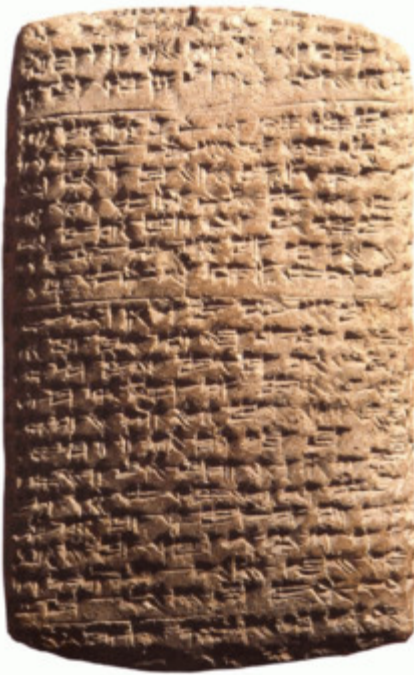


AMARNA LETTER #27

Early on in his reign, Akhenaten fell out with the king of Mitanni, Tushratta, who had been courting favor with his father against the Hittites. Tushratta complains in numerous letters that Akhenaten had sent him gold plated statues rather than statues made of solid gold; the statues formed part of the bride price which Tushratta received for letting his daughter Tadukhepa be married to Amenhotep III and then Akhenaten. Amarna letter EA 27 preserves a complaint by Tushratta to Akhenaten about the situation:



"I...asked your father, Mimmureya, for statues of solid cast gold, one of myself and a second statue, a statue of Tadu-Heba (Tadukhepa), my daughter, and your father said, "Don't talk of giving statues just of solid cast gold. I will give you ones made also of lapis lazuli. I will give you, too, along with the statues, much additional gold and (other) goods beyond measure."

Every one of my messengers that were staying in Egypt saw the gold for the statues with their own eyes. Your father himself recast the statues [i]n the presence of my messengers, and he made them entirely of pure gold....He showed much additional gold, which was beyond measure and which he was sending to me. He said to my messengers, "See with your own eyes, here the statues, there much gold and goods beyond measure, which I am sending to my brother." And my messengers did see with their own eyes! But my brother (ie: Akhenaten) has not sent the solid (gold) statues that your father was going to send. You have sent plated ones of wood. Nor have you sent me the goods that your father was going to send me, but you have reduced (them) greatly. Yet there is

nothing I know of in which I have failed my brother. Any day that I hear the greetings of my brother, that day I make a festive occasion...May my brother send me much gold. [At] the kim[ru fe]ast...[...with] many goods [may my] brother honor me. In my brother's **country gold is as plentiful as dust**. May my brother cause me no distress. May he send me much gold in order that my brother [with the gold and m]any [good]s, may honor me". (EA 27)^[12]

While Akhenaten was certainly not a close friend of Tushratta, he was evidently concerned at the expanding power of the Hittite Empire under its powerful ruler Suppiluliuma I. A successful Hittite attack on Mitanni and its ruler Tushratta would have disrupted the entire international balance of power in the Ancient Middle East at a time when Egypt had made peace with Mitanni; this would cause some of Egypt's vassals to switch their allegiances to the Hittites, as time would prove. A group of Egypt's allies who attempted to rebel against the Hittites were captured, and wrote letters begging Akhenaten for troops, but he did not respond to most of their pleas.

Directions: Answer the questions below using the primary document about and your knowledge about Ancient Egypt. Be sure to use as many levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and evidence from the document to support your statements.

1. What does Amarna letter #27 tell us about the *political* world of Ancient Egypt at the time?
2. What does Amarna letter #27 tell us about the *economic* world of Ancient Egypt at the time?
3. What does Amarna letter #27 tell us about the *social* world of Ancient Egypt at the time?