

Kiya

by Antonio Crasto

Tadu Khipa

The Mitanni princess Tadu Khipa, daughter of the Mitanni king, Tushratta, was sent to marry the king Amenhotep III (1433 - 1394 BC) to the end of his long reign.

The princess is greeted by her father in some of the tablets / diplomatic letters sent by Tushratta to Amenhotep III, who is said father-in-law and considered as his "brother" ¹.

In another letter (EA 27), this time sent to Akhenaten (1403-1386 BC), Tushratta calls the new king of Egypt, son-in law and sends greetings to his daughter Tadu Khipa, now passed from the harem of Amenhotep III to that of Akhenaten:

"For Napkhuria, king of Egypt, my brother, my son-in-law, who loves me and whom I love, thus says Tushratta, king of Mitanni, your father-in-law who loves you like a brother.

I'm fine and I hope will be the case for you, your home, your mother Tiye lady of Egypt, my daughter Tadu Khipa your wife, your other wives, your children, your nobles, wagons, horses, your soldiers, your country and everything that belongs to you. May all enjoy good health."

This letter is a problem for a chronological point of view.

The tablet was registered on arrival at the palace of Malgata and the written in hieratic speaks of the 2nd year of Akhenaten, which has led many Egyptologists to suggest an absence of co-regency or its short duration.

However, it could be a particular numbering of the State Archive, where the reign of Akhenaten is not counted from the beginning of his co-regency, as well as made at Akhetaten, but from the actual beginning of his reign in solitary. In this case, the two years should be added to at least nine years of co-regency.

In that regard, we emphasize that the co-regency between Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten has become abnormal after the 6th year, as the two sovereigns were in two different royal palaces, at Malgata and Akhetaten.

We can therefore assume that, in spite of Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten has used its own dating from the beginning of co-regency, the State Archive at Malgata protocolled incoming documents based on the kingdom of the older co-regent or on that of the one sovereign.


Some Egyptologists have reported anomalous space before the hieroglyph indicating units, so as to assume the cancellation or abrasion of the hieroglyph of ten. They suggest, therefore, the 12th year of Akhenaten.

The last two hypotheses seem consistent with the representation of Amenhotep III in the tomb of Huyu at Akhetaten in the 9th year and his absence at the ceremony of the presentation of the tribute of foreign countries in the 12th year.

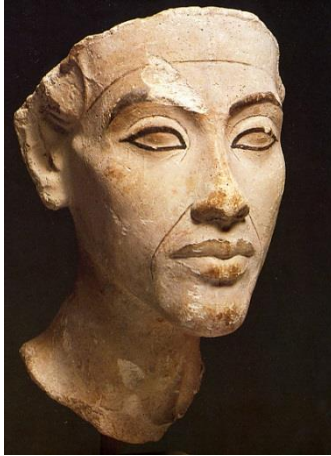
A further confirmation of the death of the old king between the 9th and 12th year of Akhenaten can be derived from the fact that the ceremony of the presentation of tribute took place at Akhetaten and not at Malgata, an event that can not be explained if Amenhotep III was still alive ².

Other clues lead me, finally, to consider the death of Amenhotep III shortly after his return to Malgata, in the 9th year of the reign of Akhenaten ³.

Archaeological evidences

Roughly the same time appears at Akhetaten the personage Kiya , as the new wife of Akhenaten, so it is considered very likely that she was actually the last wife of Amenhotep III, Tadu Khipa.

The Mitanni princess was, according to my hypothesis based on the results of the DNA of some mummies of the period, the grandson of Gilu Khipa / Nefertiti, the daughter of the Mitanni king, Shuturna, and sister of Mitanni king, Tushratta ⁴.



Gilu Khipa / Nefertiti

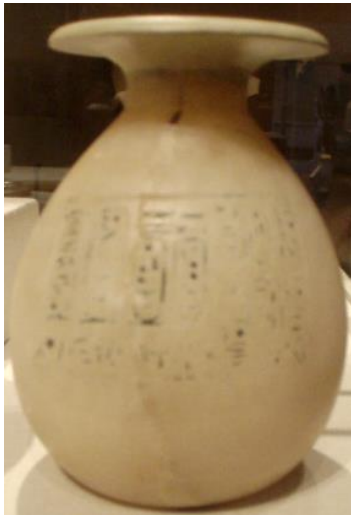


Tadu Khipa / Kiya

In the light of my hypothesis that considers Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten a daughter of Gilu Khipa / Nefertiti, and their marriage a formal expedient to appoint a pair of co-regents, it is therefore possible that the presence of Kiya at Akhetaten was an approach to the aunt after the death of the old king, rather than a marriage with the woman sovereign.

Kiya had to make a very privileged life in the court of Akhetaten, living in the southern royal palace. She took a major title, but not including that of Chief Wife: "The wife greatly beloved of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Living in Truth, Lord of the Two Lands, Neferkheperura Waenra, the handsome son of Aten, living for ever, Kiya."

Her name appears on various objects, such as a jar of cosmetics and two fragments of jar of wine, which reflect a landed property of the new "wife".



Vase for ointments



Label of jar of wine

The first witness is on the 11th year, while the second should indicate the 16th year, even if they are only readable the signs hieroglyphs of unit. This hypothesis is corroborated, according to C. Aldred, by the fact that the term used to define the farmer of the vineyards and the wine producer, was not used before the 13th year of Akhenaten ⁵.

These two dates seem, therefore, in line with the death of Amenhotep III in the 9th year of Akhenaten and the subsequent abandonment of Tadu Khipa / Kiya of the palace of Malgata to join at Akhetaten her aunt Gilu Khipa / Nefertiti and her cousin Akhenaten.

Egyptian names of the Mitanni princesses

We have to imagine that the Mitanni princesses, as well as those of other cities in the Near East, have received upon their arrival in Egypt an indoctrination to learn the Egyptian culture and, almost certainly, a new Egyptian name.

Gilu Khipa may have been entrusted to the care of her uncles Yuia / Ay and Tuia / Tey. It justifies the fact that the latter is defined as guardian of her nephew and their daughter, Mutnedjemet, is considered practically a sister.

The Egyptian name assumed by Gilu Khipa means "The beautiful one has arrived," suggesting that it was not a name imposed at birth, but a name imposed upon her arrival in Egypt and with reference to the fact that she came from a distant land and was not of Egyptian origin.

The granddaughter Tadu Khipa may have been entrusted to the indoctrination at some daughters of Amenhotep III, perhaps her cousins, and she may have been named Kiya, which seems to be a term of endearment.

In this respect it seems that the name Kiya might mean "little monkey", perhaps indicating a much loser comparison between her and her beautiful aunt, Nefertiti ⁶.

In this regard some of her images seem to confirm the lack of beauty of the last wife of Amenhotep III.

Death of Kiya

Nothing is known exactly of the formal two wives: Nefertiti and Kiya in the last years of the reign of Akhenaten.

It is very likely that the first has been appointed co-regent in the last three years of her reign, possibly after the death of the second child Maketaton, around the 14th year.

The reason for this new co-regency can be found in a new phase of the disease of plague that had already recommended the co-regency between Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten, the displacement of the royal palace at Malgata, in the Western Desert, and thus the creation of a new city in the desert of Middle Egypt.

Also this time, the trying to save the dynasty and in particular the high proportion of Mitanni women at court had advice: the appointment of Nefertiti as co-regent with the name of coronation Ankhkheperura Neferneferuaten (1389 - 1386 BC), the appointment of the first-born Marytaton as formal Chief Wife of the mother, Akhenaten, and the new separation of the royal palaces in two different buildings of Akhetaten, the southern one, for Akhenaten and Marytaten, and the northern one, for Nefertiti.

In the last three years of Akhenaten's reign, it seems to have occurred various court sudden death, perhaps due to the epidemic of plague, including the three smaller daughter of Akhenaten and her cousin and wife Kiya.

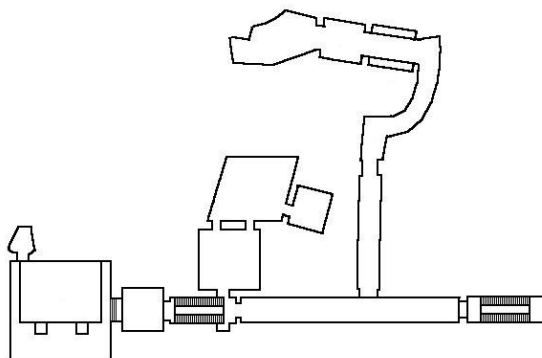
The death of the Queen Mother Tiye, in an age of over 50 years, could, however, be considered normal, but it could also have been caused by the epidemic that was decimating the population of Egypt and of various countries of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Some Egyptologists interpret the drawings of the rooms of the 2nd appendix of the Akhenaten's royal tomb as similar scenes of a double funeral celebration: of the second child of Akhenaten, Maketaton, and of Kiya, whose deaths have taken place both in childbirth.

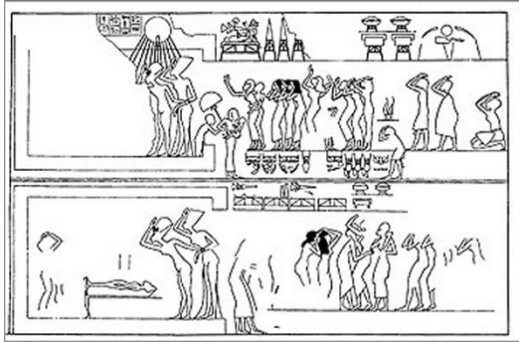
One of the scenes shows the name of the princess and in the tomb was found the small sarcophagus used for her burial.



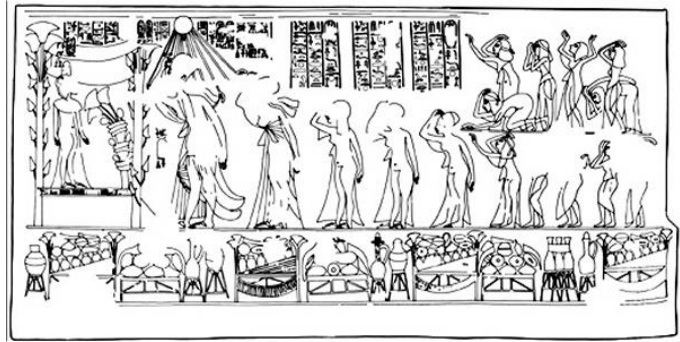
Central zone of Akhetaten



Akhenaten's royal tomb



Behind the sovereign, a nurse holding the baby



The royal family pays tribute to Maketaton

It seems, however, unlikely that: there has been a second death in childbirth, this is connected with Kiya and, last but not least, a possible second burial of the wife of Akhenaten was made precisely in the Appendix where was buried the princess.

It seems much more realistic to assume that Kiya is dead in the 16th year of Akhenaten for a disease or because of the plague and that she had been buried in one of the tombs of the royal wadi near the Akhenaten's royal tomb.

Controversial hypotheses

Some Egyptologists suggest that the infant represented in the two scenes of the 2nd appendix of the royal tomb may have been Tutankhaton, and, believing unlikely a gestation of the young Maketaten, about ten years, they speculate that the future Pharaoh was the son of Akhenaten and Kiya.

This hypothesis, already implausible from archaeological point of view, would find some support in the conclusions made by Z. Hawass on the basis of DNA testing of mummies of the period ⁷. He assumed, on the basis of certain probable relationships, that: KV 55 mummy is that of Akhenaten and that of the Young Lady of KV 35 is that of a Akhenaten's sister, Tutankhamen's mother.

In fact, the hypothesis of Hawass are forced and wrong. The KV 55 mummy is most likely that of Smenkhkara (1386 to 1385 BC), most likely father of Tutankhamen (1382-1373 BC). The close relationship between Tutankhamen and the Young Lady of KV 35 does not necessarily mean that this is the mummy of the mother, Maketaten. It could be, according to my hypothesis, that of Akhenaten-woman, mother of Maketaten and grandmother of Tutankhamun.



Sarcophagus of KV 55



Canopic jar of KV 55

Given the close relationship of Akhenaten and Smenkhkara, in my opinion, daughter and son of Amenhotep III and Nefertiti, and given the possibility that Smenkhkara has married the three older daughters of Akhenaten: Marytaten, Maketaten and Ankhnesenpaaten, DNA results can not solve some of the parental problems, since many of the alleles are common to the various personages. In this regard, there is no evidence that Kiya was a daughter of Amenhotep III and a sister of Akhenaten.

We found the funerary that leaving to assume that for the burial of the personage of KV 55, Smenkhkara, have been used the sarcophagus and the canopic jars already prepared for Kiya. On both findings the original names have been deleted to be replaced with the name of the personage of KV 55, hammered later for *damnatio memoriae*, almost certainly decreed by Horemheb (1368-1331 BC).

It seems unlikely that Akhenaten had not prepared, after 17 years of reign, these elements for her burial. It is more likely that, after the sudden death of Smenkhkara during the first year of his reign, which I assumed because of the Exodus of the Jews, have been used, the sarcophagus and canopic jars not yet used of the wife Marytaten and not those of Kiya, almost certainly now buried.

It was even suggested that Kiya was somehow placed in a second floor by Akhenaten, after being dropped, for unknown reasons, in disgrace.

The fact that some artifacts of Kiya have been usurped by Marytaton (Maru Aten temple) and Ankhesenpaaton, in their respective capacities as Chief Wife and Wife of Akhenaten can not be taken as evidence. It seems more likely to assume a death of Kiya in the 16th year of her reign and an usurpation of some things and monuments by the king's daughters.

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HASSALEH – L'OCCHIO DI HORUS. Manetone aveva ragione!

DENDERA – La sacra terra della dea

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