2015

Cultural Change in the Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern World: A Study of Interactions between the Egyptian Empire and its Neighbors

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Chapter I: Introduction

The section of the ancient world that stretched from the waters of the Mediterranean Sea to those of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers was ripe in antiquity with a variety of civilizations and cultures (Figures 1.1 and 1.2). The ancient Near East, a region of high cultural diversity during the Late Bronze Age, developed a complex web of interconnected states and empires. The connections of the states and empires of the ancient Near East spread across a wide area, including the regions of Egypt, the Anatolian Peninsula, and Mesopotamia (Figure 1.1). Many of the empires whose origins are in the ancient Near East, including the civilizations of the Mitanni, Babylonians, Egyptians, and Hittites were influential in the intricate web of intercultural relationships which developed in the region early in its history. Each of these civilizations
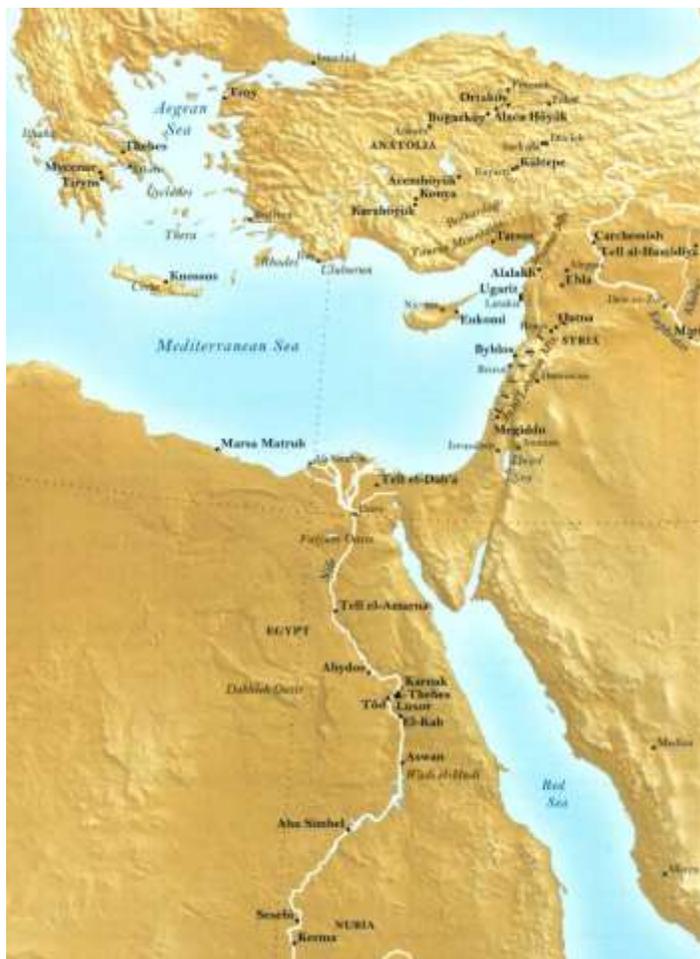

Figure 1.1   Partial Map of the ancient Near East, showing the Egyptian and Hittite Empires, the Levantine Coast, the Greek Peninsula, and Nubia (From Aruz et. al. 2008: xviii).

was unique from the others in terms of language, religion, and culture; nevertheless, interactions that occurred between these diverse cultures, from peaceful to violent,

resulted in a range of cultural exchanges. War and conquest, trade and commerce, peace treaties, and exploration are some examples of the many different socio-political interactions, from which the sharing of certain religious practices, technologic innovations, art styles, and ideologies emanated.

Figure 1.2   Partial Map of the ancient Near East, showing the sites of the Mitanni and Kassite Babylonian states (From Aruz et. al. 2008: xix).

In this thesis, I focus my attention on the developments of the Egyptian state during the Late Bronze Age, approximately 1550 B.C. to 1200 B.C. I examine the material culture of the Egyptian Empire and the influential cultures of the neighboring civilizations, including the Mitanni State and Babylonian State, and the Hittite Empire. I demonstrate that the Egyptian Empire not only played a central role in the interconnected web of relationships in the ancient Near East, but also served as a catalyst for other intercultural contacts across the ancient Near East. I conclude that the Egyptian Empire held an important role as a leader in technological innovation, art styles, and religious organization, but that their

success as a powerful, centralized state was also heavily influenced by the innovations

of other groups in the complex intercultural web of relationships in the Late Bronze Age.

I begin Chapter I by examining the theory of cultural interaction and its effects,

discussing the different categories of cultural contact, how these may be manifested in

cultural changes, and how those cultural changes may be represented in the

archaeological record. In anthropology, the interactions between cultures and the

subsequent cultural changes have been a long-standing topic of study, and scholars

have developed a number of different ways of categorizing and conceptualizing cultural

contact. Some cultural interactions are based in conflict, including instances of small-

scale conquest and raiding; in turn, this may result in occupation of subjugated of

foreign lands, full-scale wars, and treaties between two cultures that have previously

been in conflict. In addition to those associated with conflict and violence, there are

also cultural interactions of a more peaceful variety (Yao 2007: 11). These can include

arranged marriages between allied ruling families, trade and commerce, and the

establishment of diplomatic alliances. Both conflict-based and peaceful cultural

interactions have specific effect on the spread of ideas, technologies, and religious

beliefs. Specifically, in the ancient Near East, cultural interactions occurring during

times of violence or conflict tend to induce the spread of military technology, forced

acculturation of religious beliefs in subjugated cultures, and the extension of conquering

cultures' traditions and cultural practices into conquered territories (Benzel 2008: 155;

Bietak 2008: 110; Zivie-Coche 2001: 2). On the other hand, cultural interactions that

develop in the ancient Near East during times of peace tend to engender commercial

trade, exchange and synchronization of religious cults and practices, and the intermarrying of elite families (Liverani 2008: 161; Zivie-Coche 2011: 3; Avruch 2000: 162-3). Different interactions affect the flow of cultural characteristics, and thus the various interactions across time and space in the ancient Near East led to very different relationships between cultures.

In Chapter II, I examine the theoretical background to cultural contact, beginning with a brief history of the study of cultural interaction in the anthropological and archaeological discipline. I then define the different types of cultural change that can occur in the wake of various different instances of cultural interaction, giving specific examples of each distinct type from the ancient Near East. In Chapter III, I explore the histories of the larger and more prominent cultures of the ancient Near East during the Late Bronze Age, examining notably the relationships between the Egyptians and their neighbors: the Kassite Babylonians, Hittites, and the Mitanni. I present a detailed examination of the complex relationships that existed among the states and empires of the ancient Near East, specifically during the Late Bronze Age. I offer an overview of the histories of the various cultures in order to establish a better sense of the relationships that arose during the Late Bronze Age between the Egyptian Empire and its neighbors.

In Chapter IV, I examine cultural relationships from the Egyptian perspective, beginning with a history of Egyptian cultural contacts and ending with an explanation of how Egyptians viewed foreigners. In Chapter V, I explore the relationship between intercultural trade and cultural change in the ancient Near East. I cross-examine these

two distinct types of intercultural relationships through the archaeological material culture, and through written inscriptions.

As part of my analysis, I rely on published scholarship and archaeological data from previous excavations, conducted both in Egypt and also elsewhere in the Near East. The multitude of cultural artifacts found in the archaeological record from the ancient Near East, from religious relics to everyday items to clay tablets with intercultural correspondences, provide valuable evidence that archaeologists use to both extract and construct the different types of intercultural relationships. The artifacts that are most helpful for performing this complex task for the Late Bronze Age are the written records that survive in the form of clay tablets and carved inscriptions, due to the explicit information on intercultural relationships which these artifacts provide. These types of records illuminate for archaeologists messages between the elites of ancient Near Eastern cultures, in addition to telling what actions were done and which decisions were made. Written records such as these complement and further contextualize the material culture from the archaeological record. When used in conjunction, rich sources of data such as these help archaeologists to determine of intercultural exchange of both ideas and goods, in addition to helping identify the type(s) of cultural interaction, such as hybridization and acculturation, which occurred in the past. In my analysis of intercultural relationships, I present a number of examples of different types of cultural change which occurred in the Late Bronze Age, examining how each of these various changes developed and/or were disseminated to other areas, and describe the effects of that cultural change as manifested in the

material evidence. In Chapter VI I explore the issue of acculturation in the Egyptian

Empire, and provide some concluding thoughts about acculturation in the final chapter,

Chapter VII.

Chapter II: Theory of Cultural Interaction and its Effects

The study of cultural interaction and the cultural changes has been an important subject of study in anthropology and archaeology since the beginning of the discipline's history in the 1800's, and remains a topic of continued study today. Cultures interact with one another on a regular basis in a variety of ways, and every varied interaction has its own specific effects on the cultures involved.

When different cultures come in contact with one another, either directly or indirectly, the cultures involved are often changed in fundamental ways because of the exchanges that transpire. The process of cultural change and transformation can occur in a number of ways, ranging from "…limited exchanges and diplomacy, to more forceful military encounters and subjugation" (Yao 2007: 11). Cultural transformation, in its myriad of forms, can occur both at the time of contact and post-contact, leaving evidence in the epigraphic and archaeological records. Evidence of direct or indirect interaction includes changes in ideologies, customs, religious practices, technologic advances, and other cultural characteristics.

In my study of the relationship web of the ancient Near East, I examine primarily how the material evidence indicates the relationships between the Egyptian Empire and the neighbor states, including the Mitanni and Babylonian States, and the Hittite Empire. My focus is on the major role that the Egyptian Empire had in the relationships of the ancient Near East, as represented by the specific effects on the states through cultural interaction with the Egyptian Empire. However, while focusing on the role of the Egyptian Empire, I also examine the idea that, while the Egyptian Empire was a

powerful cultural entity in the ancient Near East, there was no 'cultural purity' of the Empire; the success of the Empire was heavily impacted by the other cultures of the region, such as the Hittites, Mitanni, and Kassite Babylonians.

A. The History of the Study of Cultural Change

Cultural contact studies have an extensive intellectual history in archaeology, and scholarly perceptions of both cultural interaction and the mechanisms that give rise to cultural change have developed markedly over the years. Early on, anthropologists focused on the idea of acculturation in their reconstructions of cultural contact. More recently, scholars have critiqued these studies of acculturation for being within the frame of European/Western colonialist ideals, involving a singular, unidirectional mechanism for cultural change, whereby one culture dominated another. This idea was produced partly in conjunction with the West's idea of cultural superiority, where, in this scenario, the dominated culture is forced to acculturate the institutions of the conquering civilization (Yao 2007: 7). Originally, anthropologists utilized models where acculturation occurred among "primitive" cultures following contact with another culture that was considered more advanced, and thus more "civilized" by European standards (Yao 2007: 7). This biased framework led to a skewed reconstruction of the past, whereby the more "advanced" culture, in this case the Egyptian Empire, were likened to Western, Euro-American civilization. The process of acculturation among the "primitive cultures was viewed as not only unavoidable, but a progressive step in facilitating a kind of cultural evolution, from primitive to modernity (Yao 2007: 7).

As scholarly research continued, ideas about cultural contact evolved with new information and new hypotheses. The early 20th century saw the rise of the recognition of a distinction between a change in a culture's material evidence, thus showing a change in objects, and a change in the very structure of a culture, which would indicate a change in ideas (Yao 2007: 8, from Linton 1940). Scholars such as Spicer continued that differentiation, developing a framework of what he terms *directed* and *non-directed* forms of cultural interaction. Directed contact, according to Spicer, is typified through its asymmetry, where one culture is dominant over another, usually in a violent manner. Non-directed contact, on the other hand, is based on equivalent exchange, often of a non-hostile variety (Yao 2007: 8, from Spicer 1962).

When the study of cultural interaction progressed into the late 20th and early 21st centuries, a plethora of various terms arose, in order to better define the various types of cultural contact. These terms, such as creolization, bricolage, transculturation, and mestizaje, are used by scholars to distinguish different instances of cultural interaction from one another via the nuances of situation and result which make them distinct (Leibmann 2013: 26). Another term with more modern roots is hybridity/hybridization, which has been thoroughly developed by scholars for use in describing examples of cultural contact where multiple dissimilar cultural aspects are forced together, implying a both harmonic and disharmonic nature to the union (Leibmann 2013: 30). The distinction the different instances of cultural contact has influenced subsequent, modern models of cultural interaction, shedding some of the preconceptions about cultural contact from a Western colonial point of view and broadening scholarly understanding

of the complexity of interactions between groups of people. However, the shedding of preconceptions surrounding the terminology of cultural contact is extremely difficult, most notably due to widespread use of a number of these terms in a specific context, as described above with acculturation.

B. Defining Types of Cultural Change

There are a number of types of interaction-based cultural transformations that are distinguished from one another by anthropologists and archaeologists. Cultural changes are now understood to exist on a more complex scale with a variety of outcomes, ranging from intense, conflict-based acculturation to the resistance against such domination (Yao 2007: 12). This scale of different types of cultural changes ranges from acculturation to complete resistance of cultural change, with the space in-between including the varying degrees of cultural change, differentiated by the individual circumstances and resulting outcomes.

At one extreme of the scale is acculturation, discussed above, which is the adoption and implementation of foreign symbols, customs, and cultural ideals. This process is often seen in conjunction with the subjugation of one culture by another (Yao 2007: 6). However, even in cases of acculturation, the resultant changes are not simply from dominant to subordinate. While examples of acculturation often illustrate the appropriation of cultural concepts by the conquered culture from the more dominant in the pair, there are also incidences of reversed acculturation, where the dominating culture takes on cultural traits from the subordinate of the pair (Yao 2007: 6). At the other end of the scale of cultural interactions is the complete resistance of

cultural change. This occurs when, during cultural interaction, one culture actively distinguishes their culture from the other culture, and typically causes an intensification of group identity through the establishment of cultural boundaries (Yao 2007: 12). The act of cultural resistance firmly defines the boundary between what is the self, and thus is acceptable, and what is the 'Other', that which is outside cultural boundaries. In between these two extremes are the myriad of different instances of cultural interaction, each with unique settings and results.

Syncretism, a term typically used in instances of religious cultural contact, is the "combination of elements from two or more religious traditions" (Liebmann 2013: 28, From Stewart 1999: 58). While useful in discussions of the cultural mixing of religious ideas, it is important to note the baggage accompanying syncretism, which most importantly includes the false idea of cultural purity. Cultural purity, which is defined as the complete absence of cultural mixing due to cultures being "bounded wholes", is a misnomer in that there are few instances where this is possible (Liebmann 2013: 28). In addition, it is also important to note, when discussing syncretic interactions between cultures, that syncretism, like acculturation, is neither unidirectional nor is it solely a dominant to subordinate interaction; it is the "active creation of new forms" of (typically religious) cultural traits, which can include instances of mockery and disharmonious mixing (Liebmann 2013: 28, 43). An example of this in the ancient Near East would be the syncretic adoption by the Egyptian Empire of local, foreign deities of the neighboring cultures such as the Canaanite and Kassite Babylonian states. These deities, such as Hauron, Ba'al Zephon, and Qatesh, are incorporated directly into the

Egyptian Pantheon, either as independent deities or as aspects of Egyptian deities, (Zivie-Coche 2011: 3, 5, 6; Bietak 2008: 112). Periodically names were even combined in order to establish the connection between foreign deities and those of the Egyptian Empire (Bietak 2008: 110). One example of this is the combinations of Seth-Ba'al and Ba'al-Seth, both of which are used in the Egyptian Empire to represent the same pairing of the Egyptian deity Seth with his counterpart in the pantheon of the Hyksos, Ba'al Zephon (Zivie-Coche 2011: 5).

A second of the instances of cultural mixing that fall between acculturation and cultural resistance is creolization, a term originally applied only to examples of linguistic mixing. Creolization is defined as the innovation of unique cultural forms, but specifically in instances of "forced relocation or diaspora" (Liebmann 2013: 43). The situational aspect that is important to the differentiation of creolization and other instances of cultural interaction is the locational displacement. Creolization occurs when new cultural forms are created by recombining various cultural traits in a new way, specifically in diasporic cultures (Liebmann 2013: 28-29). One examples of creolization in the ancient Near East would be the addition of new cultural forms to the culture of the Egyptian Empire through the intermarrying of Egyptian elites and foreign princesses. Through the act of intermarrying, princesses from neighboring cultures such as the Kassite Babylonians and the Mittani of Naharin brought aspects of their own culture with them to the Egyptian Empire, such as religious practices, and jewelry and clothing styles (Evans 2008: 196).

A final example of cultural mixing that is in-between acculturation and cultural resistance is hybridity/hybridization. Hybridization/Hybridity is the creation of unique, transcultural forms through cultural mixing, typically in the form of colonization. Hybridization includes both harmonious and disharmonious cultural mixing, and is unique in that it includes the "forcing together of unlike things" (Liebmann 2013: 30, from Young 1995: 26). However, much like acculturation and syncretism, hybridization is a loaded term, mostly due to the main use of the term in case studies pertaining to colonial cultural mixing, and the inherent power dynamics that accompany such interactions. In addition, prior to its modern use, the use of the term 'hybrid' was accompanied with connotations of weakness, especially when compared to cultures that were thought to be 'pure' of cultural contamination (Liebmann 2013: 30-31). In its modern usage, however, hybridity is a useful term that both the "interdependence and mutual construction of the colonizer and colonized, acknowledging the multidirectional ebb and flow of cultural influences" (Liebmann 2013: 31, from Kapchan and Stron 1999: 250). Thus, two examples of hybridization in the ancient Near East is the development of shared cultural traits, such as clothing styles, of the Egyptians and the people of the colonized land of Nubia to Egypt's south (Graff 2008: 260), and the implementation of cultural traits native to the Hyksos people of the Levant, such as militaristic funerary goods and 'bent axis' temple layouts, during the Hyksos occupation of Lower Egypt during the pre-Late Bronze Age Second Intermediate period (Bietak 2008: 110; Dodson 2004: 114).

Using archaeological evidence of cultural change, in the form of records, shared art forms, and other evidence of the spread of ideas, scholars can study the material effects of cultural interaction and geo-political relationships. Looking at my specific case study, it is clear that cultural change occurred in the ancient Near Eastern world with high frequency, as many cultures lived adjacent to one another, and we see each of the resulting forms of cultural change – hybridization, synchronization, creolization, and acculturation – in operation in different contexts.

Positive relationships that formed between two cultures on an equal bearing are often preceded by the establishment of trade connections and the forming of familial connections through elite marriage (Avruch 2000: 161). These connections through marriage and commerce, in turn, would allow for the exchange of ideas, goods, and customs. As the amount of commercial exchange increases, cultural traits are shared across cultural boundaries, often creating new forms with synchronized and creolized elements derived from both cultures.

Another extremely common locus of cultural change in the ancient Near East was cultural forms of ritual and religion. Changes of religious beliefs occurred in both direct and indirect interactions, such as the transference of "foreign" deities, which occurred in instances involving trade, alliance, or conquest (Zivie-Coche 2011: 7). In the ancient Near East, the most common forms of religious cultural transformation were the acculturation and hybridization of both deities and associated religious practices. For instance, when the Egyptian Empire subjugated new vassal states, the deities of the new territory's culture were often incorporated directly, without alteration, into the

pantheon of Egyptian Empire, reflecting a reversed form of acculturation (Zivie-Coche 2011: 5). In addition, the opposite occurred as well, where the deities of the Egyptian Empire were directly forced upon the vassal states.

Another common form of cultural transformation in the ancient Near East involved the appropriation of military innovations by cultures like the Egyptians, after seeing their use in battle against them (Van Seters 1966: 58). This process of cultural transmission enabled military technology to progress at a higher rate, for new innovations were imitated and improved upon quickly. One example of this is the two-wheeled chariot, which originated in the Anatolian peninsula and made its way south to the Egyptian Empire through post-conflict acculturation and trade between the vassal states of Syria and Egypt (Aldred 1988: 280-281; Graff 2008: 260-261). Thus, the acquisition of military technology spurred along the evolution of new technology. The imitation of military technology was most common between enemies, where one culture, after a particularly difficult victory or a shattering defeat, would imitate the technology of their enemies in order to improve their own military force (Benzel 2008: 155). The acculturation of military inventions could, in turn, cause the cultural transformation of military tactics and other military technologies later on in the history off the ancient Near East.

An understanding of the processes and context which give rise to the various forms of cultural change is vital to understanding the geo-political relationships in the ancient Near East. In this study, I will utilize archaeological evidence of cultural transformations to examine the intercultural relationships of the ancient Near East,

specifically analyzing the cultural changes that took place in the Late Bronze Age, focusing on those related to the Egyptian Empire and its closest neighbors, the Hittites, Mitanni, Kassites, and the others of the Eastern Mediterranean coast. Through examination of the material evidence remains of ancient Near Eastern instances of acculturation and hybridization, I aim to ascertain the extent of the Egyptian Empire's interactions in the ancient Near East with its rival, subservient, and allied cultures.

Through a careful study of the material remains, this study casts light on how the Egyptian Empire emerged as a leading, centralized empire of enormous power, using not only their own autochthonous developments, but also by integrating the technological innovations, art styles, and politico-religious organization of their neighbors. I conclude that the power of the Egyptian Empire was fueled by complex and ongoing intercultural exchanges involving both processes of acculturation and hybridization with their neighbors in the ancient Near East during the Late Bronze Age.

Chapter III: The Ancient Near East in the Late Bronze Age

Over the course of history, wars were fought, lands were gained and lost, and alliances for mutual benefit were made, broken, and remade among the various cultures of the ancient Near East (See Figures 1.1 and 1.2). The era known as the Late Bronze Age, beginning ca. 1550 B.C. and lasting until approximately 1200 B.C, marked the rise of some of the most powerful states to ever exist in that region (Liverani 2008: 161), including the Ancient Egyptian New Kingdom, the Hittite Empire in Hatti (modern-day Anatolia), the Hurrian Mitanni State in the land of Naharin, and the era of the Kassite rule of Babylonia (Liverani 2008:161).

During the Late Bronze Age, cultural interactions between the states of the Ancient Near East frequently involved battles between the larger states, like the Egyptian Empire, the Mitanni of Naharin, and the Hittites of Hatti, in an effort to conquer one another, for the appropriation of valuable resources and land. While conquest and conflict marked much of the interaction, these large states also engaged in diplomatic relations with one another and with farther flung powers as well, including the Kassite Babylonian State. These interactions were built around the exchange of precious goods and the establishment of diplomatic alliances (Liverani 2008: 165).

The Egyptian Empire was unified as a single state in approximately 3100 B.C. However, it was during the Late Bronze Age that the Empire of the Nile attained its height as a superpower in the ancient Near East, undergoing a cultural renaissance, resulting in the largest international reach of its power of its government and military power. During the Late Bronze Age, the Empire extended up into the Levant, bordering

the lands of the comparatively new Mitanni Kingdom, while also stretching south to include the region of Nubia (modern-day Sudan) (Liverani 2008: 161). Meanwhile, the Hittite empire expanded under King Suppiluliuma I in the 14th Century BCE (around the time of the 18th dynasty of Egypt), controlling the northernmost reaches of Asia Minor. The Mitanni kingdom, in turn, stretched east to come in contact with the outer regions of the Old Babylonian Empire, which had recently been conquered and was under the new rule of the Kassites, a culture out of the Zagros Mountains (Liverani 2008: 161). The struggles of these competing powers -- the Hittites, the Mitanni, the Kassite Babylonians, and the Egyptians – came to a head during the early portions of the Late Bronze Age, where intercultural marriages and treaties, diplomatic betrayals, and shifting borders were typical occurrences.

In the sections that follow, I outline the history of the major powers of the ancient Near East, including the most important cultures of the Mitanni, the Kassite Babylonians, and the Hittites. This background history provides the required contextual information for the subsequent discussions of cultural contacts between these states and the Late Bronze Age Egyptian Empire. In addition, the information imparted within the histories of the Mitanni, Kassite Babylonians, and Hittites is critical for understanding the examples of cultural transformations in the ancient Near East during the Late Bronze Age that I examine in subsequent chapters.

A.   The Mitanni of Naharin

The Mitanni state is a little-researched society that consisted of the communities inhabiting the upper region of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in the northeastern

portion of modern-day Syria. The state of the Mitanni people had many ancient names, being called the Naharin by the Ancient Egyptians, the Hurri by their Hittite neighbors, and the Hanigalbat by the Assyrians and the Kassite Babylonians (Evans 2008: 194). As this study mainly focuses on the interactions of the various states of the ancient Near East with the Ancient Egyptians, the region shall continue be referred to by its Egyptian name.

The inhabitants of Naharin were mainly Hurrian in origin, an ethnic group that was named after their spoken language, which was related to the later Urartian language (Evans 2008: 194). The composition of the Mitanni state is not entirely understood; some scholars hypothesize that it was an oligarchical state, with a Hurrian majority ruled over by an Indo-European military class, owing to the presence of minor cults devoted to Indo-European in the Mitanni state. In addition, some Mitanni rulers have Indo-European names, and words in the Hurrian language are of Indo-European origin (Evans 2008: 194). However, it is also plausible that the Indo-European influences in the Mitanni state were simply remnants of contact between Hurrian and Indo-European peoples in the past.
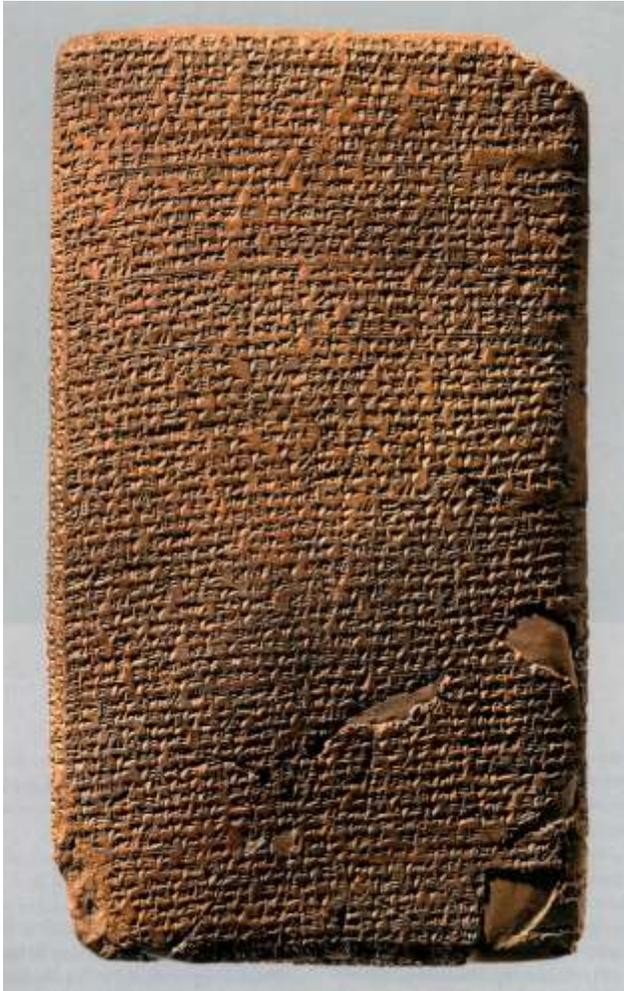
Throughout the Late Bronze Age, the Mitanni state was in almost constant conflict with the Ancient Egyptian Empire over the lands of the Levant. The formidable Egyptian armed forces were successfully obstructed in their capture of Northern Syria by the Mitanni, most notably due to their extreme expertise with horse-drawn, two wheeled chariots, and their use of the composite bow (Evans 2008: 194). Evidence of the Mitanni skill in horsemanship can be found in surviving manuals (Figure 3.1) on the training and racing of horses found at the Hittite site of Hattusa, located in modern-day Boğazköy, Turkey

Figure 3.1.   Clay Tablet from Hattusa written by Kikkuli, detailing horsemanship (From Benzel 2008: 158) ca. 14th Century B.C.

(Benzel 2008: 155). A clay tablet of Hittite script found there describes methods of training horses to keep them fit for use, and is attributed to the Mitanni horseman Kikkuli (Benzel 2008: 158). The conflicts with the Egyptian Empire continued up through the reign of Pharaoh Thutmose III (ca. 1479 – 1425 BC), and started to be resolved later in that century under Pharaoh Thutmose IV (Evans 2008: 194). Pharaoh Thutmose IV formed a diplomatic alliance with King Artatama I of the Mitanni, bringing

peace to the region (Schneider 2008: 253). The alliance was sealed with the marriage of a Mitanni princess to Pharaoh Thutmose IV, and the tradition of 18th Dynasty Pharaohs taking Mitanni princesses as wives was born (Evans 2008: 194).

This tradition would continue under Thutmose's son, Pharaoh Amunhotep III, who also married a Mitanni Princess. King Artatama's successor was named Shuttarna II, and his daughter Gilukhipa married Amunhotep III in the tenth year of his reign (Dodson 2004: 154). The Mitanni Queen Gilukhipa was later joined by another Mitanni wife of Amunhotep III, the princess Tadukhipa. Tadukhipa was the daughter of the Mitanni King Tushratta, successor of Shuttarna and brother of Gilukhipa (Evans 2008: 196). The relationship between the Mitanni and Egyptian states appear to be slightly strained at this point in the record, as detailed in the Amarna letter EA 24 (Bryan 2000: 84; Moran 1992: 68). Amunhotep III did not consent to give King Tushratta the high bride-price that was demanded by the Mitanni King, which in turn caused him to request golden statues for proof that the Pharaoh was truthful in his desire to marry his daughter. While the marriage did take place, Tushratta never received the statues from Amunhotep III (Moran 1992: 68-9). In addition, the King Tushratta warned Amunhotep III to not be taken in by any rumors being spread about either Tadukhipa or the Mitanni state itself (Bryan 2000: ph. 84)

However, the marriage between Princess Tadukhipa and Amunhotep III was not only a diplomatic alliance; Tushratta was attempting to strengthen his hold on the throne of the Mitanni, and the lavish dowry gifts he sent, along with his daughter were an attempt to gain overt and public support for the Egyptian Empire, and to solidify his

association with a large power in the Mediterranean world (Graff 2008: 159). Unfortunately, Princess Tadukhipa arrived late in the reign of Pharaoh Amunhotep III, as proven by the death of Pharaoh Amunhotep III a few years into their marriage. Upon the death of her husband, Queen Tadukhipa was married to his son and successor, Amunhotep IV/Akhenaten (Dodson 2004: 157). During the reign of Akhenaten, Tadukhipa disappeared. One theory that some scholars have is that she is later known as Kiya, a minor queen of Akhenaten's who is seen very rarely on the monuments of Akhetaten (Dodson 2004: 157). After year 11 of Akhenaten's reign, Kiya also disappeared, possibly disgraced or dead. Disgrace is more likely for Queen Kiya, as many of her monuments were later appropriated and changed to depict the various daughters of Akhenaten and his Great Royal Wife, Nefertiti (Dodson 2004: 155).

The Mitanni State did not fare well once Egypt came under the rule of Pharaoh Akhenaten. The Hittite Kingdom in Hatti was building in strength under the military leadership of King Suppiluliuma I. As the Hittite Kingdom rose in power, the Mitanni State began to crumble. Without Akhenaten's interference and assistance, Mitanni lost its position as a major power in the ancient Near East, and caught the eye of King Suppiluliuma I, who was looking to expand the Kingdom of the Hittites (Liverani 2008: 161). Soon after taking the throne, Suppiluliuma I launched a campaign of war on the Mitanni State, sacking the capital of Washshukanni and causing King Tushratta to flee in fear of losing his life (Collins 2008: 63). With the loss of Washshukanni, the Mitanni State officially collapsed and became a territory of the rapidly expanding Hittite Empire (Collins 2008: 63).

B.   The Hittites of Hatti

The Hittite Empire, arising ca. 1600 BC, became a highly powerful empire in the ancient Near East. As in Egypt and Mesopotamia, the Hittite empire arose in a fertile valley, that which surrounded the Halys River, where the early Hittite capital of Nesha was located (Müller-Karpe 2008: 170). Later, the capital moved from Nesha to the city of Hattusa, further north and to the west (Müller-Karpe 2008: 170). Once the move to Hattusa was made, the Hittite empire began to expand more rapidly, soon encompassing almost the entirety of Anatolia. However, it is to the southeast that the Hittite Empire most wanted to expand in, for the borders of the formidable Old Babylonian Empire cut off the Hittite route to the tin in central Asia (Müller-Karpe 2008: 170). Hittite King Hattusili I started the conflict with the Babylonians by capturing the city of Alalakh, and his successor Mursili I in turn captured Aleppo and Babylon, ending the Old Babylonian Empire (Müller-Karpe 2008: 170).

After the sacking of Old Babylon and with the death of King Telipinu, the Hittite Empire moved into the time period known as the Middle Kingdom, about which little is known. It is during this time that the Mitanni State of Naharin began to pressure the Hittite Empire, and the Egyptian Pharaoh Thutmose III captured the city of Aleppo (Müller-Karpe 2008: 170). The Middle Kingdom ended with the beginning of King Tudhaliya's I rule, and with the burning of the capital of Hattusa ca. 1360 B.C. However, under Tudhaliya I, the city of Aleppo was eventually recaptured, and the lengthy process of keeping the Mitanni state in check began (Müller-Karpe 2008: 171).

The Hittite Empire blossomed into the superpower it would be in the ancient Near East under King Tudhaliya I and his successors in the New Kingdom. King Suppiluliuma I of the Hatti, who ruled later in the New Kingdom, expanded the borders of the Hittite Empire even more than any of his predecessors. He conquered Aleppo and Carchemish, setting up his sons as the leaders of these vassal states, and launched attacks into the Mitanni Empire (Müller-Karpe 2008: 171). Under Suppiluliuma I, the capital of Hattusa in Hatti was strengthened, and turned into a base from which the King launched his military campaigns into the lands of Kizzuwadna and Isuwa (Collins 2008: 59). Eventually, the Hittite military under Suppiluliuma I sacked Washshukanni, the Mitanni capital city, adding the Mitanni lands to the Hittite Empire (Collins 2008: 63).

Hittite dealings with the surrounding states did not solely occur in conflict; diplomacy was also a tool of the Hittite Empire. Suppiluliuma I formed treaties and alliances using marriage agreements, much in the way the Pharaohs of the 18th Dynasty did. One of his daughters was married to the Hurrian heir to the throne, and Suppiluliuma I himself took a Babylonian princess for a bride (Müller-Karpe 2008: 171).

C.   The Kassite Babylonians of Mesopotamia

Utilizing the lingua franca of the Late Bronze Age, which was the Babylonian language of Akkadian, the Kassite Babylonian State implemented diplomatic relations with the Egyptian Empire, along with other major powers of the period, including the Hittites and the Assyrians (Evans 2008: 202). The Kassite Babylonian state was the

second of the Babylonian states to rule over the basin between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Mesopotamia (Liverani 2008: 161). When the Hittites of Hatti conquered the Old Babylonian Empire in 1595 BC, the Kassite people took control in the remains of Babylon and started to rebuild the state (Evans 2008: 200). Under the Kassite people, the Babylonian Empire became a major force to be reckoned with in the ancient Near East; however, this power was not obtained through active military campaigns (Evans 2008: 200). During the reign of King Kara-indash in the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1415 BC), there was an extensive system of exchange occurring between the Kassite Babylonian court and the Royal Court of Egypt (Evans 2008: 202). Some of the items used in the diplomatic exchanges between the Kassite Babylonian court and that of Egypt include sculptural works in ivory, ebony, and gold, jewelry, and raw goods. One of the raw materials in the highest demand from Babylonia by the Pharaohs of Egypt was Lapis Lazuli, a dark blue semi-precious stone used in jewelry, works of art, and to make paints (Evans 2008: 202). In return for the gifts from Babylon, Egypt sent gifts of her own, or extend diplomatic relations; Kara-indash's successor, King Kurigalzu I, was receiving tributes of gold from Egypt and married one of his princesses of the Babylonian court to Amunhotep III (Evans 2008: 202). Kurigalzu's successor, King Kadashman-Enlil I, also corresponded with Amunhotep III about diplomatic marriages (Avruch 2000: 163-164).

Under Akhenaten, relations with the Kassite Babylonian Empire became more strained. Kadashman-Enlil's successor to the Babylonian throne, King Burnaburiash II wrote to Akhenaten frequently, asking for gifts of "much fine gold" (Zaccagnini 2000:

143). When Akhenaten sent him a tribute of gold, King Burnaburiash II responded with another request for more gold, this time saying that the previous shipment of gold was unsatisfactory and going on to state that the Pharaoh should send another shipment, and should not "try to cheat me as you did the time before" (Zaccagnini 2000: 143). In another letter to Akhenaten, EA 9, Burnaburiash II referenced the relationship of previous Kassite Kings and the Pharaohs, stating: "From the time my ancestors and your ancestors declared a mutual friendship, they sent beautiful gifts to each other and did not refuse each other any request for beautiful things" (Zaccagnini 2000: 145). Ultimately, King Burnaburiash II received a great amount of wealth from the treasuries of Akhenaten, including gilded furniture, a golden statue of the king himself on a pedestal of silver, and precious goods from throughout the empire (Collins 2008: 61).

Chapter IV: History of the Cultural Contacts of the Egyptian Empire in the Ancient Near East

Both in the times leading up and throughout the Late Bronze Age, the Egyptian Empire formed a major link in the web of relationships that existed between the various powers in the ancient Near East. Due to the important cultural interactions which occurred between Egypt and its northern neighbors, the Hyksos, before the Late Bronze Age, this historic overview must begin during the Second Intermediate Period, beginning with the Hyksos Invasion in the Second Intermediate Period, and leading all the way up through the Battle of Kadesh between Pharaoh Ramesses II and the Hittite Army. The history of the Egyptian Empire includes a myriad of instances of cultural contact, with each interaction having a multitude of effects on the Egyptian culture, thus illustrating that the Egyptian was not a pure, 'bounded' culture at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, but rather was a powerful culture that continuously changed and transformed through the mixing of cultures. The highest intensity of that mixing, however, occurred during the Late Bronze Age in the ancient Near East.

A.   Cultural Contact in the Second Intermediate Period of Egypt

In the period just prior to the Late Bronze Age, the Second Intermediate Period of Egypt (1650 – 1549 B.C.), the Egyptian Empire was subject to an episode of extensive culture interaction, as the Empire was itself subject to invasion by the Hyksos people. Ruling from their capital Avaris in the Nile Delta, the Hyksos kings reigned in Lower Egypt as the 14th and 15th Egyptian Dynasty, which lasted approximately from 1650 to 1535 B.C. (Zivie-Coche 2011: 2; Dodson 2004: 114).

The Hyksos people were a culture from the Levant, possibly from the regions of the modern-day country of Palestine (Van Seters 1966: 4). The migration of Levantine peoples from both Palestine and Syria out of the Levant and into the Nile Delta can be seen much earlier, however. The settling of the Levantines in Lower Egypt possibly occurred as early as the 12th Dynasty, which lasted from 1994 to 1781 B.C., according to the archaeological record at the Hyksos capital of Avaris, modern-day Tell el-Daba (Dodson 2004: 114). After moving into the Nile Delta, the Hyksos seized control quickly, expelling the remnants of the 13th Egyptian Dynasty (1781 to 1650 B.C.), who fled south into Upper Egypt to rule at Thebes as the 16th Dynasty (1650 to 1590 B.C.) (Dodson 2004: 114, 116). The Hyksos rulers of the 14th and 15th Dynasties were focused on expansion; Avaris grew to an immense size, and the Hyksos conquered lands in the southern portion of Egypt. The Hyksos Pharaoh Khyan extended Hyksos rule into Upper Egypt, conquering the rival capital of Thebes and even as far south as the town of Gebelein (Dodson 2004: 114). The Hyksos Pharaohs who composed the 14th Dynasty are evident in the archaeological record primarily through the presence of royal names of seals and scarabs; however, not enough information is known to establish an order of succession for them (Dodson 2004: 115). The area in which the 14th Dynasty ruled was limited to just the Nile Delta, since the expansion of Hyksos influence in Egypt occurred under Khyan, the first Pharaoh of the 15th dynasty. The 16th Dynasty, and early portions of the 17th, ruled from Thebes contemporaneously to the Hyksos 15th Dynasty (1650 to 1558 B.C.) , and were in almost constant conflict over shifting borders with their northern, foreign competitors (Dodson 2004: 116).

Eventually retaking Thebes and pushing the border of their kingdom as far north as Abydos, the native Theban rulers were able to establish peace with the northern Hyksos rulers, though the terms and conditions of this treaty are unknown, and a relative peace lasted until the end of the 17th Dynasty (Dodson 2004: 116). The treaty ended when the Pharaoh Ahmose I recaptured Lower Egypt from the Hyksos rulers, reuniting the Two Lands under a native Egyptian Pharaoh (Dodson 2004: 122).

B.   Cultural Interaction in the Beginning of the New Kingdom

With the ousting of the Hyksos rulers and uniting of the two lands by the Pharaoh Ahmose I in 1549 B.C., the period in Egyptian history known as the New Kingdom began. The New Kingdom, coeval with the Late Bronze Age, was a period during which the Egyptian empire would grow to become one of the strongest empires in the ancient Near East (Schneider 2008: 251). One of the first examples of the many instances of cultural contacts during this period was the re-annexation of the lands of Nubia by the Egyptian Empire under Pharaoh Thutmose I (Schneider 2008: 252). Nubia was a critical source of wealth for the economy of the Egyptian Empire, as it was one of the main sources of gold; thus, the reacquisition of this important economic resource was vital to the Empire (Schneider 2008: 251).

During his time as Pharaoh, Thutmose I also led military campaigns deep into the Levant, with Egyptian forces reaching the Euphrates River (Schneider 2008: 252). His forays into Syria included the hunting of Syrian elephants, the tusks of which were consecrated to the Egyptian god Amun (Schneider 2008: 253). Following the reign of Pharaoh Thutmose I, the next crucial example of cultural contact in the early New

Kingdom was under the Pharaoh Hatshepsut. Hatshepsut is one of the most notable

Pharaohs of the 18th dynasty, since she was a woman who ruled as a Pharaoh, a

position reserved almost exclusively for men. She ruled as co-regent for her stepson,

later Pharaoh Thutmose III, since he was but a child when his father, Pharaoh

Thutmose II, died (Dodson 2004: 130-131). Her reign as Pharaoh is notable, not

simply because she was a female Pharaoh, but because of her actions during her rule.

As seen depicted in stone relief in her mortuary temple at Deir- El-Barhri,

Pharaoh Hatshepsut organized a large-scale expedition to the foreign Land of Punt,

whose modern-day location is perhaps Ethiopia or Somalia (Collins 2008: 36). The

expedition, consisting of a number of ships, brought back to Egypt many riches from

the Land of Punt, notably including ebony, myrrh resin and other incenses, exotic

animals, and foreign trees of myrrh and cinnamon (Liverani 2008: 166; Collins 2008:

36). Upon Pharaoh Hatshepsut's death, the now adult Thutmose III took the throne.

Under the rule of Pharaoh Thutmose III and through his military prowess, the

Egyptian Empire expanded to the north, stretching from Nubia south of Egypt, all the

way up into the Levantine coast. Pharaoh Thutmose III set up a system of governing

his newly acquired lands, installing a complex system of Egyptian governors and local

rulers who maintained loyalty to the throne of Egypt (Schneider 2008: 251). Pharaoh

Thutmose III's expansionist policies were driven by a number of contributing factors,

including the desire to create and maintain better trade routes, to acquire lands with

abundant resources, and to encourage the spread of Egyptian culture abroad, which in

turn heightens trustworthiness of their regional neighbors (Schneider 2008: 251).

Thutmose III's military campaigning encompassed approximately twenty years of his reign, and established the status of the Egyptian Empire as a superpower of the ancient Near East.

In addition to his conquest-based contact with the neighbors of the Empire, Pharaoh Thutmose III also developed a system of diplomacy based on marriages, as evidenced by the tomb of his three foreign wives (Schneider 2008: 254). Women of Levantine or Canaan origins, Manuwai, Manhata, and Maruta were buried in an undecorated tomb that was robbed of most of its contents in antiquity (Schneider 2008: 254-255).

Figure 4.1. Golden Gazelle Diadem ca. 1479 – 1425 B.C. of the foreign wives of Pharaoh Thutmose III, found in their tomb at Wadi Gabbanet El-Qurud (From Schneider 2008: 257).

However, the contents that remain, including a cup, a pair of pectorals, a headdress of rosettes, a diadem surmounted by two gazelle heads (Figure 4.1), and a set of jars, indicate that each of the foreign women held the title of 'Hmt Nswt", or "King's Wife," and were likely buried in the splendor befitting that station (Schneider 2008: 254-255).

About 30 years after Pharaoh Thutmose III's rule, the Pharaoh Amunhotep III ascended the throne of the Egyptian Empire, and brought about a golden age for the Egyptian Empire. He, much like Thutmose III, took a pair of foreign wives from each of the newly rising states in the ancient Near East, that of the Mitanni and that of the Kassite Babylonians (Weinstein 1998: 226). In addition to these four foreign brides,

Amarna Letters number 31 and 32, which detail correspondences between the King

Tarkhundaradu of Arzawa (a kingdom in Anatolia) and Amunhotep, the King's daughter

also became a possible fifth foreign bride to Egypt's Pharaoh (Weinstein 1998: 226).

Under Pharaoh Amunhotep III, most of the Levantine states were vassals to the

Egyptian Empire, sending tributes to the Pharaoh in exchange for the status of vassal,

which carried some semblance of safety with it (Weinstein 1998: 226). At the time, the

Levant was divided into a trio of districts for administrative purposes: Upi, Canaan, and

Amurru, with governors for each and minor administration left up to local officials

(Weinstein 1998: 226-228). Trade with these Levantine vassals and the other States of

the ancient Near East was at its height, with a complex system of exchange in place.

Amunhotep III's administration also traded may also include states in the Aegean, as

evidenced by the 'Aegean List' found in the mortuary temple of Amunhotep III

(Weinstein 1998: 237). This hieroglyphic inscription lists out fourteen different names

of possibly Aegean sites which had contact with Egypt at the time, and has been

interpreted as including cities such as Knossos and Ilios, or Troy (Weinstein 1998: 237-

238). The administration of the Egyptian Empire under Pharaoh Amunhotep III

flourished in accordance with the intercultural network of contact, which expanded

immensely under his reign.

C.   Cultural Interactions during the Amarna Period

In the middle of the Late Bronze Age was the Amarna Period, beginning roughly

around the mid-14th century B.C. and spanning approximately from 1348 to 1298 B.C.,

which brought religious and diplomatic chaos for the Egyptian Empire (Schneider 2008: 261; Dodson 2004: 142). Prior to the Amarna Period, the Egyptian Empire was at its height, tribute was flowing into the Treasury of the Pharaoh, and the land was prospering, but this would change upon the death of Amunhotep III. When his younger son (by his Great Royal Wife Queen Tiye) Amunhotep IV ascended to the throne of Egypt, he took control over one of the most powerful empires in the Mediterranean world, but would ultimately undermine its strength, and weakened the Empire's international reach during his 17 year reign (Schneider 2008: 261). Upon donning the Double Crown of Egypt, Amunhotep IV began one of the most influential rules in the history of the Egyptian Empire, becoming one of the most well-known religious fanatics of Egypt, imposing the first monotheistic religion on the Empire, one devoted to the sun god, Aten. In the end, his religious zeal caused him to be hated so vehemently by his successors that they would have attempted to wash it from history (Schneider 2008: 252). With his ascension to the throne of Egypt, Amunhotep IV married Nefertiti, whose name translates to "The Beautiful One has Arrived." With his wife, Amunhotep IV begat at least 6 daughters, and created a time of extreme religious turmoil for the Empire of Egypt (Dodson 2004: 147).

Around year 5 of the reign of Amunhotep IV, changes were made that jeopardized the future of his reign. In year 5, Amunhotep IV and Nefertiti changed their official names and began the construction of the new capital of the Egyptian Empire at the site of Akhetaten, which had been built in the previously unoccupied sands of modern-day Tel El-Amarna (Aldred 1988: 269). Amunhotep IV became

Akhenaten and Nefertiti added Neferneferuaten to the beginning of her name; these names both commemorate and pay homage to the god Aten, the Egyptian visible sun-disk (Dodson 2004: 142, 156). The cult of this single deity, the Visible Sun Disk, soon eclipsed the traditional religious cults of the Two Lands, beginning with Akhenaten and Nefertiti's individual devotion to the Aten. Soon after moving to Akhetaten, Pharaoh Akhenaten banned the traditional cults of the gods, and made their public worship illegal in favor of the worship of the Solar Disk (Hornung 1999: 48).

Many of the foreign policies and relationships that were formed during the reigns of his father Amunhotep III and grandfather Thutmose IV fell into disuse and disarray during the reign of Akhenaten. This was particularly true when those policies did not relate to his new solar cult (Collins 2008: 61, 64). This was due to Akhenaten's religious fanaticism, his lack of interest in affairs of the state, and his complete devotion to the Aten and its worship. However, as the new official patron god of Egypt, the Aten did not forgo patronage of the other states of the ancient Near East. As described in Akhenaten's "Great Hymn to the Aten", the Sun Disk's

"…*Rays embrace the lands*

To the limit of all you have created…

The foreign lands of Syria and Nubia,

And the land of Egypt –

You set all in their place and care for their needs,

They all have their nourishment, their lifetimes are determined.

Tongues differ in speech,

Their characters as well;

Their skin colors differ, for you distinguish the peoples."

(Hornung 1999: 79, 81)

The Aten was seen, primarily by his most ardent worshipers, as a deity that transcended the national borders of the states of the ancient Near East. The sun's rays shone all throughout the known lands, and thus the Aten was a deity for all of humanity, no matter the culture (Hornung 1999: 85). For those who worship the Aten, the deified sun disk was seen as a deity at the head of the 'Religion of Truth', and as a universal deity that could unite all lands under its worship (Hornung 1999: 85).

While many of the foreign relations that had been created under the reigns of Akhenaten's father and grandfather deteriorated during his reign, foreigners were not completely absent from the court at the new city of Akhetaten. Foreign peoples from across the ancient Near East, including the Hittites, Mitanni, and Babylonians, are certainly present in the new city of Akhetaten, especially in Year 12 of the Pharaoh's reign (Aldred 1988: 279). This influx of visiting foreign delegations is depicted in the tomb reliefs of Meryre and Huya, nobles from Akhetaten (Aldred 1988: 279). The foreign representatives came from across the Empire and throughout the Mediterranean world, and brought with them tribute and gifts to the royal family, attempting to attain the favor of the Heretic Pharaoh. The reliefs in the tombs show emissaries from cross Asia Minor, Africa, the Near East, and even the Aegean coming to Akhetaten to pay homage to the Pharaoh; the Hittites, Mitanni, Syrians, Canaanites, Libyans, people from Punt, and possibly Cyprians are shown bringing fabulous gifts to place at the feat of

Pharaoh (Aldred 1988: 279-80). Some of the gifts shown include ingots of copper, chariots, rhyta drinking cups made of gold and silver, incenses and exotic gums, bowls and vases, weapons, exotic animals including lions, cheetahs, antelope, and oryx, ostrich feathers and eggs, cattle and horses, logs of ebony, and even parades of slaves (Aldred 1988: 280-281). The flow of tribute into the treasuries of Egypt was still strong, due to foreign dignitaries wanted to become favored by Pharaoh, a very desirable position. The symbol of this status, the Golden *shebu* collars, are depicted in temple reliefs as being handed out to officials whom Akhenaten had deemed deserving of his favor (Aldred 1988: 281).

As the Amarna period continued, cultural connections began to weaken as Akhenaten ignored his relationships with the foreign powers of his day (Aldred 1988: 282). There was fighting amongst the other powers, leading to the downfall of the Mitanni State to the Hittites, and many Egyptian vassal cities such as Byblos and Sumura in the Levant fell to foreign armies, or simply revoked their loyalty in order to survive in a rapidly changing world (Aldred 1988: 282). The sending of tribute and gifts dwindled into non-existence as pestilence, war, and a traveling group of bandits known as the Apiru stormed the world of the ancient Near East, bringing unending chaos to the Empire of Egypt, its lands, and its neighbors (Aldred 1988: 283).

The downfall of the Amarna Era began with the unyielding stream of deaths that began to plague the Royal Family (Aldred 1988: 283). Five of Akhenaten's daughters are thought to have died during his reign, starting with Meketaten, whose death is recorded in Chamber Gamma of the Royal Tomb at Akhetaten (Aldred 1988: 283). The

Pharaoh's mother, Queen Tiye, also died during the later portion of his reign, no doubt casting a large shadow upon the Pharaoh and his family (Aldred 1988: 284). Queen Nefertiti disappeared around Year 14 of Pharaoh Akhenaten's reign, replaced briefly by the minor Queen Kiya, discussed above, who possibly was the same as the Mitanni princess Tadukhipa wedded Akhenaten early in his reign (Aldred 1988: 285-286). The great many deaths in the royal household may be attributed to the pestilences that were plaguing the Levant at the time, but that has yet to be confirmed (Aldred 1988: 283). Surrounded by death, Akhenaten died around year 17 of his reign, after which Egyptian succession is extremely jumbled up until Akhenaten's son, Pharaoh Tutankhaten, later Tutankhamun, took the Egyptian throne as a child.

D.   Cultural Interactions during the Ramassid Dynasty

After the 18th dynasty ended with the Pharaoh Horemheb in 1298 B.C., the vizier Ramesses succeeded him, becoming the Pharaoh Ramesses I (Dodson 2004: 153). Pharaoh Ramesses I did not reign for very long, but his son, Pharaoh Seti I, began the restoration of the Egyptian Empire's reputation of a major power in the ancient Near East, beginning with a military campaign into the Levant against the Asiatic princes there (Dodson 2004: 158). Recorded in a stela found at Beth-Shan, Pharaoh Seti I is documented as having sent two of his armies against the local rulers of the towns of Beth-Shan and Yanoam (Pritchard 1955: 253). Against Beth-Shan, Seti sent the First Army of Ra, while the First Army of Set marched on Yanoam; both cities fell against the might of the Egyptian military, and Seti I's power in the Levant was assured (Pritchard 1955: 253). After re-conquering these Levantine towns, Pharaoh Seti I continued to

subdue Egyptian vassal states that had rebelled during the Amarna Period, including the

Shasu, a nomadic people of the Sinai region, the Retenu people, the Hittites, and then

the Libyans (Pritchard 1955: 254). These different military campaigns are illustrated on

the northern exterior wall of the Hypostyle Hall at the temple of Karnak. Inscriptions

tell that Pharaoh Seti quelled the rebellions in many of the different Levantine cultural

groups, including "desolate[ing] the land of Kadesh and the land of Amurru," both of

which were under Hittite control at the time (Pritchard 1955: 254). The conflicts

between the 19th Dynasty Pharaohs and the Hittites continued under Seti I's successor,

Pharaoh Ramesses II (Pritchard 1955: 255). He too battled at Kadesh against the

Hittite forces, taking a number of divisions of the army of the Egyptian Empire,

including those under the patron gods of Ra, Ptah, Amun, and Set (Pritchard 1955:

256). The Pharaoh found himself hard-pressed by the Hittite forces in his attack on

Kadesh, only to be rescued by a detachment of Egyptian troops that was not one of the

four divisions he led to Kadesh initially (Pritchard 1955: 256). The loss at Kadesh to the

Hittites did not slow down Ramesses' military campaigns. During later campaigns the

Northern Levant, Ramesses II and his troops conquered a couple of the important

Asiatic fortresses, including Merom, Salem, Kerep, and Deper (Pritchard 1955: 256).

While Ramesses II was indeed one of the Egyptian Empire's most adept military

leaders, he also was extremely adept at navigating other, more diplomatic forms of

cultural contact. In year 34 of Ramesses II's reign, he and the Hittite king Hattusili III

made a treaty between the Empires of Egypt and Hatti (Pritchard 1955: 256). Beginning

with the statement that the treaty was intended to "establish (good) peace (and) good

brotherhood (worthy of) great (king)ship forever," the treaty included a declaration of brotherhood between the two rulers, a statement renouncing all future aggression between the two Empires, a military alliance of mutual defensive aid, a mutual agreement to protect the lines of succession, and a section detailing the extradition of fugitives (Pritchard 1955: 202-203). The treaty included a royal diplomatic marriage, as was customary to New Kingdom Egyptian diplomatic relations. The daughter of King Hattusili III came to Egypt, accompanied by her father, married to Pharaoh Ramesses II, and was given the name MaatneferuRa (Pritchard 1955: 257-258). This official union sealed the treaty between the Hittite and Egyptian Empires, and marks one of the most important instances of cultural contact between Egypt and one of its more powerful neighbors.

E.   Egyptian Perspective on Foreigners

Before analyzing the cultural relationships built between Egyptians and their various neighbors, it is important to understand the Egyptian concept of foreigners. Who were the foreigners for the Egyptian people? Egyptian perspective on foreigners stemmed from their characterization of both themselves and of other groups of people, and Egyptian art reflects these perceptions in how foreigners are depicted.

One of the first identifying characteristics of foreigners in Ancient Egyptian art is that of their dress. In typical depictions in art of native Egyptians, the men wear knee-length kilts and go bare-chested or wear a longer skirted tunic with shorter sleeves. Women were depicted wearing form-fitting dresses with straps that often, though not always, covered their breasts or more flowing, pleated dresses. Both styles of Egyptian

dress are seen in the depictions of Egyptians throughout much of the Late Bronze Age,

from temple reliefs to copies of the funerary papyrus The Book of the Dead, like that of

the noblewoman Nedjmet (Collins 2008: 110-111). Jewelry was often worn, including

collars and bracelets like those found during tomb excavations across Egypt.

Depictions of foreigners, however, were very different. Wall paintings in the

Theban tomb 100 of Rekhmire, a Vizier under Pharaoh's Thutmose III and Amunhotep

II, depict various groups of foreigner emissaries bringing tribute from their lands to

Egypt, represented in horizontal registers (Graff 2008: 260). In terms of clothing styles

of the foreigners, these depictions are very informative (Figure 4.2). The registers each

are populated by foreigners from different regions, including the lands of Punt, Keftiu,

Nubia, and Syria.

Individuals in the uppermost register are labeled as coming from the land of

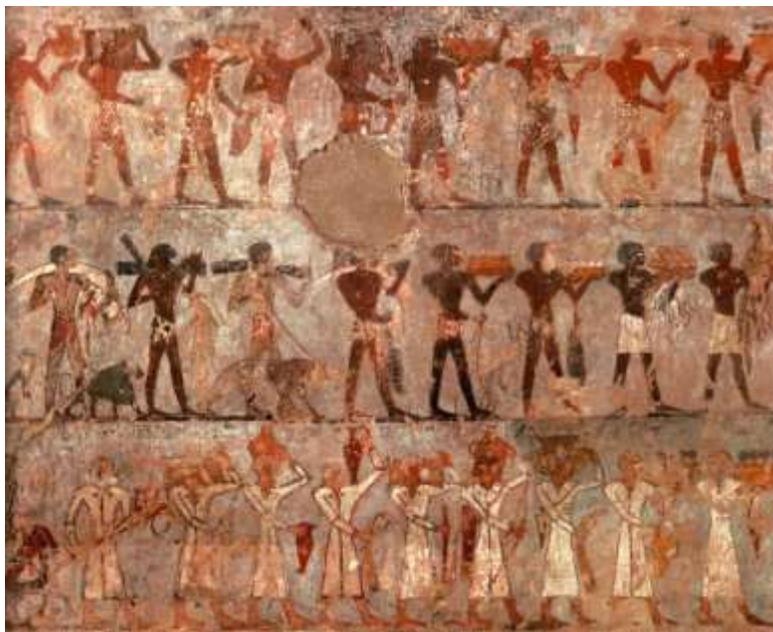Punt, a neighbor to the south of Egypt that the famous female Pharaoh Hatshepsut sent

trading expeditions to. They are easily identifiable by their unique kilts, which extend down further than Egyptian ones, and appear to have some sort of pattern along the hems (Graff 2008: 260-261). The second row down is filled with men bearing tribute from a place called "*Keftiu*" (Graff 2008: 260-

Figure 4.2.   Wall painting depicted foreign emissaries bringing tribute to Egypt from Tomb of Rekhmire (Theban Tomb 110) ca. 18th Dynasty. Register containing the Emissary from Punt is not included (From Graff 2008: 260-261).

261). The exact meaning of this word is not known to modern scholars, but from

depictions of the people from Keftiu in the tomb of Rekhmire, include objects such as

animal-headed rhyta (a type of drinking vessel) indicate that Keftiu is more than likely a

word for the Aegean or Crete (Graff 2008: 260). The men of Keftiu are depicted

wearing heavily decorated kilts, in a variety of patterns and colors. To differentiate

them further from typical Egyptian kilts, the kilts on men from Keftiu also extend down

further, similar to those worn by the emissaries from Punt (Graff 2008: 260-261).

The individuals in the third register from the top originate in the land of Nubia,

and many are almost indistinguishable in terms of dress from depictions of lay

Figure 4.2.   Wall painting depicted foreign emissaries bringing tribute to Egypt from Tomb of Rekhmire (Theban Tomb 110) ca. 18th Dynasty.

Egyptians of the time period, wearing the typical Egyptian knee-length skirts. This might possibly be due to Nubia already being part of the Egyptian Empire. However, some of the emissaries from Nubia also wear shorter skirts that are depicted as being made of animal skins, probably bovine (Graff 2008: 260). The final register of foreign emissaries bearing tribute is populated by men from Syria, commonly referred to as 'Asiatics'. There were a number of Asiatic tribes and groups in contact with the Egyptian Empire, but the Syrians were notable in that they brought horses as tribute to the Pharaoh (Benzel 2008: 155). The Syrian men wear the most notable dress, consisting of very long white robes with sleeves, with color around the hems, and which gather in the middle of the chest (Graff 2008: 260-261). Syrians would have been immediately recognizable to Egyptians who saw them depicted in this way, simply by the way they dress. Egyptian methods of depicting the various clothing styles of foreigners would have made differentiation between them much easier, in addition to between the foreigners and the Egyptian citizens (Graff 2008: 260).

In addition to the various characteristics of distinct foreign clothing, Egyptian depictions of foreigners also make them notable through their physical characteristics. People from Nubia tend to be painted with pigments much darker than those of native Egyptians, owing to their much darker skin. Peoples from Keftiu have comparable to the Egyptians, as do some depictions of the people from Punt (Graff 2008: 260-261). The Asiatic tribes prove a bit more difficult, as they are not always labeled in art as to their specific tribe. Common characteristics in depictions of Asiatic peoples include pointy beards and often yellow-tinted skin (Graff 2008: 267-268).

Archaeology at the site of Medinet Habu, the mortuary temple of Ramesses III, led to the discovery of a set of depictions of foreign leaders (Figure 4.3). While these depictions may not be completely accurate to the peoples, they faithfully represent the way that the Egyptian Empire viewed their neighbors (Graff 2008: 268). All four have the triangular beards and long

Figure 4.3.   Glazed decorative tiles from Medinet Habu ca. 1184 – 1153 B.C., the Mortuary Temple of Ramesses III, depicting the bound leaders of the Asiatic Tribes (From Graff 2008: 268-269).

robes typical of illustrations of Asiatic tribesmen. The first, an Amorite leader, is bald with yellow skin, but has a full beard. The second is unique, showing a leader of the Philistine tribe, who has skin colored much more similarly to Egyptians in depictions, but has the Asiatic pointy goatee (Graff 2008: 269). The third tile shows a Hittite leader, with yellow skin like the Syrian and Amorite, full head of black hair and a full beard. The final, a Syrian leader, is shown with yellow skin and long black hair and pointy goatee (Graff 2008: 267-269). The patterns of their robes are similar in some respects, but it is their physical features that differentiate them from one another, and in turn from Egyptians (Graff 2008: 268-269).

The quintessential 'otherness' of foreigners in the Egyptian way of thinking is illustrated in how Egyptian artists depicted their neighbors. The men from foreign tribes and states were shown to be fundamentally different from the Egyptians through both their physical characteristics and their chosen types of dress (Graff 2008: 260-261). In addition to being essentially 'non-Egyptian', foreigners were often depicted, as they are in the tomb of Rekhmire in Thebes, as subservient to the Egyptian Empire, bringing tribute from faraway lands. When not bringing tribute, foreigners were depicted as bound in ropes, held captive at the mercy of the more powerful Egyptian Empire (Graff 2008: 268; Zivie-Coche 2011: 4). Foreigners were seen, through Egyptian eyes, as being "like wild animals…living outside Egypt's borders," and representative of the forces of chaos (Graff 2008: 268). Shown bound and subservient, foreigners were forever illustrated in subdued poses by the Egyptian Empire, and thus emphasizing the importance of maintaining Egyptian socio-political superiority win the ancient Near East (Graff 2008: 268).

Chapter V: Trade and Cultural Exchange

One instance in which cultural change occurs is in the wake of relationships built via trade and commerce. It is not uncommon for trade and commerce to occur between entities without the existence or creation of hierarchical ordering (i.e. complete dominance of one over another), and when such exchange occurs, it can result in hybridization among the cultures involved. For state-level societies, from the smaller states to those which modern scholars call empires, trade and commerce is vital for survival. It is only through trade, either with colonial outposts or with neighbor states, that specialized craftsmen can obtain the raw goods needed to create the prestige items required by the elites.

One example of the importance of trade in the ancient Near East is the very early history of the Mesopotamian states, the Ubaid Period of 5000 -2800 B.C. (Gosden 2004: 43). The Ubaid Period is characterized by the colonization of the northern regions of Mesopotamia, Syria, and Anatolia by those southern Mesopotamian states. This was done to obtain raw goods such as wood and metal, things unobtainable in the southernmost portion of Mesopotamia (Gosden 2004: 43). Raw materials such as metal and wood are necessary for the creation of much more utilitarian and basic goods, but can also be seen as a commodity to other states without access to those resources. In addition, colonial settlements can be established in order to obtain access to precious goods, such as gold, silver, ebony, and gemstones of all varieties; the establishment of colonies is based on the needs and desires of the culture, and the colonies' ability to fulfill those needs through providing material goods (Gosden 2004: 43).

A.   Ancient Near Eastern Trade Networks

The states and empires around the Mediterranean Sea and the ancient Near East had an impressive system of trade and exchange of goods during the Late Bronze Age. Material goods were fairly well divided amongst the various portions of the region, fueling the establishment of trade centers, routes, and relationships based on commerce. The two kinds of fibers for cloth production in the region were wool, which was found in western Asia and imported through the Hittite peoples, and flax, grown in Egypt (Liverani 2008: 162). The variety in cloth and fibers used in the ancient Near East would contribute to the diversity in clothing amongst the cultures. That diversity, seen in depictions of foreigners such as the tomb paintings of Rekhmire (Figure 4.2), is important to the cultural diversity of the region (Graff 2008: 260-261).

Food was another vital commodity, with beer being from Mesopotamia and Egypt, while wine was the drink of choice in the Levant and Anatolia. Oil, likely both for consumption and domestic or ritual use, had a variety of sources (Liverani 2008: 162). The main source of oil was the olives of Anatolia and the Levant, but could also be made from sesame from Mesopotamia or flax seed from Egypt. Fruits and sweets were also imported and exported, including dates from Mesopotamia, and figs and honey from Egypt (Liverani 2008: 162).

Metals were a very important trade commodity in the ancient Near East, as they were used not only to make high status items such as those found in the tombs of pharaohs, but also were used to make important utilitarian objects such as swords and knives. Tin was only found in Afghanistan, to be imported by the Mesopotamian state,

while copper and bronze production was done in large scale on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus (Liverani 2008: 163). Silver came from Anatolia, while monopoly on gold was held by the Egyptians through their lordship over the land of Nubia (Liverani 2008: 162). Like precious metals, semi-precious stones were also in high demand in the markets and workshops of craftsmen across the ancient Near East, leading to their import from faraway lands. Lapis Lazuli, a stone in high demand in the Egyptian Empire, was imported from ancient Afghanistan, while stones such as carnelian and agate would be traded all the way from India and Iran (Liverani 2008:163). With the shipments of all of these raw goods flowing into the ancient Near East, vast markets of foreign merchants were needed, selling the wares from across the region to be imported and exported. These raw materials were then crafted into the extravagant personal items of kings, queens, Pharaohs, and statesmen from the different civilizations across the region.

In addition to raw goods such as metal, woods, and stones, technologies and inventions were also traded and integrated into the local customs. The Egyptian Empire imported horses from the Mitanni and from Syria for its chariots, and also imported Levantine glass, while producing their own as well (Liverani 2008: 163). These examples of goods which were exported from the various states and empires of the ancient Near East indicate the level of complexity of the commerce system of the Late Bronze Age. The sheer amount of traded goods, whether they were required or desired by the various cultures, would necessitate the development of intricate relationships and commerce networks. Out of these networks of commerce came cultural

transformation through the sharing of ideas, typically in the form of artistic motifs and methods of production.

One of the best documented examples out of the above mentioned trade commodities, is the Egyptian trade of imported Nubian Gold. The first appearance of gold in Egypt occurs long before it became an empire, in the Predynastic Period, and its use would continue up through the end of the Empire. Gold in Egypt would have come from one of a pair of sources: deposits in dried up river beds, referred to as *wadis*, or from veins of gold found in formations of quartz Schorsch 2001: 55). In the early history of the Egyptian Empire, there are sources of the precious metal inside the borders of the state; however, as the demand for gold increased, the Egyptians had to look to their gold-rich neighbor, known in antiquity as Ta-Setj (Lit: Land of the Bows), or by its newer names of Nubia and Sudan (Jiménez-Serrano 2006: 142). The Egyptians conquered their neighbors to the south during the Late Bronze Age, and began to use the land of Nubia for the mining and refining of gold (Klemm et al. 2001: 649). This is documented in tomb inscriptions of the Egyptian Overseer Amuny, who "forced their (the Nubian tribes') chiefs to wash the gold", which would indicate not only the control of the Nubian mines for gold, but also the subjugation of the peoples who lived there (Klemm et al. 2001: 649). Gold would soon become one of the Egyptian Empire's most important exports, when its demand, both at home and abroad, was at record heights. The extreme wealth of the Egyptian Empire is exemplified in the sheer amounts of gold artifacts found in the excavations in the Empire, mainly documented in the burials of nobles and royalty.

In the archaeological record, there is evidence of the complex and intricate relationships of the ancient Near East, which indicates direct interactions between the different cultures of the ancient Near East, and how those interactions caused ongoing cultural change. Off the Turkish coast, underwater archaeologists have worked on excavating a Late Bronze Age ship loaded with tradable goods, known as the Uluburun Shipwreck (Pulak 2008:

Figure 5.1.   Rock Crystal beads found in the Uluburun Shipwreck ca. 1300 B.C. (From Pulak 2008: 316).

289). Loaded with goods from across the ancient Near East, the Uluburun shipwreck exemplifies the wealth of goods being traded in the Late Bronze Age.   The cargo hold of the ship was loaded with artifacts such as copper and tin ingots as well as ingots of glass, jars from Canaan, large pithoi storage jars, remnants of ebony logs, elephant tusks, whole ostrich egg shells, spices such as coriander, cumin, safflower, and sumac, beads of glass and faience (Figure 5.1), seals of hematite and rock crystal, and a gold scarab bearing the name of Queen Nefertiti (Figure 5.2), along with many other manufactured goods (Pulak 2008: 290, 294-6, 358, 362-3). The wealth of this single trading ship points not only to the sprawling trade network of the ancient Near East, but also to the sheer amount of goods traded in antiquity. The raw goods found in the Uluburun shipwreck come from a variety of locales, signaling that the ship was likely returning home with a payload of goods from a trading expedition (Pulak 2008: 289).

The Uluburun shipwreck has been dated to around the end of the fourteenth century, B.C., utilizing both absolute and relative dating techniques (Pulak 2008: 297). It is particularly during the Late Bronze Age that trade was at its height in the ancient Near East, leading to a time of cultural contact in prolific proportions. The Levantine tribes of Canaan and Syria were both seafaring powers during this century, and their routes stretched from Egypt to the Aegean states and Cyprus, as evidenced by the goods found in the Uluburun shipwreck that come from these diverse locations and cultures (Pulak 2008: 297). In addition to trade by sea, the Levant was also home to large trading centers with the other states and empires

Figure 5.2. Scarab with Nefertiti's Throne Name found in the Uluburun Shipwreck ca. 18th Dynasty (From Pulak 2008: 358).

in the ancient Near East, including the Hittites, Mesopotamians, and the Egyptians. Intercultural trade was a major commercial business during the Late Bronze Age, and was one of the main vehicles for cultural contact and interaction (Pulak 2008: 297).

B.   Ancient Near Eastern Marriages

In addition to the cultural contacts between the states and empires of the ancient Near East that were based upon commerce and the exchange of goods, there was another type of hybridizing connection being formed: intermarriage. Gift exchange, an elite form of trade in the ancient Near East, became extremely popular during the Late Bronze Age, with the leaders of many of the states and empires sending

tributes and gifts back and forth. While gifts made of gold, silver, tin, and precious

stones were typically the caliber of the inter-elite exchange, another gift which could

and was sent between the rulers was that of their daughters. Princesses of royal or

elite blood were married to powerful foreign elites, either as the settlement of treaties

or as offers of alliances. These types of interactions are common among the Egyptian

Empire and its neighbors, in particular among the Mitanni and the Kassite Babylonians.

Notably, even diplomatic correspondences between the Egyptians and their rivals, such

as the Hittites, touched on the subject of marriage. Foreign wives, when arriving in

Egypt, brought a great deal of their cultural traditions with them, in the form of

religious cults, seen through the synchronization of new deities such as Qatesh, and

material culture, as evidenced by the large amounts of personal belongings that make

up elite dowries.

It is documented in the records that Pharaoh Thutmose IV took a Mitanni

Princess as a wife, and in doing so sealed a diplomatic treaty with the Mitanni King

Artatama I (Schneider 2008: 253). However, the identity of this princess is completely

unknown, as she is not named in the diplomatic treaty, and none of Thutmose IV's

wives are listed as being foreigners. The identity of this unknown princess may possibly

be that of Mutemwiya, the mother of his successor, the Pharaoh Amunhotep III; Queen

Mutemwiya is only ever seen on monuments constructed by her son, quite possibly due

to her foreign origins (Dodson 2004: 135). This would indicate that all of the remaining

Pharaohs in Thutmose IV's dynasty had Mitanni blood, coinciding with instances of close

ties between the two cultures.

Thutmose IV's son, Amunhotep III, took a pair of Mitanni wives, the princesses Gilukhipa and Tadukhipa. Princess Gilukhipa, daughter of Shuttarna II, arrived in the tenth year of Amunhotep III's reign, and her arrival is documented on both a series of scarabs and in a letter from King Tushratta 81, which tell of the large group of attendants who accompanied the queen, totaling 310 men and women (Moran 1992: 81). Princess Tadukhipa is the daughter of Gilukhipa's brother, Tushratta, and marries Amunhotep III much later into his reign. Much like her aunt, Queen Tadukhipa arrived in the Empire of her husband with a large retinue (Evans 2008: 196). The dowry
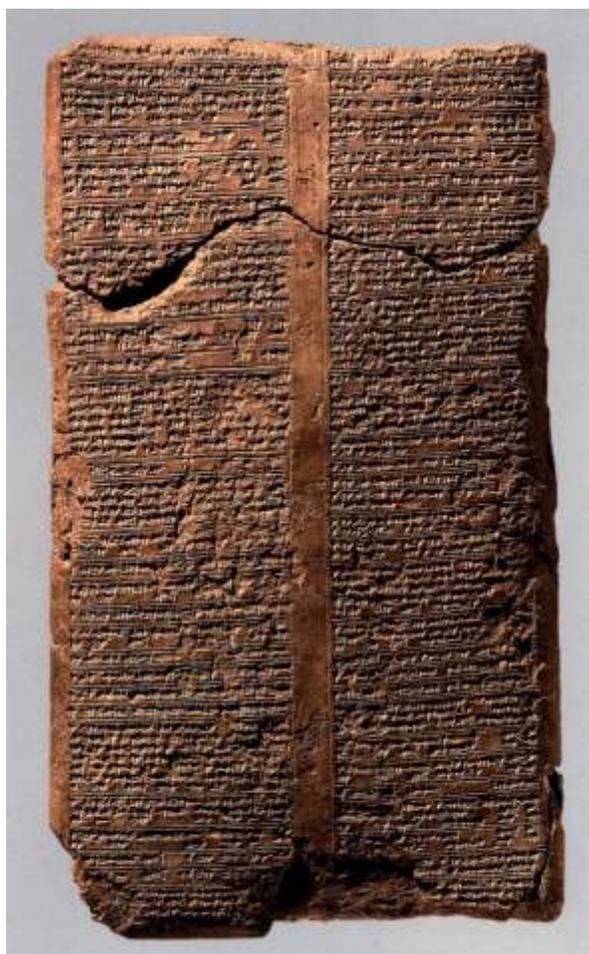
Figure 5.3.   Clay Tablet from Tell El-Amarna from King Tushratta of the Mitanni to Pharaoh Amunhotep III detailing the dowry of Princess Tadukhipa (From Graff 2008: 159).

given to Pharaoh Amunhotep III by Tushratta is detailed in a clay tablet found at the site of Akhetaten, at modern day Tell el-Amarna in Egypt (Figure 5.3). Tablet EA 25, part of the famous set of tablets known as the Amarna Letters, lists some of the items princess Tadukhipa brought with her for Naharin: necklaces, bracelets, and jewelry of all kinds for the princess, clothes such as shifts, dresses, and scarves, and necessities such as mirrors, bowls, religious items, and a set of silver combs (Evans 2008: 196).

The extravagance of the dowry gift again points not only to the close relationship between the thrones of Mitanni and Egypt, but also of Tushratta's attempts at strengthening his own claims to the Mitanni throne (Graff 2008: 159). In addition, Tadukhipa brought with her to the Egyptian Empire the cultural traditions of the Mitanni, in the form of chosen manners of dress and decoration, as well as the knowledge and usage of the basic customs of the Mitanni. The closeness of the relationship between the Pharaoh, the leader of an immense military power of the Late Bronze Age, and the Mitanni would also be useful in keeping the peace in the region for the Mitanni elite.

Marriages between Pharaohs and foreign princesses were not limited to the Mitanni elite, however. Pharaohs are also documented as taking Babylonian wives as well. However, these marriages were unidirectional, as is documented in one of the Amarna Letters between the Babylonian King and the Pharaoh Amunhotep III (Avruch 2000: 163). In Amarna Letters EA 2, King Kadashman-Enlil I suggests that, should he send one of his daughters to join the ranks of Pharaoh Amunhotep III's wives, the Pharaoh should return this gift in kind by sending one of his own daughters to wed the Babylonian king; Amunhotep's response leaves no room for questioning his decision when it comes to this query: "From time immemorial, no daughter of the King of Egypt is given to anyone." (Avruch 2000: 163). Kadashman-Enlil I's counterproposal is that Pharaoh supply him with a beautiful wife, sent to the court of Babylon "As if she were your daughter", likely referring to a wealthy dowry that should, in Kadashman-Enlil's mind, rightfully accompany a royal princess of Egypt(Avruch 2000: 163). However,

after proposing such a deceptive plan, the Babylonian King concedes, and sent one of the royal daughters of Babylon to Egypt to become a bride of Amunhotep (Avruch 2000: 164). Marriages and the trade of daughters had become one of the most important diplomatic interactions in the day; however, this was an unidirectional process of integration, rather than two-way marriage exchanges. While foreign princesses were accepted as brides by the Egyptian elite, Egyptian princesses were never permitted to wed foreign kings. There is, however, one notable example of an Egyptian Queen marrying a foreigner.

As detailed in the annals of King Suppiluliuma I, during the Hittite campaign season when Suppiluliuma was leading the Hittite military against the country of Amqa, more than likely a region of the former Babylonian state, he received something very strange. An envoy had arrived for him from an unnamed Egyptian Queen, referred to in history only as Dakhamunzu, which might be a Hittite transcription of the Egyptian title of 'The Queen' (Pritchard 1955: 319; Steadman and McMahon 2011: 588). The envoy, an Egyptian named Khani, brought to Suppiluliuma I one of the most unexpected requests from an extremely unexpected source. The Pharaoh of Egypt, whose name is transcribed into Hittite as Nibhururiya, had died and his widow was beseeching the Hittite King to send one of his sons to become her royal consort (Pritchard 1955: 319). Her plea is translated as follows:

"*My Husband has died. I do not have a son. They say you have many sons. If you would give me a son, I would make him my husband. I do not want to pick out a servant of mine and make him my husband…I am afraid.*"

(Steadman and McMahon 2011: 588)

King Suppiluliuma I sent his chamberlain Hattusa-ziti to Egypt with Khani in order to determine whether Dakhamunzu's letter was in fact truthful. Hattusa-ziti returned to Suppiluliuma with another correspondence from Dakhamunzu, this one much less diplomatic. The Queen pointed out that if she had been in possession of an heir, she would not be offering the position of Pharaoh to a foreign prince and would also not be advertising her distress to a foreign king (Steadman and McMahon 2011: 588). Suppiluliuma relents, and sends his son Zannanza with the envoy and his chamberlain back to Egypt. Zannanza, however, would never make it to the Egyptian Queen, and would never live to become a Pharaoh (Steadman and McMahon 2011: 588). While on route to Egypt, Zannanza is killed, and Dakhamunzu is never heard from again. The identities of Dakhamunzu and the deceased Pharaoh Nibhururiya are still disputed today, but many scholars agree that Dakhamunzu was probably Queen Ankhesenamun, widow to Pharaoh Tutankhamun (Steadman and McMahon 2011: 588). The almost-marriage between the Hittite prince Zannanza and Dakhamunzu, the Queen of Egypt, is significant, for it indicates not only the level of communication among the various states of the ancient Near East, but also the growing relationship between the Hittite and Egyptian Empires.

Chapter VI: Cultural Change in the Egyptian Empire

The forms of cultural transformation resulting from cultural contact in the Egyptian Empire include acculturation, syncretism, creolization, and hybridization. As described above, acculturation is the process of creating new cultural forms through the assimilation and naturalizing of foreign ideas, beliefs, and customs. Acculturation was traditionally described as an unidirectional process of cultural change, but is now understood to be a multi-directional process of cultural change which occurred in regions such as the ancient Near East through various forms of intensive cultural interaction. Syncretism is the active process of creating new cultural forms, typically within the religious sphere, through the combination of different cultural elements. Much like acculturation, syncretism occurs within a power dynamic, and can include overtones of resistance and disharmony. Creolization is the creation of new cultural forms out of elements of other preexisting cultures, but specifically within the sphere of a locational displacement or diaspora. Hybridization is the creation of transcultural forms through cultural mixing, typically in the form of colonial relationships, and carries the idea of the mixing of possibly disharmonious elements.

One frequent instance of contact in the ancient Near East involved violent encounters: small-scale raids of foreign lands, full-scale war between cultures, and then also the treaties that are drawn up as a result of war and conquest. The connection between cultural change and forms of colonialism in the ancient Near East has an early place in the history of the states there, going back to the very earliest form of imperial government: the Mesopotamian empire under Sargon of Akkad (Gosden 2004: 41).

Under Sargon, the Mesopotamian region was unified into a single State, through his successful conquests and diplomacy. After solidifying the Mesopotamian Empire, Sargon led its armies deep into the lands of its neighbors, conquering Anatolia, Syria, and the Iranian Plateau (Gosden 2004: 41). Sargon was one of the first rulers in the ancient Near East to realize the potential of colonialism, utilizing it to great effect and building an empire for himself and his successors.

Not long after Sargon's imperial rule, the Egyptian Empire would begin to wield similar military power in order to expand its borders, bringing the Egyptian culture to many other lands in the ancient Near East. However, before it rose to the position of a powerful empire, Egypt first was ruled by a foreign power: the Hyksos (as discussed above). After the Hyksos invasion, the Egyptian State utilized its military strength to continually rout foreign invaders of the Empire, and ruled over other foreign states in the ancient Near East.

A number of the resulting forms of cultural change follow along behind the acts of colonialism and conquest. Cultural transformation via conquest, whether in the form of acculturation, synchronization, hybridization, or creolization, includes many cultural traits, both religious and secular. Some of the most common ideas spread are those of religious cults and customs, but technologies, inventions, and non-religious customs are also spread through the many different types of cultural contact.

A.   Synchronization of Religious Beliefs

Emerging in the Late Bronze Age as a powerful force in the ancient Near Eastern World, the Egyptian Empire entered a period of widespread, international recognition.

A ruling body with a powerful military, the Empire didn't have to look far for lands to conquer, due to the multitude of smaller cultural groups surrounding them. However, while the Pharaoh's army marched through the lands around the Empire, the cultures they subjugated ultimately would also influence Egyptian culture (Zivie-Coche 2011: 3). As slaves, servants, and other subjects were brought back to the Empire, their own cultural history and traditions, including religious beliefs were brought along with them. Because the religion of the Egyptian Empire was polytheistic, the presence of new deities was never seen as threatening; on the contrary, these deities were often incorporated into the Egyptian Pantheon (Zivie-Coche 2011: 4). Sometimes, new deities from other cultures in the ancient Near East were given positions and roles in the Ancient Egyptian religion that had not previously existed, or that were not originally fulfilled by native gods and goddesses. Other times, non-native deities were incorporated into the Egyptian Pantheon by equating them with native deities, who then simply assume some, or in some cases many, foreign qualities from their non-native counterpart (Zivie-Coche 2001: 5,8).

Prior to the Late Bronze Age, during the Second Intermediate Period, there is evidence of worship of the gods of the Hyksos at the Hyksos capital of Avaris, with cults being established there for Ba'al Zephon, Asherah, and other Canaanite deities (Bietak 2008: 110). However, it does not seem that the foreign cults from the Near East were implemented on a grand scale during this time period, with the worship of the gods of the Hyksos being contained mostly in Avaris (Bietak 2008: 110). The primary change that the Hyksos made to the Egyptian religious system was the synchronization of Ba'al

Zephon, their principle god, one of storms and patron of seafarers, with the Egyptian

deity Seth (Bietak 2008: 110). The Temple of Ba'al Zephon/Seth at Avaris continued to

function after the Hyksos rulers were driven off of Egyptian soil, showing an adoption

by the Egyptian people of the Hyksos worship of Ba'al-Seth, respecting his worship even

after the Hyksos were expelled (Bietak 2008: 110-11).

Post-Hyksos rule, Egypt had much more contact with the cultures of the ancient

Near East than they had before. Most of the appropriation of foreign gods by the

Egyptian Empire happened during the New Kingdom, which was established by the

expunger of the Hyksos rulers, Pharaoh Ahmose I. In addition, almost all of the

Egyptian adoption of foreign deities happened during the reigns of the Pharaohs in the

18th and 19th Dynasties (Zivie-Coche 2011: 4).

The 18th Egyptian Dynasty, in particular, had strong relations with the other

cultures such as the Mitanni of Naharin, the Hittites of Anatolia, and other cultures

along the Mediterranean coast. This contact came not only through trade-based

relationships for mutual benefit, but also as the Egyptian Empire conquered and

subjugated the peoples of other, smaller cultures. When the Egyptians conquered a

locale, they would erect cult temples for the worship of Egyptian deities in foreign

lands, introducing the Egyptian state religion to the newly-acquired lands of the Empire,

where it became the official religion of the region (Zivie-Coche 2011: 3). These

structures were most likely erected in order to serve to the religious needs of the

Egyptian soldiers who were abroad for their post in the military. However, the spread

of religion through Egyptian conquest was not unidirectional. Deities encountered by

the soldiers while they were in foreign lands were often brought back to the lands of

Egypt, either by the soldiers themselves, or by prisoners of war (Zivie-Coche 2011: 3).

The foreign cults introduced to the Egyptian Empire would, in turn, serve a wide

selection of people in the Empire.

Mainly, these cults would serve the religious needs of the foreigners living in

Egypt, typically servants and slaves in the houses of the royals and the nobility (Zivie-

Coche 2011: 3 From Stadelmann 1967). However, the presence of deities with foreign

origins did not stop with foreign servants and slaves. Many of these deities became

part of the everyday religion of the imperial Egyptian palace as well.

Figure 6.1.   Large Statue of Hauron protecting Ramesses II from Tanis, Egypt. Cairo JE 64735 (From Zivie-Coche 2011: 4).

The religious structure of ancient Egypt was more open and accepting than most other ancient religions when it came to foreign influences and new deities. It was not just the non-native Egyptians and foreigners in Egypt who revered non-native deities; these gods and goddesses could become incorporated into the native religion, in a form of synchronization of religious ideals and practices. This included not only lay Egyptians but also the royal families. Deities from the Hyksos Period, such as Astarte of Syria, and Hauron and

Reshep of Canaan, resurface into religious worship, and not simply on altars dedicated for use by foreigners (Zivie-Coche 2011: 3). These deities were seen on Royal documents during the reign of Pharaoh Amunhotep II (Zivie-Coche 2011: 3; Bietak 2008: 112). These specific deities all become incorporated into the mainstream religion, and are given their place among the native deities. As the New Kingdom continued, foreign deities became more and more common, with both hybridization and creolization occurring. For instance, during the reign of Pharaoh Ramesses II, a stela was erected, known as The 400 Year Stela, which depicted the native Egyptian god Seth, dressed in the iconographic finery of the Semitic god Ba'al, a connection which was likely remnant of Second Intermediate Period Hyksos rule (Zivie-Coche 2011: 4).

Pharaoh Ramesses II also included other non-native gods, such as declaring himself as protected by the goddess Anat, another Semitic deity who is also first mentioned during the period of Hyksos rule. Under Ramesses, she is revered highly, carved sitting next to the Pharaoh in a pair of dyads, carvings depicting two figures sitting side by side (Zivie-Coche 2011: 3). The goddess is incorporated into the myths of Egypt, being seen in the Harris Magical Papyrus as having been impregnated by the god Seth, yet unable to give birth to his child (Zivie-Coche 2011: 6).

Ramesses II also incorporated reverence of the Canaanite god Hauron, having depictions of himself as a child carved underneath the protective throat of the god in falcon form (Figure 6.1) (Zivie-Coche 2011: 3). In addition, a large, granite column found at the military outpost at the site of El-Gharbaniyet is inscribed with Ramesses II's various names, and ends with the epithet "(be)loved of Hauron" (Habachi 1980:

24). Hauron is also depicted, this time in the form of a sphinx on the New Kingdom Stela of Tutuia, another testament to the veneration of the god in the Egyptian Empire (Zivie-Coche 2011: 5).

Hauron was also popular among with the lay Egyptians as well, as evidenced by his presence in the Harris Magical Papyrus of the Western bank of Thebes. Here, a pair of spells invoke the god to protect livestock from predators "who eat flesh and drink blood", sending these creatures back into the desert where they belong (Van Dijk 1989: 63). Other foreign deities such as Reshep and Anat are mentioned in the Harris Magical Papyrus, and one of the predators mentioned in the spells as a threat is the Syrian bear, an animal that did not live in Ancient Egypt, which indicates the Syrian influences behind the invocations (Van Dijk 1989: 63).

It is important to note that, while foreign deities were accepted and incorporated into the religion of the Egyptian Empire, their incorporation was not done in the method common to other states and empires of the ancient Near East. It was much more common elsewhere in the ancient Near East to induct foreign deities into the native pantheon of gods and goddesses as hybrid forms, by either incorporating them into already existing, native deities, or by modifying them to make them 'fit' the native religion (Zivie-Coche 2011: 5). This was the practice among the Hyksos of Anatolia, the later Romans, and other Mediterranean cultures, but it was not the practice in the Egyptian Empire. Foreign deities were not wholly acculturated, not simply 'made Egyptian'; instead, their foreign-ness is often preserved, both in the deity's name and their role in the world, through their complete adoption into the Egyptian pantheon

(Zivie-Coche 2011: 5). Other indications that reverse-acculturation, rather than hybridization, was at play is that the names of non-native deities, for instance, were not altered to fit into the Egyptian language. Instead, the Egyptian language adapted the foreign names of the deities. For instance, the name and derivation of the Egyptian goddess Qatesh is Canaanite (Zivie-Coche 2011: 6).   This deity was incorporated into the Egyptian language using the Semitic "q-d-š", which is the root of words related to being holy or sacred. Thus, Qatesh meant "The Blessed" in Egyptian, preserving its original Semitic meaning (Zivie-Coche 2011: 5-6).

Deities could also become synchronized in both name and worship with native ones when they fulfilled the same purpose. Ba'al, for instance, was very heavily associated with Seth, synchronized into Ba'al-Seth or Seth-Ba'al, while both remaining separate entities (Zivie-Coche 2011: 5). This Egyptian practice of synchronization of similar deities was fairly common, and can be seen in not only foreign-native deity pairs, but also with important native Egyptian gods such as Ptah-Sokar-Osiris and Ra-Horakhety.

B.   Acculturation of Ideas and Inventions

It is apparent through the archaeological record that cultural change was not simply a process limited to the exchange by cultures of deities and religious cultural traits. Cultural exchange of practices, art styles, architectural styles, and military innovations occurred as well in the ancient Near East. The process of hybridization of ideas appears to be a much quicker process, with changes in the Egyptian Empire sometimes occurring during a single dynasty.

The presence and impact of the pre-Late Bronze Age Second Intermediate Period on Egypt can be seen in the effects that Hyksos rule had on the Egyptian Culture. Under the Hyksos, Levantine influences became very prominent in the funerary practices of the citizens of the capital of Avaris in the Nile Delta (Zivie-Coche 2011: 2). The dead of Avaris were not mummified at all, counter to the Egyptian tradition that had been in place for hundreds of years, and funerary items for male burials were notably more warlike in use, including daggers, sickle-shaped Khopesh swords, and javelins (Bietak 2008: 110). Such changes in the funerary practice indicate the extensive impact of the Hyksos people on the Egyptians during the time when the Hyksos ruled.

Archaeological excavations at Avaris also indicate that changes to the pottery styles were implemented under Hyksos rule during the pre-Late Bronze Age Second Intermediate Period (Dodson 2004: 114). These pottery styles would continue to be manufactured after the Hyksos rulers had been removed by Pharaoh Ahmose I, showing the lasting effects of the Hyksos in that sphere of industry (Bietak 2008: 111). In addition to pottery styles, the Hyksos rulers brought to Egypt the 'broad room' and 'bent axis' plans for temple construction from the Near East, directly in contrast to the Egyptian temple plan, which was symmetrical and based on a layering of progressively larger rooms (Bietak 2008:110). However, despite both the foreign rule in Egypt and temples being constructed in new styles, the religious practices were not heavily altered.

During the Late Bronze Age, the Egyptian Empire expanded their reach internationally, and it was during this time period that they adapted a number of traits from other cultures in the ancient Near East, including certain innovations of military power. Adapted first by the Egyptian military was the Canaanite military implement, the Khopesh sword. These swords are first seen in burials in the time period of Hyksos rule, later appearing post-adaptation in the New Kingdom burial of the Pharaoh Tutankhamun (Bietak 2008: 110; Reeves and Wilkinson 1996: 43). Originating in Canaan and probably being first seen by the Egyptian military forces in their clashes with the Hyksos, the Khopesh was adapted for use by the Egyptian military and used to great effect in the later campaigns of conquest by the various Pharaohs of the Late Bronze Age after being brought into Egypt by the rulers of the 14th and 15th Dynasties (Van Seters 1966: 58).

C.   Hybridization of Ideas and Inventions

Also in Egypt during the early New Kingdom period was the adaptation of perhaps one of the most vital of military implements for Egyptian campaigns of military expansion: the Horse and two-wheeled chariot. The example of the horse-drawn chariot is a unique example, in that it exemplified what can be classified as an instance of hybridized adaptation. The adoption of the chariot from a subordinate culture occurred early in the emergence of the Egyptian Empire, and then utilized to further their dominance later in history. The military innovation of the chariot was adapted, then integrated in mass into the Egyptian military system, and used to great success in the expansion of the Empire.

The Horse had been domesticated thousands of years before the civilizations of

the Mediterranean had begun to flourish, around 4800 B.C. in the steppes north of the

Black and Caspian Seas (Benzel 2008: 155). Horses are thought to have come to the

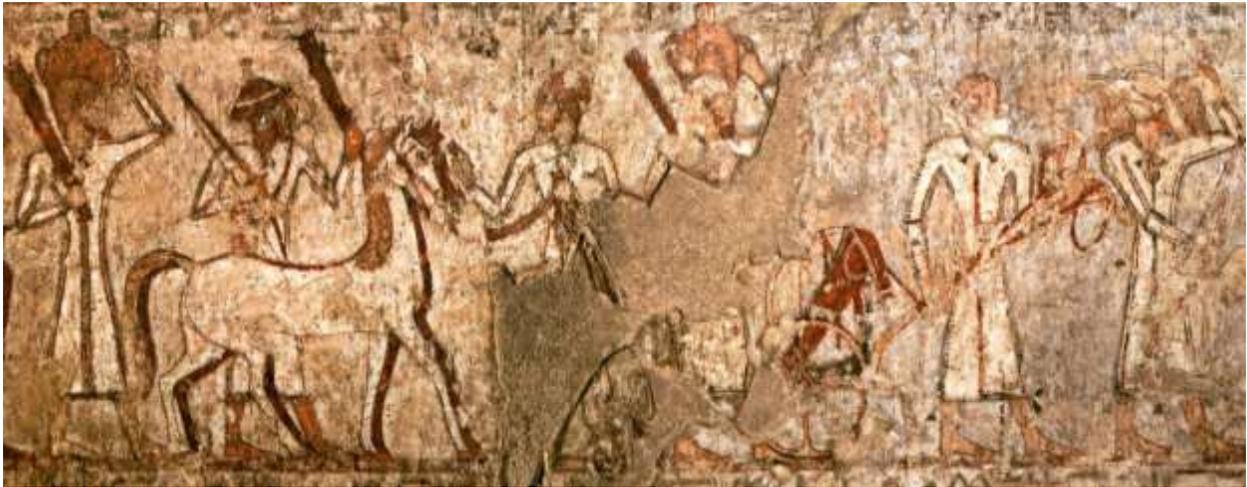ancient Near East through trade with the peoples in the steppes of central Asia, due to

Figure 6.2.   Wall painting depicted Syrians bringing horses and chariots to Egypt from Tomb of Rekhmire (Theban Tomb 110) ca. 18th Dynasty (From Graff 2008: 260-261).

the evidence of their domestication in regions close to ancient metal mines for tin and

copper. As trade in these semi-precious metals between the peoples of the Steppes

and the Mediterranean is documented, these trade routes also were the likely source for

horses in the ancient Near East (Benzel 2008: 155). Horses, as both a symbol of

wealth and status and as a military resource, are first seen in the ancient Near East in

the kingdom of the Mitanni, and the Hittites of Anatolia, as evidenced by the Hittite

tablet described earlier, which contained a detailed manual for the caring for and

training of horses written by the Mitanni horseman Kikkuli (Benzel 2008: 155, 158).

The Hyksos peoples of the Levant are thought to be the introducers of the horse

and chariot to the Egyptian Empire, occurring sometime around the beginning of the

16th century B.C. (Benzel 2008: 155). The Egyptian military first saw the Hyksos' war

chariots in battle, and later saw them brought along with horses to the Pharaoh's court

as tribute from the Syrians, as seen in the wall paintings in Theban Tomb 100 (Figure

6.2), burial place of the Vizier of Amunhotep II, Rekhmire (Graff 2008: 260). After the

introduction of war chariots to the Egyptian military, changes were made to the original

designs, improving the maneuverability over those of either the Mitanni or the Hittites,

making the chariot a hybrid form of Syrian and Egyptian styles (Benzel 2008: 155). The introduction of the horse and chariot, greatly affected later armies' success in the campaigns of the empire, similar to and yet more so than the Khopesh sickle-sword.

Figure 6.3.   Gold-gilded wooden chariot from the Tomb of Tutankhamun, KV 62 (From Hawass 2008: 66).

The hybridization and

subsequent improvement of the horse-drawn chariot was much more important to the

power of the Egyptian Empire, since the acquired technology was later used to great

effect by the Egyptian Military after its adoption. Thus, this is not simply an example of

cultural adaptation, but also of the subsequent successful usage of hybridized cultural

innovations by the dominant Egyptian Empire for expansion. Powerful though it was,

the Egyptian Empire acquired one of its most vital military technologies from a subordinate culture, and utilized it to their own advantage.

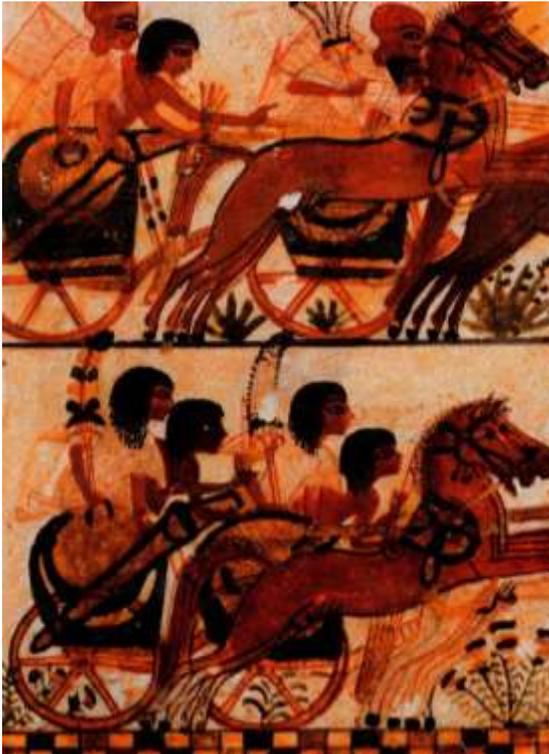The archaeological record has examples of the continued usage of the chariot by the Egyptian military, most notably including the chariot buried in Tutankhamun's tomb in the Valley of the Kings (Figure 6.3) (Aldred 1988: 154; Hawass 2008: 66) Cultural depictions of later Pharaohs using chariots in battle have been found as well, such as the images on the side of a painted wooden chest buried in the tomb of Tutankhamun, which depicts the Pharaoh riding into battle against Nubian adversaries leading the Egyptian Army, also in chariots (Figure 6.4) (Pemberton 2004: 111). Another example is the reliefs of the Temple at Abu Simbel of Ramesses II riding his chariot in the Battle of Kadesh against the Hittites (Reeves and Wilkinson 1996: 122). The chariot, a foreign invention, was brought to Egypt, integrated into Egyptian military culture, hybridized to make improvements to the foreign design, and became a vital part of the Egyptian identity in a very short time span, owing to the power of cultural change.

Figure 6.4.   Images from the side of a wooden painted chest from the Tomb of Tutankhamun, showing the Egyptian Army, (From Pemberton 2004: 111).

Chapter VII: Conclusion

Here, I have examined cultural interactions in the ancient Near East during the Late Bronze Age, with a particular focus on the Egyptian Empire. As I have argued, the Egyptian Empire played a central role in the network of cultural connections in the ancient Near East. I have explored how, over time, Egypt, itself a complex entity, was involved in a range of cultural interaction processes, including most notably instances of hybridization and acculturation. The examples of cultural interactions that I have used include trade, intercultural elite marriages, conquest and expansion, and diplomatic relations. Utilizing the artifacts and inscriptions found in the archaeological record, this study has examined the intricate web of relationships that expanded during the Late Bronze Age in the ancient Near East, specifically the range of connections that existed between the Egyptian Empire and other neighboring cultures, including the Hittites of Anatolia, the Mitanni State of Syria, the Kassite Babylonians, and other cultures of the ancient Near East. While Egypt central to intercultural networks that arose during the Late Bronze Age, it was not the origin point of all Near Eastern customs. On the contrary, the archaeological evidence presented reveals that the Egyptian Empire was but one of the numerous agents and innovators who shared and adapted cultural traits, in addition to developing new hybrid forms that departed from their origins. In addition to holding a central position in the network, the evidence reveals that the Egyptian Empire motivated cultural contact among other cultures, whether in response to the power wielded by the Pharaohs and their military, or simply by being in contact with two cultures that previously had no cultural connection. Here, I have shown that

textual and archaeological evidence can help us to understand the complex dynamics of

intercultural interactions in the past.

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