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xšnaoθrahe ahurahe mazdā

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Special Issue: Discussions in Assyriology

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How Well Did the “Eternal Treaty” Function? An Appraisal by the Correspondence Between Hattusili III and Ramesses II

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(IHAC, Northeast Normal University)

Abstract

This essay aims to verify that the “Eternal Treaty” was enforced after its conclusion by the Hittite King Hattusili III and the Egyptian Pharaoh Ramesses II. Through the classification, interpretation, and analysis of their letters, combined with historical facts, we can verify whether the treaty accomplished its purpose. The “Eternal Treaty” provided a diplomatic framework for Hatti and Egypt, and as a result, this article demonstrates that almost all of the diplomatic affairs between these two states were based on its clauses.

Introduction

According to Mario Liverani, the ancient Near East in the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1550-1200 BCE) provides a privileged case study in international relations.¹ The, then, Great Powers, viz. Assyria and Babylon in

1- Liverani 2001: 2-3. I am indebted to the anonymous reviewers for the instructive suggestions and substantial help, for alerting me on a few crucial points, for saving me from several mistakes, and for correcting my English. This study is a part of the final report of the project ‘The Communications and Mutual Influences of Ancient Civilizations in Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean Region’ (Grant: 17JJD770002), supported by the Centre for the History of World Civilizations, Northeast Normal University, Changchun, China. The abbreviations in the paper follow the *Catalog der Texte der Hethiter*, at <https://www.hethport.uni-wuerzburg.de/CTH/>, accessed on 25 March, 2021.

Mesopotamia and Mitanni and Hatti in Northern Syria and Anatolia, as well as Egypt in North Africa, were rather evenly distributed in and around this region. Therefore, the region was in its balance-of-power period, and so diplomatic activities became more frequent. An abundance of archival materials, including treaties, royal correspondence, and administrative documents that were excavated in Amarna, Hattusa, and Syria provide us with a quantity of information for studying international relationships among the Near Eastern nations at that time.

Among these finds, the “Eternal Treaty” of 1259 BCE, which is the earliest known pact between two equal great powers (namely Hatti and Egypt), has drawn much attention,² especially since the successive publications of both of its surviving versions: one translation into Egyptian, and the formal version in Akkadian. About 15 years before the treaty (ca. 1274 BCE), the Hittite Empire and the Nineteenth Dynasty of Egypt clashed with each other at Kadesh over who would have dominion over Syria. Both sides had been suffering from the considerable tensions in this area for some time, but the approval of a treaty for “brotherhood” initiated by the Hittite King Hattusili III ended the “cold war” between them.

Generally, the motives behind the “Eternal Treaty” have been understood according to one or two of its items and supplemented with some circumstantial evidence. For example, Michael Rowton has argued that the threat from Assyria pushed Hattusili into an alliance with Ramesses, while Anthony Spalinger proposed that concern for the legitimacy of his own kingship was the cause of Hattusili’s initiative.³ More recently, a reconciliation between these two opinions has become more widely accepted.⁴ However, this treaty’s effects should not be interpreted using such a method, according to which any assertion by cross-checking against the peaceful situation in Syria thereafter must be regarded as a sort of *argumentum ex silentio*. Indeed, after the treaty, the Hittites were occupied by the rebels in Anatolia, and the Pharaoh concentrated on his defense against the Libyan invader and his vast building program, while the Assyrians were suffering a setback during their struggles with Kassite Babylonia.⁵ In consideration of these historical factors, perhaps the peace in Syria should not be deemed the direct consequence of the treaty. Fortunately, the royal correspondence between Hattusili and Ramesses was published by Elmar Edel in 1994, allowing for scrutiny of the “Eternal Treaty’s” effects. This essay will appraise its performance by comparison of the historical record with the relevant royal correspondence.

For convenience, the general information about the “Eternal Treaty” and the related royal correspondence is briefly introduced here. First, a version of the treaty in Akkadian, the Near Eastern *lingua franca* during the Late Bronze Age,⁶ was inscribed on a silver tablet and delivered by Hattusili III’s envoys and messengers to Ramesses II. Then the treaty was translated into Hieroglyphs by Egyptian scribes and carved on the seventh pylon of Karnak Temple, as well as at Ramesseum.⁷ However, the Akkadian version from Hattusa

2- For a bibliography of the critical works on this treaty, see Kitchen & Lawrence 2012: 573; for an up-to-date list of references on the Egyptian version, see *KIU* 32.

3- Rowton 1959; Spalinger 1981: 357-358

4- E.g. Bryce 2005: 276-277; Allam 2011.

5- Bryce 2005: 291-293; van Dijk 2003: 290-291; Jakob 2017: 121.

6- As a rule, diplomatic partners within Anatolia received treaties in Hittite, while those in Syria and beyond were dealt with in Akkadian (see Beckman 1999: 2).

7- There are two originals in Egyptian: (1) at Karnak on a wall extending south of the great hypostyle; (2) at the Ramesseum (see Breasted 1962: 163). Note that the copies of the Hittite version in Akkadian have been excavated at Boğazköy since 1906. Both versions compared side by side can be found in Langdon-Gardiner 1920.

was not a copy of the one sent to Egypt, but rather what Ramesses sent back to Hattusili.⁸ Nonetheless, the provisions in both versions may be reduced to six points:

1. The two countries united in “peace and brotherhood.”
2. Neither would ever invade the other’s lands.
3. They promised each other military assistance.
4. Pharaoh recognized the legitimacy of Hattusili III’s succession to the throne.
5. Rules for the extradition of fugitives were established.
6. There was a blessing on keeping these provisions, and a curse on breaking them.

As for the letters (including the copies, drafts, and duplications) which were found at the Hittite capital, Hattusa, during the reign of Hattusili III, we note that the ones from Egypt are much more numerous than those from other countries like Assyria or Babylon. Many clay tablets of correspondence between Ramesses II and Hattusili III (and with his Great Queen Puduhepa) have been excavated, and they continue even into the late reign of Hattusili III or the early one of Tudhaliya IV.⁹ From these letters, we learn that after the treaty was concluded, almost all of the diplomatic affairs between the two countries centered on it. These letters strongly confirm the relevance of the “Eternal Treaty,” and the historical records show that almost every point was enforced at some time.

As with the other diplomatic texts, these letters were written in Akkadian by the local scribes, but not drafted directly in Akkadian. Normally, a scribe wrote down what the king/queen dictated to him in their mother tongue, and then prepared a draft in formal language according to his record. With the king/queen’s approval, the draft with corrections would be written up in Akkadian as an official version, which was the version delivered to the diplomatic counterpart by messengers. Having reached the addressee, the letter would be translated one more time into the local language and read to the foreign counterpart. And the answers would be handled in the same procedure, and finally, an Akkadian version was sent as a final reply.¹⁰ This kind of diplomatic letters most often followed a formal template, viz., when having replied to the sender’s requests, the addressee had to quote the former’s words firstly, hence today’s readers could find out the crucial parts of what the sender expressed even without the original letter.

8- Spalinger 1981: 299. Beside the priority of Ramesses II in the formula of the treaty parties in the Akkadian version, the deviations of the grammar in this version also show an influence from Egyptian language, e.g., *amur PN ana epēši tēma* (Edel 1997: §3), “Behold, Ramese ... will accomplish the plan”, unknown in Babylonian Akkadian but similar to so-called Future III in Egyptian, which could be taken as evidence for the Egyptian authorship of our Akkadian version and provide further support to what Spalinger argued 30 years ago. For a useful summary of the general features of the Akkadian by Egyptians and further references, see Müller 2015.

9- Several letters have been dated to Tudhaliya IV’s early reign because of the lacking addressee, for example, *KUB 3.67 (CTH 163)*. At this time, Puduhepa was still active in diplomatic affairs even though her husband had already died.

10- Bryce 2003: 56. The influences of Egyptian on the deviations of grammar in Ramesses II’s letters found at Hattusa provide good examples for this procedure, see Müller 2015.

‘Good peace and brotherhood between us’

At the beginning of the treaty, the two great kings stated their intentions of ceasing hostilities and becoming friendly to enjoy peace and brotherhood:¹¹

Riamašeš-māi-amana, great king, king of Egypt, he has made the treaty upon the tablet of silver, with Hattusili, great king, king of Hatti, his brother, from this day, for establishing good peace and good brotherhood between us forever. And [he is] the brother of me and peaceful with me; [I am] the brother of him and peaceful with him, forever and ever.

The treaty declared that Hatti and Egypt would end their cold war, with the two kings calling each other “brother”; their royal families also began to exchange greeting letters. Ramesses II even invited Hattusili III to meet at the Delta to show his good will.¹²

The treaty’s emphasis on “brotherhood” was mentioned constantly in the correspondence between the two kings, the word (ŠEŠ-*ut-ta*) derived from the Sumerian ŠEŠ (*aḫ* in Akkadian). In the Late Bronze Age of the Near East, whether a king could be recognized as a “brother” by other powerful kings was a requirement for belonging to what is now called the “Great Power Club.”¹³ In this period, Egypt, Hatti, Mitanni, Assyria, and Babylon became the successive overlords, so in their correspondence, their kings called each other “my brother” (ŠEŠ-*ia*); sometimes, however, if the economy or military power of a kingdom was not acknowledged by the others, then a king using the address “brother” to another king would displease them. In one example, when Assyrian King Adad-nirari I wrote to Mursili III (Urhi-Teshub), he called the Hittite king “my brother” without permission from his fellow kings, and received nothing but humiliation.¹⁴

The great kings calling each other “brother” demonstrated intimate relations; in some instances, it even implied a concept of ethics as a metaphor for an intimate relationship between two kings as if they had blood ties. Thus, when Urhi-Teshub protested that the Assyrian king had called him “brother,” he asked: “For what reason should I write to you about brotherhood? ... Were you and I born from one mother?” Hattusili also wrote to Ramesses harshly: “You and I do not have brotherhood? Or were we not born from one mother? Did we [not] live in one land?” Ramesses replied to his royal brother: “We were watching the brotherhood like we were the brother of one father and one mother,” to ease his fellow king’s anxiety.¹⁵

Such “brotherhood” relations could also expand into kings’ families. For instance, Ramesses called Hattusili’s wife, Puduhepa, the “Great Queen of Hatti, my sister” (SAL.LUGAL KUR *Hatti* ^{SAL}*aḫāti-ia*); one of Ramesses’s wives, Nefertari (^{SAL}*Na-ap-te-ra* in Akkadian), also called her “my sister.”¹⁶ Furthermore, when Šutaḫapšap, an Egyptian prince, wrote to Hattusili, he called him “my father,”¹⁷ putting Hattusili in a

11- All transcriptions of ‘Eternal Treaty’ follow the edition of Edel 1997: 2-12. Exemplar A: *KBo* I 7 + *KUB* III 121 + *KBo* XXVIII 115 (see Edel 1997: 9-10; §14-17).

12- In *KBo* 28.1 (*CTH* 161), Ramesses said to Hattusili: ‘The Sun God and the Storm God and my gods and the gods of my Brother will cause my brother see his brother; and may my brother carry out this good suggestion to come and see me. We may see each other face to face at the place where the king sits enthroned. So, I shall go into Canaan, to meet my brother and see his face, and receive him into the midst of my land!’ (Edel 1994: 22, no. 4, obv. 19’-24’).

13- Liverani 2000:15-27.

14- *KUB* XXVIII 102 (*CTH* 171). Cf. the translation by Beckman 1999: 146-147.

15- *KUB* 3.42 + *KBo* 28.19 (*CTH* 163), obv. 20’-22’ (Edel 1994: 86).

16- *KBo* 1.29 + *KBo* 9.43 (*CTH* 167.1).

17- *KUB* 3.70 (*CTH* 169).

position of equality with his real father. Here we should note that these titles seem to be based on ethical family relations, but in fact, in a letter that the mother of Ramesses, Tūja (or Mut-Tūja), wrote to Puduhepa, she introduced herself as the “Mother of the King of Egypt,” but she called the queen of Hatti the “Great Queen of Hatti, my sister,”¹⁸ implying the same status as her son. These examples illustrate what was not so much an ethical relationship between actual family members, but rather that the status of “Great Queen” made them acquire titles equal to them, such as “sister.” These titles seem very intimate, but in fact, these people were strictly bound by their status in their courts and by national power behind them.

Delivering gifts with letters was additionally an important correspondence practice. During the Amarna period, the Hittite king Suppiluliuma I, sent Pharaoh Huriya a letter and gifts to show his friendly intentions.¹⁹ In the time of Hattusili’s reign, there was likewise much gift exchanging that was dominated by gold, silver, crafts, jewelry, garments, slaves, livestock, etc.²⁰ Most of the gifts between Egypt and Hatti were gold, silver, and crafts made from them. To the other foreign kings, gold was the favorite gift from Egypt, so asking for gold in a letter or sending a daughter in marriage in exchange for gold, were common, as shown in the Amarna Letters.

In general, there existed not only gifts on important occasions like weddings or ceremonies, but also “greeting gifts” (*šubelta ana šulmān*) as part of regular communication between the two kingdoms. A large amount of luxury goods, including gold, silver, garments, jewelry, and medicines, was sent to the Hittite court by Ramesses. Greeting gifts were always attached to a list, with the name of messenger, sent to the addressee. There were formal lists to help the receiver check the items, and were always written at end of the letter: “I have sent (to you) gifts for PN for greeting, in the hand of PN, and you should know: the List” (*ultebila(-ak-ki) šubelta ana PN ana šulma-ni-ki ina ŠU-ti PN ù atti lū tidê*).

Not only the kings but also the royal families sent the letters with greeting gifts to each other. The Egyptian prince Šutaḥapšap once wrote a letter to Hattusili calling him “my father” and expressing his respect and gratitude, and he included a gift list at the end of the letter, all of which was delivered by a messenger named Parihnawa (*Pa-ri-iḥ-na-a-ua*);²¹ items presented were a golden drinking vessel, fabrics, and some crafts.²² Tūja and Nefertari also greeted their “sister” Puduhepa in this way. On most occasions, these letters were only for greeting since royal families had no right to engage in diplomatic affairs.

In the ancient Near East, the doctors of Babylon²³ and Egypt were quite famous. During Ramesses II’s reign, there were three occasions when Hattusili and Puduhepa requested an Egyptian doctor. Besides himself, Hattusili even wrote such letters for his sister and his nephew, Kurunta.

18- *KBo* 28.50 (*CTH* 168).

19- This Egyptian king could be either Amenophis IV, Tutankhamun, or Smenkhkare (see Moran 1992: 114-115; *EA* 42).

20- In Bryce’s opinion (2003: 94), ‘gift’ is a misnomer, gift-exchange amounted to an elite form of trading between royal courts, it is an honorable way for a king to acquire precious goods.

21- Probably identified with Pa-rekh-an in Egyptian, the treasurer and great intendant of Memphis during the reign of Ramesses II. He was one of the main messengers between Egypt and Hatti (see Singer 2006: 29).

22- *KUB* 3.70 (*CTH* 169) (Edel 1994: 34-36).

23- *KBo* 1.10 + *KUB* 3.72 (*CTH* 172), rev. 34-44, Hattusili mentioned Babylon had once sent a doctor to Hatti during Muwatalli II’s reign (see Hagenbuchner 1989: 285-286).

In one of his letters, Hattusili III described himself as sickly during his childhood, suffering from inflammation of the feet and eye disease.²⁴ In *KUB* 3.51, Ramesses II wrote to Hattusili III that a messenger named Pirihnawa had been dispatched to the Amurru kingdom accompanied by a chariot officer, and that he would hand some eye medicines to the ruler of Amurru, Benteshina, when he arrived, then take the medicines to the king of Hatti. From Hattusili's reply (*KBo* 28.24), we learn that the Egyptian medicines proved highly effective, with Hattusili asking for more medicines from Pharaoh.²⁵ Sometimes, Egyptian eye medicines also served as greeting gifts, for example, "five kukubu vessels, filled with fine eye medicines" (*KBo* 28.5(+6)) or "20 baskets, filled with fine eye-medicines" (*KBo* 28.4).²⁶

Concerned not only about himself, Hattusili also wrote to his royal brother asking for a doctor for his elder sister Massanauzzi (Matanazi in Akkadian) to help her conceive a descendant--she may have been infertile. Massanauzzi was not only his royal sister; she held a more important status as the Queen of Seha River Land, wife of the vessel ruler Masturi. After this western vassal kingdom had rebelled under its former king Manapa-Tarhunda during Mursili II's reign, Hattusili was eager to beget a successor born from Hatti royal blood. In his reply, somehow Ramesses knew of his "sister's" actual situation: "Behold, my brother's sister Matanazi, I, your brother, had already known: is she fifty or sixty years old? See, a woman of fifty or sixty years could get a medicine for pregnancy from no one."²⁷ Nevertheless, Ramesses still dispatched a doctor and a priest (^{LU}*a-ši-pu*) to her. This therapy apparently failed, for lacking a successor, the throne was usurped by a man called Tarhunradu who was finally suppressed by the Hittites.²⁸

Kurunta was one of Hattusili's nephews; like Urhi-Teshub, he was also the son of the secondary wife of Muwatalli. After Urhi-Teshub succeeded to the throne, he was sent to Hakkis, growing up with his uncle like one of his sons. Perhaps for this reason, when Hattusili rebelled against Urhi-Teshub he stood with his uncle unhesitatingly. After the rebellion, Kurunta was appointed as the ruler of Tarhuntassa, which was one of the most important Hittite vassals.²⁹ In two letters, Ramesses responded to Kurunta's request with two doctors at first, soon arranging another doctor and a scribe to replace them.³⁰ Fortunately, the second doctor cured Kurunta, but it was probably not good for Hatti since when he became well again Kurunta raised a rebellion against Hattusili.

From the above events, we learn that requesting doctors was a higher diplomatic practice than we had preconceived. Among kings, only if another person's disease threatened his dominance would he make such a request to another king. Doctors in the ancient Near East were precious, so they were always dispatched with scribes, priests, and even some guards. If the doctor were lost or died in foreign lands, this might cause some diplomatic conflict. For example, in one well-known letter which Hattusili wrote to the Babylonian king Kadashman-Enlil II he provided an explanation to appease his anger when his doctor did not return.³¹

24- Then Ištar, my mistress, sent to Mursili, my father, in a dream the Muwatalli, my brother (with the words): "For Hattušili the years are (only) short, he will not live (long). So hand him over to me, he shall be my priest and he will (stay) alive." (Otten 1981: 5).

25- See Edel 1994: 18, 80.

26- See Edel 1994: 114, 122.

27- *KBo* 28.30 (*CTH* 163), obv. 16-21 + rev. 1-4 (Edel 1994: 178). According to Bryce' speculation (2003: 115), Massanauzzi at least fifty-five years old, or even more.

28- *KUB* 23.13 (*CTH* 211.4) (see Beckman, Bryce & Cline 2001: 154-157).

29- Ünal 1974: 218.

30- *KUB* 3.67 and *KUB* 3.66 + W.24 (Edel 1994: 170, 172).

31- *CTH* 172 (= *KBo* 1.10 + *KUB* 3.72) (Hagenbuchner 1989, 292-293).

Royal marriages in the Late Bronze Age were an important means of reinforcing political and military alliances between kingdoms, and princesses were its tool.³² Almost every great king had one or several foreign princesses living in his royal palace. Some of them became first-class wife, even ascending to the queen's throne, like the daughter of Burnaburiash II, princess of Babylon; after her marriage with Suppiluliuma I, she obtained the title of "Tawanana," the highest title for Hatti's queen. However, more princesses became concubines and disappeared from extant records. Some of these marriages were done only for exchanging materials like gold; for Hittite kings, a daughter could serve her nation in a foreign harem; sending a daughter to a royal brother was a kind of guarantee after a treaty was concluded. By contrast, the Egyptian royal family never gave any daughter to foreign kings; rather, they married a foreign princess mainly as a kind of bond between the allied foreign kings and themselves, but with a propaganda consideration of flaunting their well-accepted greatness even by foreign kings,³³ for these foreign royal daughters never became Egyptian queens. Generally, these princesses had a different status in an Egyptian harem, depending on their fathers or brothers, their dowries, and the national power behind them. Ramesses once promised to Hattusili that his daughter would have a higher rank than other foreign princesses, which is what Hattusili and Puduhepa desired. One long draft of a letter which Puduhepa wrote to Ramesses expresses concern about this: "My brother, whom should I equal with the daughter of heaven and earth? Should I equal her with the daughter of Babylon? Zulabi, or Assyria? I could not equal her with them, because she stood much higher than them!"³⁴

After Puduhepa became the queen of Hatti, she devoted herself to raising the royal children. The king's sons were in heavy demand for military and administrative careers, but princesses, particularly from the highest-ranking mothers, were from their birth potential marriage alliance material.³⁵ After the "Eternal Treaty" was concluded, a royal marriage was soon scheduled, with the eldest and highest-ranking daughter sent to Egypt. Hattusili and Puduhepa were eager to have a little Egyptian prince with Hittite blood, and Ramesses desired one more Asian concubine in his palace. Both wanted this wedding to be a success; however, the troops of the bride were repeatedly delayed, making Ramesses very anxious. He wrote to Puduhepa: "My sister, you promised to give me your daughter. That is what you wrote. But you have withheld her. Now I am angry with that. Why did you not give her to me?"³⁶ From the reply, we learn that the reason was that É KUR ^{URU}HAT-TI (House of Hatti) was burnt down in Urhi-Teshub's reign, so Hattusili and Puduhepa had to delay the wedding date to raise the dowry. For their daughter's status in the Egyptian

32- See Bryce 2003: 100.

33- Thanks to one of the anonymous reviewers, the author could clarify her usage of crude terms such as propaganda and flaunting. The author strongly shares in the argument of William Kelly Simpson, which stresses the communication between Egyptian sculpture as well as image and their viewer and deems the term propaganda a better expression of this feature, see Simpson 1982, 270 f. In our case, there are two examples worth mentioning. One is the scarab of Amehotep III for publishing the news of his marriage with Gilukhepa, a Mitanni princess, mentioned yet by Simpson and the reviewer her/himself. The other is the inscription about the marriage of Ramesses II with a Hittite princess, only known by her Egyptian name, "Maat-Hor-neferure". Copies of this inscription were found at three different sites with straight-line distances more than 200 km between each two of them, namely Karnak, Elephantine, and Abu Simbel, which shows us how solemnly the Pharaoh treated the diplomatic marriage as one of his accomplishments and how broadly he intended to exhibit it. Both of them should be taken as good supports to the propaganda consideration behind the Pharaohs' diplomatic marriage with foreign princesses.

34- CTH 176 (= KUB 21.38), obv. 12'-14' (Edel 1994: 216).

35- Bryce 2003: 108.

36- CTH 176 (= KUB 21.38), obv. 7'-8' (Edel 1994: 216).

court, they sent a large dowry, including “booty of Kaskan, horses, cattle, goats.”³⁷ Ramesses’s marriage stele also recorded the dowry which the Hatti princess brought.³⁸ The troops carrying the dowry and the princess were dispatched by Nerikkail,³⁹ reached the border of the two kingdoms, were handed to the Canaanite governors, and finally entered Egypt.⁴⁰

The fate of this princess is difficult to discern, for after she married Ramesses (1245 BCE) and entered the palace which he had built for her, she soon disappeared from the records. Several years later, another of Hatti’s daughters was sent to Ramesses as a bride, further consolidating the alliance of the two great kingdoms.

Mutual non-aggression and military assistance

The conclusion of the “Eternal Treaty” ended Egypt’s and Hatti’s hostile relations. In the treaty, they promised never to invade each other:⁴¹

Riamašeš-māi-amana, great king, king of Egypt, shall not be hostile to Hatti to take anything.
And Hattusili, great king, king of Hatti, shall not be hostile to Egypt to take anything.

After the Battle of Kadesh, Ramesses divided his sovereignty over the Canaanite area. He wrote a letter ordering the local governors to take care of the bride’s troops, and invited Hattusili to meet in Canaan. Thereafter, Egypt and Hatti ruled Syria together and abided by the “military assistance” clause of the treaty, threatening the ascent of Assyria.⁴²

Besides, both the kings promised this to each other: “If another enemy comes to Hatti / Egypt, and Hattusili / Ramesses, great king, king of Hatti / Egypt, should send me a letter that says: ‘Come to me to help me against him.’”⁴³ Once one king suffered from a foreign enemy (^{LÚ}KÚR) or rebellion, the other would dispatch troops and chariots to help his brother. Such mutual defense clauses were common in the treaties of the ancient Near East. In general, they existed not only between overlord and vassal, but also as we see here, they might request military aid from each other. In the letter which Hattusili III wrote to the Babylonian king Kadashman-Enlil II before the “Eternal Treaty” was drawn up, he mentioned to this young king that his father had a promise with Hatti: “The king of Egypt has become my enemy ... if your troops go into Egypt, then I will go with you.”⁴⁴

However, we should note that in the days after the treaty was concluded, in all the military actions it is hard to find each other’s troops mentioned; even in the letters between the two kings, no word on this point can be found. Given this absence, it is quite difficult to claim that the “Eternal Treaty” was one of

37- CTH 160 (= KUB 3.24 + 3.59) rev. 8'-9' (Edel 1994: 140).

38- See Breasted 1962: 415-424.

39- KUB 3.40 obv.(?) 5' (Edel 1994: 146).

40- KUB 3.57 (CTH 159.1.B) (Edel 1994: 144).

41- Edel 1997: 7, §4.

42- The ever-present threat of Assyria has been as one of Hattusili’s chief incentives for concluding a peace with Ramesses; an alliance between Hatti and Egypt would help safeguard the interests of both in Syria against the increasingly ambitious and belligerent upstart power across the Euphrates (Bryce 2005: 275).

43- Edel 1997: 7-8, §6-9.

44- KUB 3.42 + KBo 28.19 (CTH 163), obv. 7-10 (see Hagenbuchner 1989: 281).

mutual military assistance. References to the military are confined to threats, especially from Assyria. Yet even though this treaty brought peace and friendship for the two countries, it didn't establish intimate relations, for Urhi-Teshub still created friction between them, and this was what concerned Hattusili most.

Pharaoh accepted the legitimacy of the throne of Hattusili and his descendants, and extradited Urhi-Teshub Extradition items were very frequent in this treaty, and both sides set the rules for three different fugitives (LÚ.GAL, LÚ *ša lā idī* and *kabtu* (LÚ)).⁴⁵ The only fugitive who concerned Hattusili was the former king, Urhi-Teshub. After being driven away from his throne, Urhi-Teshub asked for help from Babylon and Assyria, and finally escaped to Egypt. As a usurper, the legitimacy of Hattusili's throne was the most important thing to him. The Assyrian king wrote a letter to Ramesses calling Hattusili a "substitute king,"⁴⁶ and Hattusili also wrote to Adad-narari I asking why he had not sent any gifts for his ceremony.⁴⁷ Before the "Eternal Treaty" was concluded, Hattusili complained that Ramesses treated him like a servant.⁴⁸ To solve this problem, he added the words below to the treaty:⁴⁹

Behold! The son of Hattusili, great king, king of Hatti, may be treated as the king of Hatti, in the place of Hattusili, his father, after many years of [the reign] of Hattusili, King of Hatti. And if the citizens of Hatti committed sin against him, then Riamašeš-māi-amana should send his troops and chariots to help him.

When Urhi-Teshub escaped to Egypt, he may have met Ramesses and told him about the Hatti royal family.⁵⁰ In all the correspondence between these two great kings, Urhi-Teshub was the most frequently discussed topic. Ramesses replied impatiently: "Behold, about this matter, I have heard much from what you sent, but it was not worthwhile to listen." He insisted that Urhi-Teshub had already escaped from Egypt "like a bird" and could not be found anywhere.⁵¹ He even went so far as to suggest where Hattusili should look for him, and Hattusili took strong exception to this.⁵² When all of these suggestions had proven useless, Hattusili was left with no clue about the whereabouts of his nephew; and Urhi-Teshub had simply disappeared.

Had Ramesses cheated on his royal brother? Some scholars have suggested that Urhi-Teshub may have fled Egypt when the treaty was drawn up, but he may also have stayed at the Egyptian court until the wedding.⁵³ In one letter (*KUB* 3.62), Ramesses mentioned that someone who supported Urhi-Teshub had written to him claiming that Urhi-Teshub was the real king of Hatti and threatening Pharaoh not to hurt him, otherwise they must exact revenge.⁵⁴ If Ramesses' words are believable, Urhi-Teshub may have

45- Edel 1997: 8-11, §11-20.

46- *KBo* 8.14 (*CTH* 163), obv. 10 (Edel 1994: 24).

47- *KBo* 1.14 (*CTH* 173), rev. 4-10. Cf. the translation by Beckman 1999: 149.

48- *KBo* 28.3 (*CTH* 155), obv. 5-9 (Edel 1994: 50).

49- Edel 1997: 8, §10.

50- Bryce 2005: 280.

51- *KBo* 1.15 + 1.19(+)1.22 (*CTH* 156.A), rev. 20-21 and 22-25 (Edel 1994: 62).

52- Bryce 2005: 281.

53- *KUB* 21.38 (*CTH* 176), obv. 11'-12'. Puduhepa once wrote to Ramesses in one Hittite draft: "Since Urhi-Teshub is there, ask him whether it is like that or not!" when they discussed wedding affairs (see Edel 1994: 216).

54- *KUB* 3.62 (*CTH* 163.2) (Edel 1994: 78).

escaped to the vassal kingdom which had supported him, or to someplace south of Anatolia.

Ramesses emphasized his oath in his letters: “Certainly you are the great king of the lands of Hatti. The Sun God has granted to you and the Storm God has granted to you the seat in the Land of Hatti, in the place of the father of your father.”⁵⁵ He may have known where Hatti’s former king was, but he chose to keep it a secret while appearing to stand on his brother’s side.

Conclusions

The publication of the correspondence between the Hittite royal couple and Ramesses II provides an opportunity to appreciate how the “Eternal Treaty” was implemented. The main finding is that the treaty’s provisions and the issues discussed in this correspondence were almost parallel to each other.

In the treaty, the legitimacy of Hattusili’s kingship was treated seriously, as well as his descendants’ succession. The former was implicitly confirmed by his “brotherhood” with Ramesses, and the latter was explicitly expressed. Accordingly, in the correspondence, the whereabouts of Hattusili’s dethroned predecessor, his nephew Urhi-Teshub, was often queried, and these queries were addressed by Ramesses. Indeed, the numerous letters in Dossier D assembled by Elmar Edel leave a deep impression on their readers by showing that Hattusili’s legitimacy was the priority in the relationship between the two superpowers. Hence, after Hattusili’s death Ramesses continued writing letters to his widow, Puduhepa, and to his successor, Tudhaliya IV, so their friendship continued. In this sense, the related promise in the treaty was performed accurately.

As for the other issues in the correspondence, such as the exchange of gifts, the royal marriage, the appeals for medicine, etc., they were at the core of the kings’ “brotherhood” in the treaty, which either promoted or reflected them. Since its implementation, the “Eternal Treaty” became the framework for all of the diplomatic interactions between Hatti and Egypt, at least during the reign of Ramesses II. On an ideological level, even the Pharaoh, who frequently mentioned on the silver tablet as well as in his letters their “cordial” brotherhood deposited before the feet of divine witnesses, was completely convinced that the treaty formed the basis of his alliance with the Hittite monarch. This consensus made their treaty function.

However, it is noteworthy that as for the treaty’s provision for mutual military assistance, which was a significant part of it, neither requested any from the other in their correspondence, nor was it ever affected. Whether those military provisions were aimed at the defense of a particular region, viz. Syria, or at the obstruction of certain enemies, viz. Assyria remains an open question for further studies. In brief, the influence of the “Eternal Treaty” on the relations between these great powers can only be appraised fairly when other material than circumstantial evidence has appeared.

⁵⁵- KUB 3.22 + KBo 28.3 (CTH 155), obv. 13'-15' (Edel 1994: 54).

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