Luiza Osorio G. da Silva
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Professor Bestock

The Price of Gold and Loyalty: Parallels and Disparities in the Roles of Royal Women of the Late Bronze Age

> Say to Kadashman-Enlil, the king of Karaduniše, my brother: Thus Nibmuarea, Great King, the king of Egypt, your brother. For me all goes well. For you may all go well. For your household, for your wives, for your sons, for your magnates, your horses, your chariots, for your countries, may all go very well. For me all goes well (EA 1).[1]

Those words, while antiquated, are probably eerily reminiscent of typical pleasantries exchanged by leaders in contemporary diplomatic contexts. It might come as a surprise, therefore, that they are actually a set of traditional greetings extracted from a corpus of ancient correspondence known as the Amarna Letters. These forms of written communication were utilized in the Late Bronze Age, particularly in the era denominated Amarna Period in Egypt, by the great powers of the time (Egypt, Mittani, Babylonia, Hatti, and Assyria), as well as a few minor states.[2] The Letters are evidence that international diplomacy was already remarkably significant at this point. Perhaps as expected, it was shaped by interactions between the Egyptian pharaoh and foreign kings. However, the fact that royal women were not only relevant, but also essential might not be as obvious. Just how significant were they, and how did their status differ in accordance to their respective states' influence and reach? The Amarna Letters and other forms of material evidence provide clues that allow the modern scholar to identify patterns of how royal women were treated in the context of diplomacy. As a result, it can be said that the Great Powers' royal women were vital for the maintenance and success of diplomatic alliances in

[1] William L. Moran, trans., *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 1.

[2] Raymond Cohen and Raymond Westbrook, "Introduction: The Amarna System," in *Amarna Diplomacy: The Beginnings of International Relations*, ed. Raymond Cohen and Raymond Westbrook (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 7.

the Late Bronze Age, but patterns in the evidence demonstrate that their roles and how they were perceived differed according to culture.

Egyptian Queens of the Amarna Period

Royal women, in Egypt at least, attained more relevance in the Eighteenth Dynasty, when there was unprecedented increase in their status. The Amarna Period (late fourteenth century BCE) includes two of these incredibly prominent queens: Tiye and Nefertiti. Tiye was the wife of Amenhotep III, one of ancient Egypt's most successful pharaohs and most prolific builders. Although she hailed from a non-royal family, the level in which Tiye was visible during her husband's reign demonstrates how vital she was to the pharaoh and, by association, to Egypt herself. Not much can be inferred from material evidence alone regarding her importance in international relations, which is curious when compared to how frequently she is pictured in representations of religious festivals, a fact that speaks to her significance in the cult practices of the reign. There is one exception, however, and that is Tiye's depiction as a winged sphinx trampling the enemies of Egypt.[3] Pharaohs had been depicted in this classic scene of Egyptian power vis-à-vis other civilizations innumerable times. After all, for them, Egypt was the center of the cosmos and the world. Tiye's portrayal as a sphinx is very telling, since no other Great Royal Wife had been depicted in such a kingly role before; this break from tradition exposes her eminence.[4] The implication of the image is that, as Queen of Egypt, she had power over foreigners, particularly enemy powers. While perhaps not the most convincing piece of evidence, this unorthodox depiction of Tiye cannot be overlooked; textual evidence, however, is much more successful in portraying her importance in diplomacy.

[3] Lyn Green, "Queens and Princesses of the Amarna Period: The Social, Political, Religious, and Cultic Role of the Women of the Royal Family at the End of the Eighteenth Dynasty" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2008), 224.

[4] Ibid.

The first example of relevant textual records is a scarab from Amenhotep III's reign that was distributed throughout Egypt and supposedly celebrated his marriage to a Mitanni princess, Gilu-Hepa, even though she is barely mentioned in the inscription.[5] The text goes as follows:

> Year 10 under the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, the lord of the ritual, Nembâre, the chosen of Ra, the son of Ra, Amunhotpe-Hikawase, granted life, and of the great wife of the king, Tiye, may she live…The wonders which were brought back to his majesty, l.p.h., were the daughter of Šuttarna, the king of Naharin, Giluhepa, and the chief women of her harem, three hundred and seventeen women.[6]

While further discussion of this passage is included in the analysis section of this paper, it is imperative to note that Tiye was mentioned first in an inscription meant to celebrate the arrival of a foreign princess. Diplomatic marriages were meant to effectively unite the two lands and signified the completion or maintenance of alliances.[7] Accordingly, one might expect that this event would entail a large celebration, or at least a scarab where Gilu-Hepa is given due prominence. Since the latter, at least, does not seem to have occurred and Tiye was given precedence instead, it seems like Amenhotep III's Great Royal Wife was a relevant figure in the diplomatic alliance alongside her husband.[8]

Indeed, her participation in international affairs became even more undeniable after Amenhotep III died and his son, Amenhotep IV or Akhenaten, became pharaoh. The Amarna

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[5] Betsy M. Bryan, "The Egyptian Perspective on Mitanni," in *Amarna Diplomacy: The Beginnings of International Relations*, ed. Raymond Cohen and Raymond Westbrook (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 81.

[6] Alan R. Schulman, "Diplomatic Marriage in the Egyptian New Kingdom," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 38 (1979): 192, accessed April 2, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/544713.

[7] Amanda H. Podany, *Brotherhood of Kings: How International Relations Shaped the Ancient Near East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 217.

[8] Bryan, "Egyptian Perspective on Mitanni," 81.

Letters include one instance when Tušratta, the Mittani king, addressed Tiye directly (EA 26).[9] Two more letters (EA 27 & EA 28) from the same king include a characterization of Tiye as knowledgeable about the diplomatic developments of her husband's reign: "Tiye, your mother, knows all the words that I spoke with your father. No one else knows them. You must ask Tiye, your mother, about them so she can tell you" (EA 28). [10] This letter was written in response to Akhenaten's failure to send the Mittani two solid gold and lapis lazuli statues, which had been promised to Tušratta by Amenhotep III.[11] The Mitanni king's words attest that Tiye must have been present when the letters were read aloud by foreign messengers, since she seems to have known all of the details; this demonstrates how involved she was in the diplomatic process.[12]

Evidently, Tiye was seen as a wise figure internationally or at least by the Mitanni, whose king trusted her judgment and ability to convince Akhenaten to send him the golden statues. Perhaps not surprisingly, this view seems to have been present in Egypt as well: the aged features of Tiye's famous wood head (Ägyptisches Museum Berlin) evoke the Egyptian concept of the wise man, which derives from a statue of Amenhotep Son of Hapu (Egyptian Museum, Cairo), who was venerated as such.[13] Additionally, Tušratta mentions that Tiye's messengers regularly exchanged communications with his wife, Yuni, on her behalf (EA 26).[14] Though no such letters have been found, this would show that Tiye's international influence did not derive from her husband's power alone. If true, Amenhotep III's Great Royal Wife had the ability to

[9] Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 84.

[10] Ibid., 91.

[11] Ibid., 85.

[12] Podany, *Brotherhood of Kings*, 204.

[13] Dorothea Arnold, "An Artistic Revolution: The Early Years of King Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten," in *The Royal Women of Amarna: Images of Beauty from Ancient Egypt*, ed. Dorothea Arnold (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 30.

[14] Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 85.

communicate, and perhaps even conduct her own negotiations, with the queen of another member of the Great Powers' Club.

On the other hand, Queen Nefertiti, while supremely prominent inside Egypt, does not seem to have had as much international reach. Unlike Tiye, Nefertiti's presumable significance in diplomatic affairs is better demonstrated by material evidence, instead of textual. Surprisingly, Akhenaten's queen is not mentioned in any of the Amarna Letters, at least in no identifiable way. One obvious but simplistic explanation for this strange circumstance is that none of the letters that mentioned Nefertiti survived.[15] Additionally, as previously mentioned, Tiye seems to have conducted separate correspondence with a foreign queen and it would not be a very big leap to suggest that Nefertiti, Egypt's arguably most powerful Great Royal Wife, also did.[16] Again, however, the fact that none of those possible letters have survived is definitely suspicious, unless they would have been kept in another location that has not yet been discovered. An alternative possibility that seems more plausible is that Nefertiti was not specifically mentioned in the letters sent to Akhenaten because the foreign kings who corresponded with the pharaoh needed to give precedence to their own daughters by referring to them by name, and thus bringing attention to their position in the Egyptian court. This would have been a reminder of the alliance between the two empires, and perhaps even served as leverage when asking for gold and other precious commodities. Similarly, Tiye was also only mentioned after her husband died. At that point, it was in Tušratta's interest to speak to her directly; after all, Tiye seems to have been the only one aware of her husband's promise to the Mitanni king. After Amenhotep III's death, Akhenaten was the one who would have sent gold as diplomatic gifts, and his wife was thus the one who needed to be overshadowed by his foreign consort instead.

[15] Green, "Queens and Princesses of the Amarna Period," 482.

[16] Ibid.

In terms of material evidence, Nefertiti, like Tiye, is represented in a classic scene that displays Egyptian supremacy over foreign enemies: she smites a female captive.[17] While this scene might not have been seen outside of Egypt, the Egyptian view of the queen in relation to foreigners is still clear. Another interesting but not supremely conclusive piece of evidence is that Nefertiti's name was found on a rare golden scarab from a shipwreck outside of Turkey.[18] It was obviously a precious artifact, and one that places her in the context of international trade. Moreover, a relevant relief was found in Meryre II's tomb at Amarna.[19] It depicts a celebration dated to Year 12 of Akhenaten's reign, when several foreign powers (including Hittites, Syrians, and Nubians) showed their respect and presented massive amounts of tribute to the pharaoh and his family.[20] While unclear whether this was a singular or commonplace event, it is clear that it displayed Akhenaten's ability to request tribute from all over the area.[21] It was supposed to demonstrate his power in relation to foreign peoples, and the way in which Nefertiti is depicted makes it vital to this discussion. Both the king and queen sit on a raised platform before their foreign visitors in a position of "dual enthronement."[22] Their images overlap and, as a result, they almost look like a single person. This can be interpreted in two ways: either Nefertiti was

[17] Ibid., 225.

[18] Graciela Gestoso Singer, "El Escarabajo de Nefertiti y el Barco Naufragado en Uluburun," *Antiguo Oriente: Cuadernos del Centro de Estudios de Historia del Antiguo Oriente* 9 (2011): 265, accessed April 2, 2015, http://bibliotecadigital.uca.edu.ar/repositorio/revistas/escarabajo-nefertiti-barco-naufragado-uluburun.pdf.

[19] N. de G. Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna: The Tombs of Panehesy and Meryra II* (London: Gilbert and Rivington Limited, 1905), Plate XXXVII.

[20] Dorothea Arnold, "Aspects of the Royal Female Image During the Amarna Period," in *The Royal Women of Amarna: Images of Beauty from Ancient Egypt*, ed. Dorothea Arnold (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 86.

[21] Aidan Dodson, *Amarna Sunset: Nefertiti, Tutankhamun, Ay, Horemheb, and the Egyptian Counter-Reformation* (New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2009), 17.

[22] Julia Samson, "Nefertiti's Regality," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 63 (1977): 89, accessed April 2, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3856305.

completely overshadowed by her husband and barely relevant before other great powers—which seems unlikely considering her ubiquity in Egypt proper—or she was just as important and influential as Akhenaten in matters of diplomacy and foreign affairs.

Foreign Royal Women of the Late Bronze Age

International diplomacy of the Late Bronze Age, while mostly different from contemporary practice, also required the formation and maintenance of alliances. These alliances hinged on the exchange of considerable quantities of diplomatic gifts and the successful completion of diplomatic marriages. There is actually no evidence that the number and frequency of political marriages that took place during this period were ever exceeded in the ancient Near East.[23] Egypt never sent out princesses, a fact that will be discussed in further detail later, but rulers from other great and small powers sent their royal women to marry the pharaoh, as well as each other. Indeed, there is explicit evidence from the Amarna Letters that two members of the Great Powers' Club sent wives to Egypt: Mitanni and Babylonia. [24]

By the Amarna Period, the Mitanni suffered from the threat of the growing strength of the Hittites, while Babylonia worried about the rise of Assyria to its north.[25] They were in need of allies, and diplomatic marriages seem vital for the maintenance of such. Two Mitanni princesses sent to Egypt are mentioned in the Amarna Letters; Gilu-Hepa, daughter of Šuttarna, was married to Amenhotep III.[26] He later married Tadu-Hepa, the daughter of the next Mitanni king,

[23] Samuel A. Meier, "Diplomacy and International Marriages," in *Amarna Diplomacy: The Beginnings of International Relations*, ed. Raymond Cohen and Raymond Westbrook (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 165.

[24] Schulman, "Diplomatic Marriage," 189.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Gay Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 31.

Tušratta; she was also married to Akhenaten when he became pharaoh.[27] The Babylonians went through much the same process: Amenhotep III married a daughter of Kurigalzu II and, after his death, the pharaoh requested a daughter from Kadashman-Enlil (EA 2 & 3).[28] After the death of his father, Akhenaten followed in his footsteps and eventually married the daughter of the next Babylonian king, Burnaburiash II. [29] This pattern demonstrates how Egyptian pharaohs seemed to follow a tradition in which they requested a new bride whenever the foreign king died. This implies that alliances were not only forged between different powers but, perhaps more importantly, between different kings.[30] Consequently, foreign princesses were instrumental in securing those alliances. A refusal of the pharaoh's marriage request would not only probably offend him, since he most likely believed that he had a right to attain the princesses, but could also cause irrevocable danger to the often unstable alliance system of the time.

The other two major powers that communicated with Egypt through the Amarna Letters were Hatti and Assyria.[31] Even though there is no evidence of diplomatic marriage between these two empires and Egypt in the correspondence, the possibility cannot be discounted. It does make it harder to analyze their roles, however, since no names of Hittite or Assyrian princesses have been found in the letters.[32] While there is not much information concerning the relations of Assyrian royal women and Egypt, they seem to have played vital roles in the politics and social

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid; Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 6-8.

[29] Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 32.

[30] Ibid., 31.

[31] Schulman, "Diplomatic Marriage," 190.

[32] Podany, *Brotherhood of Kings*, 285.

processes of their homeland as well.[33] The possibility that they communicated with the Egyptian court through different channels also remains, especially if one chooses to believe that Tušratta's mention of an exchange of letters between his wife and Tiye was true.[34]

Moreover, Hatti apparently did not send Egypt as many letters as some of the other great powers, perhaps because they were still growing at the time and their relationship with Egypt was more competitive than the others, since both had interest in the Levant.[35] As previously mentioned, there is no definite evidence that diplomatic marriages occurred between the two powers in this period, but this is fortunately not the case later. In fact, Hittite texts tell of a situation in Ramses II's reign that serves as an intriguing parallel to Tiye's correspondence with Tušratta during the reign of Akhenaten. Puduhepa, wife of Hattusili III and queen of the Hittites, communicated directly with Ramses II through letters.[36] Puduhepa worked to ameliorate the dispute that transpired due to a delay in the dispatch of Ramses II's Hittite bride, much like Tiye was called upon to resolve the argument over the solid gold statues promised to Tušratta by Amenhotep III.[37] This demonstrates that Puduhepa, again like Tiye, was also considered capable of resolving an international dispute not only by her kin, but also by the foreign king who communicated with her directly. While Puduhepa might be an exception to the rule, it is vital to acknowledge that Egyptian queens and royal women were not the only ones able to exert such power. A perhaps even more significant detail is that Egyptian princesses were still not being given to foreign powers (and indeed never were), while the pharaoh addressed Puduhepa in order

[33] Sarah C. Melville, "Royal Women and the Exercise of Power in the Ancient Near East," in *A Companion to the Ancient Near East*, ed. Daniel C. Snell (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 219.

[34] Ibid., 223.

[35] Podany, *Brotherhood of Kings*, 191.

[36] Gary Beckman, trans., *Hittite Diplomatic Texts* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 125.

[37] Ibid., 125-129.

to resolve an issue concerning a diplomatic marriage. Tušratta asks Tiye for gold, while Ramses II asks Puduhepa for her daughter; the implications implied by this stark distinction are instrumental in the discussion of the different roles of royal women in the Late Bronze Age.

The Foreign Powers' Perspective of Royal Women

Clearly, there was a sharp divide between the Egyptian and foreign perspective of how royal women should participate in international affairs. For the Great Powers (excluding Egypt), royal women were infinitely useful in securing alliances, evidenced when Tušratta said that "in keeping with [the love that both kings had demonstrated in the past], my father gave you my sister" (EA 17).[38] This stance might seem like a subordinate one, since Egypt did not send any wives. It is paramount to realize, though, that cultural differences made this diplomatic arrangement a successful venture for both sides. While the Egyptian pharaoh almost certainly thought that his marriage to foreign princesses demonstrated his own superiority, the Near Eastern kings believed that becoming the pharaoh's father-in-law gave them the advantage instead.[39] Puduhepa's letter to Ramses II perfectly outlines both sides' perspectives: the Egyptian pharaoh protests the delay in the completion of his marriage to the Hittite princess, which was undoubtedly a grave slight against his preeminence, while Puduhepa focuses on patching the alliance by emphasizing that, with the marriage, "Egypt and Hatti will become a single country."[40]

Although they sent their daughters away to Egypt, kings seemed anxious to ensure that their princesses retained their high status in the foreign court, since this reflected their own

[38] Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 41.

[39] Melville, "Royal Women and the Exercise of Power, 225.

[40] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 129.

prominence.[41] To do so, they sent their daughters or sisters gifts that would express their continued significance and display their wealth.[42]Additionally, as previously mentioned, Tiye and Nefertiti were grouped with their respective husbands' "other wives" in greetings by foreign kings who mentioned their own kin by name, giving them the most distinguished place beside the pharaoh. Tušratta only addresses Tiye when it is in his interest to do so, since he needed her to convince Akhenaten to send him the golden statues; Nefertiti never seems to get the same treatment, and the Mitanni king always names Tadu-Hepa in her place.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, foreign kings sometimes also expressed their annoyance and offence at not being offered an Egyptian princess. If they believed that being the father-in-law of the pharaoh gave them the upper hand, they probably assumed that the pharaoh thought the same way; the Egyptian ruler's adamant refusal to marry off his daughters, then, would have been insulting. We have evidence of such an occurrence from the Amarna Letters, when Kadashman-Enlil I of Babylonia writes to Amenhotep III:

> Someone's grown daughters, beautiful women, must be available. Send me a beautiful woman as if she were your daughter. Who is going to say, 'She is no daughter of the king!'? (EA 4). [43]

This is said in response to the pharaoh's claims that "from time immemorial no daughter of the king of Egypt is given to anyone" (EA 4), and is followed by the Babylonian's bargaining for gold using the promise of his daughter as leverage.[44] This demonstrates how vital royal princesses were for most empires, excluding Egypt: they were exchanged not only for a diplomatic alliance, but also for gold and other precious goods. On the other hand, the Egyptian

[41] Melville, "Royal Women and the Exercise of Power, 225.

[42] Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 42.

[43] Ibid., 9.

[44] Ibid., 8-9.

pharaoh was able to refuse the demands of Kadashman-Enlil due to his advantageous position concerning resources; Egypt was a more established hegemonic power, and was very self-sufficient.[45] Kadashman-Enlil chose to prioritize the attainment of gold, and he seems to have let the matter of the pharaoh's refusal slide; the important question to ask is why he wanted the Egyptian princess in the first place. Babylonia had started to decline as Assyria had started to grow, and Kadashman-Enlil might have been looking for a way to legitimize his rule.[46] Since no Egyptian princess had ever been given away in marriage, this would have most likely demonstrated to the other powers that the king of Babylonia had gained the pharaoh's favor, and Egypt was a very powerful ally.

Another example of how Egyptian women were seen by outside powers is a vessel found in Ugarit. It displays a very unusual image: the king of the vassal state, Niqmaddu II, is engaged in what looks like a marriage ceremony with an Egyptian royal woman.[47] Both the fact that she is not named and the strangeness of the motifs suggest that this does not reflect an actual event; after all, if the king of influential Babylonia was not given an Egyptian bride, the king of Ugarit would almost certainly not have had his wish granted, either.[48] The only plausible explanation is that the king of Ugarit wanted others to see him in close contact with Egypt, which would imply his connection to the international world and maybe even open doors and facilitate relations between him and the other great powers.

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[45] Raymond Westbrook, "Babylonian Diplomacy in the Amarna Letters," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 120 (2000): 377, accessed April 2, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/606009.

[46] Ibid., 380.

[47] Marian H. Feldman, "Ambiguous Identities: The Marriage Vase of Niqmaddu II and the Elusive Egyptian Princess," *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 15 (2002): 76, accessed April 10, 2015, *Religion and Philosophy Collection*, EBSCO*host*.

[48] Ibid., 84.

The Egyptian Perspective of Royal Women

In contrast, there is a suggestion that, from the Egyptian perspective, foreign princesses brought to the royal court were not much more than commodities.[49] The two pieces of evidence that display this view of foreign brides are an Amarna letter, and the previously mentioned Gilu-Hepa scarab. While considered a "marriage scarab," the language of the text does not suggest that those were the circumstances in which the Mitanni princess moved to Egypt, even though Tušratta's letters say otherwise.[50] The scarab's text talks about the "wonders that were brought back," which is an unusual way to refer to a marriage.[51] If anything, it is infinitely more reminiscent of texts that discuss booty attained in foreign campaigns. When compared to Amenhotep III's other scarabs, this one seems to speak more of his prowess and power, rather than celebrate a union.[52]

The relevant Amarna letter is another one written by Kadashman-Enlil (EA 1). In it, he claims that he has no way of knowing whether his sister, who resides in the Egyptian court, is alive, so he does not want to send his daughter as well.[53] All of these letters probably contained a mix of lies and half-truths, anything that would help in the pursuit of more gold or prestige. If one chooses to believe the Babylonian king, however, Amenhotep III did not know who his Babylonian wife was. If true, this would imply that the Egyptian pharaoh did not care much about his foreign wives after they had arrived, even though he did continually ask for them in order to reaffirm alliances with new kings. The wedding seemed to involve elaborate

[49] Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 31.

[50] Schulman, "Diplomatic Marriage," 192.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 1-3.

preparations and fanfare, but the end result was just another foreign wife thrown into the harem.[54] It is impossible to determine whether the princesses had any choice with regards to being traded for gold and alliances, which would suggest that their own fathers or brothers also saw them as trade goods. As previously discussed, however, a marriage to the Egyptian pharaoh or a foreign king was proof of the other power's preeminence. Their own kin, therefore, most likely looked upon the princesses as illustrious participants of diplomacy, instead of mere assets.

The Egyptian understanding of their own queens and royal women is also paramount, since it explains why they did not participate in diplomatic marriages. Egyptian queenship was logically seen as the counterpart of kingship, which was a phenomenon that represented the power of the creator god on Earth.[55] This means that queens were not only essential for the succession of the royal line; they were also vital to the functioning of the cosmos itself.[56] Pharaohs were thus adamant in their refusal to give their princesses in diplomatic marriages, since that would signify that another power would have the grounds on which to argue for the control of, or at least increased influence in, Egypt.[57] This convention may seem like it generated an inferior status for other powers in relation to Egypt, but that assumption is rooted in contemporary bias and not supported by the evidence from the period.

Conclusion

As has been noted, foreign kings believed that they were gaining the upper hand when sending their daughters to marry the Egyptian pharaoh, while the Egyptians were content to

[54] Podany, *Brotherhood of Kings*, 225.

[55] Lana Troy, *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1986), 2.

[56] Ibid., 102.

[57] Carolyn Graves-Brown, *Dancing For Hathor: Women in Ancient Egypt* (New York: Continuum Books, 2010), 142.

retain their royal women who exerted influence in the international scene, and receive wives from different powers. Indeed, all royal women were vital to the maintenance of alliances, as demonstrated throughout this paper. Tiye, for example, was trusted to resolve a diplomatic dispute between the kings of Egypt and Mitanni, while the daughter of Kadashman-Enlil was given to Egypt as a bride in order to secure the diplomatic alliance and amass more gold for her father. These nuances in both the textual and material record have demonstrated how different cultural perceptions and traditions shaped the way in which the royal women of the Late Bronze Age participated in the international sphere. Records show that they played different roles and were faced with different expectations, but all were indispensable in the framing of the diplomatic system of the time.

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