



## International Relations, Diplomacy, and the Power of Discourse in the Middle Babylonian Era (1157-1700 B.C.)

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### Abstract

This article presents a study in the international relations, diplomacy, and the power of discourse in the middle Babylonian era (1157-1700 B.C.). In fact, notions such as international relations, politics, diplomacy, and power cannot be expressed without using language. Language is a powerful tool in expressing and achieving good international relations, politics, and diplomacy. Since the first written alphabet emerged from the fertile crescent, Mesopotamia (current Iraq), it is certain that the Mesopotamian political rhetoric was powerful and persuasive, especially in international relations at that time. The middle Babylonian era is the focus of this study. More particularly, we focus on the international relations and the power of discourse which happened between the Babylonian king namely, Burnaburiash II and the Egyptian pharaoh namely, Amenhotep IV. In the Egyptian ancient city Tell el-Amarna, the discovered archive of cuneiform tablets showed that there were old international and diplomatic relations between the two civilizations namely, Babylon and Egypt. Using tools of discourse, this article showed that the Babylonian kings possessed powerful discourse which helped them achieving good international, political, and diplomatic relations with Egypt in the middle Babylonian era.

**Keywords:** Mesopotamia, international relations, diplomacy, Burnaburiash II, Amenhotep IV

العلاقات الدولية والدبلوماسية وقوة الخطاب في العصر البابلي الوسيط (1157-1700 ق.م.)

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### ملخص

تقدم هذه المقالة دراسةً حول العلاقات الدولية والدبلوماسية وقوة الخطاب في العصر البابلي الوسيط (1157-1700 ق.م.). ففي الواقع، لا يمكن التعبير عن مفاهيم كالعلاقات الدولية والسياسة والدبلوماسية والقوة دون استخدام اللغة. فاللغة أداة بالغة الأهمية في التعبير عن العلاقات الدولية والسياسة والدبلوماسية وتحقيقها على نحو سليم. ومنذ ظهور أول أبجدية مكتوبة في الهلال الخصيب، بلاد ما بين النهرين (العراق حاليًا)، كان من المؤكد أن الخطاب السياسي في بلاد ما بين النهرين كان قويًا ومؤثرًا، لا سيما في العلاقات الدولية آنذاك. ويركز هذا البحث على العصر البابلي الوسيط. وبشكلٍ أدق، نركز على العلاقات الدولية وقوة الحوار التي دارت بين ملك بابل، بورنابورياش الثاني، وفرعون مصر، أمنحتب الرابع. ففي مدينة تل العمارنة المصرية القديمة، كشفت مجموعة من الألواح المسمارية المكتشفة عن وجود علاقات دولية ودبلوماسية عريقة بين حضارتي بابل ومصر. وباستخدام أدوات الحوار، تُبين هذه المقالة أن ملوك بابل امتلكوا خطابًا قويًا ساعدهم على بناء علاقات دولية وسياسية ودبلوماسية متينة مع مصر في العصر البابلي الوسيط.



الكلمات المفتاحية: بلاد ما بين النهرين، العلاقات الدولية، الدبلوماسية، بورنابورباش الثاني، أممحتب الرابع

## 1. Introduction

After mankind spent the greater part of his life living a primitive life in pre-historic times, human being entered into the most important experience which is the transition to the stage of civilization. This civilization transition was achieved by the transfer of the inhabitants of Mesopotamia from pre-historic times in the late fourth millennium before birth to the life of civil civilization. First, cities, government system, writing, codification, legislative laws, arts, literature, science, knowledge, and other urbanism and civilization built and arose (Baqir, 1986).

Mesopotamia, the Fertile Crescent, is the Greek word for the land between the two rivers namely, Euphrates and Tigris (Charvát, 2013). Its name “the cradle of civilization” did not come out of nothing. Mesopotamia is one of the earliest civilizations in the entire world. Its main contributions include the development of the written language, major advances in law, religion, science, and economy. In terms of astronomy, Mesopotamian astronomers invented a 12 month lunar calendar. They also divided the year into two seasons. In terms of mathematics, Mesopotamian mathematics is a sexagesimal, or base 60, system. Such a system, which is based on 60-minute hours and 24-hour days, remains until now. The Sumerian calendar was divided into seven-day weeks (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2011). The origins of sciences such as mathematics, physics, and astronomy are related to Mesopotamian efforts and lie between 2000 BC and 3000 BC (Maisels, 1999).

Bertman (2003) states that:

“Along with Egypt, ancient Mesopotamia was the birthplace of civilization. But, unlike Egypt, Mesopotamia was the home of not one but a succession of glorious civilizations—the civilizations of Sumer, Babylonia, and Assyria—that together flourished for more than three millennia from about 3500 to 500 B.C.E. It was Sumerian mathematicians who devised the 60-minute hour that still rules our lives. It was Babylonian architects who designed the fabled Tower of Babel and the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the “Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.” And it was Assyrian kings and generals who, in the name of imperialism, conducted some of the most ruthless military campaigns in recorded history. The civilizations of Mesopotamia are united by many common denominators: the land of the twin rivers—the Tigris and Euphrates—and the resources it possessed; the gods and goddesses that lorded over it; the cities—the world’s first—that rose and fell with their towers and temples; the lawmakers and empire-builders; the farmers, merchants, and artisans who lived out their daily lives; the scribes who told their story in the world’s oldest writing; and the works of literature that still survive that speak of a search for meaning in a land that so often saw the hopes of humankind

frustrated by nature's raw power or man's voracious greed..... In the main, yesterday's Mesopotamia is today's Iraq, a war-torn land where people still struggle to eke out their daily lives as did their ancestors thousands of years ago. Yet buried in Iraq's barren desert there also lie the ruins of an earlier glory and splendor that once shone for all to see (X)".

The Mesopotamian civilization was not only characterized by its civilizational precedence in the fields of science and construction but also it was characterized by its political precedence. Politicians in ancient Iraq worked hard in political actions. They depended or relied on the diplomatic systems and norms and international relations. The politics of ancient Iraq truly taught the mankind the diplomatic traditions in its various forms. Everyone who is familiar with the history of diplomatic and international relations in ancient Iraq become clear to them that ancient Iraqis were the people who led other people and introduce to the world diplomacy and international relations and peace agreement. The diplomatic discourse began in ancient Iraq around 2450 BC when the treaty between Eannatum, the ruler of Laksh and Umma. This treaty represented the first aspects of current international law Political-diplomatic discourse is the actual tool for managing all political relations and solving many problems in different societies. It is a tool for solving disputes, wars, and problems that arise between civilizations, countries, and states. The history of ancient Iraq is rich with negotiations and events that highlight the use of logic and wisdom in solving many issues. Such crucial ways of solving catastrophic problems gained the Iraqi civilization a priority when compared with other ancient civilizations (Nussbaum, 1947).

This study aims, from a historical discourse analysis, to illustrate the way ancient Iraqis use international relations at that time.

## **2. The Kassite Rule, Burnaburiash II, and Akhenaton (Amenhotep IV)**

According to Roux (1992), Kassite princes took the necessary measures and were able to transform 'Babylonia into a prosperous kingdom honoured and respected by its powerful neighbours (242). Although the Kassites reigned for more than four centuries, little is known about this interesting period in ancient Iraq.

The exact date of the beginning of the Kassite rule cannot be determined. A king called Agum II ruled a state that stretched from western Iran to the central part of the Euphrates Valley. Agum II restored the Babylonian god, Marduk from the Hittites, returned it to Babylon, and renewed the worship, making the god Marduk equal to the Keshi god, Shuqamuna. Meanwhile, native princes kept on ruling in southern Babylon. Ulamburiash may have been the one who finally annexed this region around 1450 and began negotiations with Egypt in Syria. Karaindash built a temple with tile decoration in Erech (Uruk) around 1420. A new capital was established west of Baghdad, Dur – Kurigalzu, competing with Babylon, and named after Kurigalzu I (c. 1400 – c. 1375). His successors were Kadashman –

Enlil I (c. 1375 – c. 1360) and Burnaburiash II (c. 1360 – 1333). They reign in correspondence with the Egyptian pharaohs, namely Amenhotep III and Akhenaton (Amenhotep IV). Kurigalzu II (c. 1332-c. 1308) fought against the Assyrians but he was defeated. To put an end to the expansion of the Assyrians, his successors sought alliance with the Hittites. During the reign of Kashtiliash IV (c. 1232-c. 1225), Babylonia indulged in two wars against Elam and Assyria. The wars ended in a disastrous invasion and destruction of Babylon by Tukulti-Ninurta I. Babylonia was able to witness a period of prosperity and peace during the reign of Adad-shum-usur (c. 1216– c. 1187) and Melishipak (c. 1186–c. 1172). Their successors, once again, forced to confront Shutruk-Nahhunte, king of Elam (c. 1185-c. 1155). The cruelty, strength, and brutality of the Elamites eventually destroyed the dynasty of the Kassites about (1155). After 1380, letters and documents showed that many things have been changed after the Kassites seized power. The Kassites upper class was a small minority and they had been Babylonianized. They were even given Babylonian names. The Kassite rule influenced Babylonian town life which had revived in terms of trade and handicrafts.



**Fig 1.** Signs of a Civilization? The Sacred Boundary Stones of Babylonia

Figure (1) above is used to refer to a stone called kudurru which is used as a document by the Kassites of ancient Mesopotamia. The kudurru served as a record of gifts in general and land grants in particular given by the king to a favoured person. The kudurru stones are important for economic and religious reasons. Also, such stones are the only works of arts which survived from the Kassite period. After 1400, the Kassites played a distinctive role in the development of architecture, sculpture, arts, poetry, and literature. During the later period of the Kassites, many scholars believe that the basis for the development of later Babylonian culture was laid (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2011).

One of the most prominent kings of the Kassites is Burnaburiash II (Burna-Buriaš II). In the Kassite language, the name Burnaburiash means servant of the Lord of



the lands. Burnaburiash II was one of the kings of the Kassite dynasty of Babylon. Succeeded Kadašman-Enlil I, his father, Burnaburiash II was the 19<sup>th</sup> king ascending the Kassite throne. Burnaburiash was a contemporary of Akhenaton (Amenhotep IV), the Egyptian pharaoh. The rule of Burnaburiash II was characterized by the emergence of good diplomatic and international relations between the Kassites and the Egyptians, or more specifically between Burnaburiash II and Akhenaton.

The middle Babylonian age started with the coming of the third dynasty of Babylon which arose after the entrance of the Kassites to Babylon. This period witnessed very important events and political upheavals. In this particular period, all the kingdoms that were established in Babylon and Assyria became part of the region as a whole. The kingdoms influenced the region and at the same time were influenced by the events which happened in the region. Its foreign political and diplomatic relations were changed according to the changing of events and circumstances. Such relations helped establishing political treaties and military alliances and agreement. The political and military relations in the Middle Babylonian era were characterized by the balance of international powers in the ongoing conflict between the Egyptians, the Hittites, and the Mitannis on one hand and the conflicts between the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Arameans on the other. Due to these conflicts, wide diplomatic relations resulted. For example, during the reign of the Babylonian king, Kara Endash (around 1450 BC), Babylon made close diplomatic relations with the pharaohs of Egypt. The two countries namely, Babylon and Egypt exchanged envoys, especially during the reign of the Egyptian pharaoh, Amenophes III (1367-1405 BC). In order to strengthen the diplomatic relations, a Kassite princess was sent to join the women of the royal household of the Egyptian pharaoh (Gurney, 1954; Brinkman, 1968).

The discovered archive of cuneiform tablets in the 9<sup>th</sup> century in the ancient site of Tell el-Amarna in Egypt showed lots of information about old international and diplomatic relations, especially between Egyptian and Babylonian civilizations during the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC (Freire & Teixeira, 2018).



**Fig 2.** A cuneiform tablet made out of clay which consists of 38 lines-5 sections illustrating Burna-Buriash's II request for more gold from Amenhotep IV.

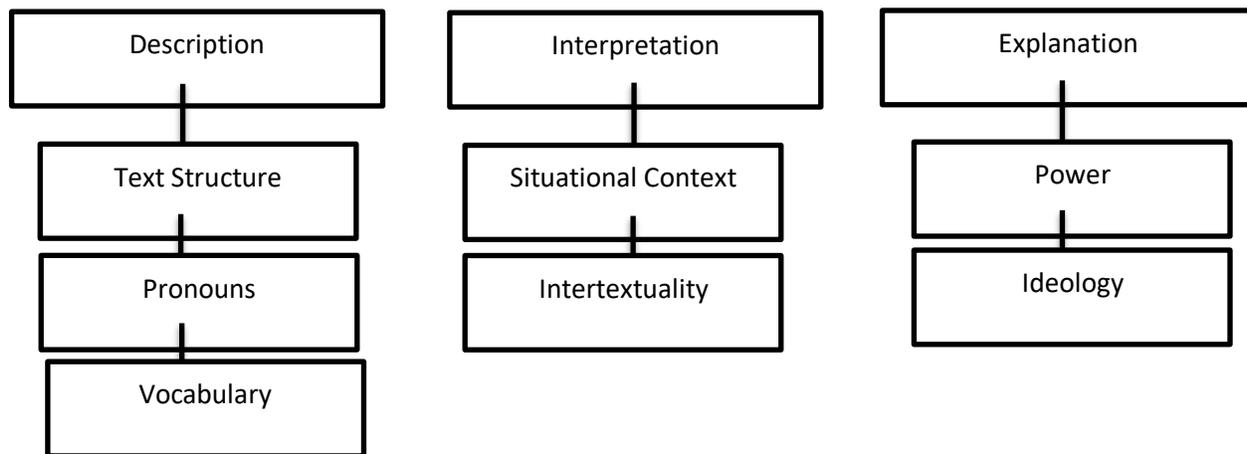
This article aims to analyze some selected letters happened between Egypt and Babylon in the Middle Babylonian era by means of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to show instances of diplomacy and international relations dated back to Mesopotamian origins.

### 3. Method

The article data consist of some selected Babylonian letters which happened between Babylonian kings in the Middle Babylonian era and Egyptian pharaohs. The selected Babylonian letters are taken from different sources. The sources are presented clearly in the references section. The letters are analysed according to Fairclough (2001) Language and power.

In terms of Fairclough (2001), the theoretical framework is divided into three stages. The stages are namely, description, interpretation, and explanation. The description stage is sub-divided into three parts namely, text structure, pronouns, vocabulary. Text structure refers to the arrangements and details of the text: introduction, body, and conclusion. Pronouns are useful in diplomatic and political discourse. They can be invested ideologically and persuasively to serve language users. Through the use of pronouns, language users can put their friends and in-group members near the self, while they put their enemies, rivals, and out-group far away from the self or the center (Chilton, 2004). Vocabulary is used to refer to the denotative (the dictionary meaning of the words, phrases, and sentences) and the connotative meaning (the non-literal and metaphorical meaning of the words, phrases, and sentences). The interpretation stage is sub-divided into two components namely, situational context and intertextuality. Situational context

refers to the time, place, and environment of discourse. It also refers to the addressor and the addressees, the relations between participants, the involved actors, and what the whole event is about. Intertextuality means one text refers to another text in a direct or an indirect way. It is a good and persuasive way in communicating a new idea by quoting or referring to another previous text that expressed this idea. Explanation stage is sub-divided into power and ideology. Fairclough's explanation stage is used to illustrate whether the text is powerful and contains power relations, authority and powerful language. The explanation stage is also used to uncover hidden ideologies in discourse.



**Fig 3. Fairclough's three dimensional framework**

In addition to Fairclough's three dimensional framework of text analysis, we adopt Text Analyser (Word Frequency Cloud). Text Analyser is a web based application used to read and analyze large corpus as well as small documents according to three categories namely, Text Statistics, Word Length Breakdown, and Word Frequency Cloud. In this study, we only use Word Frequency Cloud (WFC) for reading and analyzing the selected Babylonian letters. WFC shows each word in a bigger or smaller text size, depending on how many times it is found in the text. The bigger the word, the more frequently it occurs (UsingEnglish.com).

#### **4. Data Analysis**

This section is concerned with the analysis of some selected translated Babylonian letters sent to Egyptian pharaohs. The selected letters are analyzed according to Fairclough's three dimensional framework. The letters are also analyzed according to WFC.

##### **An Offer of Friendship:**

**“Say to Nimmuwarea, the king of Egypt, my brother: Thus Burnaburiaš the king of Karaduniyaš, the king of Karadunyaš, your brother. For me all goes well. For you, your household, your wives your sons, your country, your magnates, your horses, your chariots, may all go well.**



**Just as previously you and my father were friendly to one another, you and I should be friendly to one another. Between us, anything else what-so-ever is not to be mentioned.**

**Write to me for what you want from my country so that it may be taken to you, and I will write to you of what I want from your country so that it may be taken to me.**

**I will trust you...Write to me so that it may be taken to you, and as your greeting gift... and 1 ... I send you”**

The aforementioned letter was sent by Burnaburiaš, the Babylonian king to Nimmuwarea (Amenhotep III), King of Egypt in the Middle Babylonian era. Fairclough's first stage namely, description is sub-divided into text structure, pronouns, and vocabulary. In terms of text structure, the translated Babylonian letter is composed of four parts: the first part is the introduction. The opening part of the introduction clearly shows the polite-positive face of the Babylonian king towards the Egyptian king. In the second part of the introduction, the king expresses his best wishes for the king, his family, country, magnates, horses, chariots and all. In the second and third parts of the letter, the king offers friendship with the Egyptian king just like the good and diplomatic friendship of the Egyptian king with Burnaburiaš, Kadašman-Enlil. In the king's letter, much emphasis is given to friendship other than anything else. The letter ends with the king expressing his trust in the Egyptian king asking him to write anything he wants. Pronouns are employed skillfully in the letter. Politeness is one crucial tools of persuasion. Through the whole letter, Burnaburiaš shows polite-positive face to the Egyptian king. Thousands of years ago, the Babylonian king knew the fact that politics, diplomacy, and good international relations could not come without means of persuasion and powerful and skilful language which possesses all the elements of persuasion. The possessive pronouns “my” and “your” with the noun “brother”, which is skillfully used by Burnaburiaš, refers to the Egyptian pharaoh. There is a tendency from Burnaburiaš to emphasize that the relationship between Babylon and Egypt is based on friendship, brotherhood, respect, and equality. It is not a relationship based primarily on interests. Burnaburiaš's long polite welcomes to the Egyptian pharaoh, wives, sons, country, magnates, horses, chariots skillfully pushes the reader to feel comfortable and secure.





**“To Napkhururia, Great King, king of Egypt, thus speaks Burnaburiash, Great King, king of Karaduniash, your brother. I and my house, my horses and my chariots, my notables and my land, we are well. May well-being reign over my brother and his house, his horses, his chariots, his notables and his land.**

**From the day on which the envoy of my brother arrived before me, my body has not been well, and his envoy has never eaten or drunk before me. See, if you question your envoy, he cannot tell you that my body is not well, and ... And as my body is not well and my brother ...**

**I vented my anger with my brother with the following words: Should my brother not know that I am ill? Why has he not supported my head? Why has he not worried and sent his messengers?**

**The envoy of my brother has spoken thus: The way is not short, so that your brother can find out and send you greetings. The passage is long to your brother. Who can inform him, so that he sends a greeting to you quickly? He next spoke thus: Question your messenger if the passage is not long...**

**As I asked my messenger, and he said that the way was long, no longer make I my brother the object of my anger.**

**As one has said that in the land of my brother there is everything, and that my brother lacks nothing, of everything there is also in my land, and I lack nothing. For a long time we have had good relations between us kings, and we exchange greetings. These relations between us must remain...**

**Only, four mines of beautiful lapis lazuli have I sent to my brother as a gift, and also five teams of horses. When the times are good, I will send with my future messengers many beautiful gifts, and anything that my brother wishes, he can write ...**

**I have started an undertaking, and for this reason I write to my brother. My brother should send me much gold, that I need for my work. But the gold that my brother sends me, do not leave it to some official. Let the eyes of my brother inspect it, and let my brother seal it and send it! Because as far as the previous gold is concerned, which my brother did not inspect personally, but which was sealed and sent by an official of my brother, of the 40 mines which I put in the furnace, there was barely anything of value left.**

**And with regards to Salmu, my envoy, twice has his caravan been plundered. Once it was plundered by Biriazama, and his other caravan by Pamahu, a governor of a land that belongs to you. And this matter, my brother, you must put right! When my envoy appears before my brother, then let also appear Salmu. His ... has to be returned to him, and the damages have to be made good”.**





widely in this letter. The language of the letter is so persuasive. The king emphasizes the deep rooted friendship and good international relations between the two countries and stresses the crucial need for making such good relations better in the present and future times. The language is so polite and positive. The king always shows his polite and positive face through the whole parts of the letter. Burnaburiash II even breaks Grice's (1976) maxim of quantity in which speakers or writers should not say less or more information than is required. In his salute and welcome introduction, the king breaks the maxim of quantity asking about everything in Amenhotep's country including the king, his family, his land, his horses, his notables, and chariots. Even when the king expresses his sad feelings towards the Egyptian king because the latter did not ask about his health, the king expresses his sad reaction in a more diplomatic way using the polite positive face "my brother". The emotional appeal or what Aristotle calls it "pathos" is used clearly when the king expresses his sad feelings because the Egyptian king did not ask about his health. Using pathos, the king attempts to awaken the emotional state in the reader. The events of the letter are arranged chronologically starting with the welcome part, to the king's health, to request of more gold from the Egyptian king, and to the king's envoy Salmu who was robbed in the land of the Egyptian king. In terms of intertextuality, the king uses intertextuality for persuasive interests. The king uses the same intertextual text of welcome and salute part of the previous letter which in it, he offers his friendship to the Egyptian king. Another intertextual text used by the king is friendship and good relations between the two countries which are deep rooted in history. The friendship, good relations between the two countries, and the gifts that Burnaburiash was sending are used manipulatively before the next part of the letter which contains the request for more gold from Amenhotep IV as in the following quotation (*"As one has said that in the land of my brother there is everything, and that my brother lacks nothing, of everything there is also in my land, and I lack nothing. For a long time we have had good relations between us kings, and we exchange greetings. These relations between us must remain"*). Avoiding a negative face, speakers/writers always attempt to conform to the face that the listeners/readers want and desire, especially when making requests. Consider this quotation (*"I have started an undertaking, and for this reason I write to my brother. My brother should send me much gold, that I need for my work. But the gold that my brother sends me, do not leave it to some official. Let the eyes of my brother inspect it, and let my brother seal it and send it! Because as far as the previous gold is concerned, which my brother did not inspect personally, but which was sealed and sent by an official of my brother, of the 40 mines which I put in the furnace, there was barely anything of value left"*). Here, in this quotation, Burnaburiash II appears to be as diplomatic and courteous as possible avoiding negative and angry language. In the last part of the letter,



Burnaburiash II did not only write words in his letter; instead he definitely used illocutionary act urging and advising, with a polite face flavoured with the polite expression “my brother”, the Egyptian king to solve the problem of his envoy.

### **International Relations**

**“Tell Nipḥuririya (= Amenophis IV), the king of Egypt: Your brother Burnaburiaš, king of Kara-Dunyaš (= Babylonia) sends this message:**

**I am well. May everything be well indeed with you, your house, your wife and children, country, officials, horses and your chariots.**

**Ever since my fathers and your fathers arranged friendly relations with each other, they have sent fine presents to each other and have not refused each other any reasonable demand. But now my brother has sent only two pounds of gold as a present for me. Indeed if there is much gold (in Egypt), do send me as much as your fathers did, in case there is little gold, send me half of what your fathers did, but why in the world did you send only two pounds of gold to me? Just now I have much work to be done on the temple and I am very anxious to do it. Do send me therefore more gold and write me what you want from my country so that messengers can take it to you.**

**During the life time of my father Kurigalzu, all the rulers of Canaan wrote to him, saying “We would like to march toward the border of the land (of Egypt) and invade it and become your [allies]!” but my father wrote to them as follows: “Perish the thought of your siding with me! If you become enemies of my brother, the king of Egypt, or join forces with somebody else, wouldn’t I go out and make an expedition against you because the king of Egypt is on my side??” Thus my father did not listen to them for the sake of your father.**

**Now it was not I who sent the Assyrians, my own subjects, to you; they act according to their own decision. Why did they travel to your country? If you care for me, they must not do any buying there; chase them away empty-handed!**

**PS: I have sent as a present for you three pounds of genuine lapis lazuli and also five teams of horses with five chariots”.**

Burnaburiash’s II letter (1350 – 1367 BC) was one of the most important documents that illustrate the good international relations between Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations. The letter of the Kashi king to the Egyptian pharaoh was a perfect example of a rare diplomatic discourse which was discovered in Tell el-Amarna city.

The letter starts with the salute part. The king shows positive and more polite face towards the Egyptian king. As usual, the salute and welcome part is full of polite positive face. The king almost asks about everyone and everything including the Egyptian king, his house, wife, children, country, officials, horses, and chariots. Burnaburiash II refers to Amenhotep IV as “brother”. In terms of text structure, the

letter is arranged in a skilful way starting with the polite salute part of the king. The other part is devoted to the good international relations of Burnaburiash’s father and Amenhotep’s father. The letter part also contains the king’s request for more gold. The next part of the letter tells the story of the rulers of Canaan who came to Burnburiash’s father to make a deal with him and invade Egypt. Burnburiash’s father refused their offer for the sake of his friendship to and good relations with the Egyptian king at that time. The other part illustrates dissatisfaction with the coming of Canaan rulers to the land of Egypt asking the Egyptian king to *chase them away empty-handed*. The last part illustrates Burnaburiash’s presents for Amenhotep including *three pounds of genuine lapis lazuli and also five teams of horses with five chariots*.



**Fig 6.** WFC analysis of Burnaburia’s II letter to Amenhotep IV

Pronouns and vocabulary are skillfully employed by the Babylonian king. The positive representation of the king and his father and Amenhotep father on one hand and the negative representation of the Canaans and their negative plan are highly skilful. The king presents his father as a powerful positive sayer of truth rejecting the Canaans’ negative offer of invading Egypt. The Canaans are represented as negative actors attempting to invade Egypt as in following quotation: (“*During the life time of my father Kurigalzu, all the rulers of Canaan wrote to him, saying “We would like to march toward the border of the land (of Egypt) and invade it and become your [allies]!” but my father wrote to them as follows: “Perish the thought of your siding with me! If you become enemies of my brother, the king of Egypt, or join forces with somebody else, wouldn’t I go out and make an expedition against you because the king of Egypt is on my side??” Thus my father did not listen to them for the sake of your father. Now it was not I who sent the Assyrians, my own subjects, to you; they act according to their own decision. Why did they travel to your country? If you care for me, they must not do any buying there; chase them away empty-handed!*”). The interpretation stage includes situational context and intertextuality. Beautiful and positive stories of the past are always linked to the present and future time in the king’s words. Burnaburiash always attempts to link the good international relations of the past



which happened between his father and Amenhotep's father to the present and the future, especially when the king is asking for more gold and when he is asking Amenhotep IV to chase the Canaans away from his land. The involved actors namely, Burnaburiash, Amenhotep, Burnaburiash's father, and Amenhotep's father are not only friends; instead they are brothers. The direct quotation of Burnaburiash's father namely, Kurigalzu which says "*Perish the thought of your siding with me! If you become enemies of my brother, the king of Egypt, or join forces with somebody else, wouldn't I go out and make an expedition against you because the king of Egypt is on my side??*" is used to emphasize the good international relations between the king's father and Amenhotep's father. It also highlights the king's father negative attitude towards Canaans' offer of invading Egypt. The direct intertextual quotation is used as a reminder of a powerful positive attitude and perfect international relations of the past which, according to the king, such good relations should continue to the present and future between Babylon and Egypt. This is a good way of reinforcing diplomatic and political relations. The language of the letter is powerful and totally diplomatic. The king always resorts to the past to remind the Egyptian king of the positive and good relations of the two countries. The letter is well arranged starting with the king's polite salute and welcome introduction, to the good and positive stories of the past, to the polite request of more gold, to the good past friendship and the negative issue of the Canaans, finishing with the king's most precious presents to Amenhotep of the *three pounds of genuine lapis lazuli and also five teams of horses with five chariots.*

## 5. Conclusions

The ancient Iraqi civilization is one that effectively enriched human beings in various aspects of life. By discovering the ancient Iraqi texts, it becomes clear to everyone that this civilization played a vital role in laying the first foundations and roles of peaceful coexistence, political systems, diplomacy, and international relations. Ancient Iraqi Mesopotamians were the first who organized relations between states and international relations between countries through a set of political treaties and agreements that had been held over the historical ages. One such age is the middle Babylonian era which was characterized by diplomacy and good international relations, especially with Egypt. The discovered cuneiform tablets during the 9<sup>th</sup> century in the ancient Egyptian site namely, Tell el-Amarna revealed lots of information of good international relations and diplomacy between Babylon and Egypt in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC. Based on data analysis, the study shows that middle Babylonian kings possessed skilful rhetoric which helped them achieve good international relations and diplomacy with the Egyptian civilization during the reign of the Egyptian pharaohs namely, Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV. The description, interpretation, and explanation stages of discourse analysis showed that Babylonian kings employed these stages skillfully in their letters

which were sent to the Egyptian pharaohs. This skilful rhetoric helped them achieve political, diplomatic, and economical gains and interests for their country.

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