUBIA AND THE KERMA CULTURE

The MBA in Upper Nubia saw the emergence of a powerful African kingdom based at the site Kerma near the third Nile cataract, which at its height, rivalled Egypt. The kingdom of Kerma comprises of two main chronological phases in the MBA; the Middle Kerma (2050-1750 B.C.), which is contemporary with the Egyptian Middle Kingdom, and the Classic Kerma (1750-1550 B.C.), contemporary with the Second Intermediate Period (Bonnet 2004a, 72; Edwards 2004). The two phases document the burgeoning of the kingdom from the preceding Early Kerma phase in the EBA, to its height in the Classic Kerma and then to its destruction at the hands of the 17th and early 18th dynasty Egyptian kings.

The Middle Kerma phase is characterized as being a period of economic growth within the region, evidenced by the increasingly monumental and fortified urban settlement of Kerma and by elaborate mortuary practices and tomb structures (Bonnet 2004a, 79). In particular the emergence of an elite of some kind, perhaps even the first rulers, are documented in the construction of monumental tumuli, which often included human and animal sacrifices, as well as the bucrania of sometimes hundreds of cattle (Bonnet & Valbelle 2006, 23; O'Connor 1993, 39). Alongside this evidence for an increasingly stratified society, are sources for increasingly high level contacts with Egypt, aptly demonstrated by the presence of Egyptian objects such as coffins in Kerman graves (Kendall 1997, 41). However, Kerma is not the only site to see development at this time, with other major Kerman settlements also beginning to flourish at sites such as Sai Island (Geus 2004a). However, Ruth Humphreys (Personal Communication 2013) has suggested based on rapid fluctuations of pottery styles in the Middle Kerma, that this might actually be more of a transition phase between the Ancient and Classic Kerma phases and not quite as prosperous as previously thought. In addition, we do not know a huge amount about the nature of urban settlements during the Kerma phases, or even Kerman society at large outside of the city of Kerma itself (Bonnet 2004a, 73). We therefore, have a somewhat skewed picture of how Kerman urbanism and society was organised, as this is largely based on the archaeology of Kerma. In particular the Middle Kerma phase is little understood in comparison to the Classic Kerma, due to the comparative lack of archaeological sites and material. We therefore have to be careful when trying to categorise the nature of the Middle Kerma phase.

By the Classic Kerma, the whole of Upper Nubia had come under control of the rulers of Kerma, whose capital had become a major urban and regional centre. New Kerma settlements and cemeteries appear and expand throughout the region, such as at Ukma West and at the Egyptian fortress of Mirgissa, while older settlements such as Sai continue to grow and prosper. The power of the Kerma kings now rivalled those of Egypt, to the extent that Egyptian fortresses in Nubia came under Kerman domination, with Egyptian officials changing allegiance to the Kerman king. This power and prestige was materialised at Kerma itself, through the construction of a number of large monumental palatial and religious buildings and an elaborate fortification system. In addition, Kerma's position on the river, its harbour facilities (built in the earlier Middle Kerma) and boat construction (Bonnet 2004a, 73) allowed for increasing trade, administration and communication, bringing in more resources from Egypt and downriver from Sub-Saharan polities and communities. In conjunction with these urban developments came mortuary practices that expressed the

power and prosperity of the upper tiers of Kerman society. A huge royal and courtly cemetery developed to the east of the city where massive mudbrick and stone tumuli (themselves larger scale adaptions of Middle Kerma tumuli) were constructed to inter the Kerman kings and court, as well as hundreds of human sacrifices (Geus, 2004b, 278-279). The royal tumuli provide a snapshot of a highly stratified and centralized society which was controlled by a single ruler and accompanying court.

Upper Nubia therefore is far from a peripheral player in the political and social interactions of the Eastern Mediterranean during the period of 2000-1550 BC. It is clear that Kerma rivalled contemporary palace centres in the Eastern Mediterranean during this period, and was an active player in the political games of the time. Its influence and relationships with the courts of the different kingdoms in Egypt is particularly of interest, especially the relationship with the Avaris court, and highlights that we need to take into account this African court society which, after all, acted as a primary conduit for a number of important luxury trade goods, such as gold, ostrich egg, ivory, and African hardwoods, within the Eastern Mediterranean at this time.

3.3 CASE STUDY: PALATIAL ARCHITECTURE AND STONE VESSELS AT EBA EBLA

Having established the chronological and geographical parameters of this thesis, I would now like to demonstrate the validity of my methodology in a case study. I have chosen the EBA Royal Palace G at Ebla, which provides material in which to test both of my approaches. The case study will be split into two examples. The first examines how the design of Palace G incorporated a number of architectural features that facilitated the construction of court etiquette. This discussion of the architectural context will demonstrate how this approach can reconstruct forms of etiquette from the archaeological record. It also provides a vital discussion of the architectural and social context for the second example, which examines the role of a corpus foreign stone vessels found within Palace G. Discussion of this corpus of objects will provide an example of how we can identify and explain the transmission of court etiquettes within the archaeological record. Together, these two examples provide a demonstration on how my methodology is able to address the research questions of this thesis. I have also chosen a case study in the EBA to highlight that my methodology is not solely applicable to MBA contexts, and that the inter-regional networks and relationships I will be examining in the MBA are built upon earlier networks likely constructed even before the EBA. In this manner we place the MBA material in a deeper long-term historical context.

3.3.1 EBA EBLA AND ROYAL PALACE G

During the EBA the site of Ebla in the northern Levant was a prosperous and powerful city, the centre of a kingdom which dominated the political scene of this region'/'. Not only did the city boast formidable fortification systems but it also had a number of monumental elite and religious buildings located on and around the acropolis at the centre of the city (Fig. 3.1). One of these building in particular has provided invaluable information on how the royal court operated in the period between 2400-2300 BC (Matthiae 2013b, 37). Palace G, whose remains stretch from the south eastern top of the acropolis to its base, are the remains of a large palatial building and complex (Fig. 3.2). While a large part of the palace complex, particularly the western portion and the buildings on top of the acropolis, have not survived due to later levelling and reworking of the site, a significant part of the palace still remains (Matthiae 1982). Out of extraordinary luck the portions of the palace that did survive included some of the most important ceremonial court spaces. These included a large open air courtyard, storerooms containing courtly objects and tablet archives, a throne room, upper storeys, and a number of the entranceways, connecting corridors and staircases which would have been used to access these spaces. The discovery of the tablet archives also provided invaluable written records documenting the economic and political activities of the royal court, which are notable for some important documents illustrating the far-reaching inter-regional connections that the Ebla court participated in (Pettinato 1981). In addition the object and materials found in these sections of the palace also document similar inter-regional connections and intimate social relationships with other court societies, particular those of Old Kingdom Egypt and Early Dynastic Mesopotamia.

3.3.2 THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE CEREMONIAL QUARTER OF PALACE G

The Ceremonial Quarter of Palace G incorporates a series of rooms with clear functions as important gathering spaces for the court. Architectural features within section of the palace underscore that these spaces were very carefully and masterfully designed to maximise the options for managing the interactions between the king and court, and potentially lower tiers of society. The Ceremonial Quarter can be divided into two main sections, the Court of Audience (courtyard L.2752) and a series of rooms east of this courtyard termed by Matthiae as the Administrative Quarter, but that I refer to as the Throne Room Sector (Fig. 3.3). These two areas were physically connected and clearly functioned in conjunction with one another, with functions as spaces for reception and social gatherings. Here I discuss some of

the architectural features of these two spaces and how they facilitated specific forms of behaviour and spatial positioning.

The Throne Room Sector is orientated around two large rooms, the so-called throne room L.2866 and hall L.2013 (Fig. 3.3). The importance of these rooms is apparent not only from their large size, but also by the fact they have a number of prominent architectural features and decorations, as well as dominance over routes of movement within the sector. The majority of the other rooms within the sector have a distinctly ancillary quality, indicating that they provided additional storage and preparation space for room L.2866 and hall L.2013.

From the plan of this sector is becomes immediately apparent that access into the Throne Room Sector was quite restricted, with only two possible means of entering and exiting. The first comes through the basalt-lined doorway with mother of pearl inlaid steps that is found on the eastern wall of vestibule L.2875. The second comes from the staircase immediately to the north of hall L.2391, which leads down from an upper storey. The special nature of these entranceways, one lined with stone and inlaid with pearl and the other coming down from a staircase and upper floor, point to these being particularly important liminal markers, manifesting a transitionary space as well as a type of boundary. The vestibule doorway appears to have been the most important and prestigious in nature, not only because of its materials but also because it was quite large, with a width of about 2m. As such it facilitated at least two people walking side by side. The staircase, on the other hand, was much smaller, closer to a metre in width and only appropriate for single file. It is unclear if a door was also present at both entranceways, but given the importance of the vestibule doorway it seems likely that some form of access restriction was maintained, perhaps through the placement of guards or attendants or through a physical barrier such as a door or screen.

Given the qualities of the vestibule doorway, it must have acted as the primary method of accessing the Throne Room Sector, with a design to facilitate a large volume of people and objects. With its stone lining and slightly lower floor level and decorated steps it certainly inspires a much more liminal experience, particularly with it marking the movement from outdoor to indoor. The presence of these types of 'monumental' doorways highlight that the simple act of entering a court space could be quite ritualised and restricted. This is certainly reflected in the textual evidence from the royal archives found in the archive room L. 2769, which was just to the north of the vestibule itself. In these archives were record a number of ritual activities of the royal family and court, particularly in regards to ritualised processions

of the royal family visiting shrines in and around the city and for the royal coronation ceremony (Archi 2013, 228-233; Pettinato 1992; Ristvet 2014, 68-69). These texts make specific mention to the way that doorways and gateways acted as important markers in the ritual procession, and that physically moving through these liminal markers were essential parts of the ceremony.

This importance of doorways and passing through them is marked in the rest of the sector in the way that the placement of large doorways construct specific types of movement, or movement routes, through the entire sector. The primary route appears to be marked by these larger doorways, leading from the vestibule doorway, into hall L.2391, and into the throne room L.2866 (Fig. 3.3). The importance of this route is unsurprising as it acts as a direct route from the Court of Audience into hall L.2391 and then into the throne room. I would therefore reconstruct this as a primary ceremonial route, one in which important processions made by the court would take place in order to gather in either hall L.2391 or the throne room.

The termination of the primary movement route in room L.2866, along with the number of ancillary rooms (Fig. 3.3) has lead to the identification of this space as a throne room. Matthiae (2009 273; 2013b, 52) has suggested that it was likely that a throne dais was located against the south wall, given the directionality of the movement route entering from the north and the presence of the ancillary rooms to the east and south. I would agree with Matthiae's suggestion that a position against the south wall is likely, particularly given that the ancillary rooms to the south are large and would have provided a private space for the king to rest and prepare, though they could also have been storage rooms for objects used in court activities. Matthiae (2009, 274) is of the opinion that the latter is more likely given the finding of raw lapis lazuli and composite objects of gold, wood and precious stones (Pinnock 1987). The west wall could also have been a possibility for a throne placement, but given the orientation of the movement route, ancillary rooms, and even the columns, a position near the southern doorway seems more likely, as it provided a more prominent and domineering position with the room. The position of a throne places an orientation on the southern wall, with the sitting figure of the king as a primary focal point around which the court would be assembled. That a throne was present in this room at all seems very likely, as the location of a throne dais next to two private entrances in the Court of Audience offers a very clear idea of the desired spatial positioning of royal thrones within the palace. The role

of thrones as an orientating point for other human bodies will be explored in more detail below in relation to the example found in the Court of Audience.

While the throne room appears to have a highly restricted space, with some clear spatial cues on how members of the court and the king navigated the space and were positioned, hall L.2913 appears to have been more adaptable and dynamic multi-function space. This hall has four columns roughly orientated in a square shape in the centre of the room. To the north of this columned hall were two rooms. The first is trapezoidal in shape, with built in benches along the west and north walls and in which were discovered a number of cuneiform tablets. The presence of benches and tablets indicates that this was likely a storage space for archives and possibly other objects. The second room contained a four-ramp staircase that lead to an upper storey. The presence of an upper storey is also supported by the thick walls (2.8M) of the Throne Room Sector, which have been estimated to run to a height of 12/14m (Matthiae 2013b, 51). However, the presence and orientation of four wooden columns, which were not centrally aligned in the room, suggests that there was a second floor gallery, which looked onto the ground floor, probably with an open-air light well (Matthiae 2013b, 52). In addition, this second floor does not appear to run along into the throne room. Instead, the throne room appears to have a high ceiling that came to the same level of the ceiling of the second floor.

The second floor gallery appears to have been an important feature in hall L.2913, and would certainly have added a strong theatrical aspect. It was perhaps another space in which the court could gather but with added elements of elevation to differentiate social spaces. The elevated gallery would allow the king to address an audience who were gathered in the space below, with the elevation highlighting his status and authority. This difference in status as expressed in elevation could have been further highlighted if the hall had a light well rather than being completely roofed. In these cases the time of day and weather could create interesting and differing conditions according to floor level, allowing the manipulation of these conditions to maximise theatrical elements to the interactions between king and court.

The second storey could also be used to create different levels of participation in court events, by constructing two different social spaces within the hall. By restricting access to certain levels, perhaps through blocking or limiting access to the staircase, which in itself was small and suggests it was not a highly accessible route, the hall could establish a spatial social hierarchy at court events. This expression of status through constructing etiquettes

regarding spatial access would have been further compounded by the degree of social and sensual permeability that a gallery design allows between the two groups. While divided, there is still a sense of participation and inclusion by being together in the same room, sharing the scents and sounds and to a certain extent still being able to see one another across floors through the open upper gallery. However, while establishing a shared identity and participation, there can still be an established hierarchy and exclusivity.

It should also be noted that while the elevation and more restricted access of the second floor gallery suggests a more prestigious space, the ground floor also appears to have been a high status area. This is indicated by the remains of statuary found by the doorway on the southern wall leading into the throne room and of composite inlays and wooden panels depicting high relief figural images (Matthiae 2003, 166). The statues have only been partially preserved but comprise mostly of lapis lazuli elements depicting woollen skirts and elaborate hairstyles which might be associated with royalty (Matthiae 2003, 166). The inlays have been reconstructed as being a combination of mythological and court scenes (Matthiae 1992). This iconography and the quality of materials and craftsmanship point to this being an important visual arena for the display of court and royal identity and status. Indeed, while the composition and postures of the figures are hard to reconstruct due to only certain elements surviving, they likely formed scenes utilising court and royal iconographic compositions such as banquets, military conflict, and mythological scenes, similar to the scenes found in the standards of Ur and Mari, and a limestone inlay panel found in the western portion of Palace G (Matthiae 1992). As such, hall L.2913 would have had a powerful visual impact, with the decorated walls and statuary creating an impressive display that would have acted as a means of solidifying identity amongst the court while at the same time underlining the power and authority of the king. Court members would be able to identify with the images on the walls, and perhaps would even be mirroring the types of activities and postures found in these visual displays. In this manner the figural images would act as a mnemonic device to reinforce specific forms of activities and the postures, presenting them in a medium that was relatable and understood by those who were part of court society. To an individual entering this space who was not a member of the court, it would not doubt have been an intimidating and alien experience, creating a definite sense of 'us' and 'them', 'court' and 'non-court'.

Hall L.2913 was therefore a high status adaptable social space, with a two floor gallery design facilitating a number of different etiquettes for court events based on different factors including light, weather, elevation, acoustics, smell and degree of visibility. In addition to this it employed a decorative programme that not only enhanced the visual effect of the hall but also helped to construct a sense of court identity through an understood and relatable court iconography.

In comparison the throne room appears to have been a more formal and defined space, with a clearer structure of how the court and royalty navigated and orientated themselves within this space (though such configurations could be modified in different ways with furniture). The throne room and hall L.2913 both provided effective spaces in which the court could gather and interact with the king but also provided opportunities to utilise architectural features such as galleries, staircases, and restricted movement routes in potential etiquettes regarding the positioning and participation of members of the court.

Courtyard L.2752 is the largest space in the palace and mediates movement through the rest of the Ceremonial Quarter. That this space is certainly a social hub is evident from the number of entranceways and rooms leading in and out of this courtyard (Fig. 3.3). The western portion of the courtyard has not survived, which has led to Matthiae (1991) suggesting it was trapezoidal in shape and would have been only partially enclosed, with open access to the lower town. As such, this could actually be a transitionary public space, providing a venue for interactions between the court and those of lower social standing. Such interactions could have been ceremonial but also perhaps more utilitarian such as the receiving of goods. However, this is still unclear, and even if there was no enclosure wall, this space could still have been highly regulated in access through the placement of guards and semi-permanent structures such as screens and fences. Given the number of doorways and access to important court spaces (namely the Throne Room Sector) it seems to me to be highly unlikely that the courtyard was completely open access, as this would have allowed a high degree of physical and sensual permeability between the palace and the lower town.

In any case, the surviving architecture of this sector identifies the courtyard being a theatrical and impressive reception space. Firstly, entering and exiting the courtyard itself was clearly an impressive affair as demonstrated by the monumental and theatrical movement routes, which have been constructed using staircases and doorways. The staircases are of particular note in that they offer two different ways of entering the Court of Audience. A monumental staircase is the largest entranceway, over 22m long and made

from stone slabs. It opens onto the northern corner of the east wall and connects the courtyard with an upper portion of the palace, which we currently have no evidence for (Matthiae 2013b, 50). Given its size and grandeur it was certainly a highly important ceremonial route to and from the court of audience. Compared to this, the other staircase is much smaller but by no means less ostentatious. It is located within a tower, which is in itself monumental, in the northeastern corner of the courtyard. Its steps were inlaid with mother of pearl, highlighting that the staircase was a very high status route, similar to the vestibule doorway leading into the Throne Room Sector. It was undoubtedly a private staircase given its size and also the presence of a screening wall in front of the doorway. In addition to these staircases, there are two doorways. Along the north wall was a small entranceway leading into the Northern Quarter of the palace, and is only partially preserved. The other doorway is the previously discussed vestibule doorway.

The staircases and doorways facilitated different ways of entering the Court of Audience, offering private or public entrances. Two further types of architectural features interact with these entranceways. The first are two columned porticos, one running along the north wall and the second along the east wall. These covered porches are separated in the northeastern corner by the tower staircase and a small room attached to the tower. The eastern portico is interrupted by rooms L.2769 and L.2875, and therefore only covers the space in front of the monumental staircase, though it is likely these were later additions that intruded into the eastern portico (Matthiae 2013b, 51). The second feature is a rectangular dais with small sets of steps on its western and southern sides, which is located against the north wall under the northern portico.

The architectural features of the courtyard (the porticos and dais) and the entranceways (two staircases and two doorways) have a number of implications on how human bodies were organised and directed within this space, as well as how certain body postures were used. The dais acts as the primary orientating feature of the courtyard (that has survived) and places it in a north-south axis. A dais is usually a feature designed to elevate an individual over others and within a palace this is usually a royal figure who sits on an ornate piece of furniture called a throne. Indeed, a possible example a throne, or at least an ornate piece of sitting furniture, was found in the rooms of the Northern Quarter (Matthiae 1992). Given that the courtyard has no indication of a particular ritual or religious function it is likely that the dais, with its two sets of steps for access, was used for the placement of a royal throne similar to the example found in the Northern Quarter. This indicates that when

presented before the court in the courtyard the king was primarily sitting, facing into the courtyard, with an audience that was assembled before the dais. The king upon the dais therefore acted as the primary orientation point for the rest of the court, with a juxtaposition of the elevated sitting posture of the king compared to the standing/sitting figures of the court.

This spatial configuration emphasising the body of the king, can also be seen in the positioning of the northern portico. This portico, along with the eastern portico, divided the courtyard into sections of roofed space and an opposing open air space. By creating shaded and open areas, the courtyard had different elements of temperature and lighting, with the shaded areas being cooler and darker then the hotter and brighter open spaces. This no doubt added to the theatricality of the courtyard, creating different experiences and interactions based on where an individual was positioned. The fact that the throne dais was a permanent feature under the portico suggests that the king regularly occupied the most comfortable position in terms of temperature and lighting. In opposition, as the dais looks outwards into the open courtyard, courtiers would have been in a more uncomfortable position during the day, though less so at night. Indeed, it seems likely there were distinct differences between spatial positioning in the courtyard between day and night, particularly if we remember that the throne itself was a mobile object, which could be moved.

The permanent throne dais and positioning underneath the portico seem to suggest that this part of the courtyard was spatially connected with the king, and was delineated from the rest of the courtyard by the columned portico. That this space was a distinctly royal in nature is further indicated by the proximity and orientation of the private staircase entrance. The private staircase, which likely led to residential portions of the palace on the acropolis (Matthiae 2013b, 51), opens into the courtyard directly in alignment to the eastern side of the throne dais. This meant that the king had a private entrance and exit into this space (Matthiae 1991), kept at all times under the shade of the portico.

Additionally the porticos and entranceways facilitated a number of different ways of entering, exiting and traversing the courtyard, creating multiple movement routes for theatrical processions. The entranceways on the northern portico (the private staircase and northern doorway) allowed the king to enter and exit without entering into the open courtyard, making a sudden but obscured appearance or exit before an audience. Conversely, the monumental staircase provided a more grandiose and impactful entrance and exit, allowing an audience to observe a large procession entering or exiting the

courtyard. In addition, the upwards gradient of the staircase would have allowed an audience at the foot of the staircase to see any procession, creating a greater visual and psychological impact. The eastward facing staircase may have allowed the early morning sun to provide a blinding backdrop to processions during this time of day. This of course is speculation until more data is available on the nature of the space at the top of the staircase and the eastern part of the palace in general. However, that the foot of this staircase might have indeed served as an observation point, could be suggested by the presence of the eastern portico. This would have provided a shaded space for an audience to observe processions on the staircase.

The Court of Audience features a number of architectural features that serve to manage interactions between the king and court. The incorporation of porticos, a dais, staircases and multiple entranceways allowed the manipulation of movement routes, lighting, temperature, and body postures to construct and delineate different social spaces and spheres of interaction. A particular note was the manner in which some of these features, the northern portico, dais, and private staircase, served to construct very distinct physical divisions between the space occupied by the king and that of the court. The dais also indicates a permanent positioning and alignment of the king as well as a specific body posture as he sits on a throne. This may or may not have been in opposition to the assembled court, who were likely standing in the courtyard, though the presence of semi-permanent features such as furniture and tents may have also been employed. In any case, the incorporation of these architectural features clearly show a desire to construct specific types of social spaces and to manage the interactions between king and court.

These two sectors of the Ceremonial Quarter clearly played very similar roles as theatrical social arenas for court activities and were designed with features that facilitated a variety of different etiquettes for constructing social space. Particular attention was paid to how these architectural features manipulated the body and environmental factors in order to facilitate different embodied experiences that expressed status and position. Some of these features appear to define specific spaces for members of the court, particularly the king, as seen in the northern portico of the Court of Audience and the southern part of the Throne Room. These spaces have a higher degree of privacy and restriction of access, likely involving specific etiquettes in regards to the way courtiers interacted with them. In other cases there seems to be a degree of variability according to context and circumstance on how these spaces could be employed, as seen in the multiple spatial configurations used in hall L.2913.

While it is unclear to us what the exact social configuration of these spaces might have been, particularly as we have no evidence for the exact types of architectural features present on the second storey of hall L.2013, it seems likely that these types of spaces were deliberately adaptable in order to facilitate different circumstances and environmental factors such as weather and time of day. Indeed, the various features, rooms and movement routes in the Ceremonial Sector as a whole suggest that adaptability was quite important in the design of court spaces, facilitating a number of different etiquettes regarding access and interactions between and amongst king and court. We can therefore see that palatial architecture had a clear impact on how court social hierarchy was expressed and materialised through the varied ways in which architecture features manipulated individuals to move within these spaces and how they experienced them.

3.3.3 THE STONE VESSELS OF PALACE G

The Ceremonial Quarter of Palace G has produced not only architectural remains but also a rich material record, with a variety of high status courtly objects. These objects can reveal a surprising amount of information of the types of court activities within the Ceremonial Sector. One such group is of particular interest, the remains of over 200 stone vessel fragments, the vast majority of which are Egyptian in form. These stone vessels provide a engaging snapshot on dining practices of the Ebla court as well indicating a wider awareness and interaction with other court societies in the Eastern Mediterranean during the EBA, in this case Old Kingdom Egypt.

The majority of these stone vessels display distinctive Egyptian vessels forms and are all open form, precluding their use as storage vessels (Sowada 2009, 222). Three forms in particular comprise the majority of the group (85%), these being; carinated bowls, spouted bowls, and trefoil lamps (Figs. 3.4-3.5) (Scandone Matthiae 1981; Sowada 2009, 222). They are largely carved from travertine, with a few examples in anorthosite gneiss (Sowada 2009, 145, 222; Bevan 2007, 78). Both the materials and forms are typical of Old Kingdom Egypt, especially correlating with vessels dating to the 4th-6th Dynasties. They are certainly not of local manufacture, having distinctively different forms and materials from the ceramic assemblage of the destruction layer of the palace and stone vessels of local manufacture and of Northern Levantine and Mesopotamian traditions.

That the Egyptian stone vessels have different forms from the pottery assemblage in the palace raises some interesting questions on their role and usage. There are some indications of overlap in types and forms, with large numbers of ceramic everted rim bowels with a similar shape to the stone carinated bowls. However, notably absent amongst the stone examples are drinking vessels, which appear in the ceramic assemblage in large quantities. The main drinking vessel appears to have been beakers, but also amongst the assemblage were some handled tankards and a handled cup of the depas amphykipellon type, both Anatolian forms (Mazzoni 2013, 91).

The lack of drinking vessels amongst the stone assemblage is interesting, particularly considering that ceramic foreign drinking vessels, with a distinctly different form to the beakers of local manufacture, are present. While lacking in drinking vessels the stone assemblage did include some pouring forms in the spouted bowls. These seemed different from the pouring shapes in the ceramic assemblage, which included small spouted jars, teapots, and pitchers (Mazzoni 2013 PL. 102). Were these stone spouted bowls used for pouring beverages? They seem more suited for food and condiments such as oils, syrups, or other flavourings or sauces.

Comparing the forms of the vessels to the ceramic tableware assemblages found in the final phase of the palace (Mazzoni 2013) exhibits clear differences in function between the two assemblages. The ceramics have a wider variety of forms, indicating a number of different functions from cooking, eating, serving, and drinking. The imported handled tankards and cup might have been higher status objects than the rest of the ceramic assemblage, especially considering that they were handled, and therefore required a different method of holding and drinking. However, the majority of the assemblage is more domestic and utilitarian in nature, certainly not high status objects. In contrast, the stone vessel assemblage has a more specialised function relating to dining (eating and serving food and providing illumination). The limitation in forms and the materials suggests that they were a collection, perhaps intended as a set, with a specific function.

The idea that the corpus of vessels had a specialised and distinctive function is also indicated by the contexts of their distribution. The assemblage was largely found dispersed within hall L.2913 and vestibule room L.2875 (Scandone-Matthiae 1981). Notable is the way in which they were not stored in the more utilitarian rooms, namely the kitchens (L.2843 and L. 2890), where a vast majority of the ceramic tableware and drinking vessels were kept (although ceramics were also found in the same rooms as the stone vessels, though not in

any significant quantities). A note could be made that the stone vessels might have come from upper floors, but even in this case it seems odd that they would have such a limited spatial distribution within just these two rooms. In any case, they were not kept in the kitchens with the majority of the ceramic vessels found in he final destruction layer of the palace. This deliberate spatial distinction in storage practice between the stone and ceramic assemblages seems to suggest a perceived difference in their function and value, while also demonstrating that they were a collection. In addition, this distribution within court ceremonial spaces could also suggest that were not merely being stored there for use in court banquets, but they were also being displayed, acting as a visual expression and reminder of these types of activities.

However, the fact that some of the vessels show stylistic distinctions in form also suggests that they may not have arrived together as a set, but may instead have been collected and curated over time. This idea is suggested by the fact that a quatrefoil lamp bears the name of the 4th Dyansty king Khafre while a vessel lid bears the name of Pepi I of the 6th Dynasty (Figs. 3.5-3.6). Since these kings are separated by a significant amount of time, it suggests different times of arrival (Sowada 2009, 223). However, another possibility is that all the vessels were received at once during the reign of Pepi I or possibly a bit later, as a single group of stone vessels which included some older examples. In either case the assemblage appears to have been the result of a deliberate acquisition of specific forms of Egyptian courtly tableware, rather than a random collection of exotic Egyptian style stone vessels, which we would expect to include other forms, particularly storage vessels, jars and flasks which often form the majority of stone vessel forms in royal and elite tomb assemblages in Old Kingdom Egypt (for a comprehensive discussion of Old Kingdom royal and elite stone vessel assemblages see Vlčková 2006, 15-27).

Was this interest in the Egyptian stone vessels merely a matter of value in terms of the material and foreign origin? Or is this only part of the picture? I would suggest that these vessels were also valued because they were involved in specific and prestigious types of courtly commensal events such as feasts and banquets. We know from the rich visual record of glyptic and monumental art in nearby Mesopotamia, such as the Standard of Ur (Fig. 3.7) and the Ur-Nanshe stele (Fig. 3.8), that feasting and banquets scenes were important iconographic strategies for marking courtly and royal identities in the wider ancient Near East. Do these vessels indicate similar activities being conducted at Palace G? This picture is perhaps made strangely perplexing, given the lack of artistic representations of feasts and

banquets in seals and sealings at Ebla at this time (Pinnock 2013, 67) (though this could be due to poor preservation of a large corpus of the visual record in the palace, such as wall paintings, statuary, and textiles). It could also be simply a result of such scenes not being part of the iconographic repertoire of local seal traditions. However, the reconstruction of the *maliktum* standard, found in the northern quarter of Palace G (Matthiae 2009), has a representation of a seated statue of a deceased member of the royal family holding a goblet (Fig. 3.9). Such a scene is typical in the banqueting and feasting scenes found in Mesopotamian glyptic and royal/elite iconography, suggesting that representations of feasting and banqueting were indeed found on different media, perhaps primarily statuary, standards and perhaps wall decorations.

The contexts of the vessels themselves has been mentioned as displaying evidence of deliberate decisions in spatial storage, with close proximity to court spaces and away from utilitarian rooms and large ceramic assemblages. This in itself indicates a functional association between the stone tableware and these ceremonial court spaces. The vessel forms are also notable. Apart from the lamps, who have an obvious function, they are all serving vessels, with the majority being of an open form (only a few examples of lids remain such as the example bearing the inscription of Pepi I). There is little indication in shape and surface preservation that they were used for cooking in any way, though granted this could be influenced by the fire which destroyed Palace G.

Cohen (2005, 89-90) has made some important points on how archaeological contexts and specific vessel forms can inform us of how specific forms of behaviour can be expressed and represented, and how they are related to identity and status display. Looking at the case of the Royal Cemetery at Ur, Cohen examined the burials and their vessel assemblages in an attempt to identify what they could tell us of mortuary practice but also life at the royal court. He remarked that in cases of attempting to represent everyday eating and drinking, it would be expected to find a more representative example of vessel forms, notably the inclusion of storage and cooking vessels. Banquets and feasts, as an inherently prestigious and therefore different type of eating and drinking behaviour from the everyday, would be expected to be represented by vessel forms that are to do with serving, consuming, and social display. While Cohen's remarks relate to a different courtly and social sphere, that of mortuary practice, I find them still highly relevant in the way that they highlight specific forms of behaviours and body postures in expressing status, hierarchy, and court identities. Indeed, objects stored, displayed and used in court ceremonial spaces would similarly be

expected to be used in expressing specific ceremonial and courtly forms of behaviour and identity. In the case of Ebla, the open forms of the vessels, their prestigious materials and their storage and possible display in court ceremonial spaces appear to relate to a similar expression of identity as a participant in a prestigious commensal event such as a feast. They therefore appear to be used in much the same way as the metal and stone vessels in the Ur cemetery in representing courtly identities through feasting and banqueting practices (Cohen 2005, 89-92).

If we take the stone vessels and their contexts as evidence for court feasting practices taking palace in the Ceremonial Sector of Palace G, we therefore have a situation in which the Ebla court were using foreign types of tableware for the most important and prestigious forms of commensal events. However, as mentioned earlier, the stone vessel forms which we see at Ebla are not generic Egyptian vessels but rather from a corpus of vessels which are being used in the contemporary Egyptian court of the Old Kingdom, a fact compounded by the presence of royal inscriptions on some of the vessels. Why then this adoption, at least regarding this stone vessel assemblage, of Egyptian courtly tableware?

I would suggest this is an emulation of Egyptian courtly practices relating to commensality. We know that such travertine stone vessels, and more prestigiously of anorthosite gneiss (Aston 1994, 63-64), were important status objects in the courts of the 3rd to 6th Dynasties of the Old Kingdom. Nevertheless the later 6th Dynasty burial of Pepi II and queen Neit contained similar carinated bowls and lamps of travertine and anorthosite gneiss (Jequier 1933). The types of open form vessels found at Ebla are also well represented in these royal and court burials of the Old Kingdom, though, as noted above, they usually form a smaller percentage of total assemblages, with storage vessels being the most common. Such open form vessels were also not simply tableware, but had important ceremonial and ritual roles in the presentation of offerings, a probable reason why they often feature royal inscriptions (Vlčková 2006, 59). In many of these offering scenes in Old Kingdom tombs we find that the participants in offering (usually the deceased) use distinctive gestures and body positions such as sitting and folding an arm across the chest with the other outstretched to a offering table. Often a variety of vessels, such as storage jars, perfume flasks, pouring vessels, cups, and bowls are placed before them, in some cases directly under the offering table. While these scenes relate to mortuary practices and beliefs, as well as elite iconographical elements, they do also seem to suggest that there were important body postures and etiquettes involved in handling these vessels during ceremonial events. This is perhaps best

indicted in a festival scene from the tomb of Niankhnum and Khnumhotep where both individuals and Niankhkhnum's wife, are sat in front of offering tables full of provisions including bowls and drinking vessels whilst being entertained by musicians, dancers, and wrestlers. Since the scene appears to depict a more everyday event rather than specifically tied to mortuary practice and the funeral rituals, it indicates that some of these gestures and postures may have been used in such ceremonial events. Despite this we should still be wary in considering that these postures might still relate to mortuary iconography and may not be reflective of actual practice.

In light of these considerations, the use of these stone vessels would likely have involved specific ceremonial body techniques for eating along with possible other gestures and body postures, such as the hand clasped across the chest. As such the Egyptian stone vessel assemblage at Ebla might be indicative of additional transferences and emulations of Egyptian courtly practices involving specific body techniques and etiquettes. Given the fact that these objects were high status prestige items in Egypt and bore Egyptian royal inscriptions, it seems most likely that they arrived as diplomatic gifts from the Egyptian court (Pinnock 1988, 110; Andrassy 1991, 135-136).

As gifts they would have also been accompanied by Egyptian diplomats, individuals who would be intimately familiar on how these objects were used. They would therefore be individuals who could explain and demonstrate the etiquettes involved in their use in the Egyptian court, allowing the transference of some Egyptian body techniques and etiquettes. They even could have been used at the court commensal events taking place in receiving a foreign diplomatic delegation. The tableware and its associated Egyptian etiquettes may have even been used in particular cases when Egyptian delegations arrived at the Ebla court, as a way of demonstrating the Ebla courts knowledge of Egyptian courtly practice. Inter-dynastic marriages, in particular, might have been events in which the incorporation and performance of foreign courtly etiquettes acted as a way of joining different royal households and courts in a shared gestural vocabulary. Given the importance of etiquette in royal marriages and ceremonies mentioned in the Ebla archive, the incorporation of foreign etiquettes would have been a very visible and memorable mark of respect and inclusion between the two courts involved.

In this manner we can say that that the Egyptian stone vessel assemblage was not only valuable and prestigious for their materials and origin but also for the types of behaviour

they facilitated, with diplomats, and perhaps bridal parties, transmitting behaviour and body/object relationships through instruction and direct and indirect mimicry.

3.3.4 CASE STUDY CONCLUSIONS

The case study of EBA Ebla provides an opening example of how my methodology can be utilised to demonstrate the relationship between material culture and the more ephemeral elements of court behaviour, and a thus a template for the following parts of the thesis. The examination of the palatial architecture highlighted that court spaces were carefully designed to provide a variety of opportunities for constructing etiquette that expressed the social hierarchy of court. Meanwhile, the stone vessel assemblage provided an intriguing snapshot into one aspect of court commensal events and the role of diplomacy in the transference of not only objects, but also forms of social behaviour which were intimately linked to their use.

CHAPTER 4: PALATIAL ARCHITECTURE: CONSTRUCTING AND TRANSFERRING COURTLY ARENAS

This chapter presents a comparative analysis of palatial and royal/elite residential architecture with the aim to highlight how the architectural design of these buildings facilitated the construction and manipulation of specific types of etiquettes, and how foreign architectural features and designs might indicate the transference of architectural etiquettes between different court societies. Before presenting the corpus of data, a few words can be said regarding the relationship between architecture and etiquette. Here I turn to a large body of research on the relationship between built environments, the human body and behaviour conducted in anthropology, archaeology, and particularly environment-behaviour studies (EBS). These fields have often examined the way in which built environments are suggestive and mnemonic devices of social actions, designed to manipulate and facilitate certain forms of behaviour, and a key aspect in defining forms of identity (Aslan 2006, 134; Bourdieu 1977, 89; Eco 1980; Papaconstantinou 2005, 15; Rapoport 1969; Sanders 2005, 45). Koenig (1970, 28 n.6) stated that architecture is a system of 'sign vehicles that promote certain kinds of behaviours'. Sanders (2005, 45) noted a similar notion that buildings involved design decisions by their makers and '…the built environment plays a crucial role in providing cues for proper (acceptable) behaviour by encoding the world view and cultural values of the builders'. The work of Rapoport (1969; 1977; 1982; 2005a; 2005b) is perhaps most relevant to this study, as he emphasis the way that culture, in the case of this study relating specifically to human behaviour, greatly influences the design and construction of built environments. Indeed, the field of EBS, which Rapoport helped found, provides a great deal of support to the approach which this study takes in examining the relationship between architecture and forms of behaviour. In particular, one of the three main questions that this field attempts to address is the way which 'bio-social, psychological, and cultural characteristics of human beings (as members of species, of various groupings, or as individuals) influence, and in design should influence, which characteristics of the built environment?' (Rapoport 2008, 277).

The theoretical underpinnings of EBS are therefore useful to note for this study, as they highlight that architecture is not purely functional (as a dwelling) nor artistic (as a product of the architects mind) but also a means to structure and facilitate social interactions and to express identity and status. As such, it becomes logical that forms of etiquette, as forms of ritualised and codified behaviours within specific physical contexts, would be intimately interconnected with the architectural design of the ceremonial structures in which they were performed. Acknowledging aspects of EBS theory also helps to clarify why certain forms of architectural analysis, particularly spatial analysis, are not appropriate for this study. Spatial analysis, while useful in highlighting potential levels of access within architectural spaces, does not really provide a way of reconstructing the myriad ways architectural spaces were actually used and navigated. It particularly lacks a consideration of semi-fixed elements, such as furniture and statuary, and how they can be used to structure, reorganise, and deconstruct built spaces, allowing a number of different etiquettes for traversing and using these spaces over time (Rapoport 2005a, 33).

Another theoretical area to mention is that of kinaesthetics. Aspects of embodied sensory experience are certainly important to how behaviour is constructed within built environments. Such experiential elements can be key factors in how social space is delineated and organised, as well as adding to the embodied theatrical and performative nature of ceremony and ritualised behaviour (Inomata and Coben 2006, 29-33). Some of these aspects are touched on in my comparative analysis, particularly in regards to the impacts of moving between enclosed and open spaces (e.g. light and temperature). However, within the project I am more concerned with exploring the way architectural design can be used as a psychological and behavioural trigger and spatially delineate social hierarchy, rather than exploring the full range of kinaesthetic and phenomenological aspects of palatial architecture (which is in itself a project I would like to pursue in the future). As such, I find much more resonance with Rapoport's EBS approach within the theoretical approach I take in this project, which seeks to highlight the psychological and behavioural underpinnings of etiquette and their relation to architecture.

However, some points can be taken into consideration from anthropological sensory studies. A key question to consider is if ancient cultures experienced and perceived built environments in the same manner as we do now? Could there be kinaesthetic and embodied elements that we are missing due to our own perceptions of what constitutes the senses of the human body? This is difficult to reconstruct without, for example, an

ethnographic account from past societies. It is however, important to remember that the way we reconstruct behaviour may be lacking key evidence and aspects that we can no longer access or perceive. Geurts (2002, 3-5, 17) notes that our perceptions of the nature of senses is culturally specific and not shared across humanity. Indeed, she rightly highlights that the modern Western conception of the five senses is not fact but a cultural construction. In any case, even within the conception of 'five senses', certain sensory aspects (particularly vision) predominately take precedence (Hamilakis 2002b, 100-101; 2002c, 122; 2013, 17-23). As such we should be aware from an embodied viewpoint, that the sensory elements that we do pay attention to and prioritise may not have been shared with past societies. In this regard, my project contributes to helping reconsider some of the embodied aspects of architecture, particularly in regards to bodily movement, positioning and gesture.

As an integral element of how human beings traverse and physically orientate themselves in everyday life, as well as acting as a means of expressing forms of identity (Rapoport 2005a, 123), architectural forms can be resistant to the constantly shifting processes of cultural change that might be more evident in other forms of material culture (Papaconstantinou 2005a, 15-16). This is apparent in ethnographic cases of the forced introduction of foreign architectural elements into vernacular architecture. In many of these cases the foreign elements are rejected or have negative consequences on cultural practices, behaviours, and mental and physical health of the recipients (for a detailed discussion of some examples see Rapoport 2005a, 2-9). As such, the decision to willingly incorporate foreign types of architecture into existing vernacular architecture is not a simple and easy process, but involves a deal of planning and design into how the implementation of these new forms or architecture (and therefore behaviour) will impact existing behaviour and practices.

In this regard, changes to architectural forms can actually be quite significant in demonstrating important changes in how individuals and communities behave and visualize their own identities, as well as their level of willingness to accept and receive new cultural markers. The introduction of foreign architectural elements can therefore be a key marker of the transference of behaviours and cultural practices. Importantly, they are active design elements, and even if they are experimental and short lasting, they are the result of a willing engagement between the human body, behaviour and the built environment.

4.1 MBA PALATIAL BUILDINGS AND ROYAL/ELITE RESIDENCES

Taking into consideration the criteria outlined in the previous chapter, the below corpus of palatial buildings were selected for comparative analysis. In some cases not all the available buildings were included in the study, due to not meeting the selection criteria. Instead, these buildings were discussed as comparative elements, where appropriate, in the summary analysis for each region. This has lead to a smaller number of examples from some regions whilst others have a larger number of examples to draw from. Each regional section begins by discussing the architectural features and ceremonial movement routes of each building before providing a summary analysis of all the regions examples, including particular discussion on any indications of architectural transference between regions. The chapter will then conclude with overall remarks on the results in the wider context of the eastern Mediterranean.

4.2 THE AEGEAN

As discussed in previous chapters, the palatial buildings of the Aegean are extremely problematic in ascertaining their exact function and role in society. As such, their inclusion in this study and analysis, with palatial buildings of the Near East and Egypt, which they have constantly been compared with and distanced from, can itself be seen as debatable and controversial. However, it is clear that they are multi-functionary buildings that had an elite function, and offer the clearest comparison in terms of an architectural setting in which elite groups comparable to royal courts gathered and interacted. As elite social spaces they therefore have a justifiable inclusion in this analysis in determining how some of these architectural features and decoration facilitated the construction of social etiquettes for the management and construction of social hierarchy. Additionally, it will provide a context in which the Aegean architectural features and etiquettes found in other eastern Mediterranean sites can be compared, as well as providing some potential indications of reciprocal influences on Aegean palatial buildings and courtly behaviours. An additional note to be made is that I will be examining the late MBA/early LBA second palaces at Malia, Phaistos, and Knossos as they provide a great deal more information on ceremonial routes and reception spaces compared with the earlier MBA first palaces (which are less well preserved due to the building of the second palaces on top of these structures).

4.2.1 MALIA

Attempting to reconstruct a specific area or room as reception space or part of a ceremonial route can be quite difficult within Cretan palatal buildings. However, a number of architectural features can be noted as offering dynamic and adaptable opportunities for courts to construct social etiquettes for the expression of social hierarchy. The first of the Cretan examined here, Malia, contains a number of these features which I have identified as reception spaces and ceremonial processional routes that facilitated forms of courtly behaviour.

The palatial building at Malia, like the majority of Cretan palatial buildings, does not have a single ceremonial route, due to the plurality of entrances (Fig 4.1). At Malia, there are four possible ways of entering into the building, one from each cardinal point (and these may not have been the only entrances). These entrances are the largest, and the northern and western entrances stand out in particular from the group due to their greater complexity and degree of interaction with architectural features. The northern route enters from the northeast corner of the building, leading through an entrance and into a large room to the south, before turning northwest through a corridor and into a columned room. The route then turns south again diverging into two routes, one further south through a long corridor to the central courtyard and the other north west into a Minoan Hall (Fig. 4.2). Both the central courtyard and the Minoan hall are spaces that I have reconstructed as important reception spaces and therefore termination points for processions (though the hall could also have residential functions). The western route has a less complex route, but the presence of a raised walkway in the western court demonstrates an important processional route in this vicinity. The entering to the north of the storage magazines and turning northeast into the Minoan Hall or southwest along the corridor accessing the magazines and then turning southeast along another corridor into the central court. The south and eastern entrances lead almost directly into the central court, and therefore facilitate minimal interaction with architectural features (that we can currently see).

The two primary reception spaces that I have identified in the building are the central court and the Minoan Hall (Driessen 1982; Evans 1930, 286, 324–396; Graham 1959; 1969; Letesson 2013; Palyvou 1987; Shaw 2011). A third space, termed the piano nobile, might also have been present over the western magazines, as indicated by the position of staircases and similarities to the arrangement at Knossos. However there are no architectural remains to work with at Malia in which to firmly identify this, though it certainly seems likely. The central court is one of the primary features of a Cretan palatial

building, around which most of the building is spatially organised (Graham 1969 73-74; Palyvou 2002). The central court at Malia is certainly large enough to host large gatherings for a variety of different events and activities. To the east and north, a porticos, or stoa, also provided further architectural elements that could be used to delineate social space within the central court, creating more private sheltered areas, while still being part of the court itself. They also provided sheltered avenues to move around these portions of the court. In addition, it is likely an upper floor gallery or balcony was present above the portico, facilitating interactions between the court and an upper floor.

The second reception area is in the north west corner of the building, in an architectural feature termed a Minoan Hall. Usually these features are characterised by three spaces axially aligned, a light well, vestibule and main hall featuring pier-and-door partitions (Fig 4.2) (Evans 1930 324-396; Graham 1959; Letesson 2013, 304). At Malia this is roughly replicated in a southern columned hall which acts as the light well and vestibule and then the main hall to north featuring a single full western wall and pier and door partitions creating the other walls. To the north a portico views out onto an open space. Its connection to two of the routes connecting to the northern and western entrances indicates that it was also an important reception space. However, it is the arrangement of the pier-and-door partitions that truly marks this feature as a dynamic and adaptable court reception space. The opening and closing of the doors would have allowed the hall to construct up to four different social spaces with different levels of access, privacy, and social and sensory permeability. This would have allowed the expression of social hierarchy through the assignment of courtiers to different spatial areas, and their ability to move between these zones. This once again plays into a similar situation to the central court, with different degrees of social permeability facilitating the expression of social hierarchy.

The features identified at Malia indicate that there are certainly specialised architectural features that allowed the construction of social etiquettes regarding the spatial positioning of courtiers in Cretan palatial buildings. Particular emphasis at Malia is placed on the role of the central court and Minoan hall as areas where social hierarchy could be expressed through delineating space using porticos, balconies or galleries, and pier and door partitions. It is unfortunate that the upper floor has not survived, as it appears likely that upper floor reception rooms would have been present, and might have used similar architectural features. In addition, it also seems clear that these reception spaces were connected to a larger circulatory system within the building, and that a variety of different processional

routes were possible. From the evidence it would appear that the northern route was the most prestigious, it's winding bent axis approach creating a theatrical approach to both the Minoan hall and the central court.

4.2.2 PHAISTOS

The palatial building at Phaistos incorporates a design that was intended to maximise the theatrical elements of reception on a larger scale than at Malia. This can be seen in its monumental architectural features, which acted to construct ceremonial routes into the impressive reception spaces both within and outside the main building.

The primary entrance into the building lies in the west, in the Theatral Area, so named for the enormous set of steps that create a massive seating area looking southwards over the western court (Fig. 4.3). The presence of such a large seating area, points to the western court being an important ceremonial area that certainly had a strong theatrical element. A raised walkway, moving diagonally across the court, points to the role of processions moving through the western court, with the position of the stairs indicating that the seating area provided a clear view of these processions. The route is also connected to the stairs, possibly terminating or beginning at the top of the stairs in a diagonal route. In addition to the walkway, the main entrance is located to the east, in the form of a monumental stairway leading to a 10m wide entranceway bisected by a large oval column (Fig. 4.4). In this manner entering and exiting the palatial building could be observed by an audience located on the theatrical stairs or by an assembled group in the courtyard.

The West Court therefore offers a monumental theatrical area where processions taking place in the courtyard and entering and exiting the main building could be observed by a seated or standing audience. The incorporation of such a massive seating area in unparalleled in any other MBA palatial building in the eastern Mediterranean and is one of the few instances where we can pinpoint seated non-royal figures in a palatial architectural setting. Given the nature of the seated audience orientated towards the processional route it is a rare instance where standing and moving figures are the primary social focus in a palatial context and seated figures are secondary.

Entering into the main building through either of the two doorways allowed two sets of single or double file processions to enter at once. The large size and capacity of the entranceway therefore points to large procession sizes entering and exiting the building,

though the smaller doorway sizes within the building point to some possible reconfigurations through the journey. The route continues through a small vestibule and into a portico hall with a light well. From here two routes are possible. The first turns to the north in a small room with a staircase which leads upstairs, to a possible set of reception rooms which Graham (1956; 1960) reconstructed as a piano nobile suite (Fig. 4.5), similar to that reconstructed at Knossos and possibly Malia. Another doorway to the north leads into a corridor which turns to the east and into a large peristyle courtyard (Pernier and Banti 1951, 346-355). This courtyard could have acted as a reception space, with the portico offering both movement routes and shaded areas contrasting with the open courtyard. The role of this area as a reception space is further indicated by the presence of pier-and-door partitions to the north, which indicate that an additional reception room was located to the north (Pernier and Banti 1951, 355), with the doors acting as a means to restrict access and delineate social space in the same manner discussed in relation to the Malia Minoan hall. In fact this area could have been connected to the Minoan Hall located to the north east of the portico courtyard.

The second route possible from the entrance vestibule leads through a south eastern doorway onto a landing. From here processions could turn north, ascending a staircase to the portico courtyard (probably the primary route to enter this reception space, given the larger doorways and more ostentatious approach through a hall with a large column), or south, descending a staircase to a small columned hall with a portico leading directly onto the central court. The central court is a long rectangular space with a north-south axis in the same manner of those at Malia and Knossos. It provided a similar large outdoor reception space similar to that of the western court, however lacking any of the raised walkways and seating areas. As at Malia, a portico, or stoa, appears to have run along some of the courtyards length, as the north eastern side has remains of columns. This may or may not have also contained a gallery or balcony in the same manner as Malia, allowing some interactions between the ground and upper floors.

From the courtyard, the rest of the ceremonial route is unclear; a large doorway on the north side to the northern sector of the palace seems a likely continuation given its large size and central position. However, its termination is unclear as the remains of the building are lost in this area. The presence of the large Minoan Hall in this area might indicate a route leading here, however, the sequence of rooms and doors leading there is unknown. Its large size however, points to it being an important social reception space. A smaller Minoan hall is

also found east of the central courtyard and might have provided another smaller, private reception space or possibly a residential function.

In total the Phaistos palatial building seems to have a much more ceremonial and theatrical aspect than to that at Malia, with a greater number of reception spaces and a much clearer monumental and ceremonial movement route. The theatrical western court provides clear evidence of the etiquettes in place regarding the movement of and reception of processions, indicating that those not participating in such activities were sitting observing these activities. The location of the sitting area outside the palace also indicates that those who were not involved in the procession were not allowed access into the main building, suggesting a more socially diverse audience and interaction between members of the court and those of lower status. Within the main building reception spaces are exhibit of variety of possible configurations and opportunities to impose spatial etiquettes, with pier-and-door partitions and porticos of the Minoan halls and portico courtyard facilitating delineations in social space. In addition, upper floor reception spaces are also possible, such as the piano nobile arrangement reconstructed above the west magazines, which may have had windows overlooking the western court, allowing a degree of interaction with those in the court below. A similar arrangement may have taken place in the central courtyard with possible galleries and balconies.

4.2.3 KNOSSOS

The palatial building at Knossos is the largest such building in the Aegean, and boasts a highly complicated sequence of destructions and rebuilding during the MBA and early LBA (MMIIIB-LMIA), with additional features and frescoes added in the later LBA (Hood 2000; Macdonald 2002 35-36). As such, the exact configuration and date of rooms and wall paintings can be very difficult to pinpoint for any given phase. Given this difficulty, I have opted to discuss the generally accepted reconstructions for the two main phases of the Knossos palatial building during the MBA and early LBA; the Old Palace (1900-1750 BC) and the New Palace (which was a planned rebuilding after a partial destruction of the Old palace around 1750 BC) (MacGillivray 1994). However, the remains of the Old Palace are not entirely clear, due to the constant rebuilding, limiting our knowledge of the function and layout of the building. In most cases we work on analogies based on interpretations of the functions and features of the New Palace. Given that we do not fully understand the nature or even the layout of certain areas (particularly the east wing where the domestic quarter

was built in the New Palace rebuilding), my analysis is fairly limited regarding the Old Palace. Largely I use comparisons between the two to identify important areas that seem to indicate possible continuity in use or differences in terms of rebuilding.

The Old Palace layout indicates that there were two primary entrances to the palace (Fig. 4.6). The first was through the monumental bastions located just to the north of the central court, which created an imposing and direct entrance. This route was likely connected to the royal road to the north, and may have acted as both a monumental ceremonial route and primary entrance for both court and non-court members of society (McGillivray 1994, 52). A second entranceway comes from the west, and enters into southern portion of the building. However, a great deal of this area has been eroded and lost, and as a result we only have speculative reconstructions of this route. It appears clear that this route was not on the same scale of monumentality as the north entrance. Instead, it seems to have been much more intricate and complex, winding through the building and providing access to the central court from the south. It seems likely that this route would have been of a ceremonial and more restrictive usage, particularly considering its access to inner portions of the building.

In terms of reception spaces the obvious primary area is the central court. The monumental northern entrance would have allowed large processions access into the court while the court itself enabled audiences to observe these movements in and out of the court. The southern entrance would have facilitated smaller, possibly less visible, processions to enter into the court.

Besides the central court, the location of other reception spaces is rather hard to pinpoint. The evidence for large columned halls, possibly built over a number of floors, reconstructed in the eastern wing (MacGillivray 1994, 53-54) may have been another important social and ceremonial space. However, there is little evidence to suggest its exact function. A possible piece of evidence to support a social and ceremonial function could be the fact that this area was completely redesigned in the New Palace to facilitate important ceremonial reception spaces. However, redesign could also indicate a completely new function and departure from the Old Palace function. The western wing of the building appears to largely comprise of some possible ceremonial rooms against the western side of the central court. These spaces, such as the series of rooms later to become the 'Throne Room' and the Minoan Hall in the south western corner may have had a role as reception spaces. The presence of an upper floor is very difficult to reconstruct (MacGillivray 1994, 53), but given the large

monumental construction of the walls in this sector it seems likely that there would have been an upper floor or some kind. However, we have no knowledge of the location of staircases to such floors or of what exact function they would have had.

In total the Old Palace offers us some key points to consider. Clearly the central court continues to be the social and ceremonial focal point of the building, facilitating large social gatherings. We also see that access to the court was achieved through two different entranceways, which allowed different types of theatrical entrances by different sized processional groups. These architectural features would continue to be important in the New Palace rebuilding. However, we still have relatively little information on what other types of reception spaces could have been used during the Old Palace phase, particularly in regards to the interior rooms of the west and east wings. The rooms to the west of the central court seem to indicate that this area contained important ceremonial rooms that had a degree of permeability with the central court. This would have allowed movements and access between these areas to be tightly controlled while at the same time allowing some sensory permeability, allowing audiences in the central court to perhaps still be included as participants but at the same time excluded from events. The pier and door partitions of the Minoan hall in the south west corner certainly would have enabled different configurations for delineating social space and controlling access. The eastern wing could also have been important, but unfortunately the rebuilding of this area in the New Palace has resulted in a lack of evidence to really understand it's possible functions and layout.

The New Palace appears to have largely incorporated the basic plan of the Old Palace, but introduced greater sophistication and monumentality to its architectural features and internal arrangement. In some cases this resulted in vastly different functions and emphasis. This is particularly evident in the Domestic Quarter, where a complete rebuilding took place, removing the original Old Palace layout. The result was a complete reorganisation of space, incorporating the Grand Staircase, Hall of the Colonnades, Hall of the Double Axes, and the Queen's Megaron (Macdonald 2005, 64).

Like at Phaistos, the New Palace has a theatrical western court, which contained a similar raised walkway and a theatre set of stairs (Fig. 4.7). The theatral area in its final forms dates to the later LM period, but Evan's excavations seem to have found evidence that it has early origins possibly even in the Old Palace period. It therefore seems likely that some form of theatral structure was in palace during the New Palace period (McEnroe 2010, 58). It's location to the northeast of the main building, with stairs to the east and south, created a l-

shaped space that could act as both a performative area and part of the processional way to the north and west entrances from the Royal Road (and connecting smaller 'villas' on either side of the road to these buildings). The stairs, like at Phaistos, would have been allowed a seated or standing audience to observe (or join) processions. From the theatral area a direct route went onwards to the northern entrance, while the southern stairs ascended to a raised walkway in the western court leading to the western entrance.

Like the Old Palace, the northern and western entrances continue to be the two points of access. The northern entrance retains its monumentality, but sees continued building after MMIIIB and LMIA, resulting in a more restrictive entrance. The axis changes to incorporate a main door to the west, opening onto a columned hall, before turning south along the original route to arrive in the northern part of the central court (Macdonald 2001, 43). This rebuilding seems to have been part of a desire to enhance the theatrical and monumental entrance while also restricting access and emphasising the physical delineation of court and non-court spaces.

The western entrance continues to be a prestigious and ceremonial route, but has s number of new features that were not apparent in the Old Palace. This is particularly evident in the raised walkways in the western court leading to the entrance, which seem to be attempts to physically formalise processional routes and the number of people within processions. The narrow corridors from the entrance lead southwards and then turning to the west along the 'Corridor of Processions'. The role of this corridor as a primary processional route is suggested by the presence of almost life sized depictions of male figures with arms upraised participating in a procession. While these scenes are dated to after LMII, and therefore are later than the period within this study, there is a possibility they were preceded by an earlier MMIII procession fresco (Fig. 4.8) (Hood 2000, 203-204; Macdonald 2002, 39). As such, the role of this corridor for processions seems to be referenced in the choice of wall paintings, though this may have been subject to change over time. The placement of these figures here would have mirrored the gestures and actions of passing processions, helping to reinforce particular types of etiquettes regarding entering the building.

From this point two routes access different reception spaces. Turning north through a series of small rooms leads into the south propylaeum, a hall with pier-and-door partitions, acting as a means of restricting access into the rooms beyond (Fig. 4.9). This then leads into a columned vestibule and up a large monumental staircase to the upper propylaeum, which has been reconstructed with a series of pier-and door partitions (Macdonald 2005, 98-99).

Moving northwards leads into the main series of upper floor reception spaces, consisting of a central corridor with interconnected halls to the west and east. The key aspect with these rooms is the high degree of permeability, with extensive use of pier-and-door partitions allowing varied configurations of reception space and ritualised movement between rooms through the opening and closing of doors. In addition, it is likely that there were a large amount of windows and open walls looking out from the west and east onto the western and central court, continuing this permeability between the upper floor and courtyards. This is similar to the reconstructed upper floor reception rooms and galleries/balconies at Phaistos and Malia.

The second route from the western entrance leads into the central courtyard. This space is of the same type as the courtyards of other Cretan palatial buildings, with a large rectangular shape and a north-south axis. The western side of the courtyard, which is much better preserved, features a running portico and in some places pier-and-door partitions, creating a highly porous façade and interconnected series of ground floor rooms with the central courtyard. The most well known feature is the 'Throne Room', which featured an alabaster chair flanked by griffin frescoes and benches against the northern wall. The function of this room has been widely debated but it does not appear to be a throne room in the sense of other eastern Mediterranean palatial buildings. For one the room is quite small and not in a particularly commanding or dominant position in terms of movement routes within the building. It certainly is not the terminating point of such routes found in contemporary Egyptian and Levantine palatial buildings. In addition the configuration that has been reconstructed today is a later addition, probably in the LMIIIA (McEnroe 2010, 122), at a period later in the LBA. In this regard it is also later than the period in question, and may have been a feature influenced by later Mycenaean palatial architecture, given the similarity in throne placement and fresco decoration to Mycenaean Pylos (Blegan and Rawson 1966, 76-90; Walsh 2014 208-210). Given these factors, the actual construction of the rooms in this area can possibly be traced much earlier to the MMIIIB (Macdonald 2002, 42), and as such this may have been some kind of reception space earlier.

Finally, a monumental staircase located next to the throne room ascends into the piano nobile, connecting the upper floor reception rooms to the central court. The western wing reception spaces therefore have a strong interconnection with the central courtyard, allowing this space to be an extension of these indoor spaces. In this manner etiquettes

regarding the spatial delineation of groups across different rooms and floors could be constructed.

The eastern side of the central courtyard is less well preserved, but Shaw and Lowe (2002) have reconstructed a portico here, based on comparisons with Phaistos and Malia. Such a reconstruction would indicate a similar degree of permeability into the courtyard as the west side; a fact further compounded if an upper floor gallery or balcony was present. In this manner the courtyard would have a strong interaction with the upper floors on both the western and eastern wings, constructing similar social delineations and spatial etiquettes found in the other Cretan sites.

The final reception space reconstructed in the Knossos New Palace is the domestic quarter, whose central feature is a large Minoan Hall arrangement, the so called Hall of the Double Axes and a second Minoan hall style room termed the Queen's Megaron (Fig. 4.10) (Evans 1930 325-359). This space was accessed primarily through the monumental 'Grand Staircase' and 'Hall of the Colonnades'. The staircase and hall comprised of three floors, with landings, a light well, and a ground floor courtyard. Unfortunately the configuration of rooms on the floors above the ground floor are unknown, due to the destruction, though the quantity of debris does indicate the definite presence of upper floors (Macdonald 2005). The staircase runs down to the ground floor and is located next to a light well, which provides light for the staircase and the landings. The wall of the staircase possibly featured procession frescoes, possibly mirroring the movement and gestures of processions traversing the staircase (Macdonald 2005, 145-146). This would therefore have created a dramatic and theatrical processional route between the central court and these lower floors, with differences in light and temperature expounding a sense of liminality moving between different levels.

Entering in from the staircase from the west leads into the Hall of the Colonnades. From here there are two possible routes. The first leads directly to the east and then through a southern door into the 'Hall of the Double Axes', which features a large Minoan Hall type arrangement. This hall is the central reception space on this floor of the domestic quarter, being the centre of the movement routes in the area and featuring extensive use of pier and door partitions next to a light well courtyard. This would have allowed a great deal of control over light and temperature within the hall and delineate different social areas.

The second route from the Hall of the colonnades leads through a series of small rooms before reaching the 'Queens Megaron'. These rooms seem to also be a social space, with

small benches or seats (Macdonald 2005, 156) located within internal wall divisions with windows. The general impression is of a reception space with partial physical divisions that may have acted as ways of delineating spaces and postures (such as the possible benches), while still keeping a feeling of inclusion and participation. In this manner the permeable and adaptive arrangement is similar to that of the Minoan hall in the Hall of the Double Axes, though accomplished through different architectural features. Indeed, the two halls are also physically connected by corridors (which change there axis to prevent direct line of sight), highlighting the interconnected relationship between the Hall of the Double Axes and the Queens Megaron as adaptable and dynamic reception spaces capable of constructing different configurations of stratified social space.

In total the palatial building at Knossos incorporated an intricate set of interconnected indoor and outdoor reception spaces that utilised architectural features such as benches, raised walkways, columns, pier-and-door partitions, windows, balconies/galleries, and monumental staircases to construct a number of different spatial etiquettes. Particular emphasis is placed on constructing theatrical processions with audiences in the western court (and upper storey halls), traveling into the main building and then accessing a number of different reception spaces.

4.2.4 THE AEGEAN: SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The different ceremonial routes in the Palatial buildings at Malia, Phaistos, and Knossos share a number of features such as raised walkways, staircases, seating areas, columns, pier-and-door partitions, and the position of frescoes, indicating a shared conception between the palatial sites on the ceremonial choreography of moving human bodies through these buildings. This shared conception placed an important emphasis on how these features were able to trigger forms of gesture and behaviour, with these forms of etiquette working to construct court identities. This is particularly evident in the presence of seating areas in the western courts at Phaistos and Knossos, which facilitated the performance of these courtly gestural vocabularies and activities in front of audiences. Given their location outside of the main palatial building, this could have acted as an arena in which audiences composed of different levels of society could observe members of the court participating and performing in ceremonial and ritual processions, placing a distinct contrast in the way a seated audience interacted with a moving and upright procession, perhaps performing gestures such as the upraised arms present in the Knossos processional frescoes. The role of seated audiences

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interacting with upright figures is also suggested in other frescoes, such as the miniature frescoes from Knossos depicting a group of seated female figures before a larger congregation and standing figures on balconies/galleries.

These identities were then both reinforced and subdivided by social hierarchy when entering into the specialised reception areas of the palatial buildings, the central courtyards, piano nobiles, and Minoan halls. The use of pier-and-door partitions and interconnected floors through windows, galleries, balconies and staircases created opportunities to create etiquettes regarding access to certain spaces and the subsequent display of the human body within these spaces. In this manner, affording access to certain delineated areas could be an effective and visual mark of rank within the social hierarchy of court. The visual aspect to this bodily positioning within court spaces is particularly noted in the positioning of windows, balconies/galleries in upper floor reception spaces overlooking outdoor ground floor spaces (Palyvou 2005, 192-197). This allowed courtiers positions to be viewed by those one either floor in a clear expression of position at court. This is paralleled in the artistic sources such as the LMIA/LMIB (Hood 2005, 63-64) miniature frescoes from the early keep area at Knossos depicting figures standing or possibly sitting on upper floor galleries/balconies and viewing gatherings in the central court below the presence of columned upper floors and balcony in the Archanes house model (Palyvou 2005, PL 54 (2a), and the depiction of a woman on a railed balcony/gallery (Fig. 4.11) (Palyvou 2005, PL 54 (1a). These scenes suggest that allocation to certain upper floors was a mark of status and prestige, given these figures are larger and fewer in number. In addition, the frescoes played an important social function in providing images of ceremonial and social activities within the palace including the gestural repertoire of these individuals inside these spaces. In this light the signs of gestural performance, such as upraised arms in processions and seated or standing individuals on upper floors acted as important mnemonic devices and behavioural triggers and reinforces for those viewing them, providing a kind of visual guidebook on expected forms of behaviour within the palace.

However, at the same time, there are clear attempts to make these architectural divisions permeable and porous, allowing an overall sense of inclusion and participation in the same type of court events through this visual, oral and sensory interaction. This might have reflected the ability for the social hierarchy to be constantly reconfigured, with the ability to both move up and down in status reflected through changing access and movement through different rooms and floors. To this end, individuals on both floors formed a single group,

constituting as members of the court, but were at the same time physically and socially divided, forming a spatial etiquette the expressed social hierarchy.

In terms of foreign influences on the architecture of the Cretan palatial buildings, this has been the subject of much debate and suggestions. However, it is increasingly accepted that the palaces where the result of internal local process and innovations (Driessen 2007; Schoep 2007), and that foreign influences, particularly from the Near East and Egypt, which were originally suggested by a number of researchers (Warren 1987, 50; Watrous 1987) were minimal (Graham 1964). Be that as it may, it seems curious that at each of the largest palatial buildings at Knossos, Phaistos, and Malia, the basic design of a large ceremonial building based around a central court, processional routes, and upper floor reception spaces, appears at roughly the same time, a fact noted by these earlier researchers to suggest some external stimulus from the wider eastern Mediterranean. While these might appear to be superficial similarities the result of convergent development, in the wider scope of my analysis, I could not help but note there are a number of important similarities, and these were connected to specific types of spatial etiquettes regarding the employment of types of architectural features.

Within this study I found particular resonances with some of the Anatolian palatial buildings, particularly in the importance of upper floor reception spaces with large windows and galleries/balconies interacting with ground floor courtyards. The Burnt Palace at Beycesultan, in particular, seems to have some strong similarities in the construction of large upper storey halls and large central courtyards with porticos, galleries, and raised walkways. This could be simply coincidence of convergent development, but given the remarkable similarities in spatial etiquettes these architectural arrangements enable, it is my opinion that this similarity is the result of architectural and behavioural transmission between courts.

These similarities have been noted before and often discredited as superficial (Graham 1964; Pelon 1989). I would argue that these dismissals are largely the result of the debate on pinpointing the origin of the palatial design, in what Schoep (2007, 219) has noted as the 'either or scenario' (Schoep actually takes a midway point, suggesting that transmissions did take place but these were likely adapted rather than direct transplantations). This is not what I am attempting, instead I am pointing to the manner in which both of the palatial buildings from these regions have some shared conceptions of how to construct court space, and that this is likely due to the interaction of different courts in both regions. A simple fact

of the matter is that the Burnt Palace is quite different from the rest of the Anatolian MBA palatial buildings, as seen later, and this is likely the result of some form of interaction with the Aegean. However the architectural features at Beycesultan could also have been the result of transmissions from the courts of the Levant and Egypt, given the similar use of large ground floor reception rooms and portico courtyards. In any case, the strong similarities in terms of spatial etiquettes and social delineation that these features enabled would suggest that they were at least related in possible wider eastern Mediterranean conceptions of court reception space. However, given the apparent importance of upper floors, which is not quite so marked at Egyptian and Levantine MBA palatial buildings, it could be suggested that this arrangement of features and spatial etiquettes was a shared characteristic of the Aegean and Anatolian region, shaped through possible court interactions. In this manner my suggestion is quite different from the simple transplantation and origin argumentation of previous comparisons with Beycesultan.

4.3 ANATOLIA

4.3.1 KULTEPE KANESH: THE LATE PALACE AND THE SOUTH TERRACE PALACE

Two MBA palatial buildings at Kultepe Kanesh, the Late Palace and the South Terrace Palace, provide an interesting comparison with the Sarikaya Palace at Acemhöyük. However, the Late Palace (Fig. 4.12), while exhibiting a foreign architectural design emulating the palatial buildings in Mesopotamia, unfortunately contains no traces of reception spaces and little of the ceremonial routes in which to help reconstruct how social space was structured and navigated and possible etiquettes involved in court activities. Indeed, none of the rooms within the surviving northern section of the palace seem to have an obvious specialised function, instead being largely similar in size and shape, and by the finding of bullae and sealings, seem to primarily used for storage, though a few may have been residential (Özgüc 1999, 81-82, 130). This lack of reception space, most notably a throne room, may be due to the fact that the southern and eastern sections of the palace have not survived, which may have been the location of these spaces.

However, a couple of points can be gathered from the building. The first is that the primary entrance to the west composes of a sequence of two rooms formed by buttresses (Özgüc 1999, 83). They seem to be similar to the sequential arrangement of rooms as seen at Acemhöyük and mark the start of a ceremonial route which would have continued into the

central courtyard. In addition, it is apparent that the palace is orientated around a central courtyard (Özgüç 1999, 76), which would have acted a part of the ceremonial route and a primary reception space. Unfortunately, the excavations of Hrozny virtually destroyed this section of the building, and we do not know the exact dimensions of this space. The last point to consider is that, at least in the northern sector, there was an upper storey. This is indicated by the thick load bearing walls, remains of timber beams, and burnt debris that filled the rooms in this sector.

In total, the Late Palace provides little data which to work with but the features we can identify, the start of a sequential set of rooms from the entrance corridor, a central court, and the presence of an upper storey make an important point of comparison against the Sarikaya Palace at Acemhöyük, and help to highlight a number of points on Anatolian palatial design and court etiquettes.

To the south of the Late Palace are the remains of another large palatial building (90m long), the so-called South Terrace Palace. This building is very unusual in having a unique design based around a central corridor, an east and west wing flanking the corridor and a northern courtyard. The central corridor is about 47m long and 6m wide (Özgüç, 1999, 107-108), allowing a variety of processional configurations, ranging from single to probably around 4-5 people walking next to each other. The importance of this corridor and its prestigious and ceremonial nature is marked by not only its large size but by the fact it was roofed and paved with both timbers at its southern end and stone at its northern end. The ceremonial corridor leads into a large stone paved courtyard to the north and a temple or cultic building.

The eastern and western wings contained a number of rooms whose functions were partially reconstructed. The eastern wing had a number of small halls with central hearths, which Özgüç (1999, 107) notes were not kitchen hearths, but well constructed hearths intended for heating halls. The remains of a staircase indicate that access to a second floor or roof was also possible. The western wing shows similar proportions and the presence of large rooms with central hearths and another staircase. It would appear then that this building was large residential and ceremonial in nature, providing easy access to the ceremonial corridor leading to the large paved courtyard to the north.

Özgüc (1999) has suggested that rather than a palatial building, this was an elite residential area and also perhaps the dwelling of the crown prince (Bachhuber 2012, 590). Its function as a dwelling place of members of the court is suggested by a tablet found in this area listing administrative overseers (Özgüc 1999, 142-143). It could perhaps be comparable to the more residential and specialised palatial buildings, like those at the Ebla Western Palace or the Little Eastern Palace at Mari, though its exact boundaries and relationship to the Late Palace are still unclear. The building is likely part of the palatial complex as a whole, but not physically attached to the Late Palace. If so it is an unusual instance where a building housing members of the court, as opposed to the royal family, was in close proximity to the main palace, perhaps even within the palatial complex itself.

These two palatial buildings, while very fragmentary provide a number of points to consider regarding Anatolian palatial architecture. Firstly that we see some clear Mesopotamian architectural elements, particularly in the layout of the ground floor, at the Late Palace which appears to be tied to a change in the construction of the ceremonial route. Unfortunately, the exact configuration of this route is currently impossible to reconstruct given the lack of preserved reception rooms. However, the remains of an upper floor in the northern sector point to this being the likely location of these missing rooms. The South Terrace Palace also provides clear evidence of an upper floor in the presence of staircases, supporting this reconstruction. It also provides clear evidence of a monumental ceremonial route leading into a paved courtyard, an element which we could expect to see in the Late Palace as well leading into the central courtyard. Likely the two buildings were connected through some kind of continuation of this route, and were part of larger palatial complex incorporating other court outdoor spaces and monumental buildings.

4.3.2 ACEMHÖYÜK: THE SARIKAYA PALACE

The Sarikaya Palace at Acemhöyük is similar to the Late Palace at Kultepe, sharing its square shape with compartmentalised rooms on the ground floor, indicating a similar influence from Mesopotamian palatial buildings. Like at Kultepe Kanesh, we also have no indications of ground floor reception rooms, instead these rooms once again appear to be largely used for storage given the number of bullae and sealings found as well as courtly objects (Özgüc 1966; 1980). However, it differs from the Late Palace in that traces of the ceremonial route can be reconstructed and that a confirmed upper floor was present due to debris and the presence of staircases (Özgüc 1966, 37).

The ceremonial route appears to have started in an open courtyard to the north of the building (Fig. 4.13), which may have connected to another palatial building to the north, the Hatipler Palace (little of this palace and its layout has been published, but appears to have a similar design to the Sarikaya Palace). The courtyard would have been an important assembly point and outdoor reception space for the court.

The main entrance into the palace was located on the northern exterior wall, through a roughly 4m wide doorway. The large size of the doorway is not replicated elsewhere in the building, where doorways are between 2-3m, indicating that a single or double line procession. A portico running all along the edge of the palace perhaps hints at additional routes and entrances around the building, possibly with another large entrance to the south, which is lost. However, a secondary entrance is located in the north eastern corner of the exterior wall, through a smaller doorway facing away from the courtyard. I would suggest this was a smaller, less prestigious entrance, given its more direct route into the storage rooms on the ground floor and its placement facing away from the courtyard.

Passing through the main doorway, a thin rectangular vestibule room connected to the north eastern entrance. To the south the ceremonial route could have led to a staircase leading to the upper floor. Another reconstruction is a route to the west, through a series of long corridor rooms then turning to the south through another two rooms and then turning east to a staircase. In this vicinity were found a number of courtly objects such as stone vessels, ivory furniture inlays, gaming boards, and decorated textiles, indicating the presence of storage rooms for court activities (Özgüc 1966, 42-50). Both of these routes, the shorter route to the south and the extended route to the west both lead to staircases which led to upper floors, the likely location of the court reception spaces.

The presence of such reception spaces on the upper floor is supported by the finding of a number of painted ceramic bathtub fragments at the palace which depicts a multi-storied building, suggested by Özgüc (1979, 294-295) as actually depicting the Sarikaya Palace, featuring columned halls with open walls with railings and staircases or possible stepped daises or platforms (Fig. 4.14) (Mellink 1993, 426-427; Özgüc 1966, 33-34). The depictions point to the importance of an upper floor and that the rooms in these spaces had prestigious features such as columns, a gallery or balcony, painted wall decorations (judging at the geometric patterns) and possibly a stepped dais. Notably, the feature of open walls with railings or galleries/balconies indicates that these spaces interacted with ground floor

audiences, facilitating appearances to gatherings below, perhaps in the courtyard or possible other spaces surrounding the palace. This arrangement created similar spatial etiquettes to what we have seen in Aegean palatial buildings. The presence of court reception spaces on upper floors and in ground floor courtyards could perhaps also be paralleled at Kultepe Kanesh, with the remains of an upper storey in the northern sector close to the central open courtyard. The lack of ground floor indoor reception spaces at both palaces and the evidence from the painted bathtub fragments certainly seems to point to this reconstruction. The proximity of courtly equipment near a staircase would also suggest that they were stored here for easy access to the upper floors, where court events took place.

In total the architectural features of the Sarikaya Palace and the painted bathtub fragments which might actually depict the building, provide a great deal of information regarding the spatial arrangement and location of court reception spaces in Anatolian palatial buildings. Notably it helps to fill some of the missing information we have at the Late Palace at Kultepe Kanesh as to the location of the missing reception spaces and eventual termination of the ceremonial route. From this information we can put forward that the palatial buildings at Acemhöyük and Kultepe Kanesh incorporated their primary court reception spaces on upper floors, and that far from being enclosed private spaces, they had a high degree (at least in some places) of visual and sensory permeability in the form of open walls, large windows, balconies, and galleries. These open upper floors imply an interaction with audiences who would be located on the ground floor, probably in courtyards judging from the Sarikaya Palace, creating the same opportunities for spatial etiquettes that we have explored in the Aegean palatial buildings.

4.3.3 BEYCESULTAN: THE BURNT PALACE

Beycesultan is located in western Anatolia on a former course of the River Maeander (Bryce 2002, 122; Lloyd and Mellaart 1965, 61). It has a very different pottery repertoire to Kanesh and might therefore be part of a slightly different cultural sphere to the sites of Kanesh and Acemhöyük. It so far has not been identified in the Old Assyrian tablets and appears to have operated outside of this trade system.

The main entrance to the building appears to have been to the west (Lloyd and Mellaart 1965, 31), but immediately turning to the north through a small room and into a four columned vestibule room (Fig. 4.15). Here the route turns to the east through a 'portico' and up an earthen ramp into a large hall, termed the 'Great Hall' (Lloyd and Mellaart 1965, 23).

This room is very unusual for its apparent bare earthen ramp, rather than stairs, which leads 1.35m upwards to the floor level of the hall and then descending downwards into the main courtyard. This means that the Great Hall is actually bipartite, split through the middle by the ceremonial route. The reason for this change in elevation is unclear but may have to do with Anatolian architectural conceptions on elevation and status. In this manner the hall has two areas for receptions, the larger four columned northern end and the much smaller two columned southern end. The southern end, due to its small size, seems to be more of a porch for the large columned hall to the south, which would have provided a large court reception space. I would suggest that both the great hall and the large hall to the south would have acted as court reception spaces, perhaps used in conjunction with one another. With its bipartite split, the Great Hall together with the southern hall certainly would have had potential as a space that could physically delineate the court.

The main courtyard to the east of the Great Hall has not been fully excavated but provided the remains of a gallery portico running along its edge, as well as a raised walkway underneath this portico. The route therefore could be directed around the northern or southern ends (and through doorways to the southern and northern sectors), following the raised walkway or directly through the middle of the courtyard (which may or may not have had a similar walkway). The centre of the courtyard would have provided a large outdoor reception space within the palace, with an encircling upper gallery, creating a two storey reception space. Access to the gallery, and the upper floor reception rooms, which judging by remains found in the Great Hall appear to be located above said room (Lloyd and Mellaart 1965, 23, 33), was likely through a monumental staircase at the eastern end of the courtyard. Due to poor preservation its identification as a staircase is not certain, but appears very likely. This would then provide a monumental processional route to the upper floor, around the courtyard gallery and then into the hall above the great hall, which was possibly the main throne room.

The Burnt Palace therefore exhibits a unique and adaptable design, which created a monumental and theatrical ceremonial route leading into a series of impressive ground and upper floor court reception spaces. Within these spaces we have a number of indications of features which delineated social space, facilitating a number of configurations in which to include and exclude. In the Great Hall, courtiers could enter up the earthen ramp and then be directed to either the northern or southern reception spaces. The porch and off axis doorway into the southern hall created degrees of sensory permeability between the space,

with the southern hall being almost complete separate, while the two ends of the bipartite hall have a degree of permeability between the two. A similar arrangement can be found in the main courtyard, where a degree of sensory and social permeability is created by the two tiers of the ground floor and gallery. In this manner, courtiers could be included in the same overall court event or activity, with a degree of social and sensory interaction, but at the same time very distinctly delineated according to rank.

4.3.4 ANATOLIA: SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The Anatolian palatial buildings perhaps displayed the most unusual mix of different architectural designs and variety of configurations of movement routes and etiquettes regarding court reception. This seems to be linked with the equally varied set of foreign, hybrid and indigenous palatial architectural features. Certainly there does not appear to be a universally defined set of features or traditions that characterise the Anatolian palatial buildings (Bachhuber 2012, 587). This points to the courts of the Anatolian kingdoms actively experimenting with different types of court reception etiquettes, incorporating and adapting foreign architectural forms with indigenous styles and innovations to facilitate new forms and configurations of courtly behaviour.

The palatial buildings at Acemhöyük and Kultepe Kanesh utilise square, compacted layouts of the same type seen in Mesopotamian palatial buildings, such as those at Eshnunna and Ur. At Kultepe Kanesh this is particularly evident in the central placement of the main courtyard, which is a primary feature and orientation point of the Mesopotamian examples (Marchetti 2006 286-287; Roaf 1990, 433). At Acemhöyük, however, we do not see a central courtyard; instead this is located outside the buildings main entrance, perhaps indicating a slightly adapted incorporation (a similar arrangement appears at Palace A at Tilmen Höyük, a building that exhibits Anatolian and Levantine palatial architecture). This incorporation of room arrangements and courtyards at Kultepe Kanesh and Acemhöyük points to a form of direct transmission of palatial architectural concepts between Anatolia and Mesopotamia. This is particularly apparent in the differences between the earlier Old Palace and the Late Palaces at Kultepe Kanesh, with the circular layout and agglomeration of small buildings of the Old Palace being replaced to a single large rectangular multi-roomed building. These differences show a clear change in palace design to replicate the design of Mesopotamian palatial buildings, in a similar manner to what is seen at the Levantine palatial buildings at Mari and Qatna. This change would have resulted in a more formalised ceremonial route in

the palace, which was conceived in its entirety before construction. In this manner, the use of a Mesopotamian palatial layout shows a desire to emulate the way in which Mesopotamian royal courts structured and managed court space.

However, this emulation and transmission of Mesopotamian palatial architecture was also not a complete transplantation. A notable and distinct difference between the Anatolian and Mesopotamian palatial buildings is the importance in Anatolia of upper floors as the primary location of court reception space (Özgüç 1999, 132). This is remarkably evident in the lack of any architectural features and rooms intended for reception such as throne rooms, courtyards, columns, and daises, on the ground floor of the Sarikaya Palace, the Late Palace, and the South Terrace Palace. Instead, the ground floors are largely for storage, possibly residential rooms, and constructing a monumental approach to the upper floor through large courtyards (possibly featuring porticos and columns at Acemhöyük) and extended entrance corridors. The location of reception spaces on the upper floor is supported by the remarkable Acemhöyük painted bathtub scenes, depicting in detail upper storeys featuring columned halls with staircases or possible stepped daises. In addition, the depiction of railings seems to imply that some of these upstairs reception spaces were open to either the exterior or interior, allowing those on the ground floor a degree of visual and sensory permeability, perhaps indicating that the upper reception spaces could interact with ground floor reception spaces such as courtyards, facilitating hierarchical divisions of court social space. This importance of upper floor reception spaces and spatial etiquettes regarding dividing social space between upper floors and ground floor courtyards is also apparent in Aegean palatial buildings, as discussed above.

The design of the Acemhöyük and Kultepe Kanesh palatial buildings therefore incorporate select architectural elements from contemporary Mesopotamia and Aegean palatial buildings, while also implementing Anatolian preferences in the location and delineation of important court reception spaces. The location of these spaces on upper floors and the construction of the ceremonial route to move between floors seems to be linked with an emphasis on elevation of the human body as a mark of status. Staircases in particular seem to be important liminal zones in which courtiers literally ascended to the primary court reception spaces, a fact that is perhaps reflected in the use of the courtly and legal title (held by some kings and members of the royal family), *rabi simmiltim*, 'chief of the stairway'. This title seems to allude to some form of action and ritualised behaviour involving stairways, though its primarily appearance in notarisation makes its exact meaning unclear (Veenhof

and Eidem 2008, 101,169). That movement between floors was ceremonial and ritualised can also be clearly seen at the Burnt Palace, where the reconstructed monumental staircase connected the ceremonial route to the reception spaces of the upper floor.

The Burnt Palace at Beycesultan implements a very different design to the palatial buildings at Acemhöyük and Kultepe Kanesh. Some of these differences appear to originate in the incorporation of Aegean and possibly wider eastern Mediterranean palatial architecture forms, notably the use of portico courtyards, upper floor reception spaces, open windows and galleries, sequential rooms and bent axis ceremonial routes. Many of these features are also found in Aegean, Levantine, and Egyptian palatial designs. I have previously already outlined the transmissions I see between the Aegean and Beycesultan, but some of these features find parallels to Egypt and the Levant as well. The bipartite Great Hall can be compared with the bipartite reception halls at the Western Palace at Ebla and the Alalakh VII palace, particularly in the manner in which they facilitated spatial etiquettes regarding the delineation of social space. Large portico courtyards are also a main feature of the ceremonial routes and reception spaces in Egyptian palatial buildings, where they act to direct processions and delineate reception spaces (Though the presence of upper floor galleries is not known in Egypt). The presence of monumental columned ground floor reception spaces also deviates from the upper floor reception spaces at Acemhöyük and Kultepe Kanesh, pointing to similarities with Aegean, Levantine, and Egyptian palatial buildings. Such large columned ground floor reception halls are a more common feature of Levantine, Egyptian and Aegean palatial buildings. This deviation points to a active decision to structure the ceremonial route and court reception spaces in a very different manner to other Anatolian kingdoms, with a likely association to Egyptian, Aegean, and Levantine conceptions of structuring and delineating court spaces.

In summary, Acemhöyük and Kultepe Kanesh exhibit architectural features and design elements from Mesopotamian and Levantine palatial architecture while Beycesultan seems to employ a variety of palatial architectural features from the broader eastern Mediterranean whose origins are difficult to pinpoint (but strong parallels with Egypt, the Levant and possibly the Aegean are clear). However, other elements, such as the preference for court reception spaces on second floors and importance of staircases, seems to be imbedded in Anatolian conceptions of elevation of the human body as a mark of social status and a method of constructing courtly identities. In this manner, we can understand that these courts are selectively incorporating these foreign elements and adapting and

modifying them to suit their needs and preferences in regards to how palatial architecture structures, manages, and defines court spaces.

4.4 THE LEVANT

4.4.1 TILMEM HÖYÜK: ROYAL PALACE A

Tilmen Höyük is a large urban MBA centre featuring a number of monumental cultic, militaristic and palatial buildings on its acropolis (Fig. 4.16). Their intimate relationship to one another, made clear from their compact spacing, forms a kind of palatial complex, with the building Palace A at the centre. Palace A is relatively small palatial building, but incorporates monumental architectural features, rooms and routes which mark it as an important court ceremonial space.

The main ceremonial route begins to the north of Palace A, in a partially preserved cobbled courtyard whose walls were lined with basalt orthostats. This space, which also stretches to the front of Building E (Marchetti 2006, 277), would have acted as an assembly point for processions entering Palace A or as a venue for outdoor court events. Palace A's primary entrance is a large monumental doorway on the northern-western corner (Fig. 4.16), with a wide basalt-lined porch narrowing into a short stone-lined entrance corridor roughly 2m wide. The width of the corridor suggests that processions were either single or double file while moving through the building, with other doorways in the building either the same size or smaller.

The main entrance leads into a large entrance hall, which then turns to the east, breaking the line of sight from outside and hiding the inner rooms of the building. From the entrance hall processions would then move into the main vestibule hall, where two possible routes could be followed.

The first route turns to the north, into a small vestibule room with a staircase leading to an upper floor and an eastern doorway leading directly to the northern end of the throne room. Once in the throne room, this route leads to a buttress with possible post holes, which seems to mark the placement of a throne, with possibly standards placed behind it (Marchetti 2006). The route could also continue straight across the throne room to a private room in the north eastern corner. The architectural features of this route, with direct access to the upper floors, to a throne in the throne room, and a private room, identify this as a

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royal route. The king could enter the throne room in the most direct manner from either the main entrance or the staircase from the upper floors, delineating the routes between king and court in the same way seen in the earlier EBA example in the Court of Audience at Palace G at Ebla.

The other route into the throne room is slightly longer and convoluted, maximising the theatricality of entering before the king. While the southern part of the palace is yet to be excavated fully, the current reconstruction would have processions moving to the south, entering into another small rectangular vestibule room. This then turns to the east and enters the throne room at its southern end. The route then terminates by turning to the north to approach the throne at the far end of the room.

The throne room has no evidence of columns to manipulate and structure the space within. Two round irregular features which were interpreted originally as column bases have since been noted as not being the case (Marchetti 2006). They appear to be used for some other function, perhaps similar to other installations in throne rooms at Alalakh, Ebla, and Qatna (Marchetti 2006, 288), which all utilise combinations of stone basins, hearths, postholes and small platforms. They could be further slots or holes for standards, banners, screens, or some kind of furniture, which could have acted to interrupt the line of sight and movement towards the king. The only other feature in the throne room is the buttress and postholes that must have marked the position of a throne, bearing particular similarities to throne room designs at Alalakh and Ebla.

In total the Palace A is a relatively small palatial building whose primary focus on the ground floor was the provision of ceremonial reception space for the court and a venue for the presentation of the king (Marchetti 2006; 2008a, 354). The separation of routes between king and court, and the placement of features such as a buttress and standards for the throne indicate that there were important etiquettes in place regarding how the king and court traversed the building and how courtiers approached the king. Additional features such as hearths, basins, screens, banners, standards, and furniture are also suggested by the placement of the irregular holes in the throne room floor, indicating that there was probably an additional level of semi-permanent features that continued to manipulate how the king and court used and navigated this space.

4.4.2 ALALAKH: THE LEVEL VII PALACE

The Alalakh VII Palace (a term originating from the MBA level of the site (Woolley 1955, 91) is a well preserved rectangular palatial building with a number of strong similarities in its internal design to other Levantine palaces, particularly those at Tilmen Höyük and Ebla.

The ceremonial route in the Alalakh VII palace begins in a monumental doorway which is very similar to that found at Tilmen Höyük, with a basalt-lined stepped porch leading into a short entrance corridor (Fig. 4.18) (Woolley 1955, 92) which also enters into a large entrance hall. The entrance corridor is roughly 2-3m wide, allowing the usual single or double file procession, though it is noted that most of the doorways in this sector of the palace seem to be quite large, closer to 3m wide.

The entrance hall then leads through a doorway with a set of double doors (Woolley 1955, 101) into a bipartite hall divided by a columned portico (Fig 4.17). This portico also contained a set of postholes for double doors on its north side (Woolley 1955, 100), indicating that the hall could be physically divided into two rooms by closing the doors, creating either a large delineated reception space or into a private reception room. A series of rooms to the north of the bipartite hall could either be private rooms or possibly the larger room with a single column base could be another possible reception room (Woolley 1955, 99). If processions did not stop in the bipartite hall they could then proceed directly into a vestibule, which connected through a northern doorway to a staircase to the upper floor. A southern doorway then leads into the north western corner of the throne room.

The throne room itself is a long rectangular room with a basalt lined buttress and possible posthole against the western wall. In addition a square plastered brick platform 0.30m high and a basalt tank with a vent hole and notches on its lip were also found in the centre of the room (Fig. 4.19) (Woolley 1955, 101). This arrangement finds close parallels to the basalt lined buttress and postholes found in the throne room at Tilmen Höyük and the dais, platform and basins found in the throne room at the Western Palace at Ebla. A similar reconstruction can be made that a throne was placed against the basalt-lined buttress, possibly backed by standards or banners of some kind, with the platform and tank in the centre of the room. This would mean that the approach to the throne would have skirted around these features or possibly stopped at these points before proceeding. The series of three rooms accessed by a door way to the south of the throne buttress could be private rooms, however the discovery of elephant tusks and tablets in this room also suggest that these might have been storerooms (though it is possible they fell from an upper storey). It is

also within these rooms that fragments of Aegean style frescoes were found, which decorated an upper storey room (Figs. 4.20-4.21). The final feature of the throne room is a large doorway in the south eastern corner which leads upwards to the southern sectors of the palace, which had hinge and postholes for two doors (Woolley 1955, 102), indicating that there was a distinct divide between this ceremonial sector and the rest of the palace, a fact reflected by the lack of basalt lining in the southern sector as opposed to the ceremonial sector.

The ceremonial sector of the Level VII palace therefore incorporated a design that focused on providing formal ceremonial court reception spaces and a theatrical movement route in which to navigate these spaces. While not extensively long, the ceremonial movement route worked in conjunction with the location of the different reception spaces to create a staggered sequential route that was still complex. The use of doors in the entrance doorway and entrance hall clearly indicate that even passing through the first room could have been highly ritualised, with doors being opened and closed as the procession moves through the sequential set of rooms, breaking the line of sight ahead and behind. This demonstrates that the movement through the rooms and doorways was not a simple direct route, but involved etiquettes regarding the act of opening and closing of doors.

The reception spaces in the palace also demonstrate a high degree of complexity in the way they structure social space and utilise architectural features to trigger forms of behaviour. The bipartite hall, seen here and in the Western Palace at Ebla is perhaps the most interesting and adaptable reception space seen in any of the Levantine palaces, which would have easily facilitated the delineation of social space at court events. With the portico doors open, a large reception space was created that allowed restricted movement (the space between the columns only allows a single person to pass through at a time) between the two spaces and a degree of visual, oral, and olfactory permeability. In this manner courtiers could feel included as an overall participant. However, the portico still facilitated a degree of physical and social exclusion, restricting access to the northern space while still allowing courtiers to see, hear and smell the activities in this space. In addition, with the doors closed, a private reception space was created, allowing an even greater degree of social division.

The throne room provided the largest reception space and seems to have the same type of spatial arrangement as at Tilmen Höyük and the Northern Palace at Ebla. The basalt buttress and postholes indicates the likely placement of a throne, with the sitting king acting as the

primary social nexus of the room. The function of the platform and basin in the middle of the room is hard to ascertain, but their presence seems to indicate they triggered certain behavioural response and etiquettes. They might have facilitated cleansing or purification practices, as has been suggested at the Northern Palace at Ebla. They could also have practical functions for court activities such as banquets or feasts. In any case they appear to have further complicated the process of entering the throne room and being received by the king, while also helping to structure the position of courtiers within the room.

4.4.3 EBLA: THE NORTHERN PALACE AND THE WESTERN PALACE

The palatial buildings at MBA Ebla continue on in the tradition from the EBA Palace G of large monumental structures with a series of impressive features for reception and processions. The two main surviving buildings, The Northern Palace and the Western Palace, provide a series of similarities and distinct differences that may have to do with different ceremonial functions and social hierarchies (Matthiae 2013a, 275), but which also seem to relate to wider architectural traditions of Levantine palatial buildings.

The Northern Palace is a lozenge shaped building which is poorly preserved on its western and eastern limits (Fig. 4.22) (Matthiae 1997a, 387-386; 1997b, 132), making the main ceremonial route is somewhat difficult to ascertain. Based on the positioning and directionality of door sockets, an entrance to the west has been put forward with a route leading into the central rooms and the main throne room and reception rooms (Matthiae 1990 220-221; Matthiae 1997b, 132). A series of two rooms with an aligned set of doorways similar to the sequence of entrance rooms at Alalakh seems to mark an entrance route, with an entrance hall leading into a vestibule which leads into a large room to the south of unknown function and the to the north into the throne room. In this manner, the change in direction breaks the line of sight, screening the throne room and its occupants. The width of the doorways at around 2.5-3m indicates that single or double file processions would have been able to move through the palace interior quite comfortably.

The throne room is the largest room and features a 3m throne dais against the eastern wall and in the centre of the room a rectangular basalt basin and circular stone structure that probably acted as a hearth or fixture for furniture, such as a basalt tripod found nearby (Matthiae 1997a, 386). This arrangement of features creates two routes to the throne skirting the northern and southern walls, with routes perhaps being decided by status. A series of rooms to the north functioned as storerooms for objects involved in activities in the

throne room, particularly as furniture inlays were found here. While processions before the king entered form the west, another route appears to come from the east, leading from a series of three raised private rooms through a courtyard and entering the throne room to the south of the throne dais. This route, given its direct access to the dais and connection with spatially deep private rooms, seems to be a royal route, delineating the routes of the court and the king. The courtyard to the south may have also been used as a court reception space, but its proximity to the large residential rooms and entrance near the throne dais hint at a more private, royal space.

The Western Palace is a large rectangular building (7500m^2) (Fig. 4.23) with a similar design to the palatial buildings at Alalakh and Tilmen Höyük (Matthiae 1982; 1984, 20; 1997a, 384). However, due to poor preservation to in the western and southern portions of the building, the exact ceremonial movement route is difficult to ascertain. Comparisons with Alalakh and Tilmen Höyük suggest that a similar ceremonial route was in place through the same set of sequential rooms created. Marchetti has suggested a monumental entrance is present to the west, like all other Levantine palatial buildings, with a route leading into the bipartite reception hall. This bipartite hall provided a venue for court activities or as a smaller private reception space. It is almost identical in design to the one at Alalakh, though the sequence of private rooms leading from the reception room is slightly different and it lacks evidence of door posts (though it is likely they were present). From the bipartite hall a doorway continues the route eastwards into a two small rooms, turning first south, then east, and leading into a vestibule whose southern doorway leads into the remains of a large room. Based on comparisons with Alalakh, Tilmen Höyük, and the Northern Palace, this would be the main throne room (as opposed to Matthiae's (1990) suggestion that the bipartite hall was the primary throne room), with a likely throne placement against the western short wall (Marchetti 2006, 282). This would follow the design of the other Levantine palatial buildings and provide a similar processional route to the king to these other court spaces.

Matthiae (1997a 384) has suggested previously that the primary entrance was likely from the badly damaged south, as apposed to the west, following a different route. Another approach from the south is likely, perhaps linking with the monumental staircase to the west, which must have allowed access to possible residential space for the king on the upper floor, or perhaps a series of residential rooms on the ground floor. The damaged remains of some kind of columned portico to the south do suggest further monumental architectural

features that were part of another ceremonial route of some kind. However, at this time it is impossible to say what this route would look like.

In total the two palaces provide two venues for court activities, with the similarities and differences in their features indicating different ceremonial and social aims in their design. Both palaces have monumental ceremonial movement routes which facilitate single or double file processions, involving navigating through a series of sequential rooms which act to impress, disorient and intimidate guests and courtiers approaching the king in the throne room. However, in the case of the Northern Palace, this route is less complex and more direct, while the Western Palace has a route that staggers access, with two possible destinations; the bipartite reception hall or the throne room. In this manner, access to the throne room was much more restricted and formalised, and the bipartite hall could also act as a stopping point for processions, perhaps to perform certain etiquettes such as cleansing and washing practices, before proceeding into the throne room.

In addition, the Western Palace has the additional option of the bipartite room as a formal reception space. As at Alalakh, this type of room is particularly adaptable as a reception space that could physically delineate its occupants into two groups. This allowed courtiers to be both included as participants (as members of the larger court society) while at the same time physically stratified according to rank. In this manner, the bipartite hall provides an effective way of expressing social hierarchy through both including and excluding certain members of the court, giving the Western Palace additional specialised reception space.

Due to the poor preservation we cannot yet accurately compare the two palace's throne rooms, but is presumed that they acted as the primary social space in both palaces (Another, very poorly preserved, palatial building on the acropolis, Palace E, appears to also share a similar throne room arrangement (Fronzaroli and Matthiae 1966, 81-102; Matthiae 1997a, 384). The presence of a throne dais against the east wall in in the Northern Palace points to the figure of the sitting king as the primary social nexus in the room and termination point of the ceremonial route. The presence of a basin and a hearth/tripod stand in the centre of the room indicates that members of the court approached the throne skirting the northern or southern walls, perhaps also possibly performing washing and cleansing etiquettes using the basin and hearth before being received by the king. These features also suggest that feasts and banquets were held here with courtiers congregating around the dais and along the northern, western and southern walls during events. The abundance of kitchens and food storage in the northern and eastern wings of the North Palace suggests that one of its

primary functions was a venue for feasting and banqueting events. The finding of furniture remains in the ancillary storage rooms to the throne room also indicate that one or more pieces of sitting furniture were stored here for use in the throne room, possibly suggesting that courtiers would also have been afforded seats at certain events (Discussed further in the next chapter). It is unfortunate that more of the throne room of the Western Place has not survived in order to provide any information on hearths, basins, or postholes to suggest a similar design as that of the other Levantine Palaces

In summary the Northern Palace appears to have a more specialised function for feasting and banqueting activities, with the throne room acting as the primary social space within the building and access to it being fairly simplified but perhaps quite formalised with etiquettes regarding washing and cleansing. The less prestigious nature of the building as compared with the Western palace has led Matthiae (1989, 204-206) to suggest this was the residential palace for the crown prince, though this is debatable. The Western Palace in contrast appears to be a specialised function for ceremonial reception, with a more complex and staggered movement route, two possible social spaces and a focus on adaptable venues to express status and hierarchy.

4.4.4 TELL KABRI: PALACE D

A smaller palatial building than the other Levantine examples here, Palace D at Tell Kabri, located near modern Akko and the large MBA site of Hazor, exhibits a number of architectural features and decoration that identify it as a impressive palatial building. In addition, current excavations continuing to uncover nearby monumental buildings and sectors, such as the recently discovered 'Orthostat Building' built against the western exterior wall of Palace D (Yasur-Landau et al. 2012) and storage magazines including a fully stocked wine cellar found to the west of the Orthostat Building (Koh et al. 2014; Yasur-Landau et al. 2015). These buildings and features continue to expand the picture of the MBA palatial complex at Tell Kabri.

Palace D has both strong similarities and differences in the construction of its ceremonial route to other Levantine examples examined so far (Fig. 4.24). Most reconstructions place the start of the route in an open southern courtyard which enters the building through a large entrance measuring around 2-3m with a stone paved threshold. The doorway is similar in size to the doorways at Tilmen Höyük, Alalakh, and Ebla, though not as elaborate. The

doorway leads into an entrance hall with a sunken storage vessel (Oren 2002, 58) in the centre of the room from which two routes are then possible. A large western doorway, also featuring a stone threshold which was plastered and painted with Aegean frescoes, leads into a large hall whose floor featured the same type of fresco decoration (Fig. 4.25) (Oren 2002, 58; Niemeier and Niemeier 2002, 255-266). This large and beautifully decorated hall appears to be the largest and most prestigious room in the palace excavated so far. However, it does not appear to been the primary throne room, having no similarities architecturally or in its movement route to the throne rooms and routes of other Levantine palaces (particularly missing the usual array of architectural features in the centre of the room). I would suggest that it was a ceremonial reception space but not a formal throne room, though this may change depending on any further information that might be uncovered regarding the western end of the room. Another room to the north has an odd thin rectangular shape and perhaps was a storage or cultic room of some kind; its shape and size certainly do not lend it to being a reception space.

Returning to the entrance hall, a smaller eastern door leads into a small room before entering into a courtyard with stone based column bases at its southern end likely creating a columned portico, a fact supported by the better preservation of plaster flooring here (Oren 2002, 59). Additionally, the top half of some storage jars were found sunk into the floor around the middle column and were full of fish bones, shells, charred remains, a lamp and a cooking pot, indicating that some kind of waste disposal from court commensal activities. It could therefore have functioned as a reception space of some kind, with the columned portico delineating the social space. However, I find this unlikely, as the courtyard appears to act more as an important orientation point, as the southern end has four doorways. Unfortunately the eastern part of the palace is not excavated fully, making any continuation of the ceremonial route difficult to pinpoint in this direction (though Aegean fresco fragments in the eastern parts of the palace suggest ceremonial functions (Fig. 4.26).

Marchetti (2006) has suggested that the southern doorway of the courtyard led into the primary throne room, which Oren (2002, 69) interpreted as a cultic area attached to a temple. Marchetti's reconstruction seems more likely, based on similarities in the size of the space to other Levantine throne rooms, and the presence of some features such as Installation 798, a sunken 1.3m square that contained a hearth, some stone bases, and depressions in the plaster floor (Oren 2002, 61). These features are similar to the hearths, basins, platforms, and postholes found in other Levantine throne rooms. In this case, the

throne would be expected to be placed against the western short wall, facilitating the same type of approach to the king as at Alalakh and Ebla. It is still possible that the throne room was located in the badly damaged eastern sector, perhaps the large hall (Room 1434) being uncovered in this area (Yasur-Landau et al. 2013,7-8) but given the similarities in size and features, as well as the reconstructed movement route, I would agree with Marchetti's reconstruction.

Palace D, while not fully excavated, exhibits a number of features that fit into the wider pattern of Levantine palatial buildings which incorporated monumental ceremonial reception spaces and movement routes. However, it also seems to be quite different in other regards, namely its rather unusual location of reception spaces and divergent movement routes. The location of the large ceremonial reception hall to the west removes it from a sequential route to the throne room, forcing a decision to take one of two routes. In the previous examples at Alalakh, Ebla, and below at Qatna, large reception halls are usually placed before the throne room, allowing a type of staggered access and a potential stopping point for processions for the performance of etiquettes. This is not the case at Palace D, where the ceremonial hall is actually on a route leading in the opposite direction. This is curious, particularly considering that the doorways leading into the ceremonial hall are actually larger and more finely decorated than those leading to the south, which suggests that the route into the hall was actually more prestigious and facilitated larger processions. This has led me to wonder if the suggested southern entrance was actually the primary entrance into the palace. Based on the possible location of a door on the western wall of the ceremonial hall, a possible further set of rooms to the west might have included a ceremonial entrance. In this manner the ceremonial movement route would follow a similar path to the other Levantine palatial buildings, with the ceremonial hall being part of the sequential set of rooms in the procession route to the throne room. However, the location of the Orthostat Building and storage magazines, which do not appear to link to Palace D (Yasur-Landau et al. 2015, 4) in this area seem to complicate this tentative reconstruction, and further excavation work will hopefully reveal more on the configuration of rooms and buildings in this area. However, it is looking increasingly that a further set of rooms in this direction is likely (Yasur-Landau et al. 2015)

In any case, Palace D provides a rather divergent style of palatial building compared to its northern neighbours, with a slightly different set of etiquettes regarding how courtiers navigated the building and approached the king. This might have something to do with the

manner in which Aegean style architectural decoration was used in the court reception spaces and the possible connections with other Aegean type architecture, such as in the Orthostat Building. However, it is also clear that Levantine style architecture and etiquettes were in place as well, particularly since a Levantine type of throne room arrangement, if Marchetti's reconstruction is correct, seems to be in place. In this case the possible etiquettes regarding interacting with centrally placed features such as hearths, basins, platforms, and banners/standards seems likely, following the trend from other Levantine throne rooms. This seems to indicate that different tactics regarding the construction and interaction with court spaces were employed here, using a potential fusion of Aegean and Levantine type architecture and decoration to achieve different behavioural responses. The interactions with these foreign elements, particularly the wall paintings, will be discussed further below.

4.4.5 QATNA: THE ROYAL PALACE

The Royal Palace at Qatna is one of the largest palatial buildings in the Levant, rivalling the palace of Zimri-Lim at Mari in its size and monumentality. Constructed during the MBA, it is one of the few palatial buildings to survive in use into the LBA (Mesnil du Buisson 1935, 39; Pfälzner 2007, 36-42). Due to this continuous occupation, not much of the MBA material culture has survived within the palace, however the architecture is largely unchanged from its original construction in the MBA, with only the southwest extension being of later date (Pfälzner 2007). As such we are able to examine this building as an MBA palatial building, with the analysis having some applications in how the palatial building was used in the LBA.

The Royal Palace is almost entirely preserved except for the south and south western portions of the palace (Fig. 4.27). Unfortunately the main entrance of the building is lost, making the start of the ceremonial route unclear (Marchetti 2006, 282; Pfälzner 2007), but judging by the presence of a ramp and the western entrances of the other Levantine palatial buildings, it seems likely that the main entrance and entrance rooms were located somewhere in this vicinity (Marchetti 2006, 282).

The massive roofed main hall, supported by four huge wooden columns with basalt bases, is the largest space in the palace. Its function is unclear, but appears to have been a reception space judging by the placement of a basalt hearth in the centre of the room. A large opening (termed the *porte royale*) to the east is fronted by a row of seven wooden columns, marking this as part of the ceremonial route. The huge opening would have allowed very large

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processions to pass through. While most other Levantine palatial buildings have doorways roughly 2-3m, here the doorways of the ceremonial route vary between 5-10m, facilitating procession configurations that could not be used in any of the other Levantine palatial buildings, except possibly Mari.

The *porte royale* leads into a large vestibule hall of similar in structure to the large vestibule room at Tilmen Höyük. Here two divergent routes are possible. The route northwards leads into a rectangular partition with a number of doorways leading into the northern section of the palace. The function of these rooms are unclear, but a possible cultic or ritual function has been suggested based on the finding of a large well, some cultic bronze figurines and the presence of fresco fragments of Aegean style with aquatic themes. The fresco fragments will be discussed further below, but their date is contentious, but a likely date to the late MBA or early LBA seems likely (Pfälzner 2008, 98). A doorway to the east however leads into the north-west corner of the massive throne room (originally considered a courtyard due to its size). A buttress placed against the north wall seems to mark the placement of a throne in the same manner as those at Alalakh and Tilmen Höyük. This route appears to be reserved for the king, a fact that is made clear by the long corridor accessed west of the throne, which leads into the royal hypogeum.

The second route leads south to a another partition, which has two doorways, one leading to a room to the west and another which leads into the south western corner of the throne room. The throne room contained two large square basins placed in the centre of the room to the north and south, both of which had traces of burning. They seem to be related to the platforms and basins which are a usual feature of Levantine throne rooms. Processions entering into the throne room form the south would then need to turn north, skirting round or stopping at the basins before approaching the throne against the north wall.

To the east of the throne room are a series of rooms of unclear function. A larger room located in the north-east corner of the throne room may have had some type of function and seems related to the storage or private rooms usually found close to the throne.

The Qatna Royal Palace appears to be solely focused on providing a formal ceremonial court reception space but on a massive and truly monumental scale. Its ceremonial movement route, while currently incomplete in its reconstruction, demonstrates with its massive doorways that large processions could move through the palace, in a manner not possible in other Levantine palatial buildings. To this end the court at Qatna was in a unique position where it could construct different procession arrangements and etiquettes regarding moving

through the building. That moving through the palace was certainly different than smaller palatial buildings is obvious from the lack of doors, as most of the doorways are too large and impractical to incorporate these.

It is clear that the ceremonial route had two possible destinations with plenty of opportunities to stagger and complicate the route processions took. The main hall certainly appears to have been one destination; its massive monumentality and centrally placed hearth indicate that it would have been an impressive reception space that could house very large court congregations. Processions could also use this space as a pausing point before continuing on through the *porte royale* into the vestibule hall. Due to its size, the vestibule hall could in itself have acted as a reception space, but the partitions and lack of architectural features here seem to imply that this was a connecting room with a strong sense of directionality towards the north or south and into the throne room. The throne room appears to follow the pattern of Levantine throne rooms, with a private entrance for the king to a throne placed against a buttress on the short wall opposite the second entrance, placing the sitting king as the social nexus of the room and processions approaching from the furthest end of the room. The placement of basins in the centre of the room also follows the pattern of increasing the complexity of approaching the king, acting as a trigger for forms of ritualised behaviour possibly linked to cleansing and washing practices. They might also have served a practical function in providing illumination and washing facilities during event such as feasts and banquets. Given the size of the room a slightly different spatial organisation could also be possible for the court, with the centre of the room being available for courtiers to congregate, whereas in other Levantine palatal buildings this would have been solely occupied by architectural features such as basins, hearths, platforms, and standards, banners screens etc.

However, the Qatna throne room is also unusual for its incorporation of a formalised entrance into a royal hypogeum, architecturally linking the throne of the king to the burial place of royal ancestors. This perhaps was a method of physically incorporating past rulers into the activities and status of the current king, an extra architectural feature that expounded the distinctly royal nature of the throne room and the power and status of the king in relation to the assembled court.

Mari, located on the upper part of the Euphrates, is well known for the impressive Great Royal Palace (sometimes referred to as the Zimri-Lim Palace), a large and well-preserved palatial building that, in many ways, is quite different from the majority of other palatial buildings in the Levant. Its design is much more typical of the palatial buildings found in Mesopotamia, which are based around courtyards rather than the sequential rooms of the Levantine palatial buildings. This influence is unsurprising given its location at the bridge between the Levant and Mesopotamia. Because of this position, and the remarkable archives which document the Mari courts interactions with both Mesopotamian and Levantine kingdoms, it provides an engaging and informative comparison for this study. However, another, poorly preserved MBA palatial building at the site, the Little Eastern Palace, also provides an interesting and contrasting comparison to the Great Royal Palace in terms of its architectural features, movement routes, and relation to other Levantine palatial buildings.

The Great Royal Palace has a long and complex ceremonial route which would have facilitated a number of different etiquettes and interactions with different architectural features (Fig. 4.28). The main entrance is through a set of double doors to the north east, which enters into a small entrance hall and then into an open courtyard (Parrot 1958a, 10-110). To the south the route continues through another set of double doors into a vestibule hall where the route turn to the east and exits through another set of double doors into the large eastern courtyard. The route into the eastern courtyard therefore involves the movement through sequential rooms featuring doors which had to be opened and closed and which entered and exited through alternating bright open spaces and dark enclosed spaces, creating a more elaborate and theatrical route than at Alalakh, where a similar use of doors is seen.

From the eastern courtyard the route then turns to the west, but perhaps processions could have stopped at this point to pass by some of the cultic sector to the south of the courtyard, including the chapel dedicated to Ishtar. A doorway in the north west corner led into a series of small rooms which included the room containing the diplomatic archive. These small rooms acted as a corridor, turning first north and then to the west before turning through a southern doorway and entering into the open Court of the Palms. This courtyard, named in texts found in the palace (Al-Khalesi 1978, 6-9), featured a large artificial palm tree erected

in its centre and a number of wall paintings that depicted ritual scenes of the king interacting with deities (Figs. 4.29-4.30) (Al-Khalesi 1978; Bradshaw and Head 2012; Margueron 2014, 152-153; Parrot 1958b, Pls. VII-XIV). It would have acted as an impressive approach to the primary court reception spaces to the south, while also serving as a reception space for large gatherings or activities that required being outside, with the four wooden columns acting as a potential space to delineate social gatherings.

The wall paintings would have acted to highlight the status and exalted position of the king, with actual depictions of ritual activities taking place in the throne room, most notably seen in the Investiture of Zimri-Lim scene (Figs. 4.31) (Parrot 1958b, Pls. VII-XIV). In this manner the paintings served to express the social hierarchy of the court in a cosmological context, placing the court in the physical, social and bodily context of the palace in which courtiers, kings and deities interacted with one another. This would have been realised not only in the depictions but also in the actual ritual interactions with cultic statues, such as the statue of the goddess of flowing waters found in the vestibule hall beyond the courtyard and statues of deities found in the throne room. Processions might have also included the movement of cultic statues from other areas of the palace to the throne room.

This interaction between the court, king and deities is seen once again through the passage through the southern doorway of the Court of Palms and into a vestibule hall called 'The Hall of the Goddess of Flowing Waters', named after the position of a statue of the said goddess located on a stepped, painted and covered dais against the south wall and directly opposite the entrance (Fig. 4.32) (Parrot 1937, 69-70, 78; 1958a, 106; 1958b Pl. XV). The stepped nature of the dais and the fact that the statue included a kind of fountain element, with liquids being able to be poured into a hole at the back and flow out of the vessel held by the goddess, indicates that interaction with this statue was part of the processional route into the throne room. This could perhaps be involved in cleansing and washing etiquettes before entering into the throne room. Two possible routes are then possible after stopping at the statue, to the west or east and then through a respective doorway to the south and into the throne room.

The western route enters into the throne room with a direct line of sight and access to the throne dais located in the middle of the western wall (Parrot 1958a, 120-121). Given the easy access to the throne it is likely this was a royal route, as seen at Tilmen Höyük, Alalakh and Ebla. The eastern route enters the throne room from the far end, with a longer approach to the throne, which must have been the route for processions approaching the

king (Figs. 4.33-4.34). Like other Levantine throne rooms, a hearth or brazier is located in the room, though off to the south–east corner (Parrot 19158a), rather than the centre of the room. Instead the centre of the room appears to be largely empty space, which would have allowed processions to proceed in a direct line to the throne, in contrast to other Levantine throne rooms. This room also featured additional wall paintings that also depicted ritual interactions between the king and deities, but also had the unique feature of a stepped room to the east, directly opposite the throne, which has been reconstructed as a cultic room with a number of statues of deities (Al-Khalesi 1978).

The throne room therefore was a very formal ceremonial receptions pace which was involved with cultic and ritual practices, providing a court reception space that was heavily invested in communicating the social and cosmological hierarchy of the court and human society at large (Margueron 2014, 119). Its use as a reception space for court activities such as banquets and feasts also seems clear from the proximity to the kitchens and magazines to the east (Margueron 2014, 119), and the remains of a hearth or brazier in the room (Parrot 1958a).

The Little Eastern Palace, in contrast to the Great Royal Palace, is a much smaller and poorly preserved building (Fig. 4.35) that was the residence of members of the royal family throughout its use, starting with the crown prince Hitlal-Erra, the king Yasmah-Addu, Asqudum, a diviner, diplomat, and king Zimri-Lim's brother-in-law, and finally a queen's mother, Šibtu (Charpin 2011, 249; Margueson 2004, 446-451; 2014, 121-122). The archives found in this building give a vibrant account on the activities in the household, particularly those relating to Asqudum (Charpin 2011). While it was a smaller and secondary to the Great Royal Palace, its continued use as a royal residence for the royal family and location of royal tombs (Margueson 2014, 122-126), is materialised in the incorporation of prestigious architectural features and movement routes which mark it as an important physical extension of the royal court and another venue for court activities.

A clear indication of the ostentatious nature of the building is the incorporation of a ceremonial route, which delineates the movement of guests and the primary occupants. This route starts from the north, entering into what appears to be a large courtyard and across into a small vestibule room. From here the route divides into the two different routes. The private route for occupants leads through a western doorway, through two rooms, a small kitchen, and then through a southern doorway into a private room with a bathroom at its southern eastern end. Another doorway on the eastern wall leads into the north western

corner of throne room, directly next to the throne dais placed against the western short wall (Fig. 4.36). This route allowed the main occupants of the residence access to the residential rooms to the west behind the throne while also providing private access to the throne dais. In contrast, the other route, leading from the southern doorway of the vestibule leads directly into the opposite end of the throne room, facilitating a long approach across the throne room to the dais, identifying this as the primary ceremonial route for visitors. The throne rooms itself appears to have a tiled floor that formed a large rectangle in the centre of the room, but beside form this the poor preservation makes it difficult to identify any other features.

The architectural features and ceremonial route into the Little Eastern Palace seem to correlate with the status of the occupants recorded in the archives and sealings found within the building. While still a court building intended for members of the royal family, it is distinctly subservient to the massive complex of the Great Royal Palace. This is clearly seen in the private royal route that passes through a number of small residential room and features such as the small kitchen. The ceremonial route for guests is also rather short, leading fairly directly into the main reception space, the throne room. These aspects point to a less important and formal ceremonial function and more towards a residential aspect. However, it still appears to have been an important court space, indicated by the presence of the throne room, which has an almost identical plan to the one in the Great Royal Palace. Importantly, we also find a similar set of etiquettes regarding reception, with guests approaching a dais, which would have contained a sitting figure, from across the room. This replication of the architectural features and etiquettes from the Great Royal Palace demonstrate that the occupant of the building, usually a member of the royal family, had similar etiquettes regarding reception as those of the king, and that this throne room acted as an extension of the main ceremonial court space.

The two palatial buildings at Mari therefore provide some interesting similarities and differences. Both buildings have distinctly royal features, namely the incorporation of monumental reception spaces, particularly the throne rooms, which appear to have largely identical designs and layouts. This suggest that similar etiquettes were in place regarding courtiers approaching the king and other member s of the royal family, particularly in regards to a sitting royal figure approached by standing courtiers. However, the Great Royal Palace has a number of cultic features, such as the statue of the water goddess on its dais and the location of other cultic statues in the throne room and the painted murals of the

king interacting with divine figures, that indicate that there were also complex etiquettes regarding the interaction with these features. While these features may have possibly been present in the Little Eastern Palace, it seems unlikely that they were to the same degree and complexity. To this end, the Great Royal Palace has a much more complex set of etiquettes in its ceremonial route and reception spaces, which underpin its function as a meeting place between not only the king and court but also the divine.

4.4.7 THE LEVANT: SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The ceremonial routes and reception spaces of the Levantine palatial buildings display a clear desire to maximise the theatrical and monumental aspects of traversing court spaces. The use of sequential rooms, doors, and bent axis point to the fact that entering and moving through these buildings was highly complex and ritualised. This facilitated a variety of etiquettes to be formed regarding who opened and closed these doors (and who did not), access into certain rooms, and the points at which processions could terminate of pause before continuing.

All of these ceremonial routes, with the exception of Palace A at Tilmen Höyük, the Northern and possibly the Western Palaces at Ebla, incorporated a staggered access design, which allowed processions access to a large secondary reception spaces before proceeding to the primary reception space of the throne room. This indicates that while the throne room was the primary ceremonial reception space for the court, access was still tightly regulated and formalised, probably depended on status and situation. These secondary reception spaces come in a variety of different forms, from the massive halls at Qatna and Tell Kabri, the bipartite halls at Alalakh and Ebla, and the courtyards at Mari. In contrast, the throne rooms of all the Levantine palatial buildings exhibit largely identical throne rooms arrangements, with private entrances for the king and a main entrance for the court which approached the throne, usually marked by a dais or protruding buttress, from the far end. In addition there seems to be a number of features in the centre of the throne rooms, ranging from platforms, postholes, basins, and hearths. These features appear to be part of the ceremonial approach to the king, with their central placement in the room indicating some form of interaction, probably involving etiquettes regarding washing and cleansing before being received by the king. They could also have had practical uses in providing water, heat, illumination, and washing facilities for court commensal events, facilitating another set of etiquettes regarding their use during these activities.

The similarities in the internal design of the reception rooms has already been noted by Matthiae (1990) who has suggested that unified style of reception suites was found in the northern Levant during the MBA (though Matthiae saw the secondary reception spaces as the site of the primary throne room, as opposed to the view put forward by Marchetti (2006) which I have utilised). These similar sets of sequential rooms and architectural features point to the courts of the Levant having a common set of reception etiquettes shared between the different courts, resulting in a distinct set of Levantine courtly behaviours and identity.

However, while these shared features certainly indicate a Levantine architectural tradition linked to courtly identities and behaviour, there are also a number of distinct differences and clear deviations in architectural design, particularly in the way which foreign palatial architecture and decoration from the wider eastern Mediterranean are incorporated in Levantine palatial buildings. This is especially apparent in the employment of Aegean wall paintings at some of these buildings (Qatna, Tell Kabri, and Alalakh), a subject which has attracted a large body of scholarship outlining their distinct Aegean iconography and technical execution (For Tell Kabri see Cline and Yasur-Landau 2007; Niemeier and Niemeier 2000; 2002; for Qatna see Pfälzner 2008; von Rüden 2011; for Alalakh see Woolley 1955; for general discussion of Aegean wall paintings in the Levant see Boulotis 2000; Feldman 2007a; 2007b; Niemeier and Niemeier 1998). The presence of these wall paintings decorating rooms within these palatial buildings indicates a direct transmission of conceptions of Aegean palatial decoration. However, the range of iconographic themes from these paintings is unclear, mostly due to their fragmentary nature and in some cases highly speculative reconstructions (particularly in regards to Alalakh), making the exact intentions and ideas behind this adoption difficult to pinpoint. Currently they seem largely restricted to real and composite mythological animals, landscapes, and patterns and symbols such as rosettes. However, they certainly appear to be connected with Levantine courts associating themselves with the palatial architectural decoration of the Aegean polities.

This is notably different from the tactics of other Levantine palatial centres such as Mari which employ a Levantine style and subjects (the role of the king in relation to the gods), and some other Levantine monumental buildings which employ wall paintings with Egyptian iconographic elements and styles such as the palatial building at Tell Sakka (Figs. 4.37-4.38) and the fortress building at Tell el-Burrak (Figs. 4.39-4.40). In these cases the iconography

seems to allude to Egyptian royal and religious iconography, such as figure of a god or ruler wearing an *atef* style crown (Fig. 4.38) and court hunting scenes (Fig. 4.40), a subject found in the tombs of Middle Kingdom courtiers at Beni Hassan. In addition, Levantine iconography such as rampant goats and trees and costume are present in these scenes, identifying these as Egyptian/Levantine hybrid paintings (Kamlah and Sader 2010; von Rüden 2013, 70-71). These uses of Egyptian royal, court, and religious Egyptian iconography indicates these sites associating themselves directly with the courtly iconography and gestural vocabularies of contemporary Egypt, a fact mirrored on courtly objects from Byblos and Ebla (discussed in the next chapter).

In this manner, the choices to employ Aegean, Egyptian, of Levantine style palatial wall paintings seems to be tied with a desire to form different courtly identities, involving a potentially risky move of employing a totally foreign or hybridised visual style, incorporating different symbols of court and royal power and identity. What would be particularly interesting and helpful in exploring this subject is if more figural art could be found in these frescoes. This would illustrate if the Levantine courts were indeed utilising figural images from other courts, which would have included foreign courtly gestural vocabularies. Currently, there is a lack of figural images from the Aegean Levantine painting fragments, but hopefully future excavation work will illuminate this subject. In the interim, the fragments from Tell Sakka do seem to indicate that such figural representations were being transmitted from Egypt, and that this might have indicated the subsequent transmissions in some Egyptian courtly gestural vocabularies.

In addition to the wall paintings, some of the palatial buildings also exhibit some employment of foreign architectural features and designs. The Royal Palace at Qatna and the Great Royal Palace at Mari both employ a design which has greater affinities with Mesopotamian palatial buildings, in the same manner as some of the Anatolian palatial buildings, which indicate a transmission and relationship with the courts from this region. In particular the arrangement of their throne rooms are nearly identical and slightly different from those at Alalakh, Tell Kabri, and Ebla. Interestingly the throne room at Tilmen Höyük is also of this type, suggesting that there is more regional variation then suggested by Matthiae's unified Old Syrian reception suites.

Indeed, Tilmen Höyük itself is an interesting case, having a throne room very that incorporates features from all the other Levantine palatial buildings. However, its overall structural design and relationship to nearby monumental buildings, such as the temple

Building E, are different from other Levantine examples. Instead, there are some strong affinities with central Anatolian palatial buildings, particularly the Old Palace, Terrace Palace, and temples at Kultepe Kanesh. The presence of monumental courtyards outside the palace entrance is found at the Sarikaya Palace at Acemhöyük and the Terrace and Late (Warsharim) Palaces at Kultepe Kanesh, as is the presence of nearby monumental temples with strong spatial connections to the palace. In addition, building E has similar design elements to Anatolian temples (Marchetti 2008a, 355-356), rather than the temples found in other Levantine palatial complexes such as Ebla and Alalakh. In this light it could be noted that while the palace interior was highly influenced or originating from the design of other Levantine palaces, the larger palatial complex, including Building E, had strong ties to Anatolian palatial compounds. However, the monumental movement route which lead from the fortified city gates to a monumental staircase leading onto the acropolis and a paved road to the palace also has strong similarities to a similar route at Alalakh (Marchetti 2008b, 468). This makes Palace A interesting as a combination of palatial architecture and spatial elements from both the Levant and Anatolia. This is perhaps unsurprising, as the location of Tilmen Höyük at the junction between the Levant and Anatolia increases the likelihood of influences from both regions. Its identification as part of a Levantine kingdom, such as Yamkhad, is debatable, with a hypothetical identification of the site as the city of Khaššum possibly placing it in an Anatolian kingdom (Marchetti 2008b, 466). It could well be that the fusion of palatial architectural styles is a result of courtly transmissions from both the Levant and Anatolia, in which case the identification of what is foreign and what is indigenous is hard to define.

In total, the Levantine palatial buildings provide a dynamic picture of regional variation and use of foreign palatial architectural elements and courtly behaviours to create distinct identities. However, it needs to be noted that while I have incorporated a number of Levantine palatial buildings in this analysis, there is a notable lacuna in this picture, the southern Levant. This is largely due to the lack of sufficient remains to study, however there is clear evidence that large palatial centres existed at southern Levantine sites besides Tell Kabri. Hazor has produced clear evidence of one or two MBA palatial buildings (Yadin 1972, 6-23), but these are under later remains, so little can currently be said about their design and layout. Megiddo does have remains of a sequence of MBA royal palatial buildings, palace 5059 (Stratum XI) and later 5019 (Stratum X) (Kempinski 1989, 156-157, Fig. 42,2; Nigro 1995, 48-61), which appear to have a similar throne room arrangement to the northern Levantine palatial buildings (if you go with Marchetti's (2006, 286) suggestion for

the courtyard being instead a throne room), but are very poorly preserved, particularly in the western parts, and their reconstructions are debatable. Palace III at Tell Aphek also seems to possibly have a throne room with three-room suite (Nigro 1995, 37-41) similar to those at Alalakh, Ebla, and Tilmen Höyük, but the building is poorly understood and therefore offers little architectural remains in which to work with.

The southern Levantine palatial sites therefore offer a severely limited corpus of architectural remains, but do give a clear indication that large palatial buildings were present in the region, and fit into the wider pattern of Levantine courtly interaction. It is unfortunate more has not survived or been excavated and published, as these buildings could help to complete the picture for the Levant in regards to design choices and etiquettes in palatial architecture and the potential intra and inter-regional palatial architectural influences. Given the closer proximity to Egypt, this could have been particularly interesting.

4.5 EGYPT

4.5.1 TELL BASTA: ROYAL OR COURT PALACE?

Tell Basta, in the north eastern Nile delta, provides one of the earliest examples of a large-scale monumental palatial building in Middle Kingdom Egypt. Objects and statuary found within the palatial building belonging to at least five mayors of the city during the 12th dynasty and an inscribed door lintel of Amenemhat III, indicate a continuous use during the 12th dynasty (Farid 1964; Bietak and Lange 2014, 4; Van Siclen 1996, 245-246). The presence of objects and statues in the building belonging to a succession of mayors as well as an inscribed royal architectural feature has made the function of this palatial building highly debated and ambiguous. Van Siclen (1996, 246) has identified it as a mayoral residence with staterooms for visits from the king, while Bietak and Lange (2014, 4) identify it a temporary royal residence, noting the large size and Amenemhat III's lintel depicting him in a *Sed* festival chapel. In any case, the dual court/royal functions of the building are apparent, with the design of the palace and its decorative programme facilitating hierarchical delineations between king and court whilst also intimately including high-ranking courtiers (in this case the mayor of Bubastis) in the physical residence of the king (temporary or otherwise).

This royal/elite duality is immediately highlighted by the presence of two reception sectors in the building, reached by a ceremonial route, which divides into two branches to reach

these areas. It begins to the south, in a columned entrance hall fronted by a screening wall, whose columns and centrally aligned doorway direct a clear path forwards (Figs. 4.41-4.42). The width of the doorways in the hall and the space between the columns (roughly between 2-3m), indicate that processions were formed either of single or double file lines.

The entrance hall leads directly into an open-air courtyard, access to which was tightly controlled, judging by possible guard rooms to the west (Bietak and Lange 2014,7; Van Siclen 1996, 240). The courtyard directs movement through either a doorway in the south west corner leading into the administrative sector, or continuing on the ceremonial route through a columned porch in the north-west corner. The courtyard likely functioned as a lower status reception space (given its proximity to the entrance), with easy access to storage areas in the administrative sector and a grandiose entranceway from the columned porch. It was possibly used in cases where the king or mayor took part in activities with non-court members, such as festivals, allowing a measure of inclusion while also excluding access to the primary court spaces.

The ceremonial route continues by turning west through the columned porch and then northwards. This bent axis approach blocked the line of sight into the more private sectors of the building, delineating the lower status space of the entrance courtyard from the main court ceremonial and residential sectors. This also created a more complex and theatrical route, confusing and intimidating guests by moving in and out of open and enclosed spaces, blocking the line of sight, and creating contrasting changes in light and temperature, maximising the embodied theatricality of moving through the building.

The route then enters the main courtyard, a large rectangular peristyle court, with porticos along the east and west walls and a small hypostyle porch in the northern section. These porticos and porches create routes along the eastern, western and northern walls, providing shaded areas for processions and directing them towards the reception rooms. The courtyard could also function as a reception space for large court activities, with the porticos and hypostyle hall delineating social space, creating a semi-private, shaded areas amongst the columns, as opposed to the exposed centre of the court (depending on the time of day).

Two doorways along the eastern wall lead to columned rooms of uncertain function but were perhaps reception or storage rooms. In the north east corner a long corridor probably contained a staircase leading to an upper floor or the roof (Van Siclen 1996, 243). Along the west wall a single doorway leads into the mayoral residence (Figs. 4.41, 4.43), which forms a kind of palatial residence in microcosm within the palace. Its layout very closely resembles

the elite residences at Lahun (see below). Entry is gained through a series of columned vestibule rooms leading into the main reception room, which features a row of columns along the south wall. To the north of the main reception room is a large garden courtyard featuring a central stone basin surrounded by mudbrick paving which was connected to the palace drainage system, marking the location of a pool. Along the east and west walls are two porticos similar to those found in the main courtyard, again creating shaded routes from the reception rooms to the magazines and a possible staircase (Fig. 4.41) (Van Siclen 1996, 241). The staircase probably acted as a private entrance to the upper floor or roof for the mayor. This garden courtyard was likely both a formal and informal space for the mayor's guests, providing a more natural environment, perhaps with trees and other planted vegetation. It therefore had the potential to be an impressive but also more relaxing reception space, particularly during the cooler evening.

Returning to the main ceremonial route, from the main courtyard a doorway on the northern wall gives access into the monumental main hall. This is the largest indoor reception space in the palace, being able to host large court gatherings. There are no orientation points, such as a dais, which would provide an indication of the social orientation of the room, but a likely location for a throne is against the eastern or western walls. The presence of three small statues of mayors found along the southern part of the western wall (Fig. 4.44) (Farid 1964, 92-93) could have accompanied the throne on the western wall or faced opposite a throne on the eastern wall. This is a rare example of courtiers featuring prominently in the decorative programme of what appears to be a royal space. Bietak (2014, 5) has suggested that these statues presented a cultic purpose, but that seems unlikely in my opinion, as there are no other indications of this being a ritual or cultic space. Instead, I would suggest that the presence of statues of mayors in this room was a mark of their close relationship to the king, who continued to attend court events at the palace where they resided in the form of statues. The fact that they are all depicted seated, either on a chair or the floor, might also suggest they were afforded special status within this royal space, as this posture is almost never seen held in artistic sources by courtiers in the presence of the king. In any case, the presence of images of courtiers using this type of posture in a royal space would present a powerful message to courtiers on their social and bodily relationship to the king.

The main hall therefore presents an unusual situation were the largest reception space, which appears royal, also features instances of courtly art. The royal nature of this space is

also suggested by presence of a series of vestibule rooms and a small private bedroom to the west, perhaps a small throne room. To the east a private room and small columned room feature double doors with limestone thresholds. These double doors in the private bedchamber and two columned rooms suggest that the act of opening and closing these doors, and therefore accessing the space beyond, was highly ceremonial and ritualised. In the case of the private bedchamber, the opening and closing of double doors was perhaps involved with the ceremonial movement of the king. Similarly, the columned room may have acted as a ceremonial space for the storage of the small statues found in the main hall (a kind of statue bedroom if you will), which were then moved in ceremonial processions.

A large doorway leading into a courtyard which is now lost to the north might also have been part of the ceremonial activities taking place in the hall and relate to the long corridor to the far east, where the Sed festival door lintel of Amenemhat III was found (Farid 1964,10; Van Siclen 1996, 245-236), leading into a large square room. The large doorways, courtyard, and extended corridor and large square room seem to have a ceremonial function, which is now lost to us, but probably related to processions and royal activities.

The Tell Basta palatial building provides a poignant example of the difficulty in distinguishing between Egyptian royal and court palatial buildings and residences, with an often deliberate blurring of any distinctions between the two. Architecturally, the palace incorporates a number of features, which choreograph and manipulate the manner in which courtiers and visitors would approach both the king and mayor, crafting ceremonial routes that maximised the psychological and embodied experience of traversing the building. In addition, there is a clear desire to provide a variety of different reception spaces for court activities. Private formal and informal audiences with the mayor or king could be done in private reception halls while larger formal court gatherings could take place in the main hall or main courtyard. The entrance courtyard could even possibly be used for more uncommon congregations where the king and courtiers might interact with those outside of the court, perhaps on festivals. Finally, the presence of both royal and courtly art in the palace indicates that the visual and artistic repertoire of the palace was designed to display the intimate relationship between the mayors and the king, possibly through the image of a shared courtly gestural vocabulary. In this manner, the seated statues, although small, would have been particularly powerful visual expressions of the mayor's status and a reminder of the social hierarchy of the assembled court.

4.5.2 LAHUN: RESIDENCES OF THE COURT

The town of Lahun, located in the Fayum, is an example of urban planning in Egypt during the late Middle Kingdom (Kemp 2006, 211). Built to accommodate the workforce and administration for the construction of the nearby pyramid complex of Senwosret II, it was a state built urban landscape featuring orderly divisions in housing based on social hierarchy (Fig. 4.45) (Quirke 2005, 47). The western side of the town, which has a long rectangular shape is characterised by rows (termed ranks by Petrie) of small to medium sized houses. A substantial wall divides this lower status section, which likely housed low rank labourers, from the eastern sector which contained to the north, 'palatial mansions', and to the south and east, medium and some small sized houses. These two sectors, divided by the wall seem to split the town in two, with an eastern 'elite' area and western 'non-elite' area (Petrie 1891, 5-8).

These so called 'palatial mansions', which I refer to as residences, offer examples of Middle Kingdom elite residential architecture which strongly resemble the palatial buildings at Tell Basta and later at Tell el Dab'a. They follow two primary designs, with a possible third type for the royal/mayoral residence, which is unfortunately very poorly preserved (Its identification as a royal/mayoral residence derives mainly from its position at the highest point of the town and the presence of an open courtyard and possible temple to the south of the residence's main entrance (Petrie 1891; Quirke 2005, 47). The two primary designs contain largely the same architectural elements with some slight alterations (Figs. 4.46-4.47). The reason for the differences in the design seems to largely depend on their position in relation to the main road and access to the favourable northern winds (Quirke 2005, 56). This is clear from the orientation of important units, such as reception halls and private rooms, with doorways facing northwards.

While there is a slight variation on design, the residences show a remarkable similarity in their sequential arrangement of rooms and architectural features in order to create complex and theatrical movement routes. There are also clear design choices to maximise available reception spaces and utilise the same type of features as royal palatial buildings, continuing the pattern of blurring the distinctions between palatial buildings and royal/elite residences. As a result they were adaptable and flexible in their ability to accommodate different quantities of guests, construct varied levels of access, permeability, and social delineation and to manipulate behaviour and gesture.

The entranceways of these buildings display a formalised set of architectural features that compound the theatrical and ostentatious manner of navigating the residence. The primary entrance from the main road is a small vestibule with a central column, a prestigious architectural feature that serves to mark a hierarchical delineation between the movement routes of the family and important guests and those of lower social status (servants and their families and lower status guests). In the case of the northern residences the ceremonial and non-ceremonial routes run parallel to each other, with the non-ceremonial route having doorways leading to the servant quarters. In the southern residences the non-ceremonial route also leads into lower status residential quarters and possible animal pens and storage space. The entrance hall in both cases acts as a means of filtering and delineating the routes of individuals based on their social rank, with the central column acting as a kind of directional marker. The extended hallways are also modified according to status, with the ceremonial route having a wider and uninterrupted hallway, creating a cool, dark passage with a greater sense of space. In contrast, the non-ceremonial route has a thinner hallway, which is broken by two doorways into other lower status spaces. The ceremonial route opens into another small columned vestibule, which leads into possible guest apartments, offering potential termination of the route for guests not proceeding to the main reception areas.

The columned vestibules open into large open courtyards, creating contrasting enclosed and open spaces like at Tell Basta. The route then continued across courtyard to a portico against the southern wall, which would have created a shaded and cooler walkway. In the case of the northern residences the extended entrance hallway opens directly onto the portico, negating the walk across the courtyard. In both cases the portico acts as a walkway, directing movement along its length to two different doorways. The courtyards themselves are large enough to act as gathering spaces for large congregations and perhaps could have been used for important commensal events (a fact supported by their close proximity to possible animal pens and butchering/kitchen spaces). Contemporary models of portico courtyards such as that from the tomb of Meketre at Thebes (Fig. 4.48), also indicate that trees and other vegetation may have been planted in these courtyards, adding a further element of prestige, and providing additional shade, sensory elements (scents, sounds) and aesthetic enhancement. The portico could also have been used as a reception space, acting as a semi-private reception space at large events, with the columns acting to delineate space

between the portico and the courtyard, while still creating a degree of permeability between the two areas. The roof and columns of the portico were also possibly painted, with evidence in some cases of stars on the ceiling, creating a nightscape panorama, further enhancing the prestigious nature of the space.

The courtyard portico leads into two different types of hall. The first is the main hall, a large roofed room supported by four columns, which is accessed through an elongated rectangular vestibule. This vestibule also leads into the main residential apartments and connects with some of the servant and administrative quarters and storage spaces. The main hall is the primary termination point of the ceremonial route, as the most important and formal reception space in the residence. The columns act to direct and orientate movement within the room, creating avenues around the edge of the room and leading into the central portion of the hall. Though there is no evidence of a dais or in situ furniture remains, the primary point of reception would likely be the middle of the room or against the southern wall, maximising the length of approach and allowing direct private access for the household to enter and greet guests.

The second hall accessed from the portico is a peristyle courtyard with a stone lined pool in the middle, similar to the peristyle courtyard in the mayoral residence at Tell Basta. The Meketre model (Fig. 4.48) once again is useful here in giving us an idea of how these types of halls would have looked, with standing pools, trees, and other plants. In this manner these peristyle courtyards could be prestigious reception spaces, with a small garden and pool and surrounding portico offering a number of different spatial delineations and etiquettes. These courtyards are also attached to sets of private residential apartments, but their proximity to the primary reception hall and their prestigious and conspicuous nature indicate a function for reception rather than being purely private family spaces.

In total, the elite residences at Lahun exhibit designs which directly reference the architectural features and designs of palatial buildings, with a clear desire to maximise the theatrical and embodied aspects of receiving and hosting guests and social events. The entrance units, with columned vestibule halls and extended entrance halls create impressive and impactful routes for entering and exiting the residence, while also placing clear emphasis on hierarchical delineations between social status through different routes reserved for the primary occupants and high status guests and those of lower social status. The incorporation of these different routes and the skilful use of features such as columns clearly point to a very careful and well thought out design choices. In addition, the fact that

the residences are part of a state constructed urban landscape points to the fact that there was a great deal of awareness in the need for social and ceremonial reception for members of the court by the king. The decision and approval for their construction therefore highlights that there was a shared conception of how to navigate both royal and court spaces. This in itself is very interesting, placing the residences of the elite as officially recognised and encouraged expansions of the court space of the royal palatial buildings.

4.5.3 TELL EL-DAB'A: 13TH DYNASTY PALATIAL BUILDING

At Tell el Dab'a, located in the northeast Nile Delta, a 13th dynasty palatial building offers a later examples of a similar set of architectural features to Tell Basta and Lahun, with extended entrance halls, columned entrance halls and vestibules, a large open courtyard and large columned receptions room leading into private rooms (Eigner 1996, 75).

These similarities to earlier Middle Kingdom forms of courtly architecture are particularly apparent in the way the primary ceremonial movement route follows the same pattern as those at Lahun and the Mayoral residence at Tell Basta. However, it also contains a number of unusual differences. The apparent main entrance comes from the north west, entering into a long rectangular columned entrance hall (Fig 4.49). This is comparable to the entrance hall at Tell Basta and Lahun, but unlike these examples, this hall has a number of possible routes. Two mirrored sets of 3 private residential rooms can be directly entered from the entrance hall, a very unusual feature. They are either servant or guest quarters, as they are not spatial deep within the building, limiting access to the private residential and reception rooms.

Between these two sets of rooms is a staircase, which leads up to the roof, as no indication of a second floor has been found (Eigner, 1996, 75). To the east a long extended hallway leads to a monumental columned vestibule hall. However, this seems to have been a later addition that was unfinished, and thus its function and relationship to the rest of the building is unclear (Eigner 1996, 75). Instead a smaller columned vestibule hall seems to have been used primarily during the buildings lifetime. A similar extended hall to the west originally led into a similar columned vestibule hall, but was demolished early on to give the main courtyard its final form (Eigner 1996, 75). These hallways, rough 2-3m wide, would have channelled visitors and processions in a single or double file line, in exactly the same manner as at Lahun and Tell Basta. This creates a cool dark space that was confined and

would have contrasted with the open space on entering the vestibule halls or the open courtyard.

The main courtyard features a full portico, providing shaded walkways around the entire courtyard perimeter. A contrasting feature to previous examples to that the courtyard is aligned east/west rather than north/south, creating a longer, extended route around the portico if entered through the western extended hallway. This of course could be completely avoided by crossing directly across the courtyard, but would avoid the use of the portico (which seems to defeat the purpose of having a portico). Access could also be achieved through the eastern vestibule hall, providing a slightly different route, but one that is more in keeping with the ceremonial routes at Lahun and Tell Basta. The courtyard could also be a reception space, with contrasting areas of shade and light. The southern portico in particular would be well suited to this function, having a slightly larger space, receiving the cooler winds from the north, and having a greater degree of access to the main hall.

A central doorway from the south wall of the main courtyard leads into the main hall. This hall shares the same unusually large rectangular shape as the courtyard, making it slightly different to the Lahun and Tell Basta main halls. It is rather reminiscent of the Near Eastern central hall domestic architecture which is also found at Tell el-Dab'a at this time. In fact the building is actually built over such an example, perhaps drawing on this earlier foreign element of architecture that is peculiar to Tell el-Dab'a. In this manner it might indicate a slight Near Eastern element perhaps from the Levant or Mesopotamia that has been incorporated into the buildings design. However, this is a very minor element, the overall plan being dominantly Egyptian in origin, and seems to be a result of local traditions rather than a direct transmission or recent adoption. The large size of the main hall would have allowed large assemblies of visitors.

The Tell el-Dab'a building is a classic case of the ambiguous Egyptian palatial building. Its exact function is unknown, was it primarily a residential building, a formal ceremonial space, or a combination of both? The architecture certainly seems to be focused on accommodation and ceremonial reception and processions, with a number of bedrooms and large monumental columned courtyards and halls. Notably absent are storage magazines and servant rooms and facilities, which are apparent at both Lahun and Tell Basta, though this may be in the missing western parts of the palace. The frequent rebuilding, which include the closing off of the main hall and southern rooms and the construction of the monumental vestibule and what appears to be another, larger version of the main hall and

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residential rooms of rooms, seem to indicate that there was an increasing power and status of the owners of the building. The conversion of garden space to the south of the building into an elite cemetery indicates that this was the residence of a succession of high ranking members of the court. The lack of any royal inscriptions or architectural decoration does seem to place it as a courtly rather than royal building, perhaps a high status residence like the mayors residence at Tell Basta. In any case, there seems to have been an increasing monumentality to the building, with an increasingly complex and elaborate ceremonial movement route and enlarged reception spaces. This seems to point that the increasing complexity of the etiquettes involved in traversing the building and in the arrangement within reception spaces was due to a greater amount of status and power.

4.5.4 DEIR EL-BALLAS: THE 17TH/EARLY 18TH DYNASTY NORTH PALACE

The palatial building at Deir el-Ballas, termed the 'North Palace', is part of a large royal settlement located on the east bank of the Nile about 20km south of Dendara near the modern village of Deir el-Gharbi (Lacovara 1990, 1). The settlement and North Palace are dated to the late 17th/early 18th Dynasty based on the presence of a lintel inscribed with the cartouche of Sekenenre and seals with the name of Ahmose found within the palace, roughly placing the site in the transitional period between the Second Intermediate Period and New Kingdom (Lacovara 1997). Due to it's attribution to Ahmose's reign and the presence of a number of militaristic structures, such as the outpost mistakenly termed the 'South Palace', the settlement has been interpreted as being a 'military staging ground' and thus as an organised state built urban environment with a very specific purpose and function. Due to this militaristic nature, it offers an interesting contrast and comparison to the previous Middle Kingdom and palatial buildings and royal/elite residences, with some notable differences in plan and features which perhaps reflect the more formal and ceremonial nature of the building.

The North Palace, like much of Deir el-Ballas, is only partially preserved and excavated, with much of the settlement being covered by the modern village and main road (Lacovara 1990, 2-3; Lacovara 1997, 6-8). It was located in the centre of the settlement, within a rectangular 300mx150m walled enclosure, which acted to delineate the palatial complex from the rest of the settlement, highlighting its prestigious and important nature and restricting access to the complex. While only partially preserved, Lacovara (1996, 146) has put forward a convincing reconstruction of the main ceremonial and reception spaces of the palace (Fig.

4.51), which he fills with entrance halls and central reception and residential rooms, allowing the identification of a number of important features facilitating a reconstruction of the main ceremonial movement route.

Similar to the entrances of the Lahun elite residences and the 13th Dynasty palatial building, an extended entrance hall marks the start of a ceremonial movement route that leads into the reception spaces and private rooms of the building. The exact configuration of the entrance hallway is unclear, it was probably accessed from the main entrance through a columned entrance hall or vestibule like the previous examples at Tell Basta, Lahun, and Tell el-Dab'a. However, unlike previous examples of extended entrance halls, it has a doorway roughly halfway down its length turning northwards, which leads into a very large columned hypostyle hall. Continuing along the length of the entrance hallway leads to a perpendicular corridor, at the entrance of which was found the remains of painted wall decoration depicting running soldiers. The decoration here is interesting, the theme of soldiers in entrance hallways could relate to the militaristic nature of the settlement and a possible method of intimidation for those approaching the king's reception spaces (Similar themes can be seen later at Ramesses III's ceremonial palace at Medinat Habu). However, given the nature and termination of this corridor is unclear, it is uncertain how this decorative theme fits and relates to the rest of the palace. It does however, point to the fact that the walls were decorated and that we are currently missing a great deal of visual repertoire implemented in the palace.

Returning to the ceremonial route, the break in the main entrance hallway is unusual, as is the presence of the large hypostyle hall. None of the palatial buildings at Tell Basta, Lahun, or Tell el-Dab'a contain this element, usually instead having an open air portico courtyard or spacious columned hall. Also unusual is that the main ceremonial route entering at the top of the hall and running along the casemate wall before turning west. This route entirely bypasses walking through the entire hypostyle hall, which seems puzzling considering that it is an impressive and prestigious space. Possibly another route came from the eastern end of the room, allowing a procession through the entire hall in order to maximise the impact on guests and members of the court. That it was not a reception space seems clear from its lack of a clear area in which to conduct activities, and the manner in which the size of the hall and its tightly packed columns seem impractical for hosting. The hypostyle hall therefore appears to be intended as a kind of monumental and imposing feature of the main ceremonial movement route, facilitating varying sized processions.

The contrasts to previous palatial buildings continues as the ceremonial movement route exits the main hypostyle hall through a doorway in the northwest corner, leading up a stairway into a columned hall. The stairway is required as the central core of the palace rests on a casemate foundation, elevating this part of the building above the rest of the complex (in some places the casemate foundations are preserved at a height of 5m). The stairway into the central hall is in itself quite wide, creating enough space to facilitate access for large processions that might have included furniture. The change in elevation for the central core of the palace is an interesting design choice that so far differs considerably from other examples in the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period. The decision to elevate the central reception and residential rooms would have further acted to create an atmosphere of intimidation, while also highlighting the status of the king as above that of the court, to the extent that they physically had to climb to reach him.

The central columned hall at the top of the staircase acts as the primary nexus of the central core of the north palace, leading into three different sets of rooms. To the west it leads through a very large doorway into another columned room. The large size of the doorway is curious, as is the fact that it enters into a single columned room. It was perhaps a storage room for activities taking place in the central hall or a kind of ancillary room perhaps used to expand the reception capabilities of the central hall. It could also conceivable be a smaller reception room that was delineated from the central hall according to the status of its occupants.

A second doorway leads to the north, where it enters into a large columned hall that has been identified as a throne room. This is based on the placement of two connecting rooms to the west, which by comparison to other examples such as at Lahun, appear to be private residential rooms. These rooms are also spatially deep, only having access from the columned room, highlighting their restricted and private nature. They certainly seem to be reserved for the king, and as such the large columned hall would make sense as a throne room, particularly if we compare the placement of private rooms next to main reception halls at Lahun and the 13th dynasty palatial building at Tell el-Dab'a. Lacovara (1996; 1997) has gone so far to suggest a placement of a dais or throne against the north wall based on these comparisons. I would agree with this reconstruction, as a placement against the centre of the north wall would align with the doorway from the central hall, giving a direct line of sight and spatially dominating the entire northern section of the room.

The western doorway of the central hall leads into a square vestibule room and then turns to the south into a two columned room with smaller ancillary rooms to the west and an elongated rectangular room with a central line of six small columns. Lacovara (1997) has interpreted this as a secondary throne room, a smaller reception space used by the king. The presence of the ancillary rooms points for the need for storage, which perhaps suggests this reception space was in greater need of additional materials of some kind, perhaps even archives. In any case, it offers a smaller, more intimate reception space, with access to the materials stored in the ancillary rooms.

In total, the North Palace offers a very different type of palatial building from the previous examples at Tell-Basta, Lahun, and Tell el-Dab'a. While it has a similar set of sequential rooms (extended entrance hall, large courtyard/hall, vestibule, reception rooms and private rooms) it also has differing features and spatial arrangements. Notable contrasts are the presence of a massive hypostyle hall, the use of casemate foundations to elevate the central core, the lack of open air courtyards and halls, and the abundance of large columned reception rooms in this central core. These aspects point to the North Palace having a different set of etiquettes regarding reception than the other Egyptian examples, which relate to more formal and ceremonial court activities that emphasised the power and status of the king in relation to the court. This desire for a higher degree of formalised behaviour seems apparent from two main aspects of the palace design; constructing an elaborate ceremonial movement route and providing a number of prestigious and enclosed reception spaces.

The ceremonial route through the palace has a clear desire to restrict the manner in which individuals approached the reception rooms of the king, with a focus on linear processions or no more than two people walking side by side. By creating a one or two person procession, individuals were more keenly exposed to the monumental and theatrical aspects of the architecture. This could be felt walking down both decorated narrow extended hallways or through the larger columned halls. In fact in many ways the larger spaces such as the hypostyle hall, staircase, and halls, often feature small doorways and tight column placements that gave the impression of large grandiose spaces but actually worked to keep the same processional shapes as in the narrow confined hallways. For example, the staircase up to the central core has smaller doorways than the width of the steps, meaning that processions had to enter and exit the stairway in the same group shape. Managing the size and shape of the procession also facilitated the opportunity to implement etiquettes

regarding the how groups of courtiers moved and in what order. In these cases the front of the procession would usually require an individual who was aware of the appropriate route. This makes the knowledge of the architecture an effective method of gaining a prominent and high status position at the head of the procession. In this manner the design of the ceremonial route has been constructed to carefully guide and manage processions through the palace, facilitating certain etiquettes in moving as a group.

The second aspect was to create a series of rooms that were interconnected, creating an adaptable venue for formal and ceremonial court activities. According to Lacovara's reconstruction of the palace plan, the central core has four possible rooms, which could have been used in this manner, the central hall, the primary and secondary throne rooms, and the four columned hall. These rooms could be used in conjunction with one another to create different sized reception spaces, with the capability to create delineations in social hierarchy through access to different rooms. The central hall and primary throne room, as the largest rooms appear to be the primary reception spaces, capable of housing large congregations. The small columned room could have acted as an expansion to the central hall, while also all further delineations according to rank and status. The secondary throne room sees likely to have been a private reception space, a smaller venue in which the king could receive guests. The presence of ancillary rooms would suggest a possible more administrative function to this space, perhaps a meeting room of sorts that required access to scribal materials. The ancillary rooms could have also been used to store materials to be used in the larger reception halls of the central core. In any case, the different sized rooms and halls facilitated an adaptable space for hosting court activities and allowed delineations in accordance with rank through the combination of rooms.

The North Palace reconstruction therefore offers an interesting contrast to the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period palatial buildings and royal/elite residences. In this case we seem to have a purely royal palatial building, as opposed to the elite residences of the court at Lahun and the rather ambiguous nature of the Tell el-Dab'a and Tell Basta palatial buildings, which may have been royal or belonged to members of the court. The royal nature of this building is also reflected in its formal and ceremonial nature reflecting a desire to choreograph an imposing and monumental venue, which clearly emphasised the power and status of the king over all others. In this venue, members of the court were reminded of their lower social position through the manner in which they had to traverse the palace. However, at the same time it served not only to remind courtiers of their lower

social position but acted as an inclusion mechanism, in which the knowledge of the route through the palace marked a courtiers status as a member of the court who possessed the knowledge of how to approach the king. In this manner, the North Palace, based on its current reconstruction, provided a court space that was cleverly designed to maximise the capacity to manipulate the delineations between and amongst king and court.

4.5.5 EGYPT: SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The Egyptian palatial buildings and residences exhibit a great deal of similarity in their design and employment of features, while also incorporating enough variety in these aspects to make each of them unique. There is no clear evidence of a standardised plan, instead there is a recurring sequence of architectural features that construct theatrical and complex methods of traversing these buildings. The sequential arrangement of columned entrance halls, extended hallways, columned vestibules, open peristyle courtyards/hypostyle halls, and main reception rooms were present in all of the buildings. These similarities indicated that there was a clear conception of how Egyptian courtly ceremonial routes and reception spaces were arranged and constructed during the MBA.

This 'conception' of 'Egyptian' courtly architecture indicates an active desire for the strict management of social space and the bodily movements and postures. The arrangement of movement features such as columned halls and extended hallways into different open and closed reception spaces created a staggered set of sequences for traversing the building. The movement between these routes creates points in which access can be managed and different stages to journeys within the building. This is apparent in the Middle Kingdom text, *The Story of Sinuhe*, where a description of the process of traversing the palace includes a number of stages in which certain etiquettes must be performed (such as prostration before statues and certain sequential movements between rooms) and courtiers or members of the royal family join or escort the procession or greet visitors at certain points such as doorways.

> *"When dawn came, and it was morning, I was summoned. Ten men came and ten men went to usher me to the palace. I touched my forehead to the ground before the sphinxes./ The royal children were standing in the gateway to meet me. The companions who showed me into the pillared court set me on the way to the reception hall. I found His Majesty upon the great throne set in a recess (panelled) with fine gold. As I was stretched out on my belly, I lost consciousness in his presence. Story of Sinuhe* (Simpson 2003, 64)

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The entire description, while fictional, highlights that there were complex etiquettes regarding traversing court spaces, and that these ceremonial routes and receptions spaces were designed as trigger points for specific forms of behaviour.

Signs of foreign influence are quite limited in the architecture of these palaces. This may be due to lack of preservation. For example, the design of a 15th dynasty palace being excavated at Tell el-Dab'a exhibits some interesting design elements such as towers which appear to be directly related to Levantine and Mesopotamian temple and palatial architecture, creating a kind of fusion of architecture between Egypt and the Near East (Fig 4.50) (Forstner-Müller 2015). However, the current state of excavation of this building has not yet uncovered enough architecture for us to be able to clearly ascertain any movement routes of reception spaces, being mainly composed of storage magazines and courtyards. Further excavation might reveal the arrangement of the ceremonial sector and if foreign elements were present. However, while incomplete, it does offer a clear indication that Egyptian palatial architecture was susceptible to these types of transmissions. The fact that the 13th dynasty Tell el-Dab'a palatial building also exhibits some potential foreign influences might suggest that the region had a localised form of architecture that was a hybrid of Egyptian and Near Eastern courtly architecture.

In addition, it should also be noted that while there are strong similarities overall amongst all the buildings, there are also some differences that could hint at chronological and regional variations in palatial architecture. The Tell Basta and Lahun buildings come from contemporary contexts and their similarity is not unexpected. However, the rather different design of the Tell el-Dab'a palatial building, given its proximity to Tell Basta is rather surprising, though perhaps not unexpected given the long standing foreign influences in this part of the delta. However, the very different design and appearance of the Deir el-Ballas palatial building might indicate not only the suggested functional difference (as a military palace) but also some variations in palatial design and architecture between Upper and Lower Egypt, perhaps reflecting different practices and etiquettes regarding processions and approaching the king. Granted there is a deal of time separating these buildings, but it certainly calls to question any idea of a unified Egyptian palatial design. Further excavation work will hopefully expand our knowledge of Egyptian palatial buildings and royal/elite residences, which can expand this idea of regional architectural styles and differences in ceremonial behaviours.

4.6 UPPER NUBIA

4.6.1 KERMA

Palatial buildings and candidates for royal/elite residences are rather scare for the Kerma culture in Upper Nubia, with the only examples found at Kerma itself. The lack of a comparable site within the region is curious, as the large tumuli cemetery at Sai and elite cemetery at Ukma West would suggest probable locations for large urban centres where such structures would be present. Currently there is no evidence for such structures, and until they are found we have little understanding of the nature of palatial buildings and royal/elite residences in the Kerma territories in Upper Nubia. This picture is quite different at Kerma itself, where there are a number of examples of palatial buildings and royal/elite residences, though in some cases the identification and functions of these buildings is still debatable.

4.6.2 THE CEREMONIAL AUDIENCE HUT

The first example of a palatial building is the Ceremonial Audience Hut, a large, round building with foundations to the Ancient Kerma period in the EBA. It was rebuilt and reworked on a number of occasions until the end of the Kerma Classic (Fig 4.50) (Bonnet 2014, 20). It has a prominent central position in the city, with close proximity to the monumental religious *deffufa* building and its ancillary religious and ceremonial buildings. Like many of the architectural remains at Kerma, with the exception of the *deffufa*, the remains of the building are largely foundations. However, this still provides a deal of information on the structure of the building, the history of continual reworking and building, and some indications of how it was used and navigated.

The Ceremonial Audience Hut is not typical of the types of palatial building so far examined (Fig. 4.52). It is comparatively smaller, being essentially one room for most of its lifetime, than the vast palatial complexes at Knossos and Mari. Its design and style as a monumental round hut is completely alien to other palatial buildings in the eastern, reflecting an origin in African architecture. Despite this local, African, design, it also incorporates a number of features and design elements and choices that mark it as an adaptive and dynamic court space resonating with the reception and audience spaces in other eastern palatial buildings.

In order to examine these features, I compare the buildings different construction phases during the MBA; the Middle Kerma (2050-1750 B.C.), Late Middle/Early Classic (1800-1650 B.C.), and Classic Kerma (1750-1450 B.C.) phases (Bonnet 2014, 20). Throughout this time the building retains a general plan, with new phases built around or over previous phases. However, while there is a deal of continuity in the design of the building, there are some important elements, particularly in the internal structure, that did change throughout the MBA.

The Middle Kerma phase has a simple plan (Fig. 4.53), a large circular building with a single round room supported by a 4x3 grid of columns (indicated by remaining postholes) with a roughly 2m wide entrance to the south. There are little to no signs of any interior walls or smaller postholes that what would physically subdivide the space further. The only possible exception could be a slight protrusion on the south western side, which could be the remains of an interior wall. Outside the building there are postholes for small columns or posts circling the hut, likely to support the roof. Remains of a wall to the north indicate that there was an enclosure wall around at least the northern part of the building.

The architectural plan of the Middle Kerma building indicates that its primary function was as a restricted social gathering space. This is indicated by the fact that an enclosure wall was present, partially screening the building from view while also providing a physical barrier that delineated the space around the building from the rest of the urban centre (creating defined areas of court and non-court space in the urban landscape). This partial enclosing space may have been accompanied by a further layer of screening on the southern side, with possible rows of wooden columns or fencing of some kind as is seen in the later periods. Of interest is that while the building was certainly partially enclosed, the entrance to the building faces south, on the side with less substantial screening. This may be due to a desire to provide a more theatrical and visual movement route for entering and exiting the building, perhaps accentuated and directed by accompanying fencing and column rows.

The restricted nature of access into to the building is also indicated by the single, relatively small, doorway, which leads into the large central room. The size and shape of this room clearly marks it as an important gathering space that could house a large congregation of people, paralleling the reception halls and throne rooms of other eastern palaces. Indeed, the lack of residential spaces such as smaller private rooms, clearly indicates that the Ceremonial Audience Hut was purely a ceremonial reception space in the same manner as eastern examples. This comparison is further compounded by the incorporation of columns

within this space, whilst acting to support the roof, also act as a way of directing movement routes within this space. The 4x3 grid of columns suggests a number of possible movement routes within the room, with linear routes with right angle turns perhaps being the probable method of navigation. Unfortunately there are no signs of a dais or other features that might suggest the routes within this room, though if such a feature existed a placement on the western, northern and eastern walls would be probable. The regular placement of the columns would also have facilitated the placement of screens (in the form of textiles, animal skins, woven branch barriers) to create different routes and spaces between the columns. In this manner the interior could be quite adaptable, creating different routes and even rooms, which could be arranged and rearranged according to circumstance and need. The use of such kinds of screens would not be surprising considering the widespread use of leather and animal skins (for discussion of role of cattle and their products in funerary practices of Ancient and Middle Kerma phases see Dubosson 2011) and wooden fencing throughout the site and periods at Kerma.

In the late Middle/early Classic Kerma the building retains generally the same plan (Fig. 4.54). A semi-circular row of postholes extending from the terminations of the enclosure wall, create a further physical barrier screening the front of the building. The interior exhibits some changes, with indications that the space within is being physically delineated, creating distinct spatial zones (Fig. 4.54). 1-2m walls extend into the room from the exterior wall in 6 places around the southern and eastern part of the building. These walls may have acted as supporting buttress, however they also create alcove spaces with a greater degree of visual privacy, particularly from any individuals entering the building from the doorway to the south (which has shifted slightly to the east from the previous phase). The incorporation of alcoves could have been accompanied by the use of screens to create a series of ancillary rooms, which could act as places for storage, preparation, or private reception. In addition, the column placement during this phase has changed, creating an alternating pattern that results in a higher degree of visual impairment within the room. The reason for this change is unclear, but may have to do with the shifting of the entrance slightly eastwards. Approaching from this direction the column placement takes more of a grid pattern again, facilitating similar linear and right angle movement routes through the columns at the previous Middle Kerma phase. This may once again have been supplemented by the use of screens to further delineate space and construct movement routes.

In the Classic Kerma phase a drastic internal rebuilding provides further elaboration in spatial division (Fig. 4.55). An internal wall is constructed, creating a roughly square central room. In the north west corner of this central room two smaller rooms were constructed using further thin walling, though the northern rooms exact parameters are unclear. The function of these rooms is debatable; they were possibly ancillary storage rooms, although the presence of a hearth in one of these points to another possible use such as cooking and food preparation or private reception. Within the central room columns once again support the roof, though their arrangement is once again changed due to the redesign of the interior. In this case a discernable pattern is difficult to identify, it may be that the arrangement was changed a number of times during this phase.

Between the exterior and internal wall is a running passage, which runs around the inside of the building (Bonnet 2014, 52). It is uncertain how this space was used or navigated. Entrances into this passage from the central room are noted by Bonnet (2014, 52) to the south east and the north east, but are not entirely clear on the plans for this level. An interior wall extending into the passage does seem to create a room that can be accessed from the possible south east entrance.

The entrance to the building continues to face south, but is now more elaborate. Instead of a simple break in the exterior wall, there are now two small interior walls which extend from the exterior wall to meet the main interior wall, creating a short entranceway. In addition a small section of exterior wall acts to divide the entrance into two doorways. A new set of large semi circular row of postholes runs from the termination of the now more substantial enclosure wall (1m thick), forming a barrier with a break marking the route to the main entrance.

The choices regarding the retention and adaption in the design of the Ceremonial Audience Hut from the Middle to Classic Kerma phases draws out a number of factors to consider. The increasing complexity of the building suggests that there were developing needs to physically delineate and structure space within the building. This increasing architectural complexity that emerges in the Classic Kerma may be building on existing concepts of social hierarchy and positioning which were socially defined and regulated in earlier phases. It is also possible that the continual rebuilding and natural erosion at the site may have erased earlier architectural remains that would demonstrate similar complex internal plans.

This being said, the architectural remains strongly demonstrate that this building was a complex, an adaptive social space. It had the capability of incorporating a number of different movement routes, allowing different configurations according to circumstance and need. The hypothetical use of screens would have worked to increase the possible arrangements of these routes, with even the possibility of temporary 'rooms' being constructed. Supporting this idea is the presence of similar wooden fencing and semi-permanent barriers being used to screen the entrance. In addition, the construction of interior walls to create entrance halls, ancillary rooms, alcoves, and extended passages in the Late Middle/early Classic and Classic Kerma phases seems to point to the desire to transition some of these semi-permanent features to permanent features. This indicates that some etiquettes regarding entering, navigating, and exiting the building became fixed and formalised, particularly in the Classic Kerma phase.

This increased emphasis on the use of architectural features to formalise the way members of the court traversed court spaces in the Classic Kerma phase comes as no surprise considering that at this time other, new monumental palatial buildings with similar features also appear at Kerma. I believe that the changes in the building, which seem to focus on increased internal stratification, formalisation of etiquettes and monumentality come hand in hand with the appearance of these buildings. However, in contrast to the other two palatial buildings, the Ceremonial Audience Hut appears to retain a largely indigenous design, and while perhaps influenced by foreign concepts and ideas of constructing court spaces, was highly resistant to the actual incorporation of foreign architectural features. This would suggest that the building was a particularly important court space at Kerma, which was symbolic to Kerman elite and royal court identity and power.

4.6.3 THE CLASSIC KERMA PALACE

During the Classic Kerma period a new palatial building is constructed in the western part of the city. This building, termed the Classic Kerma Palace, more closely resembles the type of palatial buildings found in the wider eastern, being a large multi-room monumental structure (55x30m), with a number of different functions such as administration, storage, royal and elite residence, and ceremonial reception (Figs. 4.56-4.57) (Bonnet 2014, 165-167).

Bonnet has divided this building into three sectors (the eastern sector, central sector, and western sector) based on their functions and architecture. The eastern sector appears to be largely residential, with a large open courtyard containing a grain silo and a wheat processing area. A series of residential rooms to the north have a private entrance to an enclosed courtyard, possibly be a garden or outdoor reception space. These rooms have been suggested to be apartments for the royal family or visiting diplomats and dignitaries (Bonnet 2014). The western sector is large open area primarily for the storage of cattle and grain. An enclosed sector to the north contains two large silos while the rest of the sector is an open enclosure with small walls presumed to help with housing cattle.

The central sector exhibits architectural features and movement routes that mark it as an important ceremonial court space. The main entrance is in the northwest corner of the building, leading into an extended hall running along the northern exterior of the palace (Fig. 4.58). This narrow passage turns at a right angle to the south, leading into the open courtyard through a narrow doorway. The extended nature of this entrance points to it being a prestigious and theatrical method for entering and exiting the palace, perhaps compounded by the fact that the entrance hall was probably roofed, creating a dark cool hallway on entry which would then open onto the open air courtyard, creating contrasting areas of temperature and light.

From the courtyard a doorway to the west leads into a vestibule room which contained over 5,000 blank clay tablets found in a square storage pit in the north eastern corner of the room. A smaller room to the south has been suggested to perhaps being a storage space for inscribed tablets, though none were found there (Bonnet 2014). This vestibule room acts as a connecting hall to the throne room to the west and to other rooms to the north. A doorway to the north opens into an elongated hall leading into a large room to the east. The function of these rooms is unclear; they could have been for the storage of courtly equipment and/or a staging area for the preparation of food and beverages for court commensal events. This might be further indicated by the fact that a small corridor leads to the west to a doorway leading into the main entrance. This could act as a secondary, non-ceremonial entrance for the provisioning of the storerooms and the movement of service staff.

The vestibule room also leads to the west through two different doorways on the western wall into the throne room. Bonnet (2014) has suggested members of the court used one doorway, while serving personnel used the other. In this case the northern doorway could

perhaps be the service doorway, while the court would use the southern doorway. This seems to make sense considering that the southern doorway is directly opposite the eastern doorway, creating a direct route through the vestibule room. In this manner there are two primary movement routes into the throne room, a non-ceremonial route through the northern rooms (if we interpret these as service and storage rooms) and a ceremonial route through the extended entrance hall or residential rooms, courtyard, vestibule room and into the throne room (Fig. 4.58).

The termination of these movement routes in the throne room is not surprising considering it is the largest room within the palace, with the most complex set of architectural features (Fig. 4.58). The throne room features a slightly raised rectangular dais (roughly 3.5x3m) made of mudbrick on its northern wall, with a small ramp of steps leading up to it from the south. In front of this are four rectangular pillars, which supported the roof. In the north western corner another mudbrick platform or possibly a secondary dais, acted as the termination of a long bench running against the western wall. Another bench, this one in the quarter round, was located in the south eastern corner of the throne room.

The presence of benches and two daises indicates that this room had a complex set of etiquettes regarding the sitting and standing postures of courtiers and royalty. The northern ramped dais is the primary feature of the room, acting as the social nexus around which the rest of the court would be orientated. It is certainly large enough for a piece of sitting furniture and as such we can reconstruct the dais as a place for the king to sit. Its role as a primary orientating point could also be suggested by the fact that the quarter round bench seems to face directly towards it (though the largest pillar would partially obscure the dais from view). The second dais or platform, located to the west and slightly south of the main dais could be a secondary social node for the room. Bonnet (2014, 165) suggests that this might be a less formal space in which the king could more easily interact with members of the court who would be sitting on the benches or standing in the space around the pillars. This could be the case, but it also could be a space for members of the royal family or the highest ranking members of the court. I suggest that it was a smaller secondary platform for members of the court, given that it is physically connected to the west wall benches, which is a distinctly less prestigious area to sit as compared to the primary dais.

The positioning of the primary dais, the secondary dais, the west wall benches and the quarter round bench all seem to point to a hierarchical division of sitting figures. The king, sitting of a piece of furniture, acts as the social nexus of the room. The occupant of the

secondary dais, who may also be using a piece of furniture, is within close proximity to the king but still spatial distinct. In addition they are at the closest position to the king at the end of the west wall bench, and if sitting on furniture on the platform, actually physically elevated over those sat on the west wall bench. The west wall bench is lower status seating area, with no physical divisions in the bench to differentiate status. However, proximity to the secondary dais and the primary dais could have been used to indicate rank. The quarter round bench on the other hand also appears to be a lower status area for the court to sit, being by the entrance and therefore less spatially deep within the throne room. The rest of the space in the room would probably be occupied by standing figures or perhaps other sitting figures with their own furniture. They were not however afforded a platform or dais to sit on.

The positioning of the benches, daises and pillars also facilitates a number of possible terminal routes for the ceremonial movement route. Since the large mudbrick platform with ramp/staircase is the dominant feature within the room it is logical to assume that this was the terminal route for the king, who would enter from the southern doorway of the vestibule/archive room. For courtiers the termination of the ceremonial route could be in a number of places within the room, but for those who would be sitting the final destination would be the quarter round bench or straight forward to the west wall bench.

The architectural features of the palace therefore exhibit a clear desire to delineate different ways of moving and sitting amongst members of the court. There are a number of signs of a strict social hierarchy being expressed in how people accessed and navigated the palace in order to gain access to the reception space in the throne room, with non-ceremonial and ceremonial routes. The throne room itself has a sophisticated design that immediately orientates and stratifies members of the court, creating distinct spatial zones constructed through relationships with architectural features.

4.6.4 THE CEREMONIAL PALACE

To the northeast of the Ceremonial Audience Hut, occupying the central portion of the city, is the monumental religious complex of the *deffufa*. The complex comprises of a massive mudbrick structure with internal rooms and a rooftop space, and a series of ancillary buildings and structures, which appear to be workshops, chapels, and ceremonial structures (Bonnet 2004b). On the western side of the complex, abutting the *deffufa* wall is a small sector exhibiting some architectural features similar to a palatial building. However, unlike

the other two palatial buildings, this sector is physically interconnected to the *deffufa*, and as such presents a rather different type of court space. Given the obvious close relationship between the *deffufa* and its ancillary chapels, Bonnet has termed this sector the Ceremonial Palace (Bonnet 2004b, 120-129).

To access the palace, individuals would have to enter an entrance on the south western part of the exterior wall of the *deffufa* complex. This leads into a large entrance hall (Hall Q), from which an eastern doorway leads up into an elevated vestibule room (Fig. 4.59). Two routes are then possible here, up another set of stairs to the east to enter the interior of the *deffufa* and a north doorway, which leads down a staircase into hypostyle hall U. This columned hall (with a 3x4 grid of stone columns) is the first room of the ceremonial palace.

The hypostyle hall is clearly an important space, with a rare use of stone for the columns in a largely mudbrick and wood architectural medium. It leads into two rooms, a well room to the north, and a kind of vestibule hall. Access to the well seems to have been very important, to the extent that two columns in the hypostyle hall were removed to better this access. The vestibule hall however, appears to be part of the main movement route through the sector, as it leads to smaller storage and administrative rooms to the north and to a residential room (Room R). This larger room, roughly 6x3m, which has been identified as the king's room (Bonnet 2004b, 120-129).

While the Ceremonial Palace exhibits features indicating it to be a kind of palatial building, it does not appear to have been a space regularly open to the court. Its rooms are small compared to the other two palatial buildings and lack any significant area for large court gatherings. The possible exception to this could be hypostyle hall U, which is roughly 7.5x10m, and relates to the columned reception spaces in the other two Kerma palaces. However, it is still small and could not host large gatherings. In this manner, this palatial building perhaps would have acted as a smaller private ceremonial reception space that was perhaps tied to cultic activities and events.

4.6.6 UPPER NUBIA: SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The analysis of the palatial buildings at Kerma has demonstrated that the designs of these structures were highly complex, utilising a number of different types of architectural features to construct forms of etiquette. All three exhibit unique designs, which utilise a

fascinating variation of local, traditional African palatial architecture and foreign Egyptian/eastern palatial architecture.

The Ceremonial Audience Hut displays a local African design, utilising an adaptable circular single room with columns, alcoves, interior walls, and possibly screens to direct movement and delineate social space. While retaining a basic exterior design across the MBA, the interior sees increasing sophistication from the Middle Kerma to Classic Kerma. This increasing sophistication takes a particular turn during the Classic Kerma when the building sees its greatest interior redesign. This indicates that there was an increasing desire to physically formalise some of the etiquettes regarding the use of space within the building. In addition, development seems to come hand in hand with the construction of the other two palatial buildings. In fact I suspect that while the building retains its traditional Kerman architectural form, the internal redesign may be inspired by the influx of foreign palatial architectural designs from Egypt.

The Ceremonial Palace, in contrast, utilises a distinctly Egyptian style of architecture, particularly in its construction of a ceremonial movement route through the larger *deffufa* complex. This physical interconnection between palace and temple is something paralleled at other eastern palatial sites, but particularly comparisons could be made to later Egyptian New Kingdom temples which include ceremonial palaces which appear largely to be reception spaces for the king while visiting the temple (Eigner 1996). While these might offer interesting, and at first direct, comparisons, they do not appear to correlate to contemporary Middle Kingdom and Second intermediate Period temples, which do not incorporate ceremonial palatial buildings. Thus the idea that the idea of palace/temple physical interconnections could be an Egyptian design does not apply in this case.

Despite this, the actual design of the sector also has parallels in Egyptian palatial buildings and royal/elite residences. The sequences of off axis entrances, columned halls, and vestibule rooms are similar to the ceremonial movement routes found in Egypt such as at Tell Basta and at Lahun, and in the Classic Kerma Palace. I would suggest that the design of the Ceremonial Palace incorporates a movement route influenced by contemporary routes used in Egyptian palatial buildings and royal/elite residences. However, its relationship to the larger religious complex and small size point to the Ceremonial Palace being unsuitable for any large court gatherings, and was perhaps used for smaller private reception.

The Classic Kerma Palace exhibits features and design elements with very close parallels to Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period palatial buildings and royal/elite

residences in Egypt. The extended entrance hallway, with right angle turns, leading into courtyards and vestibule rooms and terminating in a reception hall is something which can be found on almost all of the Egyptian examples we have previously looked at. Even the non-ceremonial route bears distinctive comparisons to the service routes in Egyptian palatial buildings, such as those at Lahun, which also often run parallel to the more important ceremonial movement routes. In this manner it seems certain that the design and sequential placement of these features (extended entrance hall, courtyard, vestibule, reception hall) are direct transmissions from Egypt, and were deliberately meant to emulate Egyptian palatial movement routes.

In addition, the design and use of features such as daises and pillars in the throne room seems to also closely resemble the design of Egyptian throne rooms and reception halls, particularly in the manner that the pillars equate to columns in the way they structure movement routes approaching the primary orientation point of the room. Comparing this type of reception space to a more traditional and local design for reception, the large circular room of the Ceremonial Audience Hut, also demonstrates that the design of this reception space was not a local innovation. The clear differences in the shape, complexity and number of architectural features, and incorporation into a multi-room structure all point to the throne room being of a very different origin from local forms of court architecture. However, some important differences are also apparent, namely, the incorporation of benches and a secondary dais, which have no parallels in Egyptian palatial buildings, and perhaps point to Kerman adaptions of Egyptian etiquettes.

However, what is also interesting is that the Classic Kerma palace is very different from these contemporary Egyptian palatial building or royal/elite residence. It is certainly not a direct transplantation of Egyptian palatial architecture. Its rounded exterior walls actually link to the Ceremonial Audience Hut and by extension, perhaps even to the monumental and royal and courtly round tumuli in the Eastern Cemetery. In this manner it resonates with local royal and elite architectural forms. In this manner it is a hybrid of Egyptian and Kerman palatial architecture, incorporating design elements from both that suited the needs and desires of the Kerma court. Indeed what seems most evident, and indeed important, here is that the incorporation of the Egyptian architectural elements were due to the desire to introduce Egyptian courtly etiquettes regarding how social interactions were managed at court. There is meaning and intent behind these design choices, and it is clear that the building was carefully designed to incorporate important innovations but also continuations

in traditional and local symbols of Kerman court identity. This is particularly evident in the way that the Classic Kerma Palace did not supplant the Ceremonial Audience Hut, but instead coexisted, with a sharing of functions as a court gathering space along with the Ceremonial Palace.

4.7 Palatial Architecture: Social Arenas and Receptacles of the Foreign

The analysis and discussion in this chapter has highlighted that the architectural features of palatial buildings and royal/elite residences display a clear shared concern with the manner in which social space could be adapted and manipulated to create different types of spatial etiquettes. Long, bent axis routes were predominate and often utilised movements through doors and open and enclosed spaces to create confusing and dramatic ways of approaching the main reception spaces within these buildings. This complicating of the route, probably involving ritualised and halting movements through different sequential rooms and the opening and closing of doors were effective mechanisms for the construction of forms of etiquette. In the same manner, the incorporation of features such as porticos, doors, pier and door partitions, upper floor windows, galleries, balconies, and the placement of thrones, hearths, statuary, and wall paintings facilitated important ways of delineating social space, creating areas of inclusion and exclusion. However in some cases these delineations were made purposely permeable, allowing a social and physical delineation of the court but still allowing them to be participants in activities taking place, and feeling part of the larger court.

In addition there were clear instances where foreign architectural elements could be identified, pointing to instances of transmission of court etiquette. This was perhaps most clearly seen in the architectural transmissions at Kerma, where there was an obvious incorporation of Egyptian palatial architectural elements, such as extended corridors and sequential series of rooms leading to a throne room. However, even in these cases there were also strong indications that these types of adoptions were very selective, and were often hybridised, with a continuation of traditional architectural form of power. In other cases these transmissions were completely hybridised or too indistinct to firmly identify. The similarities between the use of upper floors, balconies, and galleries which communicated with large courtyards were obvious between the Anatolian and Aegean examples, despite the difference in time between them. While many have dismissed these similarities on the basis of mere convergent development, I argue that these features indicate that there was

perhaps a shared regional tradition in Anatolia and the Aegean for structuring court reception spaces. The importance of upper floors is not so marked elsewhere in the MBA eastern Mediterranean, indicating that we should not be so dismissive of these interests for similar behaviour. In other cases it was apparent that forms of palatial architecture could also be quite resistant to change. The palatial buildings in Egypt and the Aegean seemed to display a marked dearth of strong foreign influences, more often than not they seemed to be the ones who were being directly emulated, as shown by the incorporation of wall paintings from these regions in the court reception spaces of the Levant, and in the clear adoptions at Kerma. This might simply be due to the fact that we are missing other examples that might suggest otherwise. Hopefully the work at the 15th dynasty palace at Tell-el Dab'a well help to inform us if similar transmissions and influences of courtly behaviour were taking place here.

CHAPTER 5: BODY TECHNIQUES: A COURTLY GESTURAL VOCABULARY

To many people it may appear that the majority of our everyday bodily gestures are entirely natural physiological adaptions of the body. When we walk down the street, swim in a pool, or sit in a chair many people would not give much thought to the myriad gestures and ways in which we control our bodies in a single day. That is because these postures and gestures are commonly called 'second nature', or subconscious ways in which we our body (Bourdieu 1977, 79). To some extent we recognise that many of these gestures must be learned, but often they are deemed to be largely instinctive and biologically determined (e.g. walking and crawling). In contrast other ways are recognised as taught and learned, such as how to sit in a chair, ride a bike, or swim and yet these are understood to be natural physiological adapted gestures and capabilities of the human body.

In this regard, it is worth turning to the works of the anthropologist Marcel Mauss, who in 1935 published his collection of essays entitled *Les Techniques du corps* (Techniques of the Body). Mauss examined what he termed 'techniques of the body': "…the ways in which men [sic], in every society and in a traditional fashion, know how to make use of their bodies" (Mauss 1935, 455). Mauss recognised through observation that many of these ways of conducting our bodies showed variation that was often culture-, gender- and generation-specific. For instance in his observations of swimming and diving he noted that the way in which he himself swam was very different to the way the younger generation swam (Mauss 1935, 456). In another example, Mauss recognised that body techniques could be culturally specific, noting that styles of military digging using spades and marching differed radically between the French and British soldiers during the First World War, so much so that when French and British forces relieved each other of duty, they had to swap digging equipment because the British forces could not dig with French spades. In the same way the British could not integrate their marching techniques with French music.

Mauss sought to understand how the body as a physiological entity became embedded with social and cultural meaning through physical gestures. Going back to the example of swimming, we see that the body techniques used in this activity are not natural and instinctive but learned, and further that there are a variety of different techniques for swimming that are *taught* differently. Mauss (1935, 459) recognised that social learning was

one of the primary methods through which body techniques were acquired. Conditioning through positive and negative reinforcement and imitation through conformist transmission and directly biased transmission are examples of mechanisms of social learning (Shennan 2002, 56-60). For example, *onioi* is a bodily technique taught exclusively amongst Maori women and consists of moving the hips in an exaggerated manner while walking (Best 1924, 408). This technique is considered a sign of desirability amongst the Maori and is an integral part of female gender identity. Reportedly, girls who do not walk using this technique are scolded by mothers who tell them 'you are not doing the *onioi*' which becomes synonymous with 'you are not being a proper woman' (Mauss 1935, 459-460; Noland 2009, 28). In the case of the Maori girl, the further implication is that nonconformity with regard to this way of walking would result in wider exclusion from accepted female gender identity. In this way not only the mind is conditioned but also the body through the experience of gesture (Noland 2009, 21)

The above example also raises the question of *why* specific body techniques varied across cultures, gender and generations. Mauss sought to explain this through the idea that body techniques required an 'efficiency' of some kind, whether this was physiological (e.g. avoiding pain or discomfort), kinaesthetic (experience of gesture) or psychosocial (e.g. integration, identity and inclusion). If a body technique fulfilled an intention, if it was able to achieve something desirable, then it was adopted and incorporated into a larger *habitus*, a corpus of normative body behaviours adopted in specific sociocultural groups (Mauss 1935, 458; Bourdieu 1977, 72). This would take place even if the body technique could be physiologically damaging. Providing the other psychosocial benefits were great enough, the technique would be 'efficient' enough to be adopted and replicated (Mauss, 1935). These techniques would then be transmitted and reproduced by social learning through generations, becoming part of the "…traditional way in which men know how to use their bodies" (Mauss 1935, 455; Bourdieu 1977, 82). We can see that the *onioi* technique is practiced by Maori girls because it is/was a technique which designates female gender identity and expresses desirability, not because it was a physiologically efficient mode of locomotion.

The crucial element of Mauss' approach is that body techniques are culturally specific and socially constructed through processes of social learning such as imitation and social reinforcement. This departed from earlier Durkheimian notions of '*homo duplex'* (biological vs. social man) and stressed '*homme total'*, a view of humans as the total sum of human

experience (social, psychological and physiological) (Noland 2009). Mauss questioned whether the everyday body techniques of adult life could ever be termed 'natural' because they were embedded with conditioned sociocultural aspects (though he does suggest that some body techniques are more physiologically efficient). Mauss insisted that gestures, which were traditionally believed to express the idiosyncratic/personal feelings of an individual (the domain of psychology) or movement patterns traditionally believed to manifest the biological reflexes of a species (the domain of biology) were both influenced and constructed through sociocultural factors.

Accepting that body techniques are active social constructions allows us to consider how these body techniques can be resisted, adapted, and innovated. The choice of the Maori girl (whether an accurate ethnographic observation or not) to not do *onioi* demonstrates that body techniques have an inherently unstable element to them, requiring each individual to conform to normative behaviour. For example, not everyone knows how to swim or to ride a bike. This may be due to a lack of teaching or a decision not to engage in those activities. Entire sets of body techniques could die out within a few generations (as seen in Mauss' example a swimming style). Differing levels of human agency (Bandura 2001, 2) play an important role in the acceptance or rejection of body techniques. Indeed, social reinforcement and conditioning of these techniques in the first place reveals the inherent instability of their construction. Indeed, resistance and innovation can have equally powerful social, political and economic implications and rewards as conformity (Rudolph 2007). The construction of body techniques have a distinctively active, fluid and deliberate element of individual choice. In this way, we depart from Bourdieu's (1977) perception that the body techniques within societies are an innate, overall *habitus* that defines behaviour and human experience, and instead, recognise that human beings have an active awareness about how they use their bodies.

To demonstrate that body techniques can be subject to innovation and sociocultural resistance we can turn to dance. Dance promotes active and original creations and adaption, achieved through teaching, training and certain accepted kinds of experimentation of body techniques (Foster 1992, 482). While dancers are trained to use stock body techniques (and some dance forms there is a notion of perfection, like ballet) there is an expectation that these techniques can and will be modified creatively, so that they are open to new interpretation and expression as unique, felt, kinaesthetic experiences (Foster 1992, 485). In essence, dance creates and masters expression of the individual through embodied gesture.

The study of dance recognises that, like all modes of body techniques and gestures, a dance is not an isolated series of movements but part of a complex web which expresses various forms of identity (Desmond 1993-1994, 36, 42). While dance can be restricted to sociocultural norms of acceptable/unacceptable body movements, they can also act as forms of resistance and opposition to normative and prescribed forms of gesture. Dance forms can express taboo body techniques for certain sociocultural groups. Examples are Harlem Jazz and Tango amongst the wealthy elite of Argentina and New York during the 1920s (Desmond, 1993-1994, 38-39). These two forms of dance were deemed unacceptable because the body techniques were perceived as too sexual, with their entwined and suggestive movements. Add to this that these originated in sociocultural and 'inferior' racial groups (Desmond, 1993-1994, 39). Interestingly, it was these aspects which made them appealing and desirable; leading to, albeit often modified, adoptions in other dance genres. New forms of dance, and their corpora of body techniques, provide a history of innovation, resistance and adoption to normative body techniques.

In sum, we see that body techniques are a socially constructed corpora of gestures that form essential elements of the *habitus* of different sociocultural groups. These techniques are formulated not only to achieve physiological mobility, but also to embody sociocultural goals. Due to their inherently ephemeral nature they require social conditioning of both the mind and the body in order to be transmitted and replicated, particularly if they are to be assimilated into normative behaviour. This makes them fluid and unstable, subject to human agency, expressing resistance by non-conformity, innovation, adoption, and adaption.

5.1 SITTING TECHNIQUES

The postures involved in sitting may appear to be commonsensical, but Mauss (1935, 113–114) demonstrated that they are distinct social constructions that vary across time and cultures. Sitting positions and the use of sitting furniture must be learned and can be culturally distinctive. Cranz (1998, 27, 30; 2000) has noted how sitting postures, particularly the 90 degree sitting posture, are not only socially constructed, but are also physically damaging, causing a number of physiological disorders. That this sitting technique is potentially damaging to the human body highlights that it is not a natural activity and implicates that the development of sitting positions and furniture arose out of social rather than physiological factors. Indeed, it has been suggested that different bodily techniques of sitting developed as a means to express status (Cranz 1998; 2000). Status through sitting can

be expressed in a variety of ways: elevation over others, the constructed position of the body, and the use of prestigious types of furniture, among others. In addition, etiquettes can be crafted around acts of sitting, such as the construction of seating plans, allocation of furniture, and correct and incorrect techniques for sitting on furniture. In the following section I outline a number of examples where I believe we can reconstruct forms of sitting etiquette that have been transmitted between different courts within the study area, beginning with the Levant, then Anatolia and finally looking at Kerma.

5.1.1 LEVANTINE OR EGYPTIAN THRONES?

The palatial centres of the Levant present a variety of evidence for furniture and sitting practices, comprising of depictions of furniture and sitting figures in seals and statuary and furniture remains such as ivory inlays. These sources point to the important role in which both furniture and sitting techniques played in the presentation of elite and royal bodies and the formation of court identity within the region.

Material furniture remains are poorly preserved in the Bronze Age Near East, due to decomposition or destruction of the wooden components. The surviving examples of furniture remain few, with the stools, beds and tables at Jericho in the southern Levant being the largest corpus (Kenyon 1960; Parr 1996). These do not appear to be examples of courtly types of furniture, but belong to a lower elite stratum that was perhaps emulating types of court furniture, which will be touched on below. A more commonly preserved element of furniture are ivory inlays and decorative elements that would have been included in composite pieces of prestige furniture. These ivory remains are primarily distributed within palatial contexts and royal burials such as at the Northern Palace Q at Ebla and the Alalakh VII palace.

The ivory inlays from MBA Ebla present an interesting corpus of furniture remains, comprising largely of figural inlays featuring strong Egyptian elements, such as Egyptian deities and royal iconographic motifs (Figs. 5.1-5.6) (Table 1) (Scandone Matthiae 1997, 420). The inlays are distributed within three rooms within the Northern Palace P; the throne room, and two rooms in the western wing just north of the private courtyard (L.4068 and L.4070) (Fig. 4.22). Two inlays (Fig. 5.11) were found in the throne room with the rest being found in rooms L.0468 and L.4070. The large amount of inlay work has lead to the suggestion that these rooms were either storerooms or workshops for prestigious furniture (Matthiae 1997, 406-407; Scandone Matthiae 2006).

A key problem with discussing ivory inlay material is that they were used for a variety of different media and objects, particularly small boxes. This can make identification of the original object based on inlays alone quite difficult. What then makes the identification of the Ebla inlay material as furniture rather than a cosmetic box? The first indication is the large quantity of inlays, with the selection in Table 1 being the only published inlays due to their unique and interesting nature. The sheer quantity of inlays points to the presence of large furniture rather than smaller cosmetic boxes. In addition there are size variations in the inlays, with some being large (up to 7cm high) and unsuitable for a small box, particularly when the quantities indicate large compositions. In addition many are figural, which emphasizes a large composition. The artistic themes of the inlays also relate to royal iconography featuring crowns and regalia as well as symmetrical heraldic motifs and postures which are more appropriate to the backing of a piece of display furniture such as a chair than a box or chest. In this light the evidence points to an identification of the inlays being part of high backed furniture. Another corpus of ivory inlays, those from Alalakh VII palace (Table 5) provide a more difficult group of inlays to work with due to the fact that they do not have figural inlays that might elucidate aspects of composition. They likely belonged to a number of different objects including boxes, furniture and musical instruments (Yener 2007, 154). However, they do provide another accordance of similar material, and probably furniture type at Alalakh.

The iconography of the Ebla inlays is distinctly Egyptian in character, with the adoption or allusions to a number of Egyptian deities such as Hathor, Osiris, Horus, Sobek, and Amun/Min/Montu (Figures 5.1-5.4). Also evident are the presence of Egyptian royal regalia, in the form of the white and red crown and a cartouche. The presence of Egyptian motifs and symbols in the Levant during the MBA is not particularly uncommon, as seen in their presence in glyptic sources, such as at a seal at Alalakh (Fig. 5.8) (Teissier 1996), but the concentration of such royal and courtly iconographies in this context is unusual and significant. This can be seen when comparing the Ebla corpus to a similar collection of ivory inlays from the site of el-Jisr. The ivories in this group exhibit similar strong Egyptian themes. However, in this case the choices of iconography are quite different, with less royal and religious figures, regalia, and motifs. Instead there are male figures wearing Egyptian kilts (but no royal regalia), lions, falcons, a Taweret figure, and geometric motifs (Scandone Matthiae 1997, 422). In this manner the themes and associations are not particularly courtly, certainly not in the same way as the Ebla inlays. The non-royal character of these finds is intriguing, perhaps pointing to a lower elite iconography that was emulating courtly

styles and sitting practices. However, given that we know very little about the site of el-Jisr it is hard to pinpoint the meaning and intention behind these Egyptian elements (Scandone Matthiae 1997, 422). In contrast, the Ebla ivories context within the Northern Palace, their proximity to key ceremonial reception spaces, and their employment of Egyptian royal ideology and iconography, clearly point to them belonging to a prestigious court object that referenced the courts of Egypt.

What was also interesting about the Ebla pieces was that the types of motifs and compositions they seem to employ; symmetrical facing deities wearing royal and religious regalia and even the presence of a cartouche, are key aspect of Egyptian royal furniture decoration. In addition floral and vegetative motifs often appear, usually in reference to the royal *sma-tawy* heraldic symbols. This feature was not marked in the Egyptianising inlays but was found in a large tree motif in one of the inlays from the throne room. All of these motifs and composition aspects are usually found decorating the representations of royal thrones in statuary, such as the symmetrical facing figures of Horus and Seth holding *sma-tawy* motifs on the throne base of a statue of Senwosret I (Fig. 5.10) (Lange and Hirmer, 1961), but also on physical furniture remains, such as one of Tutankhamun's chairs (Fig. 5.9)

In this manner, the inlays appear to be directly referencing royal forms of furniture from contemporary Egyptian courts, indicating that they were likely part of a prestigious piece of furniture. Certainly the large size and wealth of symmetrical mirrored figures and use of heraldic royal regalia point to their use on a piece of royal furniture.

However, it is important to also note that while these inlays indicate the emulation of Egyptian furniture forms and sitting practices, they are also not pure iconographic transplantations. The style of carving is not Egyptian, indicating that it was not actually a piece of imported Egyptian furniture. In addition, there are important Levantine royal and courtly motifs within the ivories. This is mostly clearly seen in the inlay depicting a Levantine ruler wearing distinctly Levantine royal regalia (Fig. 5.11). Given its find context in the throne room, away from the Egyptianising ivories, it likely belonged to a piece of royal Levantine furniture. This suggests that while adopting furniture forms, iconography and possibly sitting practices, the Levantine courts clearly had their own set of bodily practices and behaviours in place using their own forms of prestigious furniture. Indeed, the fact that the Egyptianising ivories, have a high degree of visual hybridity in some elements (such as the fringed skirt use by the Syrian king inlay and the crocodile headed deity inlay), this was clearly a case of very selective and carefully considered adoption and transmission.

The royal nature of the furniture remains at Ebla is unsurprising considering that seated individuals in northern Levantine art, particularly glyptic and statuary, are figures of authority and veneration (Teissier 1996, 40-41). This is particularly evident in the genre of seated royal ancestor statues, which are found at Qatna, Ebla, and Alalakh. These statues are found within important palatial and temple contexts, usually in significant ceremonial spaces. The statues from the Royal Hypogeum at Qatna (Figs. 5.12, 5.14, 5.15) (Table 4) for instance were found in the main antechamber. Similarly the seated sculptures at Ebla Temple PII (Table 2) (Fig. 5.13) and possibly the other statues found in Area J of the acropolis at Qatna (Table 4) (Fig. 5.14) were found in monumental entrances. Possible remains of a travertine and white limestone throne in the throne room of the Alalakh VII Palace have been interpreted as part of a seated statue, possibly similar to the Idrimi statue in the Level IV Palace, and perhaps occupying the low platform in the throne room (Yener 2013). These statues are significant in that they demonstrate the importance of a 90 degree sitting posture in the presentation of royal bodies in both art and life, particularly in court and temple contexts.

They also underline etiquettes surrounding the relationships between sitting and standing figures. Their placement in important liminal architectural spaces such as entrances and courtyards (Fig. 5.15), emphasizes the way in which seated figures choreograph and structure the movements of non-sitting figures, especially in reception contexts (e.g. walking and standing figures moving towards sitting figures). This interaction between sitting and standing figures features also in glyptic sources, where we find seated figures being the focus of veneration or supplication and also being served or offered to by standing figures. A particularly common scene in Levantine and Mesopotamian glyptic, is that of presentation. This is where an individual is lead by a divine figure into the presence of a seated figure usually identified as a ruler or deity (Frankfort 1939, 74; Winter 1986). This is nicely demonstrated in the depiction of a seated, presumably royal figure, on an ivory 'wand' object found in the MBA Tomb of the Lord of the Goats at Ebla who receives offerings (Fig. 5.16) (Matthiae 1995, 492). The placement of the statues in context of entry and courtyards, combined with the artistic sources from sealings therefore point to sitting etiquettes utilizing 90 degree sitting postures as being a primary means of not only presenting royal bodies but also choreographing other human bodies within these ceremonial spaces.

The furniture remains and artistic sources from Ebla, Alalakh and Qatna therefore point to the use of 90 degree sitting postures and etiquettes as being a means to express status and

authority while also providing a social nexus in which to organize social and ceremonial space, particularly in contexts of reception. In addition we can see a number of foreign furniture elements, through the incorporation of Egyptian royal iconography and ideology, in furniture decoration and design. This suggests that the Ebla court was very carefully adopting Egyptian furniture forms and decoration, with a very particular interest in royal forms and ideology. This indicates the transmission of furniture design, decoration, and etiquettes between the palatial centres of Egypt and the Levant during the MBA.

5.1.2 THE PRATT IVORIES: RECONSTRUCTING A THRONE AT ACEMHÖYÜK

Like in the Levant, the remains of furniture in Anatolia are exceedingly rare, particularly those found in court contexts. This is unsurprising, considering that the expansive use of wood in palatial buildings meant that the destruction of these buildings involved violent conflagrations. This is particularly evident at Acemhöyük, where the Sarikaya Palace was destroyed in just such a fire. However, in this case the fire did not destroy all of the furniture remains, as demonstrated by the finding in 1965 by Özgüç (1966, 43) of a number of burnt and distorted ivory furniture remains in the north western part of the palace, particularly in room 31. Özgüç immediately noted that these ivories had remarkable similarities in preservation and style to a collection of burnt ivories held at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, which had been donated by the Pratt family in the 1930's. These ivories had no secure contexts and had reportedly been purchased from a dealer near Aksaray, which was known to sell illicitly dug objects from the site of Acemhöyük (Özgüç 1966, 46). From this information Özgüç was able to convincingly argue, through a series of photos held by dealers, that the Pratt ivories had been recovered from the same vicinity of the Sarikaya Palace as the excavated ivories. In this manner, the excavated group from Acemhöyük and the Pratt ivories are largely considered as being from the same context, and were a single related group.

The identification of the ivories as a single collection with a convincing provenance resulted in a great deal of interest in the ivories in regards to their function and artistic characteristics. It was quickly noted that the group exhibited not only elements of artistic similarity in style to Anatolian and Levantine styles but also that they exhibit a number of elements and images from Egyptian royal and religious iconography. These elements included the four sitting sphinxes that featured Hathoric curls and protrusions on their foreheads, which seems to reference the presence of a ureaus (Fig. 5.17) (Aruz and

Lapérouse 2008, 83). In addition to the sphinxes a number of other Egyptian elements were noted, including three crouching lion-headed deities wearing Egyptian style skirts and holding lotus blossoms (Fig. 5.18), a plaque featuring a falcon grasping two gazelles with Egyptian falcon eye markings (Fig. 5.21), and a plaque with a recumbent griffin also with the distinctive eye markings of an Egyptian falcon (Fig. 5.23). As well as the Egyptian elements a number of other ivories were found that featured a range of decorations including geometric designs, lions (Fig. 5.24), kneeling figures (Fig. 5.26) and bull men (Fig. 5.27). The iconography of these pieces was much more in keeping with the types of symbols, images, and figures seen in Anatolian sealings (Leinwand 1992; Özgüç 1980; 1965). As such the artistic style of the ivories seemed to fall into two groups; furniture feet and large plaques with Egyptian decorative elements and iconography (with the exception of the small griffin plaque) and smaller plaques and inlays with Anatolian iconography.

In terms of the reconstruction of the ivories, the majority of the larger pieces (Table 6) seem come from a single piece of prestigious furniture. The smaller inlays probably belonged to either a footstool (judging by the presence of a small furniture foot with a carved monkey) (Fig. 5.25), or possibly a small box. Simpson (2013) has made an extensive study of the larger ivories and their reconstruction, suggesting that the larger plaques and furniture feet came from a single large luxury chair (Fig. 5.30-5.31). Her reconstruction of the legs of the chair is particularly insightful, remarking that instead of being from two different sets of furniture, the lion legs and sitting sphinxes were part of the same piece (Figs. 5.28-5.29). This was accomplished through noting that the lion paws had mortises and pin holes on both the top and bottom of the pieces, indicating that instead of being feet, they were structural elements of the leg (Simpson 2013, 238-243). The sphinxes on the other hand had no mortises or pin holes on their bases, only on the tops and sides of the head, indicating they were the true feet of the chair. In addition she noted that the position of the pinholes on the two of the sphinxes, placed them as the rear feet of the chair and that these sphinxes faced outward rather than forwards like in the front two pieces. This makes sense in many ways as they would then be more visible, rather than being blocked by the front legs.

This reconstruction meant that a definite identification could be made to at least one piece of sitting furniture. The fact that this chair incorporated a 90 degree sitting position is indicated by the reconstructed height of the legs, which now measures approximately 27cm high (Simpson 2013, 253). This is not taking into account the possible addition of some wooden elements to the chair legs and the inclusion of the seat, which would push the

height up slightly more, probably between 30-35cm high. This height, using Cranz's (1998) measurements of an average of 45cm high, would facilitate a slightly flexed 90 degree sitting posture.

The chair therefore provides a firm identification as a piece of sitting furniture, utilising a 90-degree sitting posture. Given its prestigious materials, high quality craftsmanship, incorporation of Egyptian royal iconography, and its proximity to the upper floor receptions spaces in the Sarikaya Palace, it almost certainly was intended as a throne for the king or a member of the royal family. However, the question remains as to why this royal throne would incorporate a decorative theme using both Anatolian style decoration and elements of Egyptian royal furniture decoration and iconography?

I would suggest that the reason for this hybrid style decoration is that that the throne was intended to reference the types of courtly sitting furniture used in Egypt and also in the Levant. The carving of chair legs to resemble lion legs is a characteristic of Egyptian furniture forms (Aruz 2008, 86). This contrasts with the plain chair legs (if legs are depicted at all!) seen in depictions of Anatolian chairs or thrones seen in Anatolian, Levantine, and Mesopotamian MBA glyptic sources from Acemhöyük and Kultepe Kanesh (Lassen 2014; Özgüç 1965; 1980, Figs. III24-III55). The exception is the depiction of an important figure sitting on a high backed chair with a sloping back and legs that terminate in some kind of foot feature found on an ivory box from Acemhöyük. There is no detail to inform us more on the decoration of the chair, but is very different from the furniture on glyptic sources. This could indicate that other sitting furniture types were in use, however, it still is not of the same type as the Egyptian lion leg chair. The use of the lion leg chair then would be a marked difference from Anatolian furniture types, marking it distinctly foreign and associated with Egyptian furniture forms.

The use of Egyptian royal iconography, furniture forms, decoration, and compositional elements (such as the symmetry of the lion headed figures facing each other, similar to the mirrored images of deities on Egyptian thrones (Fig. 5.10) also points to a deliberate and selective referring to Egyptian courtly sitting practices. As is the case in the Ebla furniture, I believe this is part of a wider pattern of courtly behavioural transmissions regarding sitting techniques and etiquettes in the Anatolian and Levantine courts. In both regions, courts seem to have found the Egyptian courtly etiquettes and practices for sitting particularly desirable and appealing to emulate. This desire to emulate the behaviour and practices of

the Egyptian court lead to the subsequent mimicking of Egyptian types of furniture and their decorative themes, particular associating with the Egyptian king and royal thrones.

However, this was accomplished not through the exact replication of Egyptian furniture forms and decoration, but through the selective employment of a hybrid style combing both Egyptian and Anatolian iconographies. While elements such as the sphinxes clearly referenced Egypt through the use of Hathoric curls and the *uraeus*, images of similar style sphinxes without these features can be found in the Anatolian seals found in the Sarikaya Palace at Acemhöyük (Gilibert 2011; Özgüç 1980, 73-77. This can also be seen in the use of composite mythological animals such as falcon headed figures and griffins in the sealings. In this manner, some of these elements that do have Egyptian royal references have already established roles in Anatolian iconographies of power. This overlap symbols and images was probably deliberate, allowing these emulations and references to Egypt to be translated and read in a visual vocabulary that could still be understood by members of the Anatolian court. This is paralleled at Ebla, where we saw that use of Egyptian royal iconography alongside Levantine royal iconography, creating accessible and acceptable visual and gestural references to the Egyptian court, but maintaining a distinct Levantine court identity as well. In this manner, the transmission and use of Egyptian royal furniture features and iconographic elements at Acemhöyük facilitated an affiliation with the courtly sitting practices and behaviours of the Egyptian court, while still maintaining a distinct Anatolian courtly identity.

5.1.3 KERMA: THE COURT OF BEDS

The main furniture forms of the Kerma Culture are the elegant beds often found in Kerma burials (Figs. 5.32-5.33). These beds have become so iconic, that Kerma burials are typically characterized and distinguished by having them, with the body of the deceased placed on top in a perceived eternal sleep. However, the distribution of beds in the Kerma cemeteries at Mirgissa, Sai, Ukma West and Kerma suggest that some of these assumptions are misleading and have overlooked interesting distributions of furniture usage in the Middle and Classic Kerma burials. In addition the form and design of the beds, which have not received a great deal of attention, reveal intriguing changes in the relationships between the human body and furniture, as well as transmissions of behaviour and etiquette between courts in Egypt and Kerma.

An examination of the bed distribution shown in Tables 7-17 demonstrates that there is a difference in bed types used between the Middle and Classic Kerma phases. Middle Kerma graves, characterized by their circular grave shape, use bedframes which are placed directly on the ground as seen in Sai Cemetery SKC1 and some graves at Ukma West. The bedframes are simple wooden frames with either woven plant fibre or leather thong mattresses. They are rarely elevated and even in these cases legs are so small as to offer no height whatsoever (Cemetery SKC6 at Sai has a number of beds with tiny legs) (Table 11). In many ways this appears to be a development from the practice originating in Ancient Kerma burials of placing a leather floor covering on which the body of the deceased is placed, highlighting the importance of separating the body from direct contact with the earthen floor where possible. The bedframes therefore can be seen as an elaboration of this continuing practice, particularly in light that leather shrouds are also used in conjunction with the bedframes. In this light the Middle Kerma bedframes appear to be associated with traditional conceptions of floor sitting but also the separation of the human body from the floor.

In the Classic Kerma we begin to see the emergence of elevated beds with legs that are often carved to resemble bull limbs (Fig. 5.34), with a slight slant in the frame, and a footboard at the lower end of the bed. These bed forms appear suddenly in Classic Kerma burials, part of the reason why they are seen as such a characteristic of Classic Kerma mortuary practice (Bonnet 2004a, 76). However an examination of instances of these beds In Classic Kerma burials at cemeteries at Sai, Ukma West, Mirgissa and Kerma, actually revealed the opposite; that they appear to have a much more deliberate and restricted distribution. At Ukma West out of a total of 228 graves only 40 had beds or bedframes, and out of these only 12 could be identified as being elevated, with only 5 having legs carved in the form of bull limbs (Table 7). Similarly at Mirgissa (Table 8), 10 out of 17 graves had remains of beds or bedframes with only one example of an elevated bed, which had plain square legs rather than carved bulls legs. At Sai cemetery SKC2 (Table 10) 21 out of 44 graves had a bed with legs and out of these only 8 had carved bull limb legs. In contrast to all of these is the Middle/Classic cemetery at Ad-Widay I where no beds were found in any of the Middle Kerma graves and only a few quite small and surely purely funerary examples were found (Emberling and Williams 2010, 25-26). In contrast to all of these sites, Kerma had a very high number of beds, but these were almost entirely found within the royal tumuli of the eastern cemetery (Tables 14-17). We can therefore see that elevated bed burials, particularly those with carved bulls legs, have a much more restricted usage outside

of the Kerma royal tumuli, which are not reflective of typical or characteristic Classic Kerma burial practice.

Why then the introduction of these specific types of elevated beds in the Classic Kerma from what appears to be a very long-standing tradition of bedframes and leather shrouds which were placed directly on the floor in the Ancient and Middle Kerma phases? The crux point is this change in elevation. This, I would suggest, is due to the changing relationship between floor sitting and sitting techniques on elevated furniture. The use of leather shrouds and bedframes in burials, which were placed directly on the ground, point to the use of these objects to separate the human body from the floor. While being part of a distinct mortuary practice, these same objects would likely have been used in life to separate the human body from the floor, providing the same flat surface that enabled floor sitting, reclining and lying down. The lack of any other furniture forms during the Ancient and Middle Kerma phases also points to these types of floor sitting surfaces and furniture as being used in life.

The introduction of the elevated bed therefore marks a distinct change in behaviour in regards to sitting practices and furniture usage. The elevation of the Classic Kerma beds, which can vary in size and height, typically fall between 30-50cm, a height that would allow the usage of a 90 degree sitting posture based on Cranz's (2000, 155) statement of 45cm being the average height for a piece of 90 degree sitting furniture. The elevated bed therefore offers the opportunity to use a very different body technique of sitting, using a 90 degree posture rather than floor sitting or squatting, while also providing a multi-use piece of furniture that could be used for reclining, lying or even floor sitting techniques if desired. In this light we can view beds not only as places for sleeping but also for sitting. This is apparent from observations in modern Sudan where beds are often used as sitting furniture and can be the focus of social space. For example, while waiting out in the sun one afternoon visiting Kerma our team was offered not only chairs to sit on but beds as well. This offers an interesting modern example of how beds can have multiple functions as a place for sitting as well as sleeping. That beds were similarly used as sitting furniture, using a 90 degree technique, in the Kerma Culture is further suggested by the finding in three graves in tumuli KIII and KX at Kerma (K1050, K323, K1077), of footstools which were found placed alongside the beds, indicating a functional association (Fig. 5.35) (Reisner 1923, 228). We could also note the almost complete lack of other furniture forms in Kerma material culture, with the exception of a few examples of possibly imported Egyptian stools in a few of the royal tumuli (Fig. 5.37). I would therefore suggest that based on the apparent importance of

separating the human body from contact with the floor, the dominance of beds in Kerman furniture, and the association of footstools with beds in some contexts, that beds in the Kerma culture had multiple functions as both sitting and sleeping furniture.

What stimulated this change in sitting technique from floor to 90 degree postures? A clear answer can be found in the clear Egyptian influences in the furniture designs in Classic Kerma. Comparing an Egyptian bed to a Classic Kerman bed (Fig. 5.36) clearly shows the same design elements; the slanting frame, the footboard, and the carving of furniture legs to resemble animal limbs. The bed design we have in Classic Kerma is therefore an adoption of Egyptian bed design, a fact which seems unusual considering that this bed design has been used in Egypt since the Predynastic. This adoption is clearly a deliberate decision, rather than passive diffusion, involving a change in behaviour. In addition, we should note the possibly Egyptian style stool found in one of the subsidiary burials in Tumulus K at Kerma, which suggest further furniture and sitting techniques adoptions from Egypt. These stools are interesting as they are lower than the beds, appearing to be between 23-27cm high (Fig. 5.37), leading to a different sitting technique, with the legs pulled in closer to the chest. These suggest different levels of sitting at the Kerma court, using a conjunction of different furniture types with different sitting postures, behaviours which were also found in contemporary Egypt. As a last point I would also like to refer back to the examination of the Classic Kerma Palace, where we saw the sudden incorporation of benches and throne daises. Together, this evidence provides a very clear instance of gestural and behavioural transference.

These distinctly Egyptian influences suggest a transmission of Egyptian sitting techniques, furniture designs, and etiquette to Kerma from Egypt. That these specific furniture forms, with slanted frames, footboards, and animal legs come from mostly wealthy elite burials at Sai, Ukma West and within the royal tumuli at Kerma, and are notably sparse at Mirgissa and Ad-Widay I, points to their usage in a distinctly upper elite and courtly sphere. Indeed there appears to be further delineation of social status expressed in the use of additional materials and artistic themes in the decoration of the beds. Ivory inlaid footboards featuring geometric and floral patterns, African fauna and Egyptian Taweret figures feature on a number of beds in the royal tumuli at Kerma (Figs. 5.38-5.39) while a few examples even boasted gold and bronze inlays or overlay. These elements are distinctly lacking in any of the other Kerma sites, with only a few examples of ivory inlaid footboards at Sai, which used simple geometric and floral patterns. While looting might be responsible for this distribution

pattern, the fact that not even small inlay fragments have been found at other cemeteries suggests that these types of prestigious beds were afforded to only those of the highest status amongst the royal court at Kerma.

5.2 COSMETIC APPLICATION

The term cosmetics encompass a wide range of oils, perfumes, ointments and unguents. All of these materials were highly prized in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean and were integral parts in the comportment of the upper tiers of society, particularly those of the court. They also played important roles in temple ritual throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, where they were used to anoint cult statues and burned to create sacred aromas (Manniche 1999, 45; Fappas 2011). They had important divine qualities and were incorporated into concepts of cleansing and purity (Fappas 2011). These sacred and courtly aspects meant that such substances were of particularly high status and expensive (Meskell 2001, 153), along with associated material culture such as stone vessels, ceramic finewares, and application objects. These objects and their precious contents were found in the greatest quantities in royal and upper elite contexts such as palaces and courtly burials. The quantities of such materials in courtly contexts indicates that they were integral to the construction of a court identity, highlighting that the modification and construction of the aesthetic and sensory aspects of the human body were powerful ways of expressing inclusion and social differentiation in court societies. In addition, the actual methods and techniques for applying these substances to the human body could be highly ritualised and ceremonial, involving the construction of specific types of etiquettes and taboos around the touching of human bodies Mauss (1935, 472) noted in his discussion of body techniques relating to the care of the human body, that the act of washing was a learned technique that varied from culture to culture. The following examples highlight instances where I believe some etiquettes and possibly taboos concerning touching and the application of cosmetics to human bodies have been transmitted between different courts, first looking at anointing rituals in the Levant and then the application of eye and skin cosmetics at Kerma.

5.2.1 EGYPTIAN ANOINTING OILS IN THE LEVANT

Stone vessels found in the Northern Levant follow a number of different forms that show origins and influences across the Eastern Mediterranean. They present a complex and intricate set of practices and a difficult corpus of vessels to work with. In addition, they

exhibit a less select use of vessels that were used specifically for a single type of substance, making the tracing of techniques of personal beautification difficult to ascertain.

The stone vessel assemblages from the Royal Hypogeum at Ebla (Figs. 5.40-5.43) and the Alalakh Level VII palace comprise mostly of travertine alabastra (both drop shaped and baggy). Other forms including carinated bowls, globular flasks, a travertine footed jar with a lid (Fig. 5.41) (Table 3) and a grey steatite cylindrical cup (Table 5).

The carinated bowls were made of a variety of stones including travertine, red and green steatite, granite, sardonyx, white limestone and breccia (Tables 3, 5). This form is found also in metal, with parallels at Byblos and Kultepe Kanesh, suggesting that they are vessel forms found across different media (Bevan 2007, 112). Their function is unclear, they may have been used to contain ointments or oils, though they could have been used as tableware of some kind. Since their function is unclear I have chosen to look exclusively at the alabastra, as these seemed to be particularly revealing of certain modes of court comportment and ritualized behaviour.

The alabastra are all Egyptian in form and typical of contemporary Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period alabastra found in Egypt, which were found in both courtly and provincial burials (Bevan 2007, 400-402). Within the Levant these travertine alabastra were not restricted to an upper elite and courtly sphere, as evidenced at Tell el-Ajjul where they appear in significant numbers in both cemeteries and settlement contexts (Bevan 2007, 105). In addition some of their shapes are also copied and adapted in local stone vessel traditions, particularly gypsum at inland sites like Jericho (Sparks 1996, 52; Bevan 2007, 108-109). However, these types of Egyptian and Egyptianising vessels show distinct differences in distribution between the northern and southern Levant, with the largest concentrations being in the southern Levant at sites such as Tell el-Ajjul, Megiddo, Hazor, Kamid el-Loz, Lachish and Gezer (Sparks 1996, 65) while smaller numbers appear in the north. Taking these distributions patterns into account points to the Ebla and Alalakh alabastra as being more significant and part of a distinctly courtly and royal usage given their context within royal burials and palaces.

Drop shaped and baggy alabastra are used in Egypt as multipurpose oil containers (Bevan 2003, 68). As no lipid analyses has been done on the vessels from Ebla and Alalakh we cannot identify the contents of these vessels, but given their primary use for transporting and containing oils, perfumes and unguents we can safely assume that this is what they contained. Oils were vital parts of court and temple rituals in the Near East, being regarded

as a cleanser and purifier (Fappas 2011, 497). The anointing the head of an individual was even considered a purifying act that erased misdeeds. Acts of cleansing through anointing were also essential when entering liminal states such as sacred spaces and rites of passage (Fappas 2011, 498). The LBA Amarna and Hattusha archives make specific mention of the way that anointing rituals within court contexts involved prescribed etiquettes involving the way in which individuals, but particularly members or royal families, were touched. Indeed many of the texts seem to mention such rituals avoiding physical touching of royal bodies, instead pouring oil directly onto the head. An example can be seen in the Amarna Archives when an Egyptian diplomat is instructed to anoint the head of a princess of Arzawa;

> Behold I have sent you Iršappa, my messenger (with the instruction): 'Let us see the daughter who they will offer to my majesty in marriage' And he will pour oil on her head. EA 31 (Moran 1992, 101)

Indeed, from many of the letters mentioning anointing rituals there seems to be a deliberate mentioning of pouring oil on women, hinting at particular taboos in touching female bodies during these ritual actions. This might also explain potential associations between the type of globular flasks found in the Ebla royal burials (Fig. 5.42) (Table 3) and women. These flasks have been suggested to be associated with women, female deities and fertility through the act of pouring, as evidenced by a statue of the water goddess from the Mari palace holding a globular flask which was perforated so liquid could be poured into the back of the statue and flow out of the vessel (Bevan 2007, 112). This taboo of touching royal woman contrasts somewhat with male anointing rituals which may have been less restrictive in the use of physical touching, judging by the way the word anointed is used rather than pour. This may suggest that kings and male members of the royal family may have had oils applied directly to the body in anointing rituals, by either other royal or non-royal individuals.

These anointing rituals were usually performed within specific social and ritual contexts within palaces or temples such as weddings and coronations. As seen in the example above the pouring of oil on royal brides was an important part in the marriage process. Coronations also appear to have involved very important anointing rituals which was perceived as being an essential part of providing legitimacy, as seen by a number of references in the Hattusha archives of kings being anointed with oil on their coronation (Fappa 2011, 501). So important was this coronation anointing ritual that it could become a point of contention between kings if proper expected procedures and etiquettes were not adhered to, as in one example from the Hittite king to the king of Assyria;

…Still, it is customary that kings assume [kingship], and the kings, his peers, send him the proper [pre]sents (on that occasion, a royal gown, fine (oil) for anointing. But you did not do such a thing today' KBo 1.14 (Fappa 2011.501)

We can therefore see that acts of anointing within court contexts in the Levant and Egypt involved a complicated set of etiquettes involving the physical touching or avoidance of physical contact with royal bodies. The Egyptian alabastra and globular flasks at Ebla and Alalakh are suggestive of the use of such vessels in courtly anointing rituals, particularly given that they would have been of an ideal shape and size for both pouring and applying oil to the fingers. The fact that Egyptian vessel forms are used, rather than local forms or imitations, also seems to indicate that their foreign origins held a special importance. I would suggest that this specific interest in utilising Egyptian oils and oil containers was linked to a desire to specifically emulate and reference Egyptian courtly practices regarding the application of oils. The importance of having oil applied to the body of the Egyptian elite is apparent in some passages of the likely late Middle Kingdom (Tobin 2003,188) text *Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage*;

Verily it is good when shouts of joy are in (men's) mouths, when the lords of the estates stand watching the rejoicing/in their houses. Dressed in fine linen, their foreheads anointed, and secure for the future (Tobin 2003, 207)

In addition in *The Story of Sinuhe*, Sinuhe remarks that in his transformation back into a member of the Egyptian court, he is rubbed with the finest oils (Simpson 2003, 66). These allusions in Middle Kingdom literature to the application of oils indicate that the application and wearing of oil was an important aspect of Egyptian courtly identity, so important that it is seen as inherently wrong when this is not the case (as indicated by the ideal scenario described in *Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage* and the importance of the application of oils in Sinuhe's transformation from an exiled Egyptian in the Levant to a member of the Egyptian court). Therefore, the marked interest in Egyptian oil containers in the Levantine courts is likely the result of a desire to directly emulate the practices of the Egyptian court regarding anointing and application of oils to the skin. In this manner the vessels can be seen to materialise specific modes of Egyptian bodily comportment and etiquettes (and potentially taboos) surrounding the application of oils during court anointing rituals and daily toilette, with their presence at Ebla and Alalakh indicating some transmission in these behaviours and etiquettes.

5.2.2 KERMA: TECHNIQUES FOR SMOKEY EYES

Cosmetic equipment appears to have been a particularly important part of the burial practice of the Kerma Culture. Many graves, both poor and wealthy, throughout the Kerma region feature some type of cosmetic equipment such as palettes, mirrors, razors, metal toilet utensils such as tweezers and stone vessels which must have contained cosmetic substances such as perfumes, oils, and ointments. While such equipment does appear in graves across social classes they are most frequently found within the graves of the upper elite and royal court. While this is unsurprising there are also indications that there were specific forms of court comportment which were navigated through ways of applying specific substances to the body using specialized material culture and gestures.

On examining the distribution of cosmetic vessels from the Kerma cemeteries at Sai, Ukma West, Mirgissa, and Kerma it became apparent that they did not appear frequently in any of the cemeteries. For example only three stone vessels were found at the cemetery at Ukma West (Vila 1987, 221) (Table 7) while two burials at Mirgissa contained stone vessels (KT2 had 7 vessels, an unusual quantity) (Table 8). This I suspect is probably partially due to looting, with stone vessels being easily removed from burials. It could also be they are appearing in domestic contexts rather than in burial practice, which at the moment is difficult to ascertain given the lack of excavated Kerma settlements. However, what was also apparent was that the cosmetic vessels which were appearing were in upper elite and courtly burials, especially within the royal tumuli at Kerma. Further, these vessels were of a very particular type, being almost entirely travertine Egyptian forms. Two types dominate; kohl pots and drop shaped alabastra (Figs 5.43, 5.45). Other shapes and types do appear such as concave sided cylindrical jars and a group of antique Egyptian vessel fragments bearing the names of Old Kingdom kings, which were found by Reisner in the Eastern Deffufa (Lacovara 1991, 118). This deliberate selection of cosmetic vessel forms seems to indicate the adoption of specific modes of bodily adornment and techniques of applying cosmetics.

Of the two stone vessel groups the kohl pots, comprising of small piriform jars (Sparks 2007, 53) and a few shouldered cylindrical vases, are by far the most common. The largest group come from the subsidiary and main burials of the royal tumuli at Kerma (Tables 14-17), but appear in isolated graves at Ukma (T.56, T.226) and Mirgissa (KT2). Strangely no examples were found at Sai, though the Kerma cemeteries are heavily looted. Kohl pots were used to contain kohl, a black eye cosmetic, which was used for personal beautification and as a medicinal for combating Nilotic eye diseases in Egypt. Its application was considered a very

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important marker of Egyptian identity and body adornment (Sparks 2003, 50) and during the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period they are one of the most common stone vessel forms in burials and domestic contexts in Egypt (Sparks 2007, 53). Many of the pots from the royal tumuli still contained traces of kohl within them (Figs. 5.43-5.44), highlighting that these vessels were being used for their intended Egyptian function rather than arriving as empty vessels or used to contain other substances. In addition they were often found with a kohl stick, an implement made of wood, stone or ivory with a bulbous end, which was used for applying kohl to the skin around the eyes (Figs. 5.44). The finding of kohl, kohl sticks with these specific vessel forms clearly demonstrates that Kermans were using these eye cosmetics for personal beautification.

The drop shaped alabastra are more limited in numbers within the Kerma cemeteries but once again do seem to concentrate in the royal tumuli (Fig. 5.45), with only one miniature vessel found at Ukma. These alabastra forms are commonly found in Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period burials and domestic contexts in Egypt (Sparks 2007, 25) and were used as multipurpose oil containers (Bevan 2003, 68). As far as I am aware no chemical analyses has been done on any of these vessels in order to discern what they were filled with. Reisner (1923, 57) reported that one of the vessels contained a greasy black liquid, which strengthens an identification of them containing oils. Given that these alabastra were used to contain a variety of different oils in Egypt it is impossible for a specific identification to be made without lipid analysis. An additional note should be made on a few of the alabastra and a globular vase which were found in K325 and K334 which had Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions marking them as funerary goods. These vessels might be the result of tomb robbing in Upper Egypt (Davies 2003) and as such they might not have contained their original contents, being either looted by Kermans or received as a diplomatic gift.

The context of these alabastra and kohl pots within royal and court burials at Kerma points to the use of Egyptian oils and eye cosmetics in personal beautification amongst the court and royal family. These may be direct adoptions of Egyptian practices or adaptions/modifications of existing practices of personal adornment. That the Kerman's had their own set of cosmetic practices is obvious from the common provisioning of simple cosmetic palettes which often had traces of cosmetics, most often red ochre, which was used extensively in funerary practice in decorating the body of the deceased. Given lumps of red ochre were often found in burials seems to suggest that this was a common body cosmetic that may have been used in body painting. The use therefore of Egyptian cosmetics

such as kohl and oils would have been an expansion of existing practices, but also a distinctly different form of bodily comportment and beautification. The specific uses for kohl as an eye cosmetic with application using a specialized kohl stick point to an active adoption of Egyptian practices, which include the techniques of application. We can therefore see that the Kerman elite were not only adopting Egyptian cosmetics but were also adopting the specialized techniques and gestures involved in applying these cosmetics. These methods of application may not have been drastically different from previous techniques such as using the fingers or perhaps simple sticks, but appear important enough that the Kerman court wished to visually display such techniques in mortuary practice. Indeed the use and display of such a specific Egyptian tool point very strongly to the Kerman court using this Egyptian application technique, along with the visible end result, as a way of marking their own form of courtly identity and social differentiation.

5.3 DRINKING TECHNIQUES

Drinking is such an essential act to life that many would probably not think much of the myriad different ways in which we accomplish this, and that these techniques are deeply connected to social life (Vargas 2001, 17). In most instances most probably only realise this when they are confronted with a situation in which these techniques deviate from our perceived norm, when we must confront the alien and foreign. This variety of different practices and techniques become particularly apparent when we consider how drinking facilitates numerous ways of expressing hierarchy and status (de Garine 2001, 6), through the construction of different types of etiquettes, such as who is included and excluded from drinking, the order and timing of drinking, acts of toasting, acts of communal drinking and sharing, quantities and types of beverages consumed, and the use of different types of vessels. I explore some of these ideas through an examination of the Tôd Treasure in Egypt, looking at its relationship to Aegean and Anatolian drinking practices, and determine if some of these practices were being transmitted to the Egyptian court.

5.3.1 THE TÔD TREASURE: HOW TO HANDLE YOUR DRINK
The silver vessels found in four copper caskets from under the Temple of Montu at El-Tôd, located 20km south of Luxor, have been much discussed in terms of their origin of manufacture, dating, and time of deposition. The copper caskets, inscribed with the name of Amenemhat II of the 12th Dynasty, contained a trove of precious stones, metals and exotica

originating from around the eastern Mediterranean (Bisson de la Roque et al. 1953), including unworked lapis lazuli, Mesopotamian and Levantine cylinder seals (Fig. 5.46) (Porada 1982). The silver vessels formed the majority of the deposit, with a total of 153 vessels (Table 18).

The vessels were immediately noted for their foreign style decoration and shapes, which had no parallels in the Egyptian Middle kingdom ceramic repertoire. Similarities in shape and decoration to Middle Minoan vessels found on Crete were particularly noted (Bisson de la Roque et al. 1953, 21-35). This similarity lead to many attempts to date the vessels using Aegean chronology, with the majority of dates falling into the Middle Minoan phase (Hutchinson 1962, 105, 196; Kantor 1965, 11), and various suggestions on their origin as Cretan objects (Branigan 1970, 187; Hood 1961–1962, 94; Warren 1980, 496; Warren and Hankey 1989, 131– 135). However, others suggested origins in Anatolia and northern Levant (Maxwell-Hyslop 1995). This has been supported by some analysis of many silver objects (Sayre et al. 1992) from Syria, Mesopotamia, and Anatolia, which could be traced to specific ore fields in the Taurus mountains. In addition, there are similarities between the Tôd hoard and the small corpus of surviving EBA and MBA Anatolian metal vessels (Maxwell-Hyslop 1995; McCullough 2014, 428-429). The one spool handled vessel found in the hoard has close parallels to some metal vessels from Troy and Kultepe Kanesh (Ozgüç 1986, pl. 124, 16, 17). The larger corpus of semi-globular vessels with gadroons and fluting with vessels in the hoard are also very similar to vessels from Alcahöyük (Maxwell-Hyslop 1995, 246).

The fact that the Tôd vessels have close parallels to both high status and courtly ceramic and metal vessels from MBA Aegean and Anatolian sites, and that an origin in either can be argued, makes attempting to pinpoint their origin rather counterproductive. As McCullough (2014, 427-428) has pointed out, a variety of different origins, modelling, and emulation patterns are possible involving ceramic and metal vessels from both areas. Instead, if we accept that these are likely hybrid Aegean/Anatolian courtly vessels, related to a larger corpus of similar or hybrid vessel shapes and materials in the region, we can then leave this question of their exact origin behind and concentrate on the far more interesting question on the reason these vessels appear in a royal votive deposit dating to the Middle Kingdom (The suggestion by Kemp and Merrillees (1980, 290-296) of a later date in the LBA for the hoard deposition is unlikely given the distinctly MBA character of the objects and inscriptions and the analysis of the find context (Maxwell-Hyslop 1995, 243; Porada 1982; Quenet et al 2013). This I believe can be found in exploring the function and the manner in

which these vessels were used, particular in regards to the handled cups and their relationship to the human body.

In order to do this, a quick overview of the vessel typology is needed. The hoard can largely be divided into three main categories; bowls, cups and handled cups. The majority of the 153 vessels comprise of hemispherical bowls and cups, exhibiting a variety of different sizes and decorative patterns, including vertical, spiralling and meandering gadroons, beaded rims, spiral and ring decorations on the bases, and smooth undecorated sides (Fig. 5.48-5.49).

The third, smaller, group comprises of handled cups of varying sizes (Figure 5.50). Three types of handle are found. The first is a ribbon handle, which comes in both a single and double variety. The second is a double loop handle, featuring large handles that rise above the rim of the vessel. Two unique vessels in the hoard have different handles. An ovoid cup with inward sloping walls about one third of the way up and a flat base which also features a cylindrical spool handle (Fig 5.51). The handle is attached at the rim and near the base by rivets with a hollow cylindrical central element which is attached by a further two rivets. The cup features no decoration but has a smooth and polished finish. The second vessel is of a test tube shape and features a ribbon handle. It is unknown what the function of this vessel could be.

The vessels therefore exhibit some variation in shapes, handles and decorative patterns. Slight variations in treatment and execution suggest that they were probably a collection rather than a crafted set (Maxwell-Hyslop 1995, 243; Pierrat-Bonnefois 2008, 65), though their collection and similarity of forms does suggest they were collated as a set. They are all clearly open vessels or a similar type, not intended for storage, but for serving and drinking. The vessels are extremely thin, and, as such, their functional use is questionable. Anything actually served in them would have had to be in very small quantities and handled with great care. However, they are clearly meant to reference, in all features, functional vessels, given their shapes and decoration. Pierrat-Bonnefois (2008, 65- 66) has commented that their execution is rather coarse, and that perhaps they were never intended as functional vessels but valued for material, and were essential, glorified ingots. This might be supported by the presence of silver ingots and chains in the hoard, suggesting that they key aspect here was that they were made of silver rather than being vessels.

A few problems arise from this interpretation. Firstly, this idea is at odds with the effort made in their manufacture and decoration. If they were simply needed for the material it

would seem much more likely they would have been transported actually as ingots or in raw form. Why then take the time and resources to craft them into vessels featuring decorative patterns? I would argue that the shaping and decoration of the vessels is in itself a sign that they were valued and crafted as either functional or a reference to functional drinking vessels. In regards to the folding of the vessels in the copper casket, this could have been done at any time and it is hard to use this fact as an indication of their functionality. However, the fact that their working was retained, rather than simply being melted down, indicates a recognized value for their shape and identification as vessels. I would therefore interpret this as an indication of the deliberate retention of the original vessel forms, highlighting the need to consider the functional aspects (actual or in reference) of the vessels in the hoard.

The different shapes and handles types of all the vessels in the hoard indicate that the vessels were held and drunk from in different ways. The most common form, the handless bowls or cups could have been held in the palm of the hand or both hands cupped. The single handled cups allowed the handle to be grasped, perhaps with another hand to support the vessel. The doubled handled vessels would have allowed the cup to be held by handles with one or two hands. In this manner, the presence (or lack) of handles on these vessels result in three basic techniques for drinking.

These different techniques facilitated visibly different ways of drinking from the vessels, particularly if we consider the corpus as a single collection, as a kind of banquet set. If the vessels were used together, the assignment of cups would determine the type of technique used by different participants, facilitating different types of gestures that could be used to express social position through drinking etiquettes. The two handled cups in particular are very interesting for their interactive and adaptable qualities. Two handles allow the vessel to be comfortably and easily held between two people, allowing the vessel to be raised in communal toasting actions or passed around to the larger group. This contrasts with the individual nature of the other cups, whose form would be better suited being used by a single person.

To this end, the assignment of vessels could determine the drinking technique of an individual and the possible level of interaction they were capable of with others during commensal activities. Being given a double-handed cup would allow the user to express solidarity, inclusion and status through sharing their cup with others, while not sharing allowed selective exclusion. The possible techniques and etiquettes surrounding the use of

these vessel as a set suggest that there was a hierarchical prestige assigned to the cups, with the cups without handles being the lowest status, then single handed cups, and finally double-handed cups. This reconstruction is further supported by the quantity and distribution of handled cups within the hoard, with the small number of handled vessels compared to the simple cups and bowls.

The vessels therefore have a enormous value as either functional or references to functional metal drinking vessels, due to the different types of drinking techniques and etiquettes they facilitated. The employment of sets of vessels at court banquets would allow these different gestures and etiquettes to be performed, allowing the expression and negotiation of court hierarchy. This performance of behaviour would have been even more marked in the Middle Kingdom courts in Egypt due to the foreign nature of the vessels and their lack of parallels with contemporary Egyptian vessel shapes. Their perception as foreign objects is certainly highlighted by their grouping with other foreign objects such as the Aegean, Levantine, and Mesopotamian seals. Even the context of the votive deposit alludes to conceptions of the world outside Egypt, as they were deposited at a temple of Montu, a deity associated with foreign lands (Pierrat-Bonnefois 2008, 66). Therefore, the use of such a set, particularly the handled cups, and its inherent drinking techniques would have been recognized as distinctly foreign by the Egyptian court.

The idea of these vessels indicating the transmission of Aegean and Anatolian courtly drinking practices is further supported by the finding of similar ceramic shapes (carinated cups and bridge spouted jars) of Middle Minoan Kamares ware in Egypt and the Levant during the MBA (Fig. 5.52) (Merrillees 2003). On Crete these vessels were high status objects associated with the Protopalatial palatial buildings and courts, particularly those at Knossos and Phaistos (Day and Wilson 1998), though they may have also had a wider distribution across society (Walberg 2001). Steel (2013, 109-111) has argued that the Kamares Ware found at Knossos was the result of high level gift exchange, with the ware being used in ceremonial feasting. They therefore have an association in the Aegean with the palatial buildings and the commensal events that took place in them. The presence of these courtly drinking vessels in Egypt and the Levant, in conjunction with the similar Aegean/Anatolian hybrid metal vessels, indicates a specific interest in the court drinking practices from this region. At Mari we certainly have a courtly interest in the Cretan silver vessels, which are specifically mention being procured from Cretans on the Levantine coast, and the Kamares

ware fragments found in this region often come from high status burials at important palatial sites, such as Qatna, Hazor, Byblos, Ugarit and even on Cyprus.

However, the contexts of the Kamares ware in Egypt are in 'middle class' burials rather than court contexts (Kemp and Merrillees 1980). The reason for this is unclear, but perhaps the ceramic Kamares ware vessels offered a perceived lower status and more available parallel to the metal Tôd vessels, entering into circulation from trade, low level gift exchange, or perhaps through redistribution from courtly contexts. Communal feasting and banqueting events such as festivals, where there might have been a more relaxed intermixing between the court and lower elite, would certainly have offered appropriate contexts in which the use of these foreign drinking practices and objects could be performed. Interestingly some of these fragments, and some imitation wares, were found at Lahun, where both members of the court and lower status individuals lived in close proximity to one another. This might have facilitated some percolation and subsequent interest in these foreign vessels and behaviours into lower elite contexts at the site.

However, while this Egyptian and Levantine interest in Aegean and Anatolian drinking practices seems clearly suggested by the Tôd vessels and Kamares ware, the small quantities and short time span of these objects appearance in Egypt and the Levant indicates that they were a short-term transmission. Merrillees (2003 138) has noted that the time of deposition of these sherds and vessels, compared to their appearance and use in the Aegean, indicates they had a short lifespan, and were not heirlooms or curated objects. There is also little indication of mass emulation of the Kamares ware in the ceramic record, with only a few examples of locally made imitations being found (Fig. 5.53) (Kemp & Merrillees 1980, 70). In this manner, the larger picture indicates that the Egyptian court and lower levels of the elite experimented with the use of Aegean and Anatolian drinking vessels, techniques, and etiquettes, but that this was a short lived phase that did not result in permanent transmissions of behaviour and practices.

5.4 Concluding Comments

The examination of these case studies of the transmission of techniques and etiquettes regarding sitting, cosmetic application, and drinking between different eastern Mediterranean courts has highlighted a number of aspects to consider. Firstly it is apparent that there are a variety of different degrees of transmission. Cases where objects of completely foreign origin were being used, such as the Egyptian kohl pots and application

sticks at Kerma, Egyptian oil containers at Kerma, Ebla and Alalakh, and the Aegean and Anatolian metal drinking vessels in Egypt, seem to indicate that a completely new and distinct body technique and etiquette was being introduced. In these cases the appearance of the objects and techniques mark a potential distinct change in behaviour with clear foreign origins.

In the other cases, objects feature a hybridity of foreign and local forms, decoration or modified use. This was apparent in the hybrid Egyptian furniture found at Kerma, Acemhöyük, and Ebla, which referenced Egyptian furniture forms, decoration, and sitting techniques but modified them by incorporating distinctly local design choices, such as indigenous court iconography and preferred sitting practices and furniture forms. Kerma, in particular, exhibited very distinct preferences, changing their way of sitting to follow that of the Egyptian courts, but modifying these practices through changing the configuration and types of furniture used, in this case beds instead of chairs, and using a distinctly local type of iconography with little allusion to Egypt. In contrast, the courts at Acemhöyük and Ebla decided to also use the same type of high backed chair (with lion legged feet in the case of Acemhöyük) and elements of Egyptian royal iconography intermixed with local symbols of power. The end result demonstrated apparent adoptions and emulations of Egyptian courtly practices of sitting but each in uniquely different ways that suited the goals and preferences of other eastern Mediterranean courts.

All of the examples discussed have highlighted that courts understood the relationships between the human body, behaviour and material objects and that they manipulated these to express, maintain, and renegotiate the social hierarchy and identity of the court. In some cases these transmissions were relatively sudden or short lived, such as in the use of the Tôd Treasure in Egypt and the application of kohl at Kerma. In other cases, they were carefully manipulated, particularly regarding the ways material culture and behaviour was modified and hybridised in order to be more translatable and acceptable to their audiences. In these cases, such as the adoption of Egyptian sitting etiquettes in Anatolia, the Levant, and Kerma there was an active desire to incorporate new, foreign, and exciting ways of behaving, along with their associated material culture, but they were carefully adapted to fit and modify existing forms of behaviour. This tactic probably helped to reduce any unforeseen disruptions such new behaviours might have on the social hierarchy of the court, by directly associating them with existing forms of behaviour and expressions of power. In this manner, the types of transmission seen in these examples must be seen as deliberate and carefully

thought decisions made by courts. In some cases, these strategies did not result in lasting changes, highlighting that while carefully considered, they were also experimental, and subject to change.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this thesis I have demonstrated that forms of courtly behaviour, previously treated as too ephemeral to be examined, can be reconstructed from the archaeological record. In particular, a wealth of information on this subject can be ascertained through examining the embodied relationships between the human beings, material culture, and architecture. Through this theoretical model it has been possible to illustrate the important role that forms of ritualised and codified behaviour, etiquette, played in the court societies of the MBA eastern Mediterranean. These etiquettes facilitated the expression of courtly identities, status, and provided a method for managing the social hierarchy of courts.

However, this approach also highlighted the significance of foreign types of court architecture and material culture; how their presence could act as material markers of different types of courtly behaviour. In these cases the presence of foreign architectural features and objects was suggested to be an indicator of forms of exchange and transmission of not only objects, but also behaviours between different court societies.

The comparative examination of palatial buildings and royal/elite residences demonstrated that the courts of the MBA eastern Mediterranean shared a number of conceptions on how to construct social arenas and employ spatial etiquettes. Utilising a number of architectural features such as columns, courtyards, throne rooms, upper floors, windows, balconies/galleries, staircases, and wall paintings courts were able to construct ceremonial routes and reception spaces that were highly adaptable in the potential configurations and manipulations of the gestures, movements and behaviour of courtiers. In a number of cases, comparisons between these buildings on an intra and inter-regional level revealed that differences between the arrangement and sequence of rooms and employment of features often indicated regional differences and foreign influences. For example amongst the Levantine palatial buildings there was both a significant level of similarity, notably in the sequential features of the ceremonial route and arrangement of reception spaces. However, at the same time, there were distinct regional differences, notably in the incorporation and employment of foreign architectural elements such as Aegean and Egyptian wall paintings, Mesopotamian throne rooms, and Anatolian palatial compounds. In these instances the reasons for these variations appeared to be due to concerns in constructing distinct court

identities using novel new forms of behaviour. In other cases, the comparisons revealed shared regional conceptions of structuring space and manipulating behaviour, such as the importance of open upper floor reception spaces that could interact with ground floors in Aegean and Anatolian palatial buildings. In this instance the similarities in structuring court space and manipulating behaviour were so similar that the idea of them simply being convergent design was unlikely. However, this also meant that it was impossible to identify a direction of transmission, leading to the suggestion that instead, there was a shared conception of how court reception space was structured that was the result of interaction between the two regions.

The examination of different types of body techniques revealed that many forms of gesture and body behaviours were being exchanged between the MBA courts alongside these architectural transmissions. These too exhibited a great deal of variety in the degrees of adoption, adaption, and resistance. In some cases these gestures and behaviours were directly adopted with a clear and obvious use of foreign objects, gestures and etiquettes. This resulted in an often distinct and dramatic change or addition in court practices that would have been quite impactful. Courtiers would have to adapt quickly to learn the appropriate gestures and etiquettes surrounding these uses of foreign practices and objects. However, such an adoption also had the potential to be disruptive and even rejected, resulting in a short timespan for the use of such objects and etiquettes, a fact that was exhibited in the short timespan of use of Kamares ware and possibly the Tôd metal drinking vessels in Egypt and the Levant.

In other cases, these objects, gestures, and behaviours were distinctly modified, resulting in hybrid objects and behaviours. This was best shown in the adoption of courtly Egyptian furniture forms and sitting techniques at Kerma and their subsequent modification using different furniture forms, configurations and iconographies. These differences in the nature of receiving and performing types of foreign behaviour suggested there was a desire to adapt these elements into a form that more closely resembled traditional local objects, iconographies of power, and behaviours. In this way the resulting hybridity more efficiently communicated the underlying intention and meaning behind these adoptions and associations with new types of behaviour and objects. This tactic would have helped to facilitate a smoother and more accepted adoption, while at the same time creating unique forms of objects and behaviour that could be used to help reinforce and strengthen local court identities.

The case of Kerma was also interesting and rather unique in illustrating that the transmissions of architecture, objects, and behaviour were not isolated process divorced from one another. In the case of the reorganisation of reception space in the Classic Kerma palace, particular the 'throne room', the adoption of Egyptian palatial architectural and spatial configurations was accompanied by the adoption of Egyptian furniture forms and sitting postures in these spaces. This underlines the intimate interrelationships between architecture, material objects, and gestures and the way that these relationships could be selectively transmitted/adopted together as 'packages' of esoteric knowledge. The Kerma example also clearly and elegantly demonstrates that the mechanics of transmission in these forms of architecture, material culture and etiquette seem to be intimately related if not the same, with a distinct embodied element.

The Kerma example is perhaps unusual in being a context where this instance of multiple related transmissions is so clear in the archaeological record. The often limited range of small finds within palace contexts, particularly in Egypt and the Levant, also limits our ability to so neatly discuss how these objects are being used with court contexts, which is partly the reason why the division between architecture and material culture was necessary in this thesis. Perhaps a way of overcoming this in the future would be to examine architecture and material culture more as 'assemblages' in the Deluvian sense. This might facilitate a better holistic analysis of heterogeneous types of evidence, including material evidence and more abstract concepts such as gesture and language, in the examination of social entitles such as 'court society' and 'diplomacy'.

I'd like to make a note on the limitations of terminology that often came up through out the research process. A particularly problematic term was 'throne' in discussing both architectural layouts and features and also pieces of furniture. There is very much a kind of obsession and fascination with identifying 'throne rooms' in palatial buildings throughout the eastern Mediterranean, which appear to be typically the termination point of primary ceremonial movement routes. In some cases the identification of a 'throne room', however likely the interpretation, was entirely based on the sole factor of being the end of the main route. This term is rather problematic as it assumes a number of elements such as body posture and power structures ('thrones' are usually always seen as seats for individual, usually male, rulers). This interpretation was often hard to avoid in analysing both the architecture of movement routes of palatial buildings but also in discussing sitting furniture (note the discussion of the Acemhöyük furniture as a 'throne'). In some cases I deliberately

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avoided attempting to identify throne rooms, notably regarding the Aegean, because the identification of such features implied a rather forced transplantation of expectations based on other eastern Mediterranean palatial buildings. In these cases I thought it was actually rather interesting and important that we recognise that these features did not seem to exist in a recognised arrangement, highlighting that the nature of reception spaces in the Aegean palatial buildings were different. Another problem was the use of elevated platforms and daises as markers for the locations of 'thrones'. This was a particular issue in discussing the Levantine palatial buildings, which often featured rooms with many platforms and basins. While I stand by my interpretation of these rooms, I also recognise that there is a great deal of ambiguity in what actually was placed on these features, which could include a variety of different elements such as statuary, basins, furniture, standards etc. We therefore need to be careful of the assumed concepts that terms like 'throne' and 'throne room' come bagged with.

Another term which, at times, felt perhaps a little out of place was the term 'etiquette' itself. While I put forward a case for the term 'etiquette' as being the preferable term for the type of behavioural phenomenon I have been discussing, it still has some rather problematic baggage with it. This was particularly noticeable when bringing in elements of cosmology and ritual practice, such as in the placement and movement of 'ancestor' courtier statues at the Tell-Basta palatial building. In these cases the term 'etiquette' felt a little out of place given that it was now incorporating elements of religious and ritual practice that incorporated different socio-cognitive process or aspects. In this regard perhaps a new term needs to be put forward that is less tied with the more courtly aspects of behaviour that a term like 'etiquette' often inherently implies.

6.1 DIPLOMACY: THE MECHANICS OF COURTLY LIFESTYLE TRANSMISSION

So far I have talked about transmissions and adoptions of architecture, objects, gestures and etiquettes without really explaining the mechanism through which these could take place. The types of transmission could feasible fall under two processes which would facilitate these types of cross-cultural exchanges; trade and diplomacy. Trade could certainly be suggested as being responsible for the movement of objects and people between regions, but the deliberate and selective adoption of specific types of courtly and royal etiquettes seems to suggest a more specialised form of exchange relating specifically to the courtly sphere. Traders and merchants seem unlikely candidates to have had a great deal of access

to court spaces along with the knowledge of etiquettes regarding traversing palatial buildings and employing objects in their ceremonial court contexts. They are also unlikely to have training as architects and posses the high degree of technical knowledge in order to transmit architectural forms and the impacts these features have on human behaviour and social contexts. The issue of technical and esoteric knowledge is particularly important given that the incorporation of foreign features into a completely different social and cultural context is a highly significant act, which would have required a great deal of prior planning and knowledge on how this incorporation would impact behaviour. This was very clear in the instances of adoption of foreign palatial features, which were very carefully and deliberately incorporated into existing palatial architecture. In no cases were elements merely randomly inserted. Instead, these features were integrated in the largely the same manner in which they were used in their original contexts albeit with some slight alterations.

In a similar manner, the objects which facilitated different types of body techniques also required a prior understanding of the body behaviours which they enable, in order to correctly use and implement them within their intended social and ceremonial contexts. This also suggests that trade is an unlikely candidate given the esoteric nature of these behaviours relating specifically to the courtly sphere. This also seems to be the case for instances of motif and artistic transfer, particularly those relating to furniture. In these cases the iconography, particularly those of composite mythological creatures (griffins, sphinxes, bull men) and powerful animals that form the components of them (lions, falcons, bulls), belong primarily to royal and courtly iconography. These aspects point to trade as being an unsuitable vehicle for this type sophisticated and detailed exchange of courtly technical and esoteric information. Diplomacy offers are far more appropriate and likely mode of transmission.

In terms of how this type of exchange of architecture, objects, gestures and etiquettes would have actually occurred through diplomacy, I turn again to the social arena of the court. The transmission of the types of courtly esoteric knowledge discussed above necessitates the primary agents of said transmission to be members of the court. Only courtiers would have such intimate knowledge regarding the etiquettes of court life. However, such cross-cultural exchanges required a specific type of courtier, who had the appropriate skills and ability to travel between different courts within the eastern Mediterranean, in other words, a diplomat. I discussed in detail in Chapter 2 how diplomats, as liminal members of the court, spent a great deal of time moving between different courts,

bringing with them letters, gifts, and people, and participating in various court activities. These types of activities and events included diplomatic receptions, political summits and audiences, festivals, feasts and banquets, and weddings, all of which have been well documented in the various Bronze Age diplomatic archives. As such, diplomats must have been well versed in the etiquettes of their home courts, but also in the etiquettes of the various foreign courts they visited and were hosted at. These types of intercultural courtly encounters would have provided ideal opportunities and venues for diplomats to demonstrate their knowledge of these different types of etiquettes. Returning back to my discussion of the benefits of adhering and deviating from established etiquettes, and the nature of diplomats as plenipotentiary agents and liminal members of the court, such events would present diplomats opportunities to express their status and prestige by either performing the expected etiquettes or by deviating and performing foreign etiquettes (potentially from their home courts but also possibly from other foreign courts). These deviations could possibly be disruptive to court events and met with hostility (which may or may not have been beneficial or intentional anyway) or they could be well received and novel. In any case decisions to either conform to prescribed etiquettes or deviate with novel foreign etiquettes would likely work to enhance a diplomats social standing amongst different courts.

Acquiring the knowledge of foreign etiquettes could come through the embodied and performative experience of participating in court events, visual emulation and imitation, and from verbal communication with other courtiers. Actually traversing different palatial buildings and participating in events in palatial reception spaces would allow diplomats to learn how different architectural features can be used to manage social interactions and express hierarchy. Diplomatic gift giving and commensal events would present perfect opportunities for learning and demonstrating different body techniques involved in the use of specific courtly objects such as furniture and drinking vessels. Diplomatic gift giving would be well suited to facilitating transmissions of etiquette, as they involve specific interactions between foreign courtly objects and diplomats, courtiers, and rulers. This would directly allow the demonstration of bodily and behavioural etiquettes before and assembled audience at court. The importance of these gift exchange events for etiquette demonstration and transmission seems to have been widely acknowledged, given that in many cases gifts appear to have been specifically selected for certain types of court events. Gifts of furniture in particular seem to have been an important element to send for events that would have required their actual use, often for weddings and in one case the actual

furnishing of a newly opened palace (Amarna Letters EA5, EA13). This example is particularly interesting as it demonstrates that courts were aware of what types of furniture were required for court spaces, even across cultural boundaries. Similarly, we looked earlier at how oils were expected to be sent to be used in anointing practices in royal coronation ceremonies and weddings, pointing to an awareness and construction of wider courtly gestural vocabularies in the eastern Mediterranean during the Bronze Age.

The instances of motif and iconographic transmission, such as the Egyptian royal iconography and instances of Aegean wall paintings, also point to concepts of shared courtly visual and gestural vocabularies. In these cases the appropriation of certain motifs and images seems to suggest more than mere allusions to the vague 'exotic', but also include specific references to courtly practices, behaviours, and iconographies. The instances of Egyptian royal iconography, specifically on 90 degree sitting furniture at Ebla and Acemhöyük, seemed to directly reference Egyptian royal furniture and sitting practices of the same type. In the case of the Aegean, and in some cases Egyptian, wall paintings in the Levantine palatial buildings, this adoption seemed linked to decorating court reception spaces and movement routes with foreign courtly motifs and figures (in the case of the Egyptian wall paintings, but also relating to the later Aegean LBA wall paintings at Tell el-Dab 'a which included figural scenes). In these cases the incorporation of foreign figures, with different ways of visually presenting the human form, exhibits a potential awareness of foreign etiquettes regarding body techniques and gesture. In this manner the process of transmission is inherently integrative (Wengrow 2014, 95-99), with the elements of artistic and motif transmission acting to aid in the construction of cross cultural identities.

From a technical point of view, instances of motif and architectural transmission would have needed to involve more than just the movement of diplomats, but also technical specialists and craftsmen such as architects and artisans. The idea of itinerant craftsman and exchanged specialists in the eastern Mediterranean is certainly not a new one (Niemeier and Niemeier 1998), particularly in regards to the debates on Aegean craftsman and frescoes in Levantine and Egyptian palatial buildings, where they are often interpreted as being part of diplomatic gift exchange. I would agree that diplomatic exchange of craftsman does seem to be the most likely process for these instances of technological transference and architectural construction and painting (particularly the large scale wall paintings). However, I believe this must have also been accompanied by the more esoteric knowledge of how these courtly architectural and artistic features were used and experienced by courtiers themselves. In

this manner, this type of transmission required the technical skills and knowledge of both craftsman and diplomats.

The concept of cross-cultural courtly gestural vocabularies was one of the most interesting results of my examination. The high degree of blurred distinctions and hybridity between many architectural forms and objects, made the direction of transmission impossible to ascertain. This seems to point to the presence of a similar or shared corpus of bodily behaviours and behavioural practices amongst the different court societies of the eastern Mediterranean. Courts were actively attempting to forge relationships with each other and using these relationships as a sign of status and prestige on both intra and inter-regional levels. The interrelated network of transmissions between the MBA courts certainly demonstrates that diplomacy at this time was largely concerned with finding analogy with other court groups, working to transcend cultural barriers to create supra-regional courtly identities.

The construction of a supra-regional social group composed of various courts immediately brings to mind similar proposed groups in the later LBA, which are wonderfully illustrated in the Amarna and Hattusha archives. In this case we even have similar blurred definitions on what exactly was foreign, such as the 'international koine' decorating courtly diplomatic objects in the later LBA (Feldman 2006). However, my theoretical model of examining behaviour and etiquette lead away from the fruitless attempts of focusing entirely on identifying specific features, objects, and iconographies in terms of their origin but instead was able to pick out how these blurred distinctions were due to the level of behavioural and social interaction between these different social groups. In this manner, the intricate inter-regional interactions and diplomatic relationships examined in this thesis have demonstrated that this phenomenon of intense diplomatic relationships was by no means isolated or characteristic of the LBA, but was part of an already established process of courtly intercultural encounters that had been in place in the MBA, if not possibly earlier, given the case study of Palace G at EBA Ebla.

6.2 CROSSING BOUNDARIES AND CULTURES

The fact that through an examination of material culture we can find traces of the type of inter-regional relationships so clearly seen in terms of the notions of 'brotherhood' in the LBA archives, has immense implications on how we view and go about reconstructing the diplomatic relationships of the Bronze Age as a whole. This thesis has demonstrated that we

cannot rely solely on the presence of textual sources for reconstructing diplomacy, and that the current conceptions of different degrees of inter-regional court interaction according to period need to be completely reconsidered. For instance while the wealth of information from the Mari Archives documents intense interactions between the Levantine and Mesopotamian courts, this has lead to the erroneous assumption that these court societies were mainly concerned with the politics of this region. The examination of palatial architecture and material culture has demonstrated that these courts were interconnected in a vast network of courtly interactions that involved not only Mesopotamia but the Aegean, Anatolia, and Egypt. Indeed the Mari Archive can only be expected to record a small amount of the types of diplomatic relationships and interactions which took place in the MBA.

Also important is that by shifting the criteria of who can participate in diplomacy, moving beyond the tyranny of literacy, I have been able to vividly illustrate that participation in eastern Mediterranean diplomatic systems was not limited to court societies who made extensive written records. In this way the material remains of the Kerma Culture, a court society which did not develop a written script, could be considered and examined alongside material from the wider eastern Mediterranean. This examination proved that the Kerman courts were actively participating and engaging in diplomatic relationships with contemporary Egyptian courts. Indeed, it was found that some of the objects and etiquettes which were being adopted by the Kerman court were exactly the same type of behavioural adoptions found in the Levant and Anatolia. This indicated that the Kerman courts were not limited to interactions with just Egypt, but were aware of wider eastern Mediterranean court gestural vocabularies. In this manner these types of transmissions are not one off coincidental occurrences but part of a wider and informed pattern of adoptions across the region. This proves that the Kermans, far from being peripheral players, had taken a prime seat, literally, in the shifting and dynamic game of inter-regional diplomacy.

The unique nature of the inter-regional approach of this thesis should also be highlighted. Such a holistic comparison of inter-regional interactions between the societies in the MBA has not been previously attempted before, and this is certainly the first instance that the Kerma Culture has been discussed in a holistic and detailed manner comparatively to the other court societies in the eastern Mediterranean. As a result the scope of this study is in itself unique in breaking some of the traditional boundaries of the 'eastern Mediterranean'. Indeed, I think there is an immediate need to include regions and societies previously

excluded from these perceived borders in our discussions of inter-cultural interactions within the region. Notable gaps in our discussion include Libya and Cyprus, and while we are hampered in some cases by lack of available data to work with, they are areas that we should work further to integrate into our discussion. Libya in particular is an area that we know little about, our knowledge is largely influenced by Egyptian sources from the LBA and ethnographic comparisons and analogies with modern Libyan tribal societies, with little archaeology to work with at all. However, at the very least we need to at least attempt to bring such regions into discussion to highlight and acknowledge the gaps in understanding of these types of inter-regional interactions and to deconstruct some of the assumed 'break off' points for these interactions. The inclusion of Kerma in this thesis certainly is an important and critical step in the right direction, demonstrating new cross-cultural and inter-regional encounters with previously viewed 'peripheral' societies.

To conclude, the inter-regional and cross-cultural nature of this study has provided us with an opportunity to completely redefine and reconsider the nature of diplomatic and inter-cultural relationships between court societies in the Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean. By looking at these societies comparatively and recognising the role of the human body, cognition, and behaviour, we gain a greater appreciation of the human element of these relationships. In this manner, we are able to gain a richer and fuller understanding of the dynamics and performance of life in these ancient court societies.

EPILOGUE: MOVING FORWARD, TAKE A SEAT THERE'S MORE TO COME

The theoretical model and approach which I have outlined and implemented in this thesis has facilitated an in depth examination of forms of gesture and behavior which can be applied to a variety of contexts. I am particularly interested in exploring what results could be gained from taking this model and applying it to other periods within the Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean. The case study of EBA Ebla had encouraging results and indicated that a similar examination of EBA courts using my method could provide the basis for a similar study. This would be very useful in reconstructing these very early diplomatic relationships, as we unfortunately have little to no diplomatic archives form this period. Indeed, the limited and specific uses for writing at this time would mean that my method and approach could yield promising results to help us understand these early court societies and their interactions, as well as having potential further implications regarding the role of early writing and literacy in these societies. Indeed, the obviously sophisticated and complex nature of courtly interactions during the MBA clearly point to similar process taking place earlier, we just need to provide the proper perspective in which to see them.

In other published work I have also implemented my method to an LBA context, looking at transmissions of sitting etiquettes between Egypt and the Mycenaean mainland (Walsh 2014). This also provided some very engaging results, particularly in regard to the reason why specific types of objects, in this case furniture, found widespread distributions and importance in court societies, often coming in hybrid forms that indicated wider courtly gestural vocabularies. I would like to take this approach to a wider LBA context to see if we can reach any new results and information regarding the diplomatic relationships of this period, helping to incorporate the human relationships with material culture that are currently lacking on this subject. It would also be interesting to see if current conventions of the nature of diplomacy during this period might change after such an examination.

As I final note I am also very excited about the possible application of this approach in completely different cultural and social contexts. Given the highly visible nature of courtly material culture in court societies in other regions of the world, such as Mesoamerica and south east Asia, it would be fascinating to see if my approach could generate some similar results regarding the prestigious role of etiquettes and gestures when applied to these

societies. Mesoamerica in particular has some potentially promising material in which to work with, especially in regards to the complex courtly gestural repertoires that are evident in Maya courtly art. This type of study would actually provide some much needed attention on New World court societies, which have received only minimal attention in court scholarship. Indeed, the heavy concentration of research on European court soceities highlights there is currently a vital need to improve our understanding of both New World but also Old World courts outside of Europe. These areas would likely provide fascinating results that could be used to further test my model and approach regarding cross-cultural encounters, potentially considering these types of interactions across different levels of societies. I hope very much that this will lead to some exciting new research involving a variety of different fields and specialists.

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