The Amarna diplomacy in IR perspective: a system of states in the making

A diplomacia de Amarna e as Relações Internacionais: um sistema de estados em construção

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ABSTRACT:

The Amarna diplomacy (ca. 1365-1330 BCE) has been of interest for specialists ever since the discovery of the Amarna letter collection in the late 19th century. While it can be considered as one of the great archaeological discoveries of all time, it has largely remained out of academic purview in the field of International Relations (IR). IR scholarship continues to turn to the Greco-Roman experience in its attempt to delineate the chronological framework of the discipline. Far from being an anecdote in international history, this article aims to analyze what the letters convey for a student of world politics. What comes out of these missives through textual analysis of the primary sources is not only the various demands, wishes and security concerns of the actors involved but also classical IR themes such as power balancing, security dilemma and international anarchy. While there are question marks and lacunas, this paper asserts that the ancient Near Eastern world constituted an international arena where we see the makings of a genuine system of states more than a millennium before the writings of Thucydides. The Amarna letters, although incomplete, are a gateway to gain deeper synergy between IR theory and international history.

Key-words: Amarna diplomacy; power balancing; security dilemma; international anarchy; system of states

RESUMO

A diplomacia de Amarna (a.C 1365-1330) vem atraindo o interesse de especialistas desde a descoberta da coleção das cartas de Amarna ao fim do Século 19. Apesar de ser considerada uma das grandes descobertas arqueológicas de todos os tempos, em grande parte elas permanecem fora do escopo das Relações Internacionais (RI). Acadêmicos da disciplina continuam a delinear a cronologia das relações internacionais a partir da experiência greco-romana. Para além de um episódio da história, este artigo objetiva analisar a valia das cartas para estudantes de política internacional. A partir de análise textual primária das missivas pode-se retirar não só as demandas, os desejos e as preocupações em matéria de segurança dos atores envolvidos, como também indícios de temas clássicos da RI como balanço de poder, dilemas de segurança e anarquia internacional. Apesar de ainda haver questões e lacunas a serem preenchidas o texto argumenta que o Oriente Próximo antigo se constituiu

como arena internacional onde podemos observar a construção de um genuíno Sistema de Estados mais de um milênio antes dos escritos de Thucydides. As cartas de Amarna, apesar de sua ainda incompletude, são uma porta de entrada para a estruturação de uma maior sinergia entre as Teorias de RI e a História das relações internacionais.

Palavras chave: Diplomacia de Amarna; balanço de poder; dilema de segurança; anarquia internacional; sistema de Estados

Introduction – Putting the ancient near eastern diplomacy on the map

The ancient Near East during the Late Bronze Age (1600–1200 BCE)[2] has been described as "the first great international era in world history" (MONROE, 2009, p.297). Accordingly, the second millennium provides one of the best textual evidence for studying a genuinely cosmopolitan culture where the states, from western Iran to the Aegean Sea and from Anatolia to Nubia, became fully integrated in an international system based on interdependence. It is in this international arena that we encounter the for the first-time elaborate treaty-making, power balancing strategies, precise battle descriptions, sovereignty and the formation of a number of territorial states – precursors to contemporary great powers. The above puts into a questionable light the claim that "the Greeks invented politics", whether domestic or international (ROBERTS, 1996, p.27). The term 'politics' can certainly be derived from the Greek word 'polis' meaning 'city-state' but the phenomenon itself can hardly be narrowed down to a particular spatiotemporal area. In recent years, diplomacy's ancient Near Eastern roots have been recognized to go back at least to the second millennium BCE (FRÉCHETTE, 2013, xxx; COOPER; HEINE; THAKUR, 2013, p.3-4; ROBERTS, 2009, p.6). Admittedly, we cannot talk about complex interdependence in the modern sense of multiple connections between societies in interstate relations as was put forth by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (1997, p.122–32). Nevertheless, the Late Bronze Age Near East constitutes a complex milieu where there was "a web of interconnectedness", a milieu where the "deeds of one state had an impact on the faiths of others" to borrow a British archaeologist and anthropologist Brian Fagan (2003, 24;27:06 –28:32).

An older generation of scholars outside the Ancient Near East Studies (ANES) have regarded the political landscape of the ancient Near East as profoundly theocratic in nature so as to not really constitute an international political arena properly speaking but instead an environment where the divine forces rather than human agency were at the center. Richard G. Collingwood (1994, p.11–12), philosopher and historian, did not consider the Sumerian 'historiography' historical in respect of its object (divine not human), nor in respect of its method (no interpretation of evidence). This assessment is increasingly outdated, however. Already in the 1950's there were scholars who recognized that there was finality and plurality in the historical thinking of ancient Mesopotamians where the local theocracy did not pose an insurmountable barrier to research and inquiry (SPEISER,1955, p.55–56, fn. 50). Various literary genres like king lists, royal inscriptions and chronicles that existed in Egypt, Syro-

Palestine, and Mesopotamia put the deeds of human, rather than divine, actors at the forefront. Even though it would be somewhat anachronistic to qualify these texts as historiographical, they nevertheless demonstrate that the peoples of ancient Near East had a keen interest in recent as well as more remote past and wanted to explain them in terms of historical realities (VAN SETERS, 2006, p.2433–443; BULL, 1955, p.3). Theocratic and mystical elements obviously were central features of the societies in question. However, underneath the religious rhetoric cynic motives of power politics time and again surface. This becomes abundantly clear in the diplomatic correspondence of the Amarna letters as they vividly describe the complex international arena of the Near East during the second millennium with all the twists and turns related to commercial relations, prestige, political ambition, alliance politics, balance of power and warfare but also yearning for brotherhood. More than a century after its discovery, it remains the most valuable single diplomatic document archive to survive from the ancient Near East and can be considered as one of the great archaeological findings of all time (e.g. MYNÁROVÁ, 2012, p.551; PETRIE, 1894, p.23–24). While this paper focuses largely on the Amarna collection, we should bear in mind that it is only one type of source under scrutiny besides administrative memos, royal letters and international treaties – in the early 21st century it is estimated that between half a million and two million cuneiform tablets, the primary sources of the ancient Near East, have been discovered out of which only a small fraction has been published (SASSON, 2015, p.4; HALLO, 2005, p.39; BOTTÉRO, 1995, p.20). Nevertheless, the letter collection provides an invaluable source for analyzing the way the Near Eastern political arena functioned as a system.

The somewhat anecdotal approach of the IR toward the ancient Near East has started to change in the beginning of the 21st century. Adam Watson's *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative, Historical Analysis* (1992) was an important attempt to combine the English School approach with historical analysis in an effort to elucidate international states-systems in Eurasia and throughout the globe starting from the early Mesopotamia and ending with the contemporary international society. Despite its ambitious goal and scope, Watson's treatment of the ancient Near East was somewhat cursory – this becomes clear in the way he alludes to the mid-fourteenth century BCE Amarna diplomacy by erroneously attributing Aramaic as the diplomatic language of the region instead of Akkadian. Nevertheless, Watson (1992, p.121) rightly recognizes the intricate Egyptian-Hittite relationship of the period. Raymond Cohen's contribution in a series of articles (1996, 1999, 2000, 2001) marks out as perhaps the most serious attempt to bring the Late Bronze Age world in Western Asia to the research agenda of IR. Despite their vast chrono-logical coverage in *International Systems in World History*, Barry Buzan and Richard Little (2000, p.163–240) only in somewhat vague terms allude to the existence of complex alliance system in the ancient Near East. Richard Little's (2007, p.148–49) more recent *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models*, although an original way of approaching the balance of power theory by treating it as

a metaphor, does not really tackle the question of power balancing in the ancient world[3]. Finally, Wohlforth et al. (2007b) wanted to analyze how the balance of power theory could be studied in the context of ancient history – including ancient Near East during the first millennium. Together with the Wohlforth team (2007a, p.177–79; 2007b, p.228), which examined eight historical case studies, their main findings were that there is a) a tendency within the system at some point to tilt towards the unipolar phase due to various reasons such as administrative capacity of the hegemon and bandwagoning of the weaker states; b) bids for hegemony fail in most cases rather than succeed and c) ultimately, each attempt at hegemony is counter-balanced to restore the equilibrium (EILSTRUP-GIOVANNI, 2009, p.365). However, both Kaufman and Wohlforth concentrated mainly on the first millennium, which is somewhat less interesting from the IR perspective.

After having put the ancient Near East in the proper perspective, the second section will briefly focus on the way the cosmopolitan culture of diplomacy evolved in Western Asia before the emergence of the polycentric phase of the Bronze Age. The last section will highlight some of the salient features of the Amarna diplomacy while trying to elucidate in what way the mid-second millennium matters in the annals of diplomacy.

Ebla and Mari Ages: Precursors to the Amarna Diplomacy

Before entering into the world of Amarna diplomacy, it is worthwhile taking a brief look at what preceded it. In substance, we can divide the dynamics of the Near Eastern political landscape into three different chronological phases: a) formation of large territorial states in the Middle and Late Bronze Age (ca. 2300–1600); b) shifting balances of power in the Syro-Palestinian area (ca. 1600/1550–1200); c) systemic collapse of intense interaction between regional entities (ca. 1200–900) (end of a polycentric states-system). The Middle Bronze Age (2100–1600 BCE), in particular, included two important antecedents to the polycentric environment of the Late Bronze Age – they are known as the Ebla and Mari Age respectively. These epochs left an important precedent and a tradition of diplomatic practices, which set rules for the international arena that came about during the Amarna age.

The Ebla age dating back to the 24th century BCE refers to the ancient city of Ebla (some 55 kilometers southwest of Aleppo) where a rich archive of cuneiform tablets was found in the mid-1960s by a group of Italian archaeologists. The tablets evoke a sophisticated political scene of inter-polity[4] relations in 'Eblaite', a Semitic language closely related but distinct from the Northwest (Hebrew, Phoenician, Ugaritic) and East Semitic (Akkadian) languages. The Ebla archive have deepened our knowledge of the state formation process in Syria during the third millennium and discarded the view that only Egypt and Mesopotamia were the great cultural centers in the Near East during the Early Bronze Age (3300– 2100 BCE) (GARFINKLE, 2016, p.103; KUHRT, 1997, p.41, 49–50, 317). One of the oldest surviving diplomatic documents – such as the treaty between Ebla and Abarsal[5] – originate from this period (SOLLBERGER, 1980, p.29–55). Before Ebla

3. For a critical assessment of Little's (2007) work, see Zhang (2011, p.641-51)

4. The concept of 'inter-polity' refers here to the interaction of political communities that predate the age of nation-states – the all-encompassing nature of the term describes the reciprocal action between different kinds of entities whether city-states, states or other type of political community (GAT, 2006, p.234, 253, 278, 302, 304, 451). The 'inter-polity' relations enables us to bypass the issue of 'international', a concept coined by Jeremy Bentham (1781), which relates to the nation-state building process of the 17th century Europe (NARDIN, 2013, p.316–17; OSIANDER, 1994, p.1–2).

5. The treaty between Ebla and Abarsal (its exact location in Syria is unknown) dating back to ca. 2400 BCE is considered to be the oldest surviving treaty that stipulates in great detail the commercial and territorial relations between two independent major states, the former of which was a regional power (KITCHEN; LAWRENCE, 2012, p. 9, 12; MILANO, 2006, p.1227).

was destroyed by Sargon of Akkad around 2350 BCE, it was a regional power with a population of about 15, 000 to 20, 000 people (LIVERANI, 2014, p.121; MILANO, 2006, p.1226). The city-state wielded political power over an area between Hama in the west and Euphrates in the east while conducting trade relations with maritime cities on the Mediterranean littoral coast as well as with southeastern Anatolia (PODANY, 2010, p.26–32). Interestingly, there were cities some distance away from the center of the kingdom that belonged to Ebla. Having pockets of territory outside of the core area of a territorial state was widely practiced in the ancient Near East and can be seen as a way of expanding the control of a given city-state in the surrounding areas. These cities on the outer limits also served as a buffer zone for a regional power but they often lead to conflicts with rival polities (Tignor *et al.,* 2011, p.93). In the case of Ebla, this caused territorial disputes with Mari taking the form of a prolonged war. From a letter dubbed "letter of Enna-Dagan" we know that the clash was over land east of the Euphrates while, however, dragging in some independent cities, such as Imar (Emar) located on the opposite side of the river (LIVERANI, 2014, p.117, 119, 124–26; PODANY, 2010, p.26, 315, fn.33–34). From the point of view of power balancing the protagonists had to maintain delicate diplomacy in order to guarantee the favor of neighboring city-states who could tilt the precarious balance in favor of the adversary. Although we don't know the details of the conflict between Ebla and Mari, the city-states whose political fates were tied to the ebb and flow of their opponents' fortunes, winning the loyalty of the small buffer kingdoms became a pattern not just during the third millennium but especially during the second (TIGNOR *et al,* 2011, p.100–01). Ultimately, the heyday of the kingdom of Ebla came to an end when the first territorial state that can be characterized as truly a great state in history, the Akkadian empire, put an end to this regional powerhouse although in what manner Ebla was incorporated into Sargon's realm is difficult to establish with certainty (MILANO, 2006, p.1227–228). Ebla would rise again few centuries later, only to face a final destruction around 1600 BCE by the Hittites.

Mari was a Mesopotamian city on the west bank of the middle Euphrates in Syria (close to the border of modern Iraq). A middle-rank power with an estimated population of 40, 000 at its zenith, the kingdom of Mari reached the peak of its power under Zimri-Lim (1776–1761) (CHARPIN, 2006, p.816–17; SASSON, 2015, p.1–2). The history of this wealthy trading city-state – controlling strategically important trade lanes between different regions and cultures such as Iran, Mesopotamia, and parts of Anatolia – extends from the early third millennium to the Middle Bronze Age period when it faced destruction by Hammurabi, the king of Babylon in 1759 BCE. Despite its relative affluence, the kingdom of Mari faced two problems, one related to the shortage of human, technological and economic resources, the other related to the constant conflict caused by the expansionistic ambitions of several kings like Naram-Sin of Eshnunna, Shamshi-Adad of Assyria, and Hammurabi of Babylonia (LIVERANI, 2014, p.227–29). To some extent the technological and economic challenges are understandable when dealing with premodern societies. The scarcity of human resources, how-

ever, was probably linked to the dual structure of Mari society where large parts of the population practiced a nomadic lifestyle, which led to the lack of specialized workforce (KUHRT, 1997, p.104; LIVERANI, 2014, p.222). The geopolitical dilemma was more pressing, however. Mari was caught between foes both in the east and in the west, tried to accommodate its powerful neighbors, Babylon and Yamhad, ultimately failing in this. The strategically blessed location of the kingdom of Mari controlling crucial commercial routes, which gave the royal house significant income, only increased the external threat (BRYCE, 2009, p. xliii–xliv, 450−53). The anarchical environment also explains why the Mari rulers placed particular emphasis on military conscriptions, and those failing to register to them risked the death penalty (SASSON, p.125–26, fn. 13, 16). The Babylonian cultural influence was, however, ever-present in the cultural practices of Mari as Akkadian became the preferred language for diplomatic relations even as the main spoken language was Hurrian or Amorite. The best-known figure of the Mari Age is Hammurabi who was famous for his law code although among modern scholars there's a growing consensus that it was not so much a code of law but rather a monument to prop up Hammurabi's prestige as a ruler of a Mesopotamian empire and perhaps a piece of political propaganda to win the hearts and minds of citizens of formerly autonomous city-states (VAN DE MIEROOP, 2004, p.96–98; LEVIN, 2009, p.15; YOFFEE, 2004, p.104−09). Hammurabi, like Sargon more than a half millennium before him, then, was the one who effectively put an end to the kingdom of Mari under Zimri-Lim by conquering in 1761 BCE (PODANY, 2010, p.65). However, Hammurabi's success in uniting and expanding Babylonia's sphere of influence in Syro-Mesopotamia was the result of clever and complex set of diplomatic maneuvers.

From the two examples raised above, Mari is better-known and more extensively studied than the Ebla case because of the rich archive that has survived to posterity: an estimated 9,000 tablets out of 17,000 excavated cuneiform tablets were already published by 2014 with the letter correspondence constituting a quarter of that amount (SASSON, 2015, p.4). Nevertheless, despite the scope of the findings, we have to be careful not to read too much into the tablets, which on occasion included fabricated information, exaggeration and outright lies, at times admitted by the protagonists themselves like king Samsi-Addu who warned his son of the traffic of false information (SASSON, 2015, p.7). In the end, however, the correspondence offers a precious source of information, for it enables to develop an intimate knowledge of life in the kingdom on thematic issues like culture, kingship, administration, society, religion and warfare (CHARPIN,2006, p.816; SASSON, 2015, p.20). Overall, the Mari archive constitutes an interesting case study because the Mari Age, like the Amarna period few centuries later, essentially constituted a polycentric international arena. We get a glimpse of this from a fragment in below:

6. The document appears in Dossin (1938, p.117–18), which is the first modern translation in French. The excerpt in question is a translation by Charpin (2006, p.816); see also the translation given in Munn-Rankin (1956, p.74).

> …There is no king who, just by himself, is truly powerful. Ten or fifteen kings follow Hammurabi, lord of Babylon, as many do Rim-Sin, lord of Larsa, as many Ibal-pi-el, lord of Eshnunna, as many Amut-pi-el, lord of Qatna. Twenty kings follow Yarim-Lim, the lord of Yamkhad (Aleppo)[6] (CHARPIN, 2006, p.816)

The diplomatic practices and inter-polity relations we witness during the Late Bronze Age did not come about all of a sudden but rather seem to have followed a formula preceding at least a millennium the Near East of the mid-second millennium. Half a dozen of territorial states alongside Mari, namely Babylon, Larsa, Eshnunna, Qatna, and Yamhad vied for power and served as overlord to a number of vassal kings who governed from cities within their realms (PODANY, 2014a, p.74–75). Unlike the third or first millennium, the one characterized by lacunas in our literary sources and the other by a hegemonic phase, the second millennium saw a fertile ground for a relative equilibrium that favored the development of a genuine states-system leading the way for the "international age" we witness during the Late Bronze Age (GARFINKLE, 2016, p.104–05; LAFONT, 2001). The above excerpt – a letter sent by Itûr-Asdu, an official of Zimri-Lim from Mari (18th century) – is one manifest example of this fact as it reflects the ancient tradition of diplomatic relations and the interdependence of the region where the deeds of one state had an impact on the fates of others. Although the larger context of the letter is unknown, we are hardly witnessing here a stereotypical eastern despotic monarchy but rather a landscape of minor powers jostling for an advantage where control of territory was never permanent or guaranteed (FLEMING, 2004, p.238–39; SASSON,2015, p.344). The letter, while clearly showing the early signs of the rise of larger political communities, also tells us that the basic political unit in the ancient Near East, before large territorial states came into being, was a city-state, if we exclude tribal formations. One contributing factor for the existence of numerous city-states was the varied topography, particularly in the Levant, with its mountainous regions and separated river valleys and forests, which favored the formation of smaller political entities rather than large transregional states (BRYCE, 2003, p.137; GARFINKLE, 2016, p.105; LEMCHE, 2006, p.1197, 1205).

Importantly, with the coming of the city-state culture, organized political violence became more intense. Yet this also meant more subtle diplomacy, i.e. willingness to influence neighboring poleis by other means than coercive violence thus setting the stage for the formation of more familiar interstate environment. Indeed, rivalry between city-states is a constant theme in the history of the region, and it was to outlast the rise of territorial states and empires (GARFINKLE, 2016, p.97–105). In fact, we can agree with Joyce Marcus (1998, p.92) who argues convincingly that territorial and city-states "were often different stages in the dynamic cycles of the same states rather than two contrasting sociopolitical types" and that "clusters of city-states were invariably the breakdown product of earlier unitary states". In other words, we can see an ebb and flow process or a swing movement between unitary and city-states polities, which are by no means mutually exclusive – this theme is strongly present in the state formation process in the ancient Near East (EIDEM, 2003, p.745; LIVERANI, 2005, p.4). Not surprisingly, then, the oldest surviving interstate treaty between two independent polities was signed by two city-states – Eanna-tum of Lagash and the Ruler[7] of Umma – ca. 2500 (KITCHEN; LAWRENCE, 2012, p.1, 5, 9). Lagash and Umma were Sumerian city-states in southern Mesopo-

7. While there is uncertainty with whom Eannatum made the treaty with, some scholars have suggested the name Enakale, others Urluma (KITCHEN; LAWRENCE, 2012, p.5, fn. 7; WILCKE, 2007, p.73–75).

tamia, which were in conflict over territorial issues. After a century and a half of warfare over the stretch of a river called Gu'edena, which ran between the two cities, Lagash and Umma reached an agreement and signed a treaty described above (DUHAIME, 2012; GARFINKLE, 2016, p.103, 115). It cannot be classified as a parity nor a vassal treaty, overwhelmingly the two most common types of treaty between ancient Near Eastern polities, but rather a superiority treaty in the sense that Lagash as a more powerful side of the two dictated the terms of the settlement, without nevertheless subjugating Umma (KITCHEN; LAWRENCE, 2012, p.9). The city-states are relevant here because they created a multi-centric environment where ever-shifting alliance strategies – including power balancing – could emerge as the above letter from the Mari archives vividly reminds us (LIVERANI, 2005, p.10–14).

Although the treaty-making was based on commitments between individuals rather than between states, it is safe to say the pacts were so extensive a phenomenon in the ancient Near East that it gave the inter-polity interaction a structured nature resembling a system of states. Between 60 and 70 inter-polity treaties now known from Western Asia exist, the oldest dating back to the mid-third millennium (BECKMAN, 1999, p.1; LAFONT, 2001, p.53). The treaties structured not only the power relations between polities but were an attribute of independence as the signing of a parity treaty was the prerogative of a truly sovereign state, the most important documentation of which comes from Hattusha (Asia Minor), Ugarit (Levant), Mari (Syria), and Amarna (Egypt) (BECKMAN, 2003, p.754; BRIEND; LEBRUN; PUECH, 1992; BRYCE, 2006, p.5). The abundant corpus of treaties emanating from the ancient Near East offers us novel ways to approach sovereignty and shows that we are far from the traditional image of empire building. This widely theorized concept remains controversial and interpretations of it vary greatly in the IR literature (e.g. GLANVILLE, 2013; OSIANDER, 2001). The treaty-making, especially the existence of alliance treaties, bears witness to the fact that the entities involved were territorial in that they wanted to regularize and demarcate their relations. The transformation to a modern territorial system can thus be seen as much older than the medieval and early modern experience suggest, as is commonly seen in IR theory (BUZAN; HANSEN, 2009, p.22–24). Accordingly, the ancient world provides a number of examples where power was organized in a polycentric framework rather than in imperial fashion, which is often the stereotypical assumption. What is not sufficiently taken into account in the traditional explanations examining sovereignty relates to the external sovereignty, which is too often taken as a sign of maintaining the international anarchy in the field of IR (AALBERTS, 2016, p.185–87; WALTZ, 1979). Furthermore, less attention has received the idea according to which external sovereignty is historically anterior to internal sovereignty. One of the reasons for the prevalence of internal sovereignty relates to the fact that the concept of sovereignty has been theorized in the early modern European context when the feudalist medieval world was starting to give away to the emerging nation-state – this shift received an explicit expression when Jean Bodin (1986, p. 74–87, 99–105) invented the term 'souveraineté' to

describe the absolute and perpetual power of a republic to command. Although for Bodin this meant first and foremost that a prince had to possess the ultimate power over the nobility and the estates, in actual practice, sovereignty started to manifest itself as the reconfiguration of rule from papal and feudal authority to more centralized modern societies (AALBERTS, 2016, p.186). It is the external sovereignty, above all, i.e. the capacity for a political community whatever it's form, be it a city-state, vassal, kingdom, or large territorial state, to conduct independently its external relations and decide whether to wage wars, what makes the interstate relations possible (for a discussion on the various ways of defining domestic/international sovereignty) (SUGANAMI, 2007, p.512, 517; WALTZ, 1979, p.96). Another important attribute of sovereignty, i.e. recognition, is an age-old feature bypassing the last five hundred years, which some scholars see as sufficient for the understanding of a modern states system (EILSTRUP-GIOVANNI, 2009, p.347–48, 369–71; BULL, 2002, p.35). Consequently, not only is sovereignty a much older phenomenon than what is usually the consensus in the field of IR, which... tends to emphasize the formation of nation-states, it has also, has been reified as somehow naturally given instead of being historically contingent.[8] To be sure, the Westphalian model of sovereignty has started to lose its explanatory power, but it still affects the way IR theorists think about the interstate relations (e.g. GAT, 2006, p.648; HOLSTI, 1992, p.35, 38, 40, 42–43; OSIANDER, 2007, p.247; SUGANAMI, 2007).

Amarna diplomacy (1365-1330 BCE): tetrarchy or great power cooperation and rivalry among vassals

> "Between the kings there are brotherhood, amity and [good] relations..."[9]

> "Don't you know Amurru, that they follow the strong one?"[10]

> "The Tell el-Amarna letters – numbering a few hundred and belonging to a period near to 1400 B.C. – have acquired great fame as early documents of foreign policy. They no doubt deserve their fame; but one can brood over them at dead of night without finding a trace of the diplomatic craft, though there were occasions when diplomacy was sorely needed...But the reaction of the complaints was never particularly diplomatic; they would resort to straight bleating or begging, would withhold the return gift, or would detain the unfortunate messenger, perhaps for years."[11]

The above excerpts refer to the Amarna letter collection found in the late 19th century CE. In the first citation above (letter EA 11) the king of Babylon, Burna-Buriash II, writing to the Egyptian pharaoh, Amenhotep IV, declares to the neighboring kings of the region that 'between them there are brotherhood and good relations'. Although frictions did arise between the great kings, the letter epitomizes the ideal toward which the rulers aimed at – harmony and mutual respect. In the second excerpt (letter EA 73) the ruler of Tyros, Rib-Hadda, states cynically to the pharaoh Amenhotep IV that the Amurru people go with whoever is stronger. This is the most explicit allusion to the alternating and unstable process of changing alliances linked both to bandwagoning and to power balancing behavior we find in the letter archive and will be addressed further ahead (LIVERANI, 2004, p.104). In the third quotation the British

8. In recent years, critical interpretation of the traditional readings of sovereignty are becoming more current in the field of IR (GLANVILLE, 2013, p. 80); on the use of the concept in political theory see Osiander (2001, p.284); for a criticism on the way the concept of state is defined in Political Science, see Scheidel (2016, p.7–9).

9. EA 11: 22–23, translation after Rainey (2015, p.105).

10. EA 71: 11–16, translation after Rainey (2015, p.452).

11. Butterfield (1970, p.357–58).

historian and English School scholar Herbert Butterfield, while recognizing the Amarna letters as early documents of foreign policy, dismisses the significance of the Amarna diplomacy as a whole on the grounds that there was supposedly no proper diplomatic immunity nor comparative advantage in the economic exchange. Butterfield's assessment, although not utterly unfounded, reflects a professional historian's predilection for the hard facts and narrative, which are largely missing in the letter archive. However, in spite of its shortcomings, the Amarna archive conveys us a rather multi-faceted international arena where the polities involved were fully aware of the regional complexities. Indeed, despite its temporal brevity of just few decades, the letter collection gives us in-direct hints as regards the way the regional power balance started to change both on a local and a general level.

As we have seen, by the time of the Amarna letters, the Near Eastern great states were already well-established powers. The international arena can best be described as a tetrarchy of great power cooperation and rivalry, a situation unseen before the mid-second millennium. Unlike under Thutmose I and III who led more than a century before the Amarna period – numerous military campaigns in Western Asia almost unopposed, including the battle of Megiddo, by the time we reach the turn of the 14th century, Egypt was joined by other great powers stretching from Mesopotamia to Asia Minor and to the Levant. Hayim Tadmor popularized this political landscape by the appellation of "club of the great powers" in 1979. Since then, the expression and especially the term 'club' has drawn some criticism for being anachronistic while the term 'brotherhood' is more in tune with the usage of the age (PODANY, 2010, p.192, 343, fn. 2). In the end, both terms can be problematic. If we accept the concept of brotherhood, which undoubtedly was part of the terminology of the Amarna letters and the diplomatic 'protocol' of the ancient Near East more generally, we have to be careful not to see the inter-polity relations as too harmonious for clashes of interest and conflict were ever-present. Nevertheless, the club of the great powers, while undoubtedly sounding too modern, for both 'great power'[12] and 'club' as colloquial terms have a history of just few hundred years, they nonetheless carry the meaning of a restricted community reserved for few selected members.

There are obvious differences between these polities – Egypt for one had a tradition of being a continuous great power dating back to the early third millennium with the exception of the Hyksos occupation while the Near Eastern major states knew both periods of imperial expansion and political fragmentation. When Egypt at the beginning of the New Kingdom campaigned in Western Asia, she did not have to face a group of rival great powers except for Mitanni. This development was in stark contrast to the 17th and 16th centuries, time period known as the Dark Age and characterized by scarce textual documentation, political fragmentation and the decline of the city-states at the expense of semi-nomadic groups. The Dark Age period was followed by a gradual and dynamic change, however, which transformed the small and weak states into a system of territorial states (KUHRT, 1997, p. 185−380; VAN DE MIEROOP, 2004, p.125; VAN DE MIEROOP, 2010, p. 226−34). It is somewhat

12. Great powerhood is used here as a generic term to designate the criteria for a great power stature. In the IR literature (see e.g. DANILOVIC, 2002, p.225–27; NEUMANN,2008, p.130–31) a major state is usually defined as having three elements: a) power (military, political, economic); b) space (geographic scope of interests, power projection); and c) status or prestige (an acknowledgement of major power status). Historians and earlier generation of social scientists, on their part, have stressed military strength and staying power as a distinguishing feature of great power habitus (TAYLOR, 1954, p. xxiv; WRIGHT,1942: 268; MANDELBAUM,1998–99, p.29).

difficult to establish with exactitude the precise reasons for the formation of this great powers' club – no doubt, it was a process involving internal and external forces in the state formation. The international arena that came as a result of multitude of coexisting states both small and great was unprecedented in its geographic scope, multipolarity and relative stability when compared to the Middle Bronze Age period of the ancient Near East (LIVERANI, 2014, p.106, 271, 278–80). So far, there are no other ancient Near Eastern sources available to us that would describe this regional system as comprehensively as the Amarna archive.

The Amarna letter collection dating back to the mid-14th century, probably the most important source of its kind in terms of describing the inter-polity relations in the late Bronze Age, portrays an international arena where the interaction in variety of forms – spheres of influence, deterrence, prestige, alliance formation, trade and survival of small city-states as well as the rise and decline of major states – were at the center of the missives exchanged between the great states and the vassals. The Amarna period describes the logic of international anarchy almost a millennium before Thucydides' classic study of the causes of the Peloponnesian War (431–404). Unlike within the Greek *poleis*, however, the world of the ancient Near East during this period was less Hobbesian – military clashes were followed by relative peace and stability, which were upheld by peace treaties, exchange of precious gifts, marital arrangements between sovereigns, by the notion of 'brotherhood' depicting equality between great states, and diplomatic envoys and letters (e.g. COHEN, 1996a, p.13; MORRIS, 2010, p.197; PODANY, 2014a, p.87–88, 91–94). Although hardly a unique collection, for there must have been other similar cuneiform tablets before the discovery of the Amarna archive, the crucial difference between the two is the multi-centered environment the letters depict. Before the Hellenistic period and the Roman conquest, the Greek city-states – while at times both fighting and cooperating with each other and with the Persian empire – were never part of a broader multiethnic states-system although they maintained trade links and colonies in the wider Mediterranean world[13] (ECKSTEIN, 2006, p.37–48).

In the ancient Near East, by contrast, there were several smaller and larger political units interacting with each other and using a common language in order to overcome linguistic barriers, which included Akkadian, Amorite, Egyptian, Elamite, Hittite, Hurrian and Sumerian, each belonging to separate, and in some cases to unknown, language groups. During the Hellenistic period until the battle of Pydna (146 BCE), which marked the end of Alexandrian empires and paved the way for Roman dominance over much of the eastern Mediterranean and Near East, the interstate relations became more complex and cosmopolitan but this does not change the fact that a coherent system of states, in the sense we see in the ancient Near East, was lacking in the Greek world (DAVIS, 1999, p.51–55; TUCKER, 2011, p.63–64). Hence, the ancient Greece of the Classical Age (ca. 500–323 BCE) was predominantly what the historian Herodotus (Book VIII, 144) called *to hellēnikon*, "the Greek thing", i.e. peer polity interaction[14] amongst the Greeks, rather than a multicultural inter-state arena as such (BUZAN,1993, p.333–34; BUZAN; LITTLE,

13. For a take on the cultural and ethnic homogeneity of ancient Greece, see MORRIS, 2009, p.99, 132, 159–60.

14. Western Asia, by the time of mid--second millennium, was enough tightly knit an area to constitute what the British archaeologists have called the 'Peer Polity Interaction' (MA, 2003, p.12–14, 19, 32–35; RENFREW, 1986, p.1–18; VAN DE MIEROOP, 2010, p.30–31; YOFFEE, 2005, p.1774). The Peer Polity Interaction is a concept to explain the close social co-existence and contacts between the different polities beyond a specified spatial-temporal context. It included the use of common diplomatic language, a nascent diplomatic protocol, international treaties, and long-distance commerce.

1994, p.240). Overall, this state of affairs sums up the case for the Roman world as well especially after the Punic Wars, which ultimately led to the *Pax Romana* in the classical world and lasted for several hundred years (GOLDSWORTHY, 2003, p.357−65). One clear indication of this relative cultural insularity is the fact the there is no evidence of a systematic attempt to gather anything resembling a diplomatic archive in the Roman world – Rome like China were hegemonic entities which saw themselves as universal empires instead of being part of a system of great states interacting with each other on the basis of equality (COHEN, 1999 , p.10).

In all, the Amarna letters include 382 cuneiform tablets which describe the diplomatic correspondence under the Egyptian pharaohs Amenophis III (ca. 1390−1353) and Amenophis IV (better-known as Akhenaten) (ca. 1352−1336)[15]. The documents had been buried in a room of the palace when the court moved from Akhetaten back to Thebes, to mark the return to 'normalcy', soon after the death of Akhenaten (DROWER, 1973, p.483). However, to keep things in perspective, it is worthwhile remembering that the Amarna period does not constitute a culmination of the ancient Near Eastern diplomacy per se. The exchange of ambassadors, the attention paid to the protocol, the princely marriages, the conclusion of treaties, the rhetoric of negotiations were highly structured already at least by a millennium before as the Ebla and Mari ages testify (LAFONT,2001, p.56; PODANY, 2010: p.19−32). Nevertheless, the Amarna letter collection, with the sort of 'still image' precision and width, constitutes, despite its shortcomings, one of the key elements to understand the inter-polity relations in the ancient Near East during the 14th century. The correspondence was primarily conducted between Amenhotep IV and his vassals in Syria-Palestine, but some forty of them were from or to the kings that were considered as 'Great Kings'. As the title of this section suggests, the interplay took place between four great powers as one fell (Mitanni) and the other (Elam) was not really an integral member of the regional system. Besides Egypt, those were the rulers of Babylonia, Mitanni, and Hatti and, after the collapse of Mitanni, Assyria would enter the international scene as well. In the letters, the kings mainly discussed diplomatic matters related to the exchange of precious goods and of royal women. The language of most of the letters was Akkadian (a dialect of Babylonian), the lingua franca of interstate diplomacy in the region.

Through the Amarna letter collection, we can witness how the great power relations changed in the Near East. Each state's status was carefully demarcated, but as the relative power of the great powers sometimes changed quickly, frictions were bound to arise. The collapse of Mitanni as a great state – a unique event in the 300 years of the Late Bronze Age – as a result of Hittite aggression and internal power struggle is not explicitly addressed in the letters except for a one single letter written in Hurrian, where the Mitannian king Tushratta mentions the Hittites as "the enemy of the Hurrian king" (EA 24: 8−15 *apud* RAINEY, 2015, p.189). Indirectly, however, this debacle in the political landscape of the Near East is conveyed to us in the exchange of letters between Egypt, Babylonia, and Assyria. The great beneficiary of the fall of Mitanni was

Assyria which was able to liberate herself of the Mitannian tutelage. Assyria's urge for emancipation had wider implications, however, as it was also under the control of Babylonia. The rise of Assyria under Ashuruballit is thus indicative of the dramatic change in the balance of power in Near East during the Late Bronze Age. Fortunately, Assyria's return to the international scene as a great state is rather well documented in the Amarna archive. Consequently, Ashur-uballit sent two letters (ca. 1350) to the king of Egypt Amenophis IV. In the first letter (EA 15: 7–22) his approach was visibly tentative:

> …I have sent my envoy to you to see and to see your land. Up to now, my fathers have not written. Today, I have written to you. [I] have sent to you an excellent chariot, two horses and one date-stone of genuine lapis lazuli as your greeting gift. Do not delay the envoy whom I have sent to you for a visit. May he see and may he depart. May he see your behavior (nature) and the behavior (nature) of your land and may he depart (RAINEY, 2015, p.129)

The letter gives us several clues as to the way the Near Eastern states-system functioned. From it we learn that it was not a custom for messenger-diplomats to stay long periods of time in foreign courts – this has sometimes rather excessively been interpreted as a sign of the relative crudeness of the pre-modern states-systems (ANDERSON, 1993, p.6–7, 11, 43; BERRIDGE, 2000, p.214, 222; ECKSTEIN, 2006, p.97; FUBINI, 2000, p.29, 41; JÖNSSON, 2000, p.214–15; MATTINGLY, 1988). More importantly, Ashur-uballit is not making any claims to brotherhood that was one of the defining features of the Near Eastern system – Assyria still considered herself as an aspiring power. In the second letter (EA 16: 22–33), however, the tone is clearly more assertive reflecting military success and power:

> When I saw your ambassadors, I rejoiced greatly. May your envoys dwell in my presence in great solicitude…When the Hanigalbatian (Assyrian term of for Mitanni) king sent to your father, to the land of Egypt, they sent to him twenty talents of gold. I'm equal to a Hanigalbatian king but you send to me x minas gold. It is not sufficient for the going and returning and the wages of my envoys. If your intention is truly genuine, send much gold and as for that house of yours, send to me so that they may bring what you need (RAINEY, 2015, p.131, 133).

The letter is astonishingly sure, almost arrogant, marking the formal entry of Assyria into the "club of the great powers" (LIVERANI, 1990, p.71–72). While Assyria became a truly established power only in the following century after having beaten Hatti in the battle of Nihriya, already the Amarna archive bears witness to her nascent rise which became possible as Mitanni, Assyria's former overlord, collapsed. Meanwhile, Burna-Buriash II, king of Babylon, who wanted to show his loyalty to Egypt by hinting at a Canaanite plot against Egypt in the past, was enraged by the Assyrian rapprochement with the latter, which made him send an angry letter (EA 9: 19–38) to pharaoh Akhenaten as he considered Assyria to be part of his vassal states:

> In (the time of) Kurigalzu, my father, all the Canaanites wrote to him, saying: Come to the border of the land; let us revolt and let us be allied with you. My father wrote this to them, saying: Leave being allied with me! If you become estranged from the king of Egypt, my brother, and become allied with another, will I not come and will I not plunder you? How can there be an alliance with me?...Now, as for the Assyrian, my vassal, it was not I who sent him to you. Why

on their own initiative have they come to your country? If you love me, they will conduct no business whatsoever. Send them off to me empty handed (RAINEY, 2015, p.93, 95).

Egypt, however, did receive the Assyrian messengers and recognized Assyria's new position as great power as is attested in the Amarna letter EA 16 (COHEN; WESTBROOK, 2007, p.7; KUHRT, 1997 p.352; RAGIONIERI, 2000, p.48; VAN DE MIEROOP, 2004, p.127–28). We cannot ascertain with certainty Egypt's motives for recognizing Assyria, yet circumstantial evidence points to the threat posed by the other rising power Hatti suggesting that Egypt considered Assyria, at this stage, a potential counterweight to the Hittite power. Ultimately, even Babylonia had to adapt to the new realities and ultimately Burna-Buriash agreed to a royal marriage with Assyria (GILES, 2001, p.131–32). It is suggestive that the royal title šar māt Aššur "king of Assyria", was first used by Ashur-uballit on his own seal thus demonstrating the shift from a "city of Ashur" or ālu Aššur into a regional polity māt Aššur or "land of Ashur" (LIVERANI, 2011, p.257). What remains unclear, however, is the question of when exactly did the process of 'emancipation' from Mitannian and Babylonian yoke start for Assyria. We know that already before Ashur-uballit, the Assyrian kings (GILES, 1997, p.87–98, GRAYSON, 1972; MAIDAN, 2011, p.107–14) were making Assyria a serious contender on the international scene. At stake was Assyria's yearning to be recognized as an independent great state whereas the other powers, mainly Babylonia, felt that this would weaken their relative position in the region. Indeed, a preoccupation with recognition, which is one of the central themes in the Amarna archive, connects the Amarna period to a wider framework of international and diplomatic history. The letter also emphasizes the special position Egypt enjoyed as the central power among the great powers – the other great states constantly sought her approval. However, it is possible that Egypt's motives can be partly explained by a genuine willingness to appease the rising power of Assyria or to see the rising power as a useful ally against the Hittites. Be that as it may, from the point of view of power balancing the crucial factor here is the interdependence, i.e. action–reaction -like relationship that we equate to be a central modern feature of interstate relations. While Assyria would not yet be that hegemonic state we witness in the first millennium, its liberation from the Mitannian and Babylonian yoke meant that its westward expansion was putting pressure on Hatti territory.

The vast majority of the Amarna letters – almost nine out of ten – revolved around the relationship of the vassals (*ardu*) with their great power lords (*bēlu*), and with Egypt in particular. Unlike in the missives of the Great Kings where the primary interest was in the diplomatic exchange of messengers, goods, and women, the contents of the vassal letters reveal a greater inter-polity dynamism. From these letters, one sees that the main purpose of the king's writing was to acquire personnel and other goods, to introduce Egyptian officials and secure obedience to their orders, and to arrange for supplies for his troops (MORAN, 1992, p.xxviii). Yet there's no clear evidence to suggest that Egypt pursued a deliberate policy of divide and rule. Rather we see an attempt to maintain a fragile

status quo (SEVERAL, 1972, p.129; ALDRED, 1975, p.85). Nevertheless, the relations among vassals seem to have been in a chronic state of unrest where inter-city conflict, problems with nomads called the Hapiru, disruptions to trade and communication and disregard of imperial orders were a constant (SEVERAL, 1972, p.123—25). The Amarna archive paints a picture of an imbroglio over competing vassal states ostensibly trying to protect the interest of their overlord, while in actual fact advancing their own ambitions and ever-ready to change their loyalties (ALDRED, 1975, p. 82, 104—05; EA 289, EA 292, EA 294, EA 333 *apud* SCHNIEDEWIND, 2015). In this environment, political calculations based on power balancing were never far away (DROWER, 1973, p. 559—67).

One of the most interesting aspects of the vassal correspondence relates to a local ruler in Amurru by the name of Abdi-Ashirta as this highlights a sudden challenge to the regional balance of power. Abdi-Ashirta managed to unite the disparate population of Amurru, a region located roughly between the Mediterranean coast and the Orontes River (north-western Syria and northern Lebanon). In doing so, he created a powerful buffer between the spheres of influence of the rising new Hittite empire and fledgling kingdom of Mittani to the north and the Egyptian kingdom to the south. In the Amarna letters, we learn how he tried to conceal his ambitious expansionist plans by exploiting the unsettled situation concomitant with the Hittite incursion into Amurru. While claiming to be a loyal servant of Egypt (EA 60, p.19—29; EA 62, p.34—49 *apud* SCHNIEDEWIND, 2015) by asserting to be "guarding the city of Sumur and the city of Ullassa and all the territories of my king, my son god, my lord" and regretting being denigrated by other vassals, Abdi-Ashirta didn't mind intimidating and attacking fellow vassal rulers in the region, seizing their cities and lands in the process (RAINEY, 2015, p.425). It seems that Abdi-Ashirta wanted to expand his own powerbase at the expense of Egypt, perhaps looking for a vassalage with Hatti, and while doing it, overplayed his card. Meanwhile, the Hittite king Suppiluliuma I had forged relations with Amurru and with the king of Kadesh in view of entangling in Syrian affairs (LIVERANI, 2014, p.304). The instability in Amurru was a test case for Egypt, which was not keen to intervene unless really necessary – in this case, she had been warned on several occasions by a loyal vassal Rib-Hadda of Byblos (EA 108, p.20—58; EA 117, p.6—52 *apud* SCHNIEDEWIND, 2015). Although slow to react, the way Egypt dealt with Abdi-Ashirta left no room for hesitation: after having occupied the Egyptian garrison in Sumur, the Amurru ruler was called to Egypt and apparently killed there even if the Amarna archive is not very clear on this fact (EA 101, p.18–33 *apud* SCHNIEDEWIND, 2015; COHEN; WESTBROOK, 2000, p.8). The action taken by Akhenaten demonstrates that Egypt was not facing a general state of anarchy in Palestine as sometimes purported, rather she had quite a firm presence in the Levant despite lingering problems there (SEVERAL, 1972, p.123, 132—33; ALDRED, 1975, p.85). However, Abdi-Ashirta's son, Aziru, did not acquiesce to being an Egyptian vassal and ultimately defected to the Hittite camp (BECKMAN, 1999, p.36). This against the background when the great power of Mitanni collapsed, the expansion of the Hit-

tites in central Syria posed a threat to Egyptian interests, and when other vassals such as Aitakkama (also known as Aitaggama or Etaka-ma) was involved in subversive activities in the city of Kadesh (LIVERANI, 1998, p.46; SCHNIEDEWIND, 2015, p.21).

Overall, in bringing the quotidian of everyday diplomacy of the ancient Near East out in the open, the Amarna letter collection as a primary source is unlike no other. What sets the Amarna period apart from the earlier eras in the Near East, is the fact that the inter-polity relations became more formalized as the political units became more fully integrated into a region-wide system. During the few decades, two significant changes took place in the great power relations of the region. The diplomatic letters exchanged between great states and vassals draw a picture of transitional phase in the inter-polity relations where we see a move from a tetrarchy to a trierarchy of relations. First, Mitanni, Egypt's ally and a buffer state, was conquered by the rising power of the Hittite state. Second, the gradual rise of Assyria and its acceptance into the club of the great powers, despite some protests on the part of Babylonia, is clearly witnessed in the letter archive. These developments had obvious implications for the carefully maintained balance of power in Syria-Palestine. There is little doubt that the 14th century stands out in the whole period of the Late Bronze Age insofar as the rich primary sources bring the Near Eastern world much closer to a modern reader than earlier periods. Although we have to avoid putting the Amarna period in a pedestal, it is fair to say that in certain important ways the diplomatic relations we encounter from the mid- to the late second millennium was more cosmopolitan in the region than before. By cosmopolitan we mean that polities of different sizes and cultural backgrounds all interacted with one another with the help of a common diplomatic language, Akkadian, and an urge to be recognized by peers and vassal states alike. Brief, we can see the formation of a genuinely systemic international environment where all the ingredients of the international anarchy problematic the students of world politics tend to equate as more recent phenomena saw their birth in the ancient Near Eastern world.

Conclusions

The Near Eastern diplomatic practices were firmly established long before the emergence of Amarna diplomacy. If we look at the limitations of the missives, the inadequate background information, the lack of diplomatic immunity or the noninstitutionalized nature of diplomatic presentation, then we are not able to read much into this diplomatic correspondence and as a result we can be as dismissive as Herbert Butterfield raised above. Indeed, the very term 'diplomacy' does not emerge in the ancient documents even in the Greco-Roman world, let alone in the ancient Near East, not until 1796 CE when Edmund Burke first uses the word. The same is true of the expression 'great power', which became a colloquial term only after the Napoleonic Wars. If we want to continue the list from a IR perspective, we have to add concepts like 'empire' and 'balance of power', both of which found written expressions only in the

Roman context and in the early modern Europe respectively. However, in the words of Bertrand Lafont (2001: 41), an Assyriologist, we can ask: "…is it necessary to conceptualize diplomacy to make diplomacy?"

British historian Paul Kennedy (1987, p.21) has noted that what stood in the way of gaining the mastery of Europe after 1500 CE was the fact that each of the rival forces had access to the new military techniques, so that no single power ever possessed the decisive edge. The dynamics of the Amarna diplomacy and its precedents in the Near East were surprisingly similar in the sense that no area in the region was technologically superior to the other. The reason for this lies in the close coexistence and contacts that existed between the polities. This resulted in fierce competition and imitation that led to the so-called peer polity interaction.

The Amarna letters not only depict the power change of the territorial states in question – the rise of Hatti and Assyria, and the fall of Mitanni – relatively closely but they also show the nature of the diplomacy and the systemic level of inter-polity interaction with a precision, which is rare at this point in time. This development sets the Late Bronze Age apart from the earlier and later periods in Near Eastern history where we see imperial hegemonic tendencies. The Amarna diplomacy and its precedents in the ancient Near East challenge traditional views held dear in IR theory about the contemporary and Eurocentric nature of concepts such as sovereignty, great powerhood and statehood altogether, as well as power balancing. These questions inevitably lead us to ask how far back in time can we apply the idea of an international system. By reaching out to the complex political landscape of the ancient Near East, IR scholars can include large chunks of international history into their research agendas, and, subsequently, contribute to the mutually beneficial dialogue between IR theory and world history.

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