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CHAPTER 4 OLD ASSYRIAN LEGAL CASES

Cécile Michel

During the early second millennium BCE, the inhabitants of the city of Aššur, on the Tigris River in northern Iraq, undertook intensive exchanges with central Anatolia. They set up commercial settlements (*kārum**, *wabartum**) in some thirty towns, the network center being located at Kültepe, ancient Kaneš, not far from the modern city of Kayseri. They exported tin, originating from far to the east, and textiles, produced locally at Aššur or imported from southern Mesopotamia, and brought back gold and silver to their mother city as proceeds from their merchandise. The two and a half centuries of long-distance trade between Aššur and Anatolia (1950-1700) correspond conventionally to the Old Assyrian period.¹

For this period, only two dozen texts were found at Aššur, while the city of Kaneš, the destination of the Assyrian caravans, provided the bulk of the written sources: 22,700 clay tablets written in the Old Assyrian dialect. These cuneiform texts constitute the private archives of the Assyrian merchants settled in the *kārum**. They include letters, which document the context and development of disputes, and a great variety of legal texts that scholars usually divide into two categories: contracts and judicial records (Hertel 2013, 137). The contracts concern both records of family law and commercial agreements, such as loans, transport and caravan contracts, deposits, partnerships and investments. The judicial records consist of witnessed depositions, records of private arbitration, oaths, judgments, binding orders, etc. All these texts, kept by those involved, document mainly trade, the *raison d'être* of the Assyrians in central Anatolia.

During the Old Assyrian period, the Aššur city-state had a tripartite structure consisting of the king, the assembly and the eponym (Larsen 1976; Dercksen 2004). The Aššur city assembly, most often referred to as the City (*ālum*) held fundamental powers. As an administrative, legal and economic center, the assembly was called on regularly to settle disputes between merchants, thus acting as a court of law. The judgments of the Aššur assembly were recorded on official tablets, sealed by the king, and when necessary, sent to the Kaneš district authorities. The economic rules were based on the Aššur assembly judgments and laws were engraved on a stele (*nārum*), no copies of which have been found (Veenhof 1995; Veenhof 2012b). These laws, probably protectionist, had a mainly commercial content: regulations for losses to caravans, for debt repayments, for closing the accounts of a deceased merchant, etc. They also have covered both legal procedures and the requirements for evidence given by witnesses.

Three tablets found at Kültepe attest to fixing the statutes of the *kārum** and are understood to complete and specify the legislation in force within the framework of the trade treaties concluded with the Anatolian rulers (Larsen 1976; Hertel 2013, 73-87; Veenhof 2013). The trade bureau (*bēt kārim*) at Kaneš also functioned as a court of law, through its plenary assembly of “small and big men” (*šaher rabi*). Its decisions dealt among other things with the seizure of goods and persons, the transfer of people and the repatriation of a deceased merchant’s property to Aššur. In order to render a judgment, the *kārum** hear the testimony of the factual witnesses, often given under oath, and study the tablets associated with the examined case (Veenhof 2003; Hertel 2013, 185-388).

Letters, minutes, witnessed depositions, records of private mediations and arbitrations, and judgements discovered in the archives of the Assyrian merchants at Kaneš provide many examples of legal proceedings that highlight the shortcomings of partnership agreements based usually on mutual trust and reputation. Despite the cost and length of a trial, merchants used the judicial path in order to limit their often considerable financial losses. Witnessed depositions and records of private

¹ For a general presentation of the period see Michel 2001; Veenhof 2008; Larsen 2015. A detailed bibliography of the Old Assyrian period is given in Michel 2003, with its supplements Michel 2006, 2011, 2015 and in press.

arbitration represent the bulk of Old Assyrian judicial documents. Following a standard form, they report a dispute by factual witnesses designated by the authorities of the *kārum**. The witnesses record the arguments of both parties and then take an oath as to the veracity of their testimony. Private archives also include some judgments that were handed down by the Aššur assembly and its king, or by the *kārum**.

The sworn statements, records of private arbitration, judgments and letters presented here allow a better understanding of some aspects of the legal proceedings through a few dossiers, each of which includes several texts. The complexity of some cases, such as the one between Buzazu and Ili-wedaku, which was aggravated by the death of Puzur-Aššur (#69-78), or the succession of Šalim-Aššur and the dispute between his two sons (#79-82), may be measured by the significant number of tablets that they generated, including several duplicates. In both cases, only a selection of texts is provided here. These examples explain the regulation of “interrogations” and “responses” between the two parties and address the aftermath of an active merchant’s death. The dossier relating to the dispute between Puzur-Ištar and Aššur-malik documents the hiring of an attorney after a decision by the city assembly (#83-88), while the last group of texts highlights the important role of written tablets as official proof of economic or legal acts and, consequently, the very special attention paid by merchants to their tablets (#89-92).

FOR A FEW TALENTS* OF COPPER...

The conflict between Buzazu, son of Pušu-ken, and Ili-wedaku, the agent² (*tamkārum**) of Puzur-Aššur, addresses some of the main issues that led to many lawsuits between Assyrian merchants, such as the holding of a document representing capital or the death of a merchant and the liquidation of his assets for all ongoing transactions. In addition, it illustrates several aspects of Old Assyrian legal procedures, such as mediation, arbitration and questioning before witnesses (Veenhof 1991; Hertel 2013, 185-300). The three letters presented at the beginning of this dossier provide the elements to reconstruct the genesis of this case. These are followed by a dozen documents, as witnessed depositions made in the course of private summonses, sworn testimonies and a judgment by the Assyrian *kārum**.

Buzazu was importing tin into Anatolia together with Puzur-Aššur, son of Išar-kitti-Aššur, a business partner of his late father. Representing the family business at Kaneš, he invested the imported tin in the local copper trade. Puzur-Aššur asked him to buy copper from Wahšušana, but Buzazu was prevented from doing so: first he was summoned to appear before the Assyrian court at Kaneš, then he became ill and was confined to bed, and at finally, trade with the city of Burušhattum was suspended. He therefore instructed Ili-wedaku, an agent of Puzur-Aššur, to carry out this task (#69 and #71). However, the latter did not hand over the copper to Buzazu. Since he was already involved in a trial at Kaneš for another case, Buzazu refused to sue Ili-wedaku. He gathers the available copper and went to Šaladuwar to sell it. But Ili-wedaku sent representatives to Šaladuwar to take legal action against Buzazu: he accused him of having taken copper belonging to another merchant. Independently of this business, Buzazu lent silver to Šu-Ištar, with Puzur-Aššur as the guarantor of the transaction (#70). Šu-Ištar probably gave Puzur-Aššur a tablet for this loan, allowing 45 copper talents* to be taken from the stock deposited at the Wahšušana trade bureau. Buzazu, as the creditor for this loan, wished to recover the tablet in order to be paid back.³ Upon Puzur-Aššur’s death, Ili-wedaku, his agent, took possession of the documents, allowing him to collect the copper at Wahšušana (#75). A representative of Buzazu was suing Ili-wedaku in Wahšušana for effectively having taken copper belonging to Buzazu (#72). The case was referred to the Kaneš Assyrian court which rendered a judgment relating to the continuation of the legal proceedings (#73 and #74), and further negotiations took place between the two parties (Eisser and Lewy 1935, no. 316-320).

² See the glossary for the various translations of *tamkārum**.

³ The anonymous notice BIN 4 160 probably originates from Buzazu, ll. 2-3: “I will take 45 talents* of copper in pieces from the stock (deposited) at the trade bureau.” Other documents, not reproduced here, also relate to this case, for example BIN 4 112+CCT 6 17a, BIN 6 253 (Michel 2000 no. 79), CCT 3 32, CCT 4 39b and CCT 6 30a (Michel 2000 no. 78).

69. Letter. Buzazu, ill, did not send copper to Puzur-Aššur

Collection number: BM 113394

Publication/Edition: CCT 2 31a [copy]; CDLI P358537 [photo, transliteration]

Bibliography: Dercksen 1996, 53, n. 166 and 133 n. 413 for ll. 13-17 and 21-27; Michel 2000, 117 no.71
[translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *a-na puzur₄-a-šūr qí-bi-ma*
2 *um-ma bu-za-zu-ma : a-dí*
3 *ša il₅-we-da-ku*
4 *ša áš-pu-ra-ku-ni : mî-ma*
5 *li-ba-kà : lá i-pá-ri-id*
6 *iš-tí : šu-ištar DUMU lu-zi-na*
7 *iš-ri-iš : lá e-ta-wu*
8 *i-na wa-áš-ha-ni-a : a-li-ku*
9 *im-hu-ru-ni-ma : um-ma šu-nu-ma*
10 *iš-tí : šu-ištar i-ta-na-lá-/ak*
11 *u₄-ma-am : a-mu-ur-ma*
12 *a-wa-tum : lá ší-na*
13 *a-dí : URUDU : ša tû-na-hi-dí-ni*
14 *ma-ú-qá-ku-ma : i-na*
Rev. *ša-am-ší : e-ru-bu*
16 *e-ri-qá-tim : ú-lá a-bu-uk*
17 *URUDU er-sú : a-dí 2 ú-me*
18 *ra-mî-ni : i-na-tù-ma*
19 *e-ri-qá-tim : a-ma-lá*
20 *té-er-tí-kà : a-ba-ak*
21 *ṭup-pá-am : ša 45 GÚ*
22 *URUDU ší-ki-im : ša i-na*
23 *wa-ah-šu-ša-na : i-na*
24 *sú-hu-pì-im : lá-qá-a-am*
25 *qá-bi₄-a-tí-ni : ṭup-pè-a*
26 *pé-té-a-ma : i-li-bi₄*
27 *ṭup-pè-a : šu-uk-na-šu-ma*
28 *té-er-ta-ak-nu*
29 *li-li-kam*

¹⁻²Say to Puzur-Aššur: thus (says) Buzazu.

²⁻⁵Concerning Ili-wedaku about whom I wrote you, you have nothing to fear. ⁶⁻⁷He does not speak honestly with Šu-Ištar, son of Luzina. ⁸⁻⁹Travellers approached me in Wašhaniya and (said) as follows: ¹⁰“He always goes with Šu-Ištar!” ¹¹⁻¹²Today I can see that the matter is not like that.

¹³Concerning the copper about which you gave me instructions, ¹⁴⁻¹⁶I was feeling poorly and did not send away the wagons on the day I came, ¹⁷(but) the copper is ready. Within 2 days, ¹⁸⁻²⁰I will be better, and I will send away the wagons according to your instructions.

²¹⁻²⁵As for the tablet (stating) that you are entitled to take 45 talents* of copper in pieces from the stock in Wahšušana, ²⁵⁻²⁷open up (the boxes of) my tablets and place it among my tablets, ²⁸⁻²⁹then let your report come to me.

An attempt at conciliation

Before initiating legal proceedings, which were often long, costly and not always appropriate, when possible, the Assyrian merchants often tried to reach an out-of-court agreement. The complainant could ask a mediator to confront his opponent with his unfulfilled obligations (Veenhof 1991; Hertel 2013, 172). Buzazu takes three men as witnesses to recover the tablet relating to the 45 copper talents* that Puzur-Aššur refuses to give him (#70), while Ili-wedaku appoints representatives against Buzazu in Šaladuwar for copper that does not belong to him. In both cases, the conciliation fails and the case is brought to court (#71).

70. Letter. Puzur-Aššur wants a tablet recording 45 talents* of copper

Collection number: MPP 1

Publication/Edition: Garelli 1966, 121-4 [copy, transliteration, translation].

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 117 no. 72 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *um-ma puzur₄-a-šūr-ma*
 2 *a-na bu-za-zu qí-bi-ma*
 3 *a-šū-mì DUB ša 45 GÚ*
 4 *URUDU ša ta-áš-pu-ra-ni*
 5 *i-nu-mì ta-ta-al-ku-ma*
 6 *iš-tí-kà ú-ša-ni um-ma a-ta-/ma*
 7 *ṭup-pá-am šu-a-tí dí-na-šu*
 8 *pá-i a-dí-na-kum um-ma*
 9 *a-na-ku-ma le-qé-šu*
 10 *a-lá-ak-ma i-lí-bi₄*
 11 *ṭup-pè-kà a-ša-kà-šu*
 12 *wa-ar-ki-tám-ma áš-pu-ra-/kum*
 13 *um-ma a-na-ku-ma a-hi a-/ta*
 Lo.e. *a-na ṭup-pì-im*
 Rev. *lá ta-da-ga-[al PN]*
 16 *a-ma-kam wa-š[a]-áb [a-p]u-[tum]*
 17 *i-hi-id-ma KÙ.BABBAR^{(á)p}-k[à]*
 18 *a-wi-lam ša-áš-qí-il₅ šu-ma*
 19 *KÙ.BABBAR lá i-ta-ad-na-kum*
 20 *ṭup-pu-um ku-a-tí i-za-za-kum*
 21 *a-ta KÙ.BABBAR té-ri-iš lá té-ri-/iš*
 22 *a-na ṭup-pì-im ta-áš-tap-ra-am*
 23 *ù 3 ša-ba-am a-na*
 24 *ší-bu-tim iš-tí-a tal-ta-/ap-tám*
 25 *i-na mì-nim ṭup-pu-/um*
 26 *a-ku-a-im i-tur₄*
 27 *a-na-ku a-na KÙ.BABBAR ša qá-ta-/at*
 U.e. *šu-ištar a-na be-lúm-ba-/ni*
 29 *al-ta-ap-tù KÙ.BABBAR*
 30 *a-bu-ru-uš-ha-tim*
 Le.e. *i-a-tí i-lá-ak a- KÙ.BABBAR[?]*
 32 *ta-ap-té-x-ma um-ma a-na-ku-/ma*
 33 *li-dí-na[?] la x x ma-x-am*

¹⁻²Thus (says) Puzur-Aššur: say to Buzazu.

³⁻⁴Concerning the tablet of 45 talents* of copper about which you wrote to me, ⁵⁻⁶when you departed, and I left with you, you (told me) as follows: ⁷“This tablet, give (it) to me: I promised you!” ⁸⁻¹¹ (answered) as follows: “Take it, (or) I will go and place it among your tablets.”

¹²⁻¹⁵Later on, I wrote you as follows: “You are my brother. Do not wait for the tablet. ¹⁵⁻¹⁶[PN] is staying there. [It’s ur]g[ent]!” ¹⁷⁻¹⁸Take care to make the man pay your silver. ¹⁸⁻²⁰If he does not give you the silver, the tablet will be at your disposal.

²¹As for you, did you ask for the silver or not? ²²You wrote me to (get) the tablet, ²³⁻²⁴and you have registered (the names of) three men as witness for me. ²⁵⁻²⁶Why would the tablet have ended up with you?

²⁷⁻²⁹As for me, the silver for which I have registered as Šu-lštar’s guarantor toward Belum-bani, ²⁹⁻³¹the silver shall come to me at Burušhattum. 31-33 You [...] for the silver and I (said) as follows: “let him give [...].”⁴

71. Letter. Ili-wedaku refuses to release copper to Buzazu

Collection number: NBC 1677

Publication: BIN 4 35 [copy].

Edition: Dercksen 1996, 188-90 no. 6 [transliteration, translation]

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 117-8 no. 73 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *a-na puzur₄-a-šùr qí-bi-ma*
2 *um-ma bu-za-zu-ma : i-nu-mì*
3 *a-na kà-né-eš₁₅ : ša-sú-ha-ku-ma*
4 *a-li-kà-ni : AN.NA lu i-a-am*
5 *lu ku-a-am a-na il₅-we-da-ku*
6 *e-zi-ib um-ma a-na-ku-ma a-dí*
7 *a-tù-ra-ni : URUDU SIG₅ : e-pu-uš-ma*
8 *li-im-hu-ra-ni : iš-tù*
9 *kà-né-eš₁₅ : a-tù-ra-ni : lá li-bi*
10 *DINGIR-ma : e-er-šu-um i-ša-áb-ta-ni*
11 *iš-tù : at-bé-ú : um-ma a-na-ku-ma*
12 *URUDU lu i-a-am lu ša puzur₄-A-šùr*
13 *dí-nam-ma a-na bu-ru-uš-ha-tim*
14 *lá-li-ik-ma : KÙ.BABBAR 10 ma-na*
15 *lu a-na puzur₂-a-šùr lu i-a-tí le-pu-/uš*
16 *i-ta-pá-lá-ni-ma : sú-ku-ur-tum*
17 *i-ta-áš-kán-ma : ITI.5.KAM ù ITI.6.KAM*
Lo.e. *a-sú-hu-ur : ù i-nu-mì*
19 *iš-tù : kà-né-eš₁₅ : a-na URUDU*
20 *ta-áš-ta-na-pá-ra-ni*
Rev. *a-dí 5^{ší-šu} ù šé-ší-šu «šu»*
22 *aq-bi-šu-um : um-ma a-na-ku-ma*
23 *URUDU lu nu-šé-bi-il₅-šu-um ù i-a-tí*
24 *URUDU-i : ta-da-nam : lá i-mu-a*
25 *ù ku-a-tí : šé-bu-lam : lá i-mu-a*
26 *i-šé-er : URUDU : ir-ta-na-bi₄-iš*
27 *ù mì-li-ik : URUDU i-ma-li-/ik*
28 *lá na-ù-ma : ri-ig-ma-am*

⁴ The end of this tablet written on the left edge is more or less impossible to read.

29 *ú-lá a-na-dí-i : um-ma a-na-ku-ma*
 30 *pá-ni-ša-am : bu-lá-tí : qá-tí*
 31 *puzur₂-a-šùr : ša ša-ba-tim : li-iš-/ba-at*
 32 *a-hi-dí-ir-ma : a-na ší-ip-ri-im*
 33 *ra-mì-ni áš-ku-un-ma (erasure)*
 34 *um-ma a-na-ku-ma : URUDU lu i-a-am*
 35 *lu ša puzur₂-a-šùr ša a-ba-ki-im*
 36 *i-pá-ni-a : lá-bu-uk : URUDU : a-na*
 37 *ša-lá-du-a-ar i-pá-ni-a*
 38 *a-bu-kà-ma : i-ba-áb : ha-ra-ni-a*
 Up.e. DAM.GÀR : *ú-ta-dí-a-am : a-dí : qá-tí*
 40 URUDU *li-iš-ba-at : um-ma a-na-ku-ma*
 41 *e-zi-ib : DAM.GÀR : ša li-bi₄-šu*
 42 *lu-wa-dí-a-am : ki-ma a-ša-lá-du-a-ar*
 43 *e-ru-bu : ur-ki-a-ma*
 Le.e. *2 ša-zu-úz-tám : uš-ta-zi-za-am : lu ku-a-tí /ù i-a-tí*
 45 *a-na ra-pu-dí-ni : i-tí-zi-iz-ma : /URUDU a-na ša DAM.GÀR*
 46 *a-he-e-em : iš-ta-kán : ù u₄-ma-am a-na dí-nim : i-šé-e-a-ni*
 47 *ú a-na tár-ki-is-tim : iš-pu-ra-am um-ma šu-ut-ma 1/2 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR*
 48 *ù 1 GÍN.TA : ra-ki-sà-ni-šu : a-wi-lam : řé-em-šu*

¹⁻²Say to Puzur-Aššur: thus (says) Buzazu.

²⁻³When I was summoned (to go) to Kaneš, and ⁴⁻⁶I was about to leave, I left the tin – mine and yours – to Ili-wedaku (saying) as follows: ⁶⁻⁸“Before my return, acquire good quality copper so that it falls to my (share).” ⁸⁻¹⁰After I came back from Kaneš, unfortunately, I have been confined to bed.

¹¹When I could get up (again), I (said) as follows: ¹²⁻¹⁴“Give me the copper – mine and that of Puzur-Aššur – so that I can go to Burušhattum, ¹⁴⁻¹⁵and make silver, about 10 minas*, both for Puzur-Aššur and for me.” ¹⁶⁻¹⁸While he kept arguing with me, a trade suspension took place, and I was delayed 5 or 6 months. ¹⁸⁻²⁰And since you kept writing me from Kaneš for copper, ²¹⁻²²I told him (Ili-wedaku) 5 or six times as follows: ²³“Let us send him (Puzur-Aššur) copper.” ²³⁻²⁴He was neither willing to give me my copper, ²⁵nor to send (it) to you! ²⁶He keeps sitting on the copper, ²⁷and thinks about what to do with the copper. ²⁸⁻²⁹It is not the right moment for me to lodge a complaint. I (said) as follows: ³⁰⁻³¹“First, let Puzur-Aššur seize my assets whatever he can.” ³²⁻³³But I became anxious and decided to make myself the messenger, (thinking) as follows: ³⁴⁻³⁶“I will personally transport as much of the copper as possible, mine and that of Puzur-Aššur.” ³⁶⁻³⁸So I personally brought the copper to Šaladuwar, ³⁸⁻⁴⁰and just as I was setting out, he (Ili-wedaku) made known to me (the name of) the creditor, lest I myself take the copper. I (thought) as follows: ⁴¹⁻⁴²“Never mind! Let him indicate to me the creditor of his choice.” ⁴²⁻⁴⁵As I entered Šaladuwar, he appointed 2 agents and wanted to trouble (us), you and me, ⁴⁵⁻⁴⁶and has made the copper the property of an outside creditor. ⁴⁶And today, he is suing me (for the copper)! ⁴⁷⁻⁴⁸And he wrote for a payment contract (asking) as follows: “Bind him by contract for 1/2 mina* of silver and at the rate of one shekel* (of silver) per (mina* of copper).” <...> the man his report.

Initiation of a trial and summons of the parties to appear

When negotiations failed, the Assyrian *kārum** authorities were approached in the town where the disputed capital was located. They authorized a procedure by appointing factual witnesses. These witnesses, already having been seized by the parties, heard their statements. Authorities could issue a judgment in order to transfer the dossier and the accused to the center of the Assyrian trade network, at Kaneš, where a trial could take place in the presence of both parties. Document #72 is a copy of an envelope that records a judgment sealed by the witnesses and by Ili-wedaku. The latter has accepted the sentence of the Wahšušana Assyrian court insofar as it is proven that he actually owes copper to Buzazu.

The mediators were known by the list of names at the end of the document and by their seal imprints on the envelope. Such persons sometimes played a more active role and could be called on to settle a dispute. As soon as the trial began, the concerned parties no longer had the right to travel and had to be available to answer the court at all times. Buzazu, who wished to be free to travel, discussed the matter with his opponent in the presence of witnesses and undertook to appear at the trial at the appropriate time. The agreement reached on this occasion is recorded on a tablet, placed in an envelope that is sealed by the witnesses (#73). This sworn testimony refers to an oral procedure: the factual witnesses hear both parties and quote their main arguments *verbatim* in the tablet.

72. Text recording a judgment of the Wahšušana assembly forcing Ili-wedaku to pay Buzazu

Collection number: Gi 1-5

Publication: KUG 12 [copy]; CDLI P283869 [photo, transliteration]; http://bibd.uni-giessen.de/tf/kug12/kug12_3d.html [photo 3D]

Edition: Eisser and Lewy 1935, 45-46 no. 316 [transliteration, translation]

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 119 no. 74 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. KIŠIB *il₅-we-da-ku* DUMU *i-da-/a*
 2 KIŠIB *šu-ma-li-ba-a-šur* DUMU
 3 *a-mur^{1-d}-a-šur* KIŠIB *bur-a-šur*
 4 DUMU *e-lá-lí* KIŠIB *ni-mar^d-im*
 5 DUMU *i-na-sú-en₆ : um-ma ša ki-/ma*
 6 *bu-za-zu-ma a-na il₅-we-<da>-ak-/ma :*
 7 *lu ba-áb-tám ša nu-a-e :*
 8 *lu ši-ma-am : e-zi-ba-kum*
 9 *lu i-ba-áb-tí-šu iš-tí*
 10 DAM.GÀR^{ru-tim} *tal-ta-qé*
 11 *a-ma-lá dí-in kà-ri-im wa-ah¹-šu-/ša-na*
 12 *ta-lá-ak-ma a-na ITI.2.KAM*
 13 *i-kà-né-eš₁₅ iš-tí bu-za-zu*
 14 *ta-za-ku : šu-ma : bu-za-zu*
 Lo.e. *lu KÙ.BABBAR lu URUDU ši-kam lu URUDU SIG₅*
 16 *i-li-bi-kà : ib-tù-ar*
 Rev. 1 1/2 GÍN.TA KÙ.BABBAR *a-1 ma-na-im*
 18 1 1/2 *ma-na ta a-bi-il₅-tim*
 19 *a-ši-«kam»-ki-im : 1 1/2 ma-na.TA SIG₅*
 20 *ši-ib-tám : iš-tù u₄-mì-im*
 21 *ša tal-qé-ú : tù-ša-áb : um-ma*
 22 *il₅-we-da-ak-ma ú-ša-áb*

¹⁻⁵Seal of Ili-wedaku, son of Idaya, seal of Šumma-libbi-Aššur, son of Amur-Aššur, seal of Bur-Aššur, son of Elali, seal of Nimar-Adad, son of Enna-Suen.

⁵⁻⁶Thus (say) the representatives of Buzazu to Ili-wedaku. ⁷⁻⁸“Whether he left you outstanding claims from the locals, or (some) merchandise, ⁹⁻¹⁰or whether you have collected from the (various) outstanding claims due him by a *tamkāruttum**-transaction, ¹¹⁻¹⁴by judgment of the *kārum** of Wahšušana, you must go and clear (accounts) with Buzazu within 2 months at Kaneš. ¹⁴⁻¹⁶If Buzazu is proven to be your creditor for the silver, ¹⁷⁻²¹the copper in pieces or the good quality copper, you will pay interest at (the rate of) 1 1/2 shekel* of silver per mina* (of silver) and 1 1/2 mina* per talent* of (copper) in pieces, 1 1/2 mina* (per mina* of) good quality (copper) from the day you borrowed (it).” ²¹⁻²²Ili-wedaku (answered) as follows: “I will add (the interest).”

I. 7: The Assyrians refer to the local population as *nuā'um*, meaning “local,” a term that we translate simply as “(local) Anatolian.”

I. 10: The abstract *tamkāruttum** refers to a commercial transaction.

73. Sworn testimony indicating that the case has been brought to the Kaneš court

Collection number: NBC 1846 and its duplicate NBC 1703

Publication: BIN 4 110 and its duplicate BIN 4 109 [copies].

Edition: Eisser and Lewy 1935, 47-48 no. 317 and 318 [transliterations, translations]

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 119-120 no. 75 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Envelope

Obv. KIŠIB ^dUTU-*ba-ni* DUMU *i-na-sú-en*₆
2 (sealing A)
3 KIŠIB *ma-num-ki-ištar* DUMU *šu-be-lim*
4 *a-na a-wa-tim a-ni-a-tim*
5 (sealing A)
6 *kà-ru-um kà-né-eš*
Lo.e. *i-dí-ni-a-tí-ma*
Rev. IGI GÍR *ša a-šùr*
9 (sealing B)
10 *ší-bu-tí-ni ni-dí-in*
11 (empty line)
12 (sealing B)
Le.e. (sealing A)
R.e. (sealing B)

Tablet

Obv. *bu-za-zu a-na il*₅*-we-da-ku*
2 *iš-ba-at-ni-a-tí-ma*
3 *um-ma bu-za-zu-ma*
4 *a-na il*₅*-we-da-ku-ma a-na*
5 *a-e-tim sí-ki*
6 *tù-kà-al um-ma*
7 *il*₅*-we-da-ku-ma a-na*
8 *a-wa-tim sí-kà-kà*
9 *ú-kà-al um-ma bu-za-zu-/ma*
10 *pá-a a-ni-ma a-wa-tám*
11 *lá-dí-na-kum lá tù-kà-lá-/ni*
13 *a-na a-wa-tim*
14 *a-ni-a-tim*
Rev. *kà-ru-um kà-né-eš*
16 *i-dí-ni-a-tí-ma*
17 IGI GÍR *ša a-šùr*
18 *ší-bu-tí-ni ni-dí-in*
19 IGI *ma-num-ki-ištar*
20 DUMU *šu-be-lim*
21 IGI ^dUTU-*ba-ni*
22 DUMU *i-na-sú-en*₆

Envelope

¹⁻³Seal of Šamaš-bani, son of Inna-Suen, seal of Mannum-ki-Ištar, son of Šu-Belum.

⁴⁻⁷For these proceedings, the *kārum** of Kaneš appointed us (as factual witnesses), and ⁸⁻¹⁰we have given our testimony before Aššur's dagger.

Tablet

¹⁻²Buzazu summoned us (as arbitrators) against Ili-wedaku and ³⁻⁴Buzazu (said) to Ili-wedaku as follows:

⁴⁻⁶"Why do you hold my hem?"

⁶⁻⁷Ili-wedaku (answered) as follows: ⁷⁻⁹"I am holding your hem for the trial."

⁹Buzazu (then said) as follows: ¹⁰⁻¹¹"I give you my word (to answer you) at the trial, you should not hold me!"

¹³⁻¹⁶For these proceedings, the *kārum** Kaneš appointed us (as factual witnesses), and ¹⁷⁻¹⁸we have given our testimony before Aššur's dagger. ¹⁹⁻²²In the presence of Mannum-ki-Ištar, son of Šu-Belum, of Šamaš-bani, son of Inna-Suen.

ll. 5-6 and 8-9: Literally "to hold the hem (of someone)" means, according to Hertel 2013, 228, "to detain someone for a legal action, preventing him from leaving and avoidance."

Procedure for confrontation and a 'dialogue of the deaf'

In the event that the opponent refused to submit himself to a procedure for mutual agreement, an interrogation by the complainant could be ordered by judgment. Thus, in **#74**, the court would issue a judgment demanding the disputant to engage in an interrogation-process. This gave one the right to question the other and obliged the latter to answer in the presence of witnesses. At the end of this exchange, proceedings had to be drawn up by the factual witnesses mentioned here anonymously under the personal pronoun of the first person in the plural. During the trial undertaken by the *kārum**, the parties' arguments were given under oath, as well as those of witnesses who recorded them *verbatim* (Garelli 1982). In any event, the obligation to answer the complainant's questions did not resolve the dispute. Ili-wedaku, instead of clearly answering the question put to him, chooses to attack Buzazu in turn on a new grievance (**#75**). According to his own statements, he had already filed a complaint against his opponent on this matter before the trial was held.

74. Judgment of Assyrian plenary assembly at Kaneš engaging parties in an interrogation-process

Collection number: VAT 13515

Publication: VS 26 114 [copy]; CDLI P358255 [photo, transliteration]

Edition: Eisser and Lewy 1935, 48-49 no. 319 [transliteration, translation]

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 120 no. 76 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *kà-ru-um ṣa-he-er¹ GAL*

2 *dī-nam* (erasure)

3 *i-dī-in-ma*

4 *bu-za-zu*

5 *il₅-we-da-ak*

6 *i-ša-a-al-ma*

7 *ṭup-pí-šu-nu*

Lo.e. *ú-ha-ru-mu-ú-ma*

Rev. *a-li i-ma-gu₅-ru-/ni*

10 *e-ta-wu*

¹⁻³The plenary assembly of the *kārum** has rendered a judgment (stating that) ⁴⁻⁶Buzazu will question Ili-wedaku, then ⁷⁻⁸they will place their tablet in a sealed envelope, and ⁹⁻¹⁰they will deliberate in order to come to an agreement.

75. Sworn testimony recording an injunction to bring the case in court

Collection number: AMM 1-146-90 + AMM 1-226-90

Excavation number: Kt 90/k 235 + Kt 90/k 315

Publication: TPAK 1 190 (tablet) and 186 (envelope) [transliteration, translation]. Duplicate of BIN 4, 112 + CCT 6, 17a

Edition: Eisser and Lewy 1935, 49-51 no. 320 [transliteration, translation]

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 120-21 no. 77 [translation, commentary]; Hertel 2013, 216 no. 36 for ll. 30-37

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Envelope

- Obv. (seal)
- 2 KIŠIB *i*-[*dí-da-gan* DUMU *sà-ar-ni-ki-im*]
 3 KIŠIB *il*₅-*ba*-[*ni* DUMU *a-mur-a-šur*]
 4 KIŠIB *a-gu*₅-[*a* DUMU *puzur*₄-*a-šur*]
 5 *a-na a-wa*-[*tim a-ni-a-tim*]
 6 *kà-ru-um* [*kà-né-eš*₁₅ *i-dí-ni-a-tí-ma*]
 7 IGI GÍR *ša* [*a-šur ší-bu-tí-ni ni-dí-in*]

Tablet

- Obv. *bu-za-zu : il*₅-*we-da-ku*
 2 *iš-al : um-ma bu-za-zu-ma*
 3 45 GÚ URUDU *ší-kam : i-na wa-ah-šu-ša-na*
 4 *É kà-ri-im i-na sú-hu-pí-im*
 5 *lu a-na kà-ri-im : lu a-na*
 6 *we-dim : ú-ší-am puzur*₄-*a-šur*
 7 *lá-qá-am : qá-bi ú : ṭup-pá-am*
 8 *ša dí-in : kà-ri-im : kà-né-eš*₁₅
 9 *a-na-ku : ú-kà-al : ù ṭup-pá-am*
 10 *ša ku-nu-uk : puzur*₄-*a-šur*
 11 *ša URUDU*^{um} : URUDUⁱ-*ni : ú-kà-al*
 12 *ù iš-tù : puzur*₄-*a-šur*
 13 *me-tù-ni : i-na ba-áb ha-ra-ni-a*
 14 *i-na wa-ah-šu-ša-na*
 15 *ša-zu-úz-tí : ú-ša-zi-iz-kà*
 16 *ù i-šú-ra-tim : ša kà-ru-um*
 17 *wa-ah-šu-ša-na : a-na ša-pár-tim*
 18 *i-dí-a-ni : e-zi-ba-kum*
 Lo.e. *i-na URUDU*^{im} : *šu-a-tí*
 20 *ki-ma : i-a-tí : mi-ma*
 Rev. *tal-qé-e : lá tal-qé-e*
 22 IGI *a-ni-e-ma : i-ki-ir ú-lá*
 23 *kà-in : il*₅-*we-da-ku bu-za-zu*
 24 *e-pu-ul : um-ma il*₅-*we-da-ku-ma*
 25 *tí-ma-li-ma a-na kà-ri-im*

- 26 TUR GAL : *a-na ša ma-áš-kà-tí*
 27 *tù-šar-dí-ú : a-li-ik*
 28 *um-ma a-ta-ma : a-wi-lam*
 29 *lá-áš-al-ma : u₄-ra-ma lu né-tù-wu*
 30 *lu mì-ma : ha-bu-lá-ku-um*
 31 *lu ʔup-pí-i : ha-ar-ma-am tù-kà-al*
 32 *ri-id-a-ma : u₄-ma-ma*
 33 *lu-ta-mì-ú¹-kà : ša ni-iš a-lim^{ki}*
 34 *ù ru-ba-im : ší-bu-tí : kà-i-lá*
 35 *a-na kà-ri-im : TUR GAL : a-wa-tí*
 36 *bi-lá : ki-ma ma-áš-kà-tí : ú-šar-dí-ú*
 37 *ú-kà-a-šu a-na a-wa-tim*
 38 *a-ni-a-tim : kà-ru-um*
 Up.e. *kà-né-eš₁₅ i-dí-ni-a-tí-ma*
 40 IGI GÍR *ša a-šur ší-bu-tí-ni*
 Le.e. *ni-dí-in IGI i-dí-da-gan DUMU sà-ar-ni-ki-im*
 42 IGI *il₅-ba-ni DUMU a-mur-a-šur*
 43 IGI *a-gu₅-a DUMU puzur₄-a-šur*

Envelope:

²Seal of I[ddin-Dagan, son of Sarnikum]. ³Seal of Ili-ba[ni, son of Amur-Aššur]. ³Seal of Agu[a, son of Puzur-Aššur]. ³⁷⁻³⁹For [these] procee[dings, the Kaneš] *kārum** [appointed us (as factual witnesses) and ⁴⁰⁻⁴¹we have given our testimony] before Aššur’s sword.

Tablet:

¹⁻²Buzazu questioned Ili-wedaku, (and) Buzazu (said) as follows: ³⁻⁶“In Wahšušana, in the trade bureau, 45 talents* of copper in pieces were removed from the stock, either to the *kārum**, or to the official (in charge of the *kārum**). ⁶⁻⁷Puzur-Aššur was entitled to take (them). ⁷⁻⁹Moreover, I myself hold a tablet with the judgment of *kārum** Kaneš, ⁹⁻¹¹also I hold a tablet sealed by Puzur-Aššur (stating) that the copper is mine. ¹²⁻¹³But after Puzur-Aššur died, ¹³⁻¹⁵ just as I was setting out, I put at your disposal my agents in Wahšušana, ¹⁶⁻¹⁸and I left you the *išurtum**-contracts (debt-notes) that the *kārum** of Wahšušana had deposited as pledge for me. ¹⁹⁻²¹Have you taken any of that copper in my name or not? ²²⁻²³In the presence of these (witnesses) deny or confirm (it)!”

²³⁻²⁴Ili-wedaku answered Buzazu; Ili-wedaku (said) as follows: ²⁶⁻²⁷“Yesterday already, I came to the plenary *kārum** (assembly), concerning the fact that you took away my deposit. ²⁸⁻²⁹(But then) you (said) as follows: ‘I will ask the gentleman/boss and tomorrow we will confer.’ ³⁰Whether I owe you anything ³¹or whether you are holding a certified tablet with me (as debtor), ³²⁻³³bring (witnesses) here, and let them have you swear today. ³³⁻³⁴Keep in mind my testimony under the oath of the City and the king. ³⁵⁻³⁶Bring my case to the plenary *kārum** (assembly)! ³⁶⁻³⁷I will prove that he took away my deposit.”

³⁷⁻³⁹For these proceedings, the Kaneš *kārum** appointed us (as factual witnesses) and ⁴⁰⁻⁴¹we have given our testimony before Aššur’s sword. ⁴¹⁻⁴³In the presence of Iddin-Dagan, son of Sarnikum, of Ili-bani, son of Amur-Aššur, of Agua, son of Puzur-Aššur.

I. 13: literally “at the beginning of my journey”

... GOLD, SILVER AND TABLETS: THE PROPERTY OF A DECEASED MERCHANT

The legal controversy over copper management between Buzazu and Ili-wedaku probably took place shortly after Puzur-Aššur’s death. It precedes the case concerning his succession (Matouš 1969). At the death of Puzur-Aššur, investors and creditors enter his house, open the sealed room, make an

inventory of the goods and seize everything of value: gold, silver, copper and many loan contracts to his credit or his debit (#76). All the seized goods are entrusted to Enna-Suen, son of Ili-alum, in the presence of witnesses, with the order to keep the capital intact pending an agreement between all Puzur-Aššur's creditors. Aššur-mutappil, Pušu-ken's son, contacts Enna-Suen and tries to convince him to hand over the dead man's property to Buzazu, his brother, who was, by then, on a business trip to Wahšušana and had not yet been able to get back the 45 copper talents*. Enna-Suen effectively entrusts all Puzur-Aššur's goods to Buzazu, who had returned from his trip (#77). By making this transfer, Enna-Suen favors one of the deceased's lenders, to the great displeasure of the other creditors and heirs. However, he is released from any claim (#76).

The complainants hire an attorney (*rābišum**)⁵ and enter discussions from from this point on with Buzazu (#78). He reports his actions to his opponents: with gold and silver, he paid the deceased's unpaid expenses and entrusted the rest of the capital to Aššur-Šamši, a transporter for his father's enterprise, to reinvest it in trade. Purchases were made in Aššur on behalf of Puzur-Aššur's creditors, and the goods, entrusted to another transporter named Kulumaya, are yet in Anatolia (#76 and #77). Some tin was handed over to the trade bureau at Kaneš to pay the deceased's debt to the Aššur authorities (#78). However, Puzur-Aššur's sons claim the silver as their father's.

Meanwhile, Ili-wedaku has claimed goods acquired with his own money during the lifetime of Puzur-Aššur.⁶ These also would have been handed over to Aššur-Šamši, and Pušu-ken's son would have taken possession of them as well (#78). As this new dispute between Buzazu and Ili-wedaku begins, it appears that the first affair has not been resolved and that the case has been brought before the City assembly and the king in Aššur (#78).

Clearance of the assets and ongoing transactions of a deceased merchant

References to the death of a merchant are so numerous in the Old Assyrian texts that they are systematically announced with a standard expression: "Alas (*la libbi ilimma*), PN is dead!" This announcement was often synonymous with aggravation for the heirs and representatives of the deceased, and with financial losses for his business partners and investors.⁷ Given the financial issues and the importance of the capital involved, a fixed protocol regulated the steps to be followed for the liquidation of the assets of all ongoing transactions at the time of a merchant's death. Investors and creditors were entitled to seal the deceased's safe or, in the present case, to seize all the goods and tablets preserved in it. These were then handed over to a third party in charge of determining its value and bringing the contents to Aššur. The final settlement had to take place in the City, in the presence of the heirs, business partners, investors and creditors, in accordance with the deceased's testament, insofar as he left such a document (Michel 1994; Veenhof 2012a). When Buzazu took over the goods of Puzur-Aššur,⁸ he broke this rule. This explains the lawsuit brought against him by the investors and heirs of the deceased (#76).

76. Sworn testimony. The goods of the deceased Puzur-Aššur were entrusted to Buzazu

Collection number: unknown; NBC 6619 (duplicate)

Publication: Landsberger 1940, 7-10 no. 1 [transliteration, translation].⁹ BIN 6 220 (broken duplicate) [copy]

Edition: Matouš 1969, 168–70 [transcription, traduction]

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 124 no. 80 [translation, commentary of BIN 6 220]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

⁵ For the role played by the *rābišum** or attorney, see below the trial between Puzur-Ištar and Aššur-malik.

⁶ TC 1 22. According to this letter sent by Ili-wedaku to Puzur-Aššur, Aššur-mutappil took the money intended for the purchase of goods.

⁷ Michel 1992, Michel 1994 and 1998; Veenhof 1995, 1726-7; Hertel and Larsen 2010; Hertel 2013, 337-45.

⁸ BIN 6 253 translated in Michel 2000, no. 79.

⁹ The distribution of lines on the tablet remains unknown.

1 MAŠKIM *um-ma-a-nu puzur₄-a-šur*
2 *ù me-er-ú puzur₄-a-šur*
3 *a-na en-na-sú-en₆*
4 *iš-ba-at-ni-a-tí-ma lá li-bi*
5 *ì-lí-ma a-bu-ni me-et-ma*
6 *i-mu-at a-bi-ni*
7 *um-me-a-nu a-bi-ni 12 ta-ma-lá-ki*
8 *ša ʔup-pì KÙ.BABBAR ku-nu-ki*
9 *KÙ.GI ku-nu-ki 2 šu-uq-lá-tim*
10 *ša URUDU KÙ.BABBAR ú KÙ.GI ú URUDU*
11 *i-na ma-ša-ar-tim ku-nu-ku*
12 *ša a-bi-ni um-me-a-nu é*
13 *a-bi-ni e-ru-bu-ma*
14 *ip-qí-du-ni-ku-um mì-ma*
15 *a-nim a-ma-nim ta-dí-in*
16 *um-ma en-na-sú-en₆-ma*
17 *um-me-a-an a-bi-ku-nu*
18 *iš-tù wa-ah-šu-ša-na*
19 *i-li-kam-ma mì-ma*
20 *a-nim a-na bu-za-zu*
21 *ap-qí-id um-ma*
22 *bu-za-zu-ma i-na KÙ.BABBAR*
23 *KÙ.GI a-ší-it*
24 *a-bi-ku-nu ša ša-qú-lim*
25 *ú-ša-qí-il₅-ma ší-tí*
26 *a-na a-šùr-^dUTU^š_i*
27 *ap-qí-id a-na a-lim^{ki}*
28 *ú-bi-il₅-ma lu-qú-tum*
29 *e-li-a-ma lu-qú-ut-ku-nu*
30 *a-na ku-lu-ma-a pá-aq-da-at*
31 *al-kà-ma lu-qú-ut-ku-nu*
32 *le-qé-a um-ma en-na-sú-en₆-ma*
33 *mì-ma lá ta-tù-ra-nim*
34 *um-ma MAŠKIM ù me-er-ú*
35 *puzur₄-a-šur-ma mì-ma*
36 *lá ni-tù-ra-ku-um*
37 *a-šar ta-ap-qí-du*
38 *bu-za-zu ni-šé-e*
39 *a-na a-wa-tim a-ni-a-tim*
40 *kà-ru-um kà-né-eš₁₅ i-dí-ni-a-tí-ma*
41 *IGI GÍR ša a-šur ší-bu-tí-ni ni-dí-in*
42 *IGI a-gi-a DUMU puzur₄-a-šur IGI ma-ší-ì-lí*
43 *DUMU bu-zu-zi-im IGI DINGIR-pí-lá-ah*
44 *DUMU a-šur-na-da*

¹⁻⁴The attorney, Puzur-Aššur's investors and Puzur-Aššur's sons summoned us (as arbitrators) against Enna-Suen (declaring as follows): ⁴⁻⁵"Alas, our father died! ⁶And at the death of our father, ¹²⁻¹³the investors entered the house of our father, and ⁷our father's investors ¹⁴entrusted you ⁷⁻¹⁰12 boxes of tablets, silver under seal, gold under seal, 2 packages of copper, ¹⁰⁻¹²(all the) silver, gold and copper were sealed in our father's safe. ¹⁴⁻¹⁵To whom did you give all this?"

¹⁶Enna-Suen (declared) as follows: ¹⁷⁻²¹“An investor of your father came from Wahšušana and I entrusted all this to Buzazu.”

²¹⁻²²Buzazu (then declared) as follows: ²²⁻²⁵“I paid out the silver and gold that was due for the expenditures of your father and ²⁵⁻²⁸entrusted the rest to Aššur-Šamši.¹⁰ He brought it to the City. ²⁸⁻

³⁰The merchandise went up (to the palace) and your merchandise has been entrusted to Kulumaya. ³¹⁻

³²Come and take your merchandise.”

³²⁻³³Enna-Suen (said) as follows: “You should not raise any claim against me!”

³⁴⁻³⁵The attorney and the sons of Puzur-Aššur (said) as follows: ³⁵⁻³⁶“We will not raise any claim against you. ³⁷⁻³⁸Where you entrusted (it), we will sue Buzazu (for it).”

³⁹⁻⁴⁰For these proceedings, the Kaneš *kārum** appointed us (as factual witnesses) and ⁴¹we have given our testimony before Aššur’s sword. ⁴²⁻⁴⁴In the presence of Agia, son of Puzur-Aššur, of Maši-ili, son of Buzuzum, of Ili-pilah, son of Aššur-nada.

Repeated trials

The dispute between Buzazu and Ili-wedaku concerned various financial transactions arising from their collaboration with Puzur-Aššur’s business (#77 and #78). The texts presented in this dossier refer to several disputes. One has been presented before the “group of three,” a set of witnesses set up for the occasion. Another necessitated the intervention of the Aššur authorities, represented by the assembly and by the king, before whom an oath was taken (#78). It is therefore necessary to imagine that other documents that have not yet been published or excavated may add to this corpus.¹¹ Nevertheless, these linked cases remain remarkable; some twenty factual witnesses were asked to testify, and the affair could not be resolved for several years.

77. Sworn testimony. Buzazu pays but does not want further questioning in court

Collection number: AO 9337

Publication: TC 3 270 [copy]; CDLI P357836 [photo, transliteration]; partial duplicate: OIP 27 57:5-22 // TC 3 270:14-29, and the declaration of Buzazu to Ili-wedaku is reproduced in the declaration of the same Buzazu to Aššur-Šamši: KTB 18:2-15 // TC 3 270:14-32.

Edition: Garelli 1963, 242–4 [transliteration, translation]; Matouš 1969, 170–1 [transliteration, translation]

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 125 no. 81 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *il₅-we-da-ku a-na bu-za-zu*
2 *iš-ba-at-ni-a-tí-ma um-ma*
3 *il₅-we-da-ku-ma a-na bu-za-zu-/ma*
4 4 GÚ 40 *ma-na AN.NA*
5 *ku-nu-ku ša a-lim^{ki} 97 ku-ta-nu*
6 *ša qá-tim 40 ku-ta-nu SIG₅ /DIRI*
7 *mì-ma a-nim lu-qú-tum*
8 *ša tám-kà-ri-im ša a-šur-^dUTU^{ši}*
9 *a-šé-er tám-kà-ri-im i-ra-de₈-/ú*
10 *ta-aš-ba-at lá ta-aš-ba-/at*
11 IGI *a-né-e-ma i-ki-ir*

¹⁰ The duplicate BIN 6 220 ll. 24-25, specify that the rest of the silver entrusted to Aššur-Šamši amounted to 37 minas*, ²⁴[šr]-í KÙ.BABBAR 37 *ma-n[a]* ²⁵[KÙ.]BABBAR.

¹¹ The first affair is attested by the following documents #69-75; BIN 4 109; BIN 4 112 + CCT 6 17a; CCT 3 32; CCT 4 39b; CCT 6 17a; TPAK 1 186; and the second affair is referred to by these texts: #75-78; AKT 1 10; ATHE 52; BIN 6 188; BIN 6 253; CCT 5 27a (?); CCT 6 30a; KTB 18 + LB 1284; OIP 27 57; TPAK 1 186; TuM 1 22a.

12 *ú-lá kà-i-in : bu-za-zu*
 13 *il₅-we-da-ku : e-pu-ul um-ma*
 14 *bu-za-zu-ma lá li-bi : DINGIR-ma*
 15 *puzur₄-a-šùr tap-pá-a : É a-bi-ni*
 16 *me-et-ma a-na-ku i-na wa-ah-šu-ša-/na*
 17 *wa-áš-ba-ku : um-me-a-nu ù tám-kà-ru*
 18 *puzur₄-a-šùr a-na É puzur₄-a-šùr*
 19 *e-ru-bu-ma : ma-ša-ar-tám*
 20 *ša puzur₄-a-šùr ip-té-ú-mà*
 21 *lu KÙ.BABBAR ù KÙ.GI lu ṭup-pé-e*
 22 *ta-ma-lá-ki : mì-ma a-nim a-na*
 23 *en-na-sú-en DUMU ì-lí-a-lim*
 Lo.e. *ip-qí-du a-na-ku iš-tù*
 25 *wa-ah-šu-ša-na a-li-kam-ma*
 26 *en-na-sú-en : aš-ba-at-ma*
 Rev. *lu KÙ.BABBAR lu KÙ.GI lu ṭup-pé*
 28 *ša um-me-a-nu ù tám-kà-ru (erasure)*
 29 *puzur₄-a-šùr ip-qí-du-šu-ni*
 30 *ú-šé-ra-ma KÙ.BABBAR a-na a-šur-UTU^š*
 31 *áp-qí-id-ma : šu-mì tám-kà-ri-im*
 32 *ú-dí-ma i-na KÙ.BABBAR qá-tí : áš-ku-ma*
 33 *ší-ma-am É a-bi-a : i-ší-ma-ma*
 34 *ba-áb a-bu-lim ša ki-ma i-a-tí*
 35 *qá-sú-nu : iš-ku-nu : i-na*
 36 *wa-ar-ki-tim-ma : ra-bi-šú-/um*
 37 *ú me-er-ú puzur₄-a-šur i-li-ku-nim-/ma*
 38 *um-ma šu-nu-ma KÙ.BABBAR i-na ma-ša-ar-/tim*
 39 *ša a-bi-ni : u-ša-am um-ma*
 40 *ra-bi-šú-ma ú me-er-ú puzur₄-a-šur-ma*
 41 *a-bu-ni tám-kà-ru-um a-ší-a-tí*
 42 *a-zu-pá-na : ša ki-ma i-a-tí*
 43 *áš-pu-ur-ma lu-qú-tám a-na ku-lu-ma-a*
 44 *ip-qí-du a-ta MAŠKIM ù me-er-/ú*
 45 *puzur₄-a-šùr a-ta-wa-ma a-šar*
 46 *lu-qú-tum i-bu-ru lu-qú-tám*
 47 *li-il₅-qé-ší a-na-ku ša mì-ma*
 48 *lá ha-bu-lá-ku-ni sí-ki tù-kà-/al*
 49 *ù i-na dí-tim tù-ša-e-li*
 50 *a-na a-wa-tim a-ni-a-tim*
 Up.e. *kà-ru-um : kà-né-eš i-dí-ni-a-tí-/ma*
 52 *IGI GÍR ša a-šùr ší-bu-tí-ni*
 53 *ni-dí-in IGI a-šùr-SIG₅*
 Le.e. *DUMU a-šur-re-ší IGI a-gi₅-a DUMU puzur₄-a-šùr ú-zu-a*
 55 *DUMU a-pì-li-a tap-pá-i-ni*

¹⁻⁴Ili-wedaku summoned us (as arbitrators) against Buzazu. ²⁻³Ili-wedaku (declared) as follows against Buzazu: ¹⁰“Have you or have you not taken ⁴⁻⁶4 talents* 40 minas* of tin with the seal of the City, 97 *kutānum*-textiles of standard quality, 40 *kutānum*-textiles of excellent quality ⁷⁻⁹– all this is the merchandise of the creditor that Aššur-Šamši was (supposed) to take to the creditor? ¹¹⁻¹²In the presence of these (witnesses) deny or confirm!”

¹²⁻¹⁴Buzazu answered Ili-wedaku, thus (said) Buzazu as follows: ¹⁴⁻¹⁶“Alas, Puzur-Aššur, the (business) partner of our father’s house has died! And ¹⁶⁻¹⁷while I was in Wahšušana, ¹⁷⁻¹⁹Puzur-Aššur’s investors

and creditors entered Puzur-Aššur's house; ¹⁹⁻²⁰they opened Puzur-Aššur's safe,¹² and ²¹⁻²⁴silver, gold, tablets in boxes, all this they entrusted to Enna-Suen, son of Ili-alum. ²⁴⁻²⁶As for me, I came (back) from Wahšušana, I seized Enna-Suen, and ²⁶⁻³⁰he delivered to me the silver, gold, (and) tablets that Puzur-Aššur's investors and creditors had entrusted to him. ³⁰⁻³²Then I entrusted the silver to Aššur-Šamši, I made known the name of the creditor, and I laid claim to the silver. ³³⁻³⁵Then, when the purchase was decided upon in my father's house, my representatives laid claim (to the merchandise) at the city gate. ³⁵⁻³⁷Later on, Puzur-Aššur's attorney and sons came here, ³⁸⁻³⁹and (said) as follows: 'The silver came out from the safe of our father!' ³⁹⁻⁴¹Puzur-Aššur's attorney and sons (added) as follows: 'Our father was the creditor!' ⁴¹⁻⁴⁴Because of this, I sent my representatives to Zupana and they entrusted the merchandise to Kulumaya. ⁴⁴⁻⁴⁵You, the attorney, and Puzur-Aššur's sons – discuss (the matter all together) and, ⁴⁵⁻⁴⁷wherever merchandise has been confirmed (as mine), let him take it. ⁴⁷⁻⁴⁹Even though I owe you nothing, you hold my hem and you questioned me in court!" ⁵⁰⁻⁵¹For these proceedings, the Kaneš *kārum** appointed us (as factual witnesses) and ⁵²⁻⁵³we have given our testimony before Aššur's sword. ⁵³⁻⁵⁵In the presence of Aššur-damiq, son of Aššur-reši, of Agia, son of Puzur-Aššur; Uzua, son of Apiliya was our partner.

78. Sworn testimony in which Ili-wedaku asks to bring the same case to court

Collection number: I 633 + BM 115053 + I 763

Publication: – Prag I 633: Matouš 1969, 178-9 (obv. 1-25 and rev. 64-84); CCT 6 15a (copy of obverse and reverse to be exchange; obv. 17-34 and rev. 48-64) – Prag I 763: Matouš 1969, 175-7 and 180 (l. 31-56, right side of the end of the obverse, of the lower edge and of the beginning of the reverse) [copy, transliteration, translation, except for CCT 6 15a: copy]; CDLI P358901 [photo and transliteration of I 633 and I 763] – OIP 27 57, bought at Kültepe, is a duplicate of ll. 1-32 – BIN 6 188 is a broken duplicate of ll. 9-17 and 61-76.

Edition: Hecker, Kryszat, and Matouš 1998, 212-4 and 330-1 (Prag I 633 and Prag I 763) [transliteration, translation]

Bibliography: Larsen 1976, 338 n. 9 (ll. 24-32); Michel 2000, 126-8 nos. 82-84 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. [bu-za-zu i]l₅-we-da-ku : iš-a-al
 2 [um-ma bu-za]-zu-ma : tí-ma-li-ma
 3 [IGI ša-li-iš-tí t]a-áš-e-li-ma
 4 [ú a-pu-u]l-kà : lá li-bi₄ DINGIR-ma
 5 [puzur₄-a-š]ùr : tap-pá : É a-bi₄-ni
 6 [me-et] : a-na-ku i-na ah-šu-ša-na
 7 [wa-áš-ba-ku] : um-me-a-nu : ù tám-kà-ru
 8 [puzur₄-a]-šùr : a-na É puzur₄-a-šùr
 9 [e-ru-bu-m]a : ma-ša-ar-tám : ša puzur₂-a-šùr
 10 [ip-té-ú-ma l]u KÙ.BABBAR lu KÙ.GI : lu ṭup-pè
 11 [ta-ma-lá-k]i ší-ta i-le-en₆ : ša URUDU
 12 [mì-ma a-nim a]-na i-na-sú-en₆ DUMU ì-lí-a-lim
 13 [i]p-qí-du : a-na-ku : iš-tù ah-šu-ša-na
 14 a-li-kam-ma : en-na-sú-en₆ : aš-ba-at-ma
 15 lu KÙ.BABBAR : lu KÙ.KI : lu ṭup-pí ta-ma-lá-ki
 16 2^{ší-ta} šu-uq-le-en₆ : ša URUDU : ša um-me-a-nu
 17 ù tám-kà-ru : puzur₄-a-šùr ip-qí-du-šu-ni-ma
 18 i-a-tí [ú-šé]-ra-ma : lu KÙ.BABBAR lu KÙ.KI : a-na ší-it

¹² The *maššartum* is a sealed container that could be kept in a strong-room.

19 *puzur₄-a-[šù]r : ša ša-qú-lim : ú-ša-qí-il₅-ma*
20 *ší-tí KÙ.BABBAR : a-na a-šùr-^dUTU^ší áp-qí-id-ma*
21 *i-na KÙ.BABBAR šu-mì : DAM.GÀR : ú-dí-ma : qá-tí*
22 *áš-ku-un-ma É a-bi₄-a : ší-mu-um : i-ší-im-ma*
23 *i-na ba-áb : a-bu-lim ša ki-ma i-a-tí :*
24 *i-na lu-qú-tim : qá-sú-nu : iš-ku-nu : k[i-ma DUMU.MUNUS]*
25 *puzur₄-a-šur : ù me-er-ú puzur₂-a-šur : a-[na a-wa-tim]*
26 *šu-a-tí : MAŠKÌM : e-hu-zu-ni-ni : áp-lá-ah*
27 *a-ší-a-tí : ša ki-ma : i-a-tí : a-zu-pá-n[a]*
28 *áš-pur-ma : lu-qú-tám a-na ku-lu-ma-a : ip-[qí-du]*
29 *lu-qú-tum : iš-tù É.GAL^{lim} : ur-da-m[a ší-ip-ru]*
30 *ša a-lim^{ki} : ù li-mu : AN.NA : a-[na hu-bu-ul]*
31 *puzur₄-a-šur : ša a-na a-šur [ha-bu-lu a-na É]*
32 *kà-ri-im : ip-qí-du : um-ma me-er-ú puzur₂-a-šur-ma*
33 *KÙ.BABBAR ša a-bi₄-n[i a]-bu-ni DAM.GÀR : a-li-ik-ma*
34 *MAŠKÌM^l : ù m[e-er-ú puz]ur₂-a-šur : at-wu-ma*
35 *[x x x x]-ku²-ni : lu-qú-tám*
36 *[iš-tí x x x]-na : ù me-er-e puzur₂-a-šur*
37 *[le-qé u₄-ma-am] i-na dí-tí-im tù-ša-a-lá-ni*
38 *[KÙ.BABBAR ma-dam tù]-uš-ta-ag-me-ra-ni*
39 *[lá tù-na-ha-ní] : il₅-we-da-ku : bu-za-zu*
40 *[e-pu-ul um-ma] il₅-we-da-ak-ma a-na*
41 *[bu-za-zu-ma] 20 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR : ni-is-ha-sú*
Lo.e. *[DIRI ša-du-a]-sú : ša-bu : ku-nu-ki-a*
43 *[IGI 3 me-er-e um]-me-a-ni : i-na ah-šu-ša-na*
44 *[a-na a-šùr-^dUTU^ší] : áp-qí-id-ma*
Rev. *[ELLAT[?]]-x-tí-šu-ma : a-na a-lim^{ki}*
46 *[a-šé-er ša ki-ma] : i-a-tí : li-ip-tí-ištar*
47 *[ú-bi-il₅-ma a-šur]-i-dí : DUMU il₅-tap-pá*
48 *a-na [É x x x]-a²-nim : a-na ší-mì-im ú*
49 *ša-a-mì-[im ú-bi-il]-ma : a-ha-ma : 6 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR*
50 *ú 15 GÍN [KÙ.GI ku]-nu-ki-a : i-na kà-né-eš₁₅*
51 *i-tur₄-DINGIR DUMU [a-mur-ištar] : ša-zu-úz-tí*
52 *IGI 3 me-er-e : um-me-a-ni a-na a-šùr-^dUTU^ší*
53 *ip-qí-id-ma : a-na a-lim^{ki} : a-šé-er*
54 *ša ki-ma : i-a-tí-ma a-na ší-[mì]-im*
55 *ša-a-mì-im : ú-bi₄-il₅ a-ta i-na*
56 *lá i-da-i-a i-na KÙ.BABBAR ša iš-tù*
57 *ah-šu-ša-na : a-šur-^dUTU^ší ub-lá-ni*
58 *qá-at-kà : ta-áš-ta-kan : um-ma a-ta-[ma]*
59 *a-na a-šùr-^dUTU^ší-ma : ra-dí KÙ.BABBAR^{pl}-[ma]*
60 *25 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR : šu-mì il₅-we-da-ku*
61 *ša ki-ma šu-lá-ba-an : DUMU šu-a-šur ÷up-pá-[am]*
62 *ah-ri-mu : a-ta : li-bi₄-kà-ma š[a mì-ma]*
63 *lá ha-bu-lá-ku-ni : ù [KÙ.BABBAR a-šu-mì-a]*
64 *ta-áš-qú-lu-[ma i-na KÙ.BABBAR^{pl}-a-ma qá-at-kà]*
65 *[ta-áš-ta-kán] u₄-mu-a im-lu-[ú-ma]*
66 *ša-zu-úz-tí-a-ma : KÙ.BABBAR iš-qú-ul-[ma]*
67 *÷up-pì : ú-šé-ší-a-am : a-ta : ša mì-ma*
68 *lá ha-bu-lá-ku-ni : ma-áš-kà-tí : KÙ.BABBAR ku-nu-ki-a*
69 *a-šur-^dUTU^ší : a-šé-er : ša ki-ma i-a-tí*

70 *ub-lu-ma* : TÚG^{hi-a} : ù AN.NA : *ku-nu-ki*
 71 *ša ki-ma* : *i-a-tí* : *a-šur*-^dUTU^š : *a-na*
 72 *še-ri-a* : *i-ra-de₈-a-ni ma-áš-kà-tí*
 73 *tù-uš-ta-ar-dí* : ù *mi-ší-ih-tám*
 74 [*i*]-*še-ri-a* : *ta-áš-ta-kán* : *a-še-er*
 75 [*ma*]-*áš-kà-tí-a-ma* : *tù-ša-a-lá-ni* : ù KÙ.BABBAR
 76 [*ma*]-*dam* : *tù-uš-tág-me-ra-ni* : *ša ni-iš*
 77 [*a-lim* ù] *ru-ba-im* : *ta-mu-ú* : *kà-i-lá*
 78 [*a-na kà-ri-im*] : *ša-he-er* : GAL *a-wa-tí* : *bi₄-lá*
 79 [*ša i*]-*na dí-in* : *kà-ri-im* : *ta-áš-e-li-ma*
 80 [*x x x x*] *a-na a-wa-tim*
 81 [*a-ni-a-tim kà*]-*ru-um* : *kà-né-eš₁₅*
 82 [*i-dí-ni-a-tí-ma*] : IGI GÍR *ša a-šur*
 83 [*ší-bu-tí-ni*] *ni-dí-in*
 84 [IGI NP] DUMU *i-dí-in-ištar*
 85 [IGI *a-šur-mu*]-*ta-pì-il₅* DUMU *e-ra-dí*

¹⁻³[Buzazu] questioned Ili-wedaku, (and) Buza]zu (said) as follows: ²⁻⁴“Yesterday [before a committee of three yo]u questioned me [and I answer]ed you. ⁴⁻⁶Alas, [Puzur-Ašš]ur, the (business) partner of our father’s house [has died]! ⁶⁻⁷while I [was] in Wahšušana, ⁷⁻⁹[Puzur-A]ššur’s investors and creditors [entered] Puzur-Aššur’s house; ⁹⁻¹⁰[they opened] Puzur-Aššur’s safe, [and] ¹¹⁻¹³ silver, gold, tablets in [boxe]s, two leather bags of copper, [all this they] entrusted [t]o Enna-Suen, son of Ili-alum. ¹³⁻¹⁴As for me, when I came (back) from Wahšušana, I seized Enna-Suen, ¹⁵⁻¹⁸[he de]livered to me the silver, gold, tablets in boxes, 2 packets of copper that Puzur-Aššur’s investors and creditors had entrusted to him. ¹⁸⁻¹⁹I paid the silver and gold that had to be paid for the expenses of Puzur-[Ašš]ur, then ²⁰I entrusted the rest of the silver to Aššur-Šamši, and ²¹⁻²²I made known the name of the creditor over the silver, and I laid claim (to it). Then, when the purchase was decided upon in my father’s house, ²³⁻²⁴my representatives laid claim to the merchandise at the city gate. ²⁴⁻²⁶Since Puzur-Aššur’s daughter and sons hired an attorney (to oppose) me on this case, I was afraid. ²⁷⁻²⁸Because of this, I sent my representatives to Zupana, and they entrusted the merchandise to Kulumaya. ²⁹The merchandise came down from the palace, ²⁹⁻³²then [the envoys] of the City and the *limum**-officials (of the *kārum**) handed over to the trade bureau the tin for the debt of Puzur-Aššur for which he was indebted to Aššur. Puzur-Aššur’s sons (said) as follows: ‘This is the silver of [our] father. Our [fa]ther was the creditor!’ ³³⁻³⁴Come and discuss (the matter) with the attorney and [Puz]ur-Aššur’s s[ons], and ³⁵⁻³⁷[take] the merchandise [... with...] and Puzur-Aššur’s sons. ³⁷[Today] you are questioning me in court! ³⁸[You] made me spend a [lot of silver]! ³⁹[You should not harass me (anymore)!]” ³⁹⁻⁴¹Ili-wedaku [answered] Buzazu; thus (said) Ili-wedaku to [Buzazu] as follows: ⁴¹⁻⁴⁴“In Wahšušana, [in the presence of 3 affiliated] traders, I entrusted 20 minas* of silver – import tax [added], its [transport tariff] paid – under my seal [to Aššur-Šam]ši, and ⁴⁵⁻⁴⁷Lipit-Ištar brought (them) with his own [caravan] to the City to my [representatives], ⁴⁷⁻⁴⁹then [Aššur]-idi, son of Ili-tappa, [brought (them)] to [the house of ...] to make a purchase. ⁴⁹⁻⁵⁵Further, Itur-ili, son of [Amur-Ištar], my agent, entrusted to Aššur-Šamši, in the presence of 3 affiliated traders, 6 minas* of silver and 15 shekels* [of gold under] my seal, in Kaneš, and he brought (them) to the City to my representatives to make a pu[rch]ase. ⁵⁵⁻⁵⁹You, without my knowing, you put your hand on the silver that Aššur-Šamši brought from Wahšušana, (saying) as follows to Aššur-Šamši: ⁵⁹⁻⁶²‘Add? (it to) my silver! And (there are) 25 minas* of silver, in the name of Ili-wedaku, for whom I certified a tablet instead of Šu-Laban, son of Šu-Aššur.’ ⁶²⁻⁶³You, as it pleases you, (confirm) that I owe you [nothing], ⁶³⁻⁶⁵that you paid [the silver in my name, and that you put your hand on my silver]! My term expi[red], thus ⁶⁶it is my agent who has paid the silver, [and] ⁶⁷he obtained my tablet. ⁶⁷⁻⁷⁰You, (confirm) that I owe you nothing, (and that) Aššur-Šamši brought to my representatives the silver under my seal, ⁷⁰⁻⁷²then Aššur-Šamši will (be able to) bring me textiles and tin under the seal of my representatives. ⁷²⁻⁷⁴You have had my deposit sent (off) and you have swindled me! ⁷⁴⁻⁷⁶On top of the fact that it is my [de]posit that you keep asking from me, you made me spend a

[I]ot of silver! ⁷⁶⁻⁷⁷Keep (in mind) what has been sworn by the City and the king. ⁷⁸Bring my case [to the] plenary [*kārum**] (assembly)! ⁷⁹[Thus] you questioned me in a judgment of the *kārum**, and [...] ⁸⁰⁻⁸²For [these] proceedings, the Kaneš [*kārum*] [appointed us (as factual witnesses) and] ⁸²⁻⁸³we have given [our testimony] before Aššur's sword. ⁸⁴⁻⁸⁵[In the presence of PN], son of Iddin-Ištar, [of Aššur-mu]tappil, son of Erra-(i)di.

I. 3: The “group of three” (*šalitim*) correspond to a group of outsiders who were seized as witnesses during official and unofficial legal process (Hertel 2013, 275).

ONE OR TWO TESTAMENTS?

When a merchant died but took the precaution before his death to draw up a testament, we may think that his succession would have proceeded smoothly. However, this was not always the case. One of the best examples, which resulted in a complex legal procedure, concerns the succession of Šalim-Aššur, whose house was excavated in 1994. This dossier, documented by no less than 88 texts, shows, on the one hand, Ennam-Aššur and Ali-ahum, the two sons of the deceased, confronted with the investors of their late father, and on the other hand, the dispute that arose between the two brothers concerning the way to proceed and the possible existence of a second, final, will that the father would have dictated on his deathbed.¹³

An attorney to settle a dispute between brothers

Šalim-Aššur died in ca. 1869 or 1868 BCE, at Durhumit where he owned a house, under which he was presumably buried. His second son, Ali-ahum, was at his side while his older son, Ennam-Aššur, was informed of the news by letter. The father's goods were in Durhumit, and the absent son, Ennam-Aššur, complains that his brother opened the father's safe and took goods out of it (#79). About a year after the father's death, during which Ali-ahum refuses all proposed mediation with former collaborators of his father, he hires an attorney, after obtaining a tablet from the City. Ennam-Aššur answers to the attorney and his brother, in the presence of witnesses, reminding Ali-ahum that they have, in the past, worked together for their father, selling his goods for silver and paying his (business) partners. Ennam-Aššur asks Ali-ahum to submit to an arbitration in the presence of their father's investors, representatives and impartial witnesses. Other documents suggest that Ali-ahum refused this proposal as well.

79. Sworn statement in which a party states that he has impartial witnesses

Collection number: unknown

Excavation number: Kt 94/k 827

Publication: AKT 6 229 [transliteration, translation].

Bibliography: Hertel 2013, 275 no. 61 and 293 no. 67 (ll. 1-4, 33-40 and 49-62)

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe), house of Šalim-Aššur excavated in 1994 in squares LII-LIII/124-125.

Obv. *en-um-a-šur ra-bi₄-ša-am ù a-lá-/ha-am*
 2 *e-pu-ul um-ma en-um-a-šur-ma*
 3 *a-na a-lá-hi-im-ma me-er-ú*
 4 *me-tim né-nu lá ni-ip-ta-ar*
 5 *i-nu-mì a-bu-ni i-na a-lim^{ki}*
 6 *lu-qú-tám ip-qí-da-ku-ni-ma*
 (erased line)

¹³ The archive of Šalim-Aššur is published by Mogens Larsen in the volumes AKT 6a to AKT 6e (2010-2021). The legal aspects of this archive are studied by Hertel 2013 and Hertel and Larsen 2010. See also for a summary of the affair, Larsen 2015, 32-5.

7 *a-na še-er : ša-zu-za-tí-šu*
8 *i-dí-a-bi-im DUMU a-šur-GAL*
9 *i-tur₄-DINGIR DUMU a-mur-ištar en-na-nim*
10 *DUMU am-ri-a e-na-ah-DINGIR DUMU šu-a-šur*
11 *i-a-tí ù ku-a-tí qá-dí-šu-nu-ma*
12 *ù né-nu ša-zu-úz-tum ša šál-ma-/a-šur*
13 *a-bi-ni : ù a-lá-an lu-qú-tim*
14 *a-ni-tim ša šé-pì-kà mì-ma*
15 *lu-qú-tám šál-ma-a-šur ú-lá ú-šé-bi₄-lam*
16 *ma-lá lu-qú-tum a-ni-tám (erasure)*
17 *ša a-ta tù-šé-li-a-ni-ma*
18 *lu-qú-tum ší-it i-na é-šu-nu*
19 *iz-ku-a-ni : li-bi : ša-zu-úz-tí*
20 *a-bi-ni ù li-bi-ni i-de₈*
21 *ù me-he-er-ni : a-na a-lim^{ki}*
Lo.e. *a-na še-er a-bi-ni i[š-t]ù*
23 *u₄-mì-im ša lu-qú-tám tù-šé-li-/a-ni*
24 *i-li-ik-šu-ma i-na a-lim^{ki}*
Rev. *i-ba-ší : i-na lu-qú-tim*
26 *a-ni-tim : qá-tí : ša-zu-za-at*
27 *a-bi-ni i-ta-dí-nu : ni-a-tí-ma*
28 *ma-lá lu-qú-tám i-a-tí i-šu-ru-ni-ni*
29 *a-na KÙ.BABBAR ú-ta-er-ma KÙ.BABBAR ší-im*
30 *lu-qú-tim a-na ša ki-ma a-bi-ni ù*
31 *ku-a-tí áš-qú-ul-ma KÙ.BABBAR ku-nu-ki-šu-nu*
32 *a-šé-er a-bi-ni : a-na a-lim^{ki} uš-té-bi₄-lu-ma*
33 *li-ba-kà i-de₈ ù a-na*
34 *šé-ri-ku-nu a-na wa-bi-il₅ KÙ.BABBAR ší-bi*
35 *a-hi-ú-tim i-šu ú-lá tù-na-ha-ni*
36 *ú iš-tù MU.1.ŠĚ lá-ma-ma ra-bi-šú*
37 *e-li-ú-ni-ni ú-sà-la-a-kum um-ma*
38 *a-na-ku-ma : al-kam 5 um-me-a-ni a-hi-ú-tim*
39 *a-šé-er ša-zu-úz-tí a-bi-ni lu nu-ṭá-hi-ma*
40 *a-na KÙ.BABBAR 1 GÍN ša ša-zu-úz-tí a-bi-ni*
41 *i-ša na-áš-pé-er-tí a-bi-ni ša id-na-/a*
42 *ub-lá-ni-ma : a-na KÙ.BABBAR ša ší-im lu-qú-/tim*
43 *ù ba-a-ba-tí-šu is-ni-qú-ni-a-tí-ni-ma*
44 *ma-ah-ri-šu-nu-ma i-na bu-lu-uṭ a-bi-ni*
45 *ni-iz-ku-ma ma-la KÙ.BABBAR i-na li-bi₄-a*
46 *ù li-bi-kà i-dí-ú-ni na-áš-pé-er-tum*
47 *ša ša-zu-za-tí-šu ù ni-a-tum iš-tí*
48 *id-na-a ší-ip-ri-šu a-na a-lim^{ki} i-tù-/ur-šum*
49 *a-ta a-dí u₄-mì-im a-nim qá-tí*
Up.e. *ta-am-ta-ha-aš-ma šé-šu-ba-am*
51 *ú-lá ta-mu-a-ma a-na ra-bi₄-ší-im*
52 *ù ṭup-pí-im ša a-lim^{ki} li-ta-qú-/im*
53 *ta-áš-ta-na-pá-ar : uš-kà-in*
54 *a-na ṭup-pí-im ša a-lim^{ki} ù ra-/bi₄-ší-im*
55 *ša be-lí-a*
I.e. *al-kam ša ma-áš-a-ni-kà i-na IGI ra-bi₄-ší-im a-ni-im 5 um-/me-a-ni*
57 *a-šé-er 4 ša ki-ma a-bi-ni lu nu-šé-ší-ib-ma KÙ.BABBAR ší-im*

58 *lu-qú-tim ù ba-a-ba-tum i-na ma-ah-ri-šu-nu li-ib-lá-aṭ-/ma*
 59 *ma-lá KÙ.BABBAR maš-kà-na-tum a-šé-er a-bi-ni i-ta-lá-kà-ni ù*
 60 *ší-i-ma ša ú-ša-qí-lu li-iš-hi-ir-ma ší-tí KÙ.BABBAR ma-lá*
 61 *i-na li-bi₄-ni i-na-dí-ú-ni lu ni-iš-qú-ul-ma iš-tí*
 62 *MAŠKIM lu ni-li-ik-ma*

¹⁻³Ennum-Aššur answered the attorney and Ali-ahum; thus (said) Ennum-Aššur to Ali-ahum as follows:
³⁻⁴“We are the sons of the deceased, let us not fall out with each other! ⁵⁻⁶When our father entrusted to you merchandise in the City, and ⁷⁻¹⁰(sent it) to his agents – Iddin-abum, son of Aššur-rabi, Itur-ili, son of Amur-lštar, Ennanum, son of Amria, Enah-ili, son of Šu-Aššur; ¹¹⁻¹³me and you, together with them, we are (indeed) the agents of Šalim-Aššur, our father –, ¹³⁻¹⁴then apart from this merchandise that was in your shipment, ¹⁴⁻¹⁵Šalim-Aššur did not send (any other) merchandise. ¹⁶⁻²⁰Our father’s agents and we knew how this merchandise – that you, yourself, brought up here – was cleared in their house. ²¹⁻²⁵Also, the copy of our (tablet) went to the City, to our father, the very day you brought the merchandise up here, and it is in the City. ²⁵⁻²⁷A claim on this merchandise has been made by our father’s agents. ²⁷⁻²⁹It was for us that I converted into silver all the merchandise that they took care of for me, ²⁹⁻³¹I paid the silver, proceeds of the merchandise, to our father’s representatives and to you, and ³¹⁻³³they sent the silver under their seal to our father in the City; ³³you know (all) that very well! ³³⁻³⁵Also, I have impartial witnesses against the persons who brought the silver to you. You should not harass me (anymore)! ³⁵⁻³⁸Further, a year ago, even before the attorneys came up here, I pleaded with you (saying) as follows: ³⁸⁻³⁹“Come! Let us confront 5 impartial investors with our father’s agents and (prove) ⁴⁰for each shekel* of silver that our father’s agents ⁴³checked for us ⁴¹as (mentioned in) the letter of our father that Idnaya ⁴²brought here, for the silver, the price of the merchandise ⁴³and his outstanding merchandise, ⁴⁴⁻⁴⁵that we have cleared in their presence while our father was still alive, ⁴⁶⁻⁴⁸and that a letter from his agents and us went back to him to the City with his messenger Idnaya ⁴⁵⁻⁴⁶concerning how much silver was deposited with me and you.” ⁴⁹⁻⁵¹As for you, until this day, you fight with me, you refuse to meet, and ⁵¹⁻⁵³you keep writing to get an attorney and a tablet of the City. ⁵³⁻⁵⁵I submit to the tablet of the City and the attorney of my lord. ⁵⁶⁻⁵⁸Come! It is your ... let us meet in the presence of this attorney with 5 investors in addition to the 4 who represent our father, and let the silver, proceeds from the merchandise, including the outstanding merchandise, become a credited item in their presence, and ⁵⁹⁻⁶⁰let him deduct as many silver deposits that will come to our father and the *expenses*? that he has paid, ⁶¹⁻⁶²and let us pay the rest of the silver, as much as they will assign to our account, and let us go with the attorney.

A tablet of the City to invalidate a last will

Ennam-Aššur wishes to travel to Aššur with his brother in order to meet their sister Lamassi and settle the succession in agreement with their father’s testament which was preserved in Aššur (**#80**). But this proposal does not meet with the agreement of Ali-ahum. Indeed, he pretends to hold a document with the last will of their father, which he would have dictated on his deathbed in Durhumit while his was at his side. This document has been entrusted to Iliya, son of Elali. Ennam-Aššur is supported by his cousin Enna-Suen, who makes an attempt to obtain a tablet from the City assembly invalidating the Durhumit document and ordering the two brothers and the attorney to come to Aššur to settle the affair in accordance with Šalim-Aššur’s original testament.

80. Letter requiring an official document to cancel a false testament

Collection number: unknown
 Excavation number: Kt 94/k 815
 Publication: AKT 6 241 [transliteration, translation].
 Bibliography: Hertel 2013, 290 n. 934 (ll. 22-39)

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe), house of Šalim-Aššur excavated in 1994 in squares LII-LIII/124-125.

Obv. *um-ma en-na-sú-en₆ ù*
 2 *en-um-a-šùr-ma a-na um-ma-za*
 3 *ù t[ù]-ta-a um-ma*
 4 *en-na-sú-en₆-ma a-na um-ma-za*
 5 *qí-bi-ma : a-hi a-ta ib-ri a-ta*
 6 *a-ta ù tù-ta-a : a-šé-er*
 7 *lá-qé-ep i-na ší-a-ri-im ù*
 8 *ša-am-šu-wi-im ki-ma ša a-na ra-mì-ni-/kà*
 9 *ù i-a-tim tù-uš-ta-ba-ru-ú-/ni*
 10 *[ih-d]a-ma : a-na ma-lá na-áš-pé-er-/tí-ni*
 11 *[ša a-n]a šé-er la-qé-pí-im*
 12 *[ù]^de-šu-ba-ni ni-iš-pu-ra-ni*
 13 *i-na ša-ha-at lá-qé-pí-im*
 14 *[i]-zi-za-ma : ih-da-ma i-na*
 15 *[pá]-ni-im-ma pu-[ù]h[?]-ri-im*
 16 *[ta-e]-ra-ma : a-lam₅^{ki} mu-ùh-ra-/ma*
 17 *[a-na] ma-lá ša na-r[u-q]í-im ki-ma*
 Lo.e. *[a-wa-t]um ša a-lim^{ki} [da-a]-a-ni-/ma*
 19 *[tup-pu-um] GÁN^{am₅} ú-ku-ša-ni*
 Rev. *[a-na a-l]im^{ki} t[a-e]-ra-ma*
 21 *[tup-p]á-am ša dí-in a-lim^{ki}*
 22 *[le]-qé-a-nim-ma ša ki-ma ší-ma-at*
 23 *[š]a-lim-a-šùr ša a-lim^{ki} ra-bi-ša-/ni-ma*
 24 *tup-pu-um «ša ša-lim»*
 25 *ša šál-ma-a-[šùr] ša ba-áb né-bi-ri-šu*
 26 *a-wa-sú i[q-b]i₄-[ú]-ma tup-pu-um*
 27 *a-na i-li-a DUMU e-lá-lí pá-aq-du-/ni*
 28 *tup-pu-um šu-ut i-[mu-tù-n]i*
 29 *tup-pá-[am] ša dí-in a-lim^{ki} le-qé-a-nim-ma*
 30 *ša ki-ma tup-pu-um ša a-na*
 31 *i-li-a pá-aq-du-ma i-mu-tù-/ni*
 32 *ù ma-ru ša-lim-a-šur a-na a-lim^{ki}*
 33 *iš-tí MAŠKIM i-lu-ku-ni-ni-ma*
 34 *a-na ší-ma-tí-šu-nu ša a-lim^{ki}*
 35 *e-ta-ú-ni tup-pá-am ša a-lim^{ki}*
 36 *ša ki-ma a-ni-a-tim le-qé-a-nim-/ma*
 37 *iš-tí tù-ta-a šé-bi-lá-ni-šu*
 38 *lá tù-ša-as-ha-ra-šu a-na-/kam*
 u.e. *iš-tí tù-ta-a na-am-gu₅-ra-ni*
 40 *i-tup-pí-im ša a-lim^{ki} šu-um-šu*
 41 *lu-up-ta-nim a-na um-ma-za*
 42 *qí-bi-ma i-hi-id-ma*
 Le.e. *i-ša-ha-at lá-qé-ep i-z[i-iz-ma tup-pá-am]*
 44 *[š]a a-lim^{ki} le-qé-a-nim ú né-[nu] a-wi-[il₅]*
 45 *gi-mì-li ni-ga-mì-il₅-kà i[š]-r[a-am a-na]*
 46 *qá-áb-li-kà tù-ta-a n[a-áš-a-kum]*

¹⁻⁵Thus (say) Enna-Suen and Ennum-Aššur to Ummaza and Tutaya; thus (says) Enna-Suen to Ummaza.

⁵You are my brother, you are my friend. ⁶⁻¹⁰You and Tutaya, morning and day, pay attention toward Laqep as yourself you would be persistent toward your own (business) and mine. ¹⁰⁻¹⁴Assist Laqepum in accordance with our letter that we sent to Laqepum and Ešu-bani. ¹⁴⁻¹⁶Also, take care to come back at the [fi]rst assembly-meeting, confront the City, and ¹⁷⁻²⁰t[urn] back [to the Ci]ty [concer]ning the joint-stock company since the [ord]ers of the City [are st]rict, and [the tablet] abroad has been mislaid. Then ²¹⁻²²obtain a tablet with a judgment of the City, ²²⁻²³stating that since the testament of [Š]alim-Aššur of the City lies around, ²⁴⁻²⁶the tablet of Šalim-A[ššur] in which he dictated his will at the point of death, ²⁶⁻²⁸and which tablet was entrusted to Iliya, son of Elali, that tablet will be invalid. ²⁹Obtain the tablet with the judgment of the City ³⁰⁻³¹stating that the tablet entrusted to Iliya, son of Elali, will be invalid, ³²⁻³³and that the sons of Šalim-Aššur will go to the City with the attorney and ³⁴⁻³⁵will deliberate on the basis of their testament (written) in the City. ³⁵⁻³⁶Get a tablet of the City with this content, and ³⁷send it with Tutaya. ³⁸Do not cause him any delay. ³⁸⁻³⁹Here, we have made an agreement with Tutaya. ⁴⁰⁻⁴¹Write his name on the tablet of the City. ⁴¹⁻⁴⁴Speak to Ummaza so as to take care to ass[ist] Laqep, [and] get the [tablet o]f the City. ⁴⁴⁻⁴⁶W[e] also are me[n] capable of granting favors. We will show you one for you: Tutaya i[s bringing you] a be[lt] for your waist.

I. 9: for the reading of this line, see Veenhof 2015, 258 n. 85.

A prejudiced attorney?

Attorneys are mentioned regularly in complex legal procedures that often arose after the death of a merchant. The hiring of an attorney was authorized after a formal appeal to the City assembly, but his wages were paid by a private individual, which indicates that he usually worked for one of the parties (Larsen 1976, 184-90; Michel 2000, 130; Hertel 2013, 93-8).

The attorney Ababa questions the two brothers concerning the silver they had to pay for the outstanding claims mentioned in their father's disputed last will (**#81**). Ali-ahum consents to pay the silver and then to go to Aššur. On the contrary, Ennam-Aššur, since he rejects the validity of this document, refuses the attorney's decision, thus provoking his anger. Ennam-Aššur also refuses to answer in court. Instead, he proposes to the attorney to come with him to Durhumit and collect his father's goods stored there before going to Aššur. Further texts indicate that the attorney finally went to Durhumit with Ennam-Aššur to collect Šalim-Aššur goods; this settlement might have been reached after going to court and swearing an oath.¹⁴ An inventory (**#82**) mentions containers with copper and tablets that have been sealed by Ennam-Aššur and the attorney and that might correspond to Šalim-Aššur's goods in Durhumit. This suggests that Ennam-Aššur has won his case. However, sometime in 1867 or early 1866, Ennam-Aššur is murdered in the country of Tawiniya. This puts an end to the dispute between the two brothers, which lasted two years, and the attorney is sent back to Aššur (AKT 6 294).

81. Record of private arbitration initiated by an attorney

Collection number: unknown

Excavation number: Kt 94/k 1171

Publication: AKT 6 264 [transliteration, translation].

Bibliography: Hertel 2013, 293-294 n. 943 (ll. 1-12 and 55-56)

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe), house of Šalim-Aššur excavated in 1994 in squares LII-LIII/124-125.

Obv.

¹⁴ Texts AKT 6 273 to AKT 6 275 for the travel to Durhumit and text AKT 6 293 for the oath sworn by the attorney and Ennam-Aššur. See also Larsen 2010, 32-5 and Hertel 2013, 293-5.

1 *ra-bi-šú-um : ša É šál-ma-a-/šùr*
2 *a-ba-ba iṣ-b[a-a]t-ni-a-tí-ma*
3 *a-na en-um-a-š[ù]r ù a-lá-hi-im*
4 *ù-ťá-hi-ni-a-tí-ma i-na ʔup-pí-/im*
5 *ša a-lim^{ki} : mì-ma šál-ma-a-šùr*
6 *[e]-zi-bu ù-[p]á-[ha-]ar-ma*
7 *a-[n]a a-lim^{ki} ù-b[a-a]l lu ba-áb-tám*
8 *a-bu-ku-nu e-z[i-í]b lu mì-ma e-zi-/bu*
9 *ba-a-nim : k[à-l]i-ma-ni-ma*
10 *i-ša-ha-[tí]-ku-[nu] lá-zi-iz-ma lu-šé-ru-/ku-nu-tí-ma*
11 *ù a-na a-lim^{ki} : lu ni-lik*
12 *tí-ma-li-ma áš-al-ku-nu-ma um-ma a-na-ku-ma*
13 *KÙ.BABBAR ma-lá i-li-bi-ku-nu a-bu-ku-nu*
14 *i-dí-ú šu-uq-lá-ma ù <a-na> a-lim^{ki} lu ni-lik*
15 *um-ma a-lá-hu-um-ma a-hu-kà-ma ba-a-am*
16 *ma-lá a-bi KÙ.BABBAR i-na ʔup-pí-im il₅-pu-tù-/ni*
17 *lá-áš-qúl-ma ù a-na a-lim^{ki} lu ni-lik*
18 *a-ta ki-ma KÙ.BABBAR ša-qá-li-im da-na-tim*
19 *ta-ta-na-pá-lá-ni ù KÙ.BABBAR ša-qá-lam*
20 *lá ta-mu-a lá tù-na-ha-ni ù a-šar*
21 *ba-áb-tum ša a-bi-kà i-ba-ší-ú*
22 *kà-li-ma-ni i-ša-ha-tí-ku-nu*
23 *lá-zi-iz-ma KÙ.BABBAR lu nu-ša-áš-qí-il₅-ma*
24 *a-na a-lim^{ki} lu ni-lik a-hu-kà*
25 *a-lá-hu-um KÙ.BABBAR ma-lá a-bu-šu*
26 *i-ʔup-pí-im il₅-pu-tù-šu KÙ.BABBAR*
Lo.e. *ù-kà-lam : a-ta KÙ.BABBAR ma-lá*
28 *a-[b]u-kà i-na ʔup-pí-im*
29 *i[l₅-p]u-tù-kà ša-qá-lam*
Rev. *[lá t]a-mu-a ù tù-na-ni*
31 *al-kam ba-a-am ma-lá a-bu-kà*
32 *i-na ʔup-pí-im il₅-pu-tù-kà*
33 *a-ma-lá dí-in a-lim^{ki} KÙ.BABBAR šu-qúl*
34 *a-na a-lim^{ki} lu ni-lik lá tù-na-ha-ni*
35 *ra-bi-ša-am a-ba-ba en-um-a-šùr*
36 *e-pu-ul us^l-kà-i-in a-ʔup-pí-im*
37 *ša a-lim^{ki} ú ra-bi-ší-im ša be-li-a*
38 *tí-ma-li-ma : ta-áš-a-lá-ni-ma*
39 *a-pu-ul-kà um-ma a-na-ku-ma*
40 *i-na mu-a-at a-bi-ni i-na dur₄-hu-/mì-it*
41 *a-na-ku lá-šu-a-ku a-lá-hu-um a-hi*
42 *i-na ri-iš a-bi-ni i-zi-iz*
43 *uš-ta-ki-lu-ni-ma a-bi ma-da-tim*
44 *lu il₅-pu-ta-ni mì-ma ša ʔup-pí-im*
45 *a-nim a-na a-bi-a lá ha-bu-lá-ku*
46 *ba-a-am a-na dur₄-h^{si}c-mì-it a-šar bu-lá-tù*
47 *(erasure) «bu-lá-tù» ša a-bi₄-ni i-ba-ší-/ú-ni*
48 *lu ni-lik-ma bu-lá-tí lu ni-il₅-qé-a-ma*
49 *a-ma-lá dí-<in> a-lim^{ki} iš-tí-kà a-na a-lim^{ki}*
50 *lu ni-lik-ma li-ma-am lu nu-ťá-ib-ma*
51 *a-na ší-ma-tim ša a-bi-ni ša a-lim^{ki}*

52 *iš-tí a-hi-a ù a-ha-tí-a lá-tù-[wa]*
 53 *šu-ma um-ma a-ta-ma a-dur₄-hi-mì-it*
 54 *lá a-lá-ak qí-bi-a-am-ma ba¹-a-am*
 55 *u₄-ma-ma a-na a-lim^{ki} lu nu-ší i-na dí-tim*
 56 *lá tù-ša-a-lá-ni a-na a-lá-ki-im*
 57 *qá-at-kà lá /am-ha-aš*
 58 *a-lá-hu-um ra-bi-ša-am a-ba-ba*
 Up.e. *e-pu-ul um-ma a-lá-hu-um-ma*
 60 *uš-kà-i-in a-ṭup-pì-im ša a-lim^{ki}*
 61 *ù ra-bi-ší-im ša be-li-a*
 62 *tí-ma-li-m[a] ta-áš-a-lá-ni-ni*
 63 *a-p[u-u]l-kà*
 Le.e. *um-ma a-na-ku-ma al-kam ba-a-am ma-lá a-bi KÙ.BABBAR i-na ṭup-pì-im*
 65 *il₅-pu-tù-ni lá-áš-qúl-ma ù a-na a-lim^{ki} lu ni-lik al-kam u₄-m[a-am]*
 66 *KÙ.BABBAR lá-áš-qúl-ma ú ba-a-ba-tim ša a-bi-ni lu-kà-li-im-ma*
 67 *i-na ša-ha-tí-a i-zi-iz-ma KÙ.BABBAR lu nu-ša-áš-qí-il₅-ma a-ma-lá ṭup-pì-im*
 68 *ša a-lim^{ki} a-na a-lim lu ni-lik*

1-4The attorney of Šalim-Aššur’s house, Ababa, summoned us (as arbitrators) and made us approach Ennum-Ašš[u]r and Ali-ahum (saying as follows): 4-7“According to the tablet of the City, I am to collect everything that Šalim-Aššur [l]eft behind and bri[ng] (it) t[o] the City. 7-9Come, s[h]ow me the outstanding merchandise your father l[ef]t – anything at all that he left behind; then 10-11Let me he[l] yo[u] so they release (it) to you, and we can go to the City.

12Yesterday, I questioned you (saying) as follows: 13-14‘Pay whatever silver your father has deposited on your account and let us go <to> the City.’ 15Your brother Ali-ahum (answered) as follows: ‘Come, 16-17let me pay whatever silver my father has recorded on the tablet, and let us go to the City.’ 18-20(But) you (Ennum-Aššur), instead of paying the silver, you keep answering me with harsh (words), and you refuse to pay the silver. 20-22Do not harass me, and show me where there is outstanding merchandise belonging to your father. 22-24Let me help you so we can get the silver paid, and then go to the City. 24-27Your brother Ali-ahum is showing me the silver, whatever silver his father recorded for him on the tablet, 27-30(but) you [(Ennum-Aššur) re]fuse to pay whatever silver your fa[t]her [reco]rded for you on the tablet, so you ha<r>ass me. 31-33Come along, and according to the judgment of the City, pay whatever silver your father recorded for you on the tablet. 34Let us go to the City, do not harass me!” 35-36Ennum-Aššur answered the attorney Ababa (as follows): 36-37“I submit to the tablet of the City and the attorney of my lord. 38-39Just yesterday you questioned me and I answered you as follows: 40-42‘I was not present at our father’s death in Durhumit, (but) my brother Ali-ahum was standing in the presence of my father. 43-45They apportioned (the estate), and my father wrote many things concerning me, but I do not owe anything to my father of what is in this tablet!’ 46-48Come, let us go to Durhumit. Wherever there is outstanding merchandise belonging to our father, let us take the outstanding merchandise, and 49-50let us go together with you to the City according to the judgment of the City, let us satisfy the eponym, and 51-52let me discuss with my brother and sister the testament of your father that (is in) the City. 53-54If you (say) as follows: ‘I will not go to Durhumit!’, then say (it) to me, and then come, 55-56let us depart today to the City. You shall not question me in court! 56-57I have not refused to go!”

58-59Ali-ahum answered the attorney Ababa; thus (said) Ali-ahum as follows: 60-61“I submit to the tablet of the City and the attorney of my lord. 62-64Just yesterday you questioned me, (and) I answered you as follows: 64-65‘Come along, let me pay whatever silver my father recorded on the tablet, and let us go to the City.’ 65-66Come, let me pay the silver to[day], and let me show (you) our father’s outstanding merchandise, 67-68so help me get the silver paid, and let us go to the City according to the tablet of the City.

82. Witnessed document recording the transfer of goods from a dead merchant

Collection number: unknown

Excavation number: Kt 94/k 1192

Publication: AKT 6 284 [transliteration, translation].

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe), house of Šalim-Aššur excavated in 1994 in squares LII-LIII/124-125.

Obv. 11 *i-lá-tim*
2 *ša URUDU ku-nu-ku*
3 *ša en-nam-a-šur*
4 *ù ra-bi₄-ší-im*
5 *6 ta-ma-lá-ku*
6 *ša ṭup-pé ku-nu-ku*
7 *ša en-nam-a-šur*
Lo.e. *a-dí-da*
9 *a-lá-hu-um*
Rev. *ù ra-bi-šú-um*
11 *ša a-na*
12 *e-na-ah-DINGIR*
13 *ni-ip-qí-du*
14 *nu-šé-ší : IGI a-šur-ba-ni*
15 *DUMU ku-ta-a*
16 *IGI be-lúm-ba-ni*
Up.e. *DUMU a-šur-be-el-a-wa-/tim*

¹⁻⁴11 containers of copper under the seals of Ennam-Aššur and the attorney, ⁵⁻¹⁰6 boxes of tablets under the seals of Ennam-Aššur, Adida, Ali-ahum and the attorney, ¹¹⁻¹⁴which we entrusted to Enah-ili – we took out.

¹⁴⁻¹⁷In the presence of Aššur-bani, son of Kutaya, of Belum-bani, son of Aššur-bel-awatim.

A SHADY ATTORNEY

When Buzazu seized Puzur-Aššur's goods, the investors and heirs of the deceased probably appealed to the City assembly of Aššur, which allowed them to hire an attorney to defend their interests (**#76-78**). Also, in the dispute opposing the two sons of Šalim-Aššur after their father's death, the younger, Ali-ahum, together with some former business partners of his father, hires the attorney Ababa to settle the succession to his advantage (**#79-82**; Larsen 1976, 183-9; Hertel 2013, 92-8). The role of the attorney is particularly well documented by the controversy between Puzur-Ištar and Aššur-malik, first, and then between Puzur-Ištar and his attorney in a second stage. The origin of this dispute, obvious for the protagonists, is not reported. But the course of the case and the intervention of the attorney are reported by various types of legal texts. A letter mentioning the hiring of the attorney completes the dossier.

Imdi-ilum, who spent part of his life in Anatolia, returned to Aššur to take over the family business. His son Puzur-Ištar represented his father's interests at Kaneš. With his father, he started a legal case against Aššur-malik and his business partner Itur-ili.¹⁵ Aššur-malik, son of Ali-ahum and Šimat-Aššur, usually lived at Kaneš with his father and his brother Aššur-bel-šadue. In collaboration with Itur-ili or Aššur-ṭab, he arranged the sale of merchandise exported from Aššur and sent back to Aššur their proceeds in silver. According to **#83**, Imdi-ilum hires for a salary Laliya, an attorney, in order to defend his family business in his lawsuit against Aššur-malik. At Nihriya, a town located on the route for the

¹⁵ The case opposing Puzur-Ištar to Itur-ili is reported by the fragmentary text Prag I 524. This document also mentions Aššur-ṭab, presumably the second attorney mentioned in this letter and who receives the same salary as Laliya.

Assyrian caravans to Anatolia, in the bend of the Euphrates, Laliya stops Aššur-malik on his journey to Aššur and obliges him to come back to Kaneš in order to settle his dispute with Imdi-ilum's son, Puzur-lštar. During various interrogations, Laliya reproaches Aššur-malik for having refused to comply with the judgment of the City assembly. For his part, Aššur-malik complains that this was not read to him according to the rules (#84-86). Finally, Laliya turns against his employer's son, who accuses him of having failed to perform his duties and subsequently cancels his contracts (#87 and #88).

Hiring an attorney

When a dispute in Kaneš could not be solved through private mediation, the concerned parties could appeal to the Aššur authorities who, on the basis of the available documents and witness statements, examined the case. The City assembly could then allow the complainant to hire an attorney to conduct investigations and to defend his interest. A private contract was then drawn up on the spot, at Aššur, between the complainant and his attorney, fixing the latter's wages as a temporary employee. For example, Imdi-ilum hired Laliya as attorney in Aššur. In a letter to his son (#83), he reminds him of the amount of the wages promised to Laliya: 50 shekels* of silver (about 420 grams). Half of this amount has already been paid, at the time of the hiring. The total payment of the wages depends on the success resulting from the investigation. If the attorney gave up the case, he then had to reimburse the amount already received. In the above situation, Laliya has received tin for his travel expenses for travel between Aššur and Kaneš, and a monthly ration of 2 shekels* of silver and 30 liters of wheat (#87).

83. Letter giving the wages of attorneys

Collection number: AO 7073

Publication: TC 1 24 [copie]; CDLI P357359 [photo, transliteration]

Edition: Ichisar 1981, 45-248 [transliteration, translation]

Bibliography: Larsen 1976, 180, 184-185 (ll. 1-12, 21-26 and 41-51); Michel 2000, 130-1 no. 86 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *um-ma im-dí-lúm-ma : a-na puzur₄-ištar*
 2 *a-šūr-DU₁₀ ù la-li-a qí-bi-ma*
 3 *a-na puzur₄-ištar qí-bi-ma*
 4 *5/6 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR ig-ru-šu ša lá-li-a*
 5 *ša ra-bi₄-šú-tí-šu ŠÀ.BA 1/3 ma-na 5 GÍN*
 6 *KÙ.BABBAR il₅-qé : ší-tí KÙ.BABBAR 1/3 ma-na 5 GÍN*
 7 *KÙ.BABBAR : a-wa-at-ni i-kà-ša-ad-ma*
 8 *i-tù-wa-ri-šu KÙ.BABBAR i-lá-qé šu-ma*
 9 *té-er-tí e-tí-zi-ib-ma : a-šar ša-ni-um*
 10 *i-ta-lá-ak KÙ.BABBAR ša il₅-qé-ú : ú-ta-ar*
 11 *i-na ṭup-pí-šu ša ku-nu-ki-šu : a-ni-a-tum*
 12 *lá-áp-ta : 5/6 ma-na 5 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR*
 13 *ig-[ru-šu] ša a-šūr-DU₁₀ ša ra-bi₄-šú-tí-šu*
 14 *[KÙ.BABBAR] ig-ri-šu ša-bu : a-[na]*
 15 *[a-wa-t]im : i-kà-ša-ad-ma*
 16 *[a-šūr-DU₁₀] DUMU at-ta-a-a¹*
 17 *[a-wa-at-ni] : i-kà-ša-ad šu-ma*
 18 *[té-er-tí e-tí-zi-ib]-ma : a-šar ša-ni-um*
 19 *[i-ta-lá-ak KÙ].BABBAR ša il₅-qé-ú*
 20 *[ú-ta-ar i]-na ṭup-pì-šu ša ku-nu-ki-šu*
 21 *[a-ni-a-tum lá]-áp-ta : 2 ma-na AN.NA*

Lo.e. [ù x ma]-na ni-ga-li ga-mar-šu^l(KU)-nu
 23 [ša] iš-tù a-lim^{ki} : a-dí kà-né-eš¹⁵^{ki}
 24 kà-ša-dí-šu-nu a-na qá-tí-šu-nu
 Rev. a-dí-in-šu-nu-tí-ma : gám-mar-šu-nu ša ha-ra-nim
 26 ša-bu-ú : mì-ma gám-ra-am ša ha-ra-nim
 27 lá e-ri-šu-kà : a-pu-tum ih-da-ma
 28 ki-ma e-ru-bu-ni-ni : ʔup-pè-e-a
 29 na-áš-pé-ra-tí-a ší-ta-me-a-ma
 30 ma-lá té-er-tí-a ší-bi₄-ku-nu ʔup-pí-ku-nu
 31 [d]a-ni-na-ma : a-wa-at-ku-nu
 32 ku-uš-da : ki-ma i-na lá i-dim
 33 ep-ša-tí-ni-ma ša-ag-ša-tí-ni li-bi₄
 34 da-ni-ša-ma : im-ta-ra-aš : ki-ma
 35 a-šùr-DU₁₀ ù lá-li-a : e-ru-bu-ni-ni
 36 ša-ri-a-ma : a-na KÙ.BABBAR ša ú-sà-nim
 37 10 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR ù 1 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR a-ha-ma
 38 ša a-be-a-lim a-dí-nu-šu-ni ih-da-ma
 39 KÙ.BABBAR ú-sà-nam ša-áš-qí-lá-[šu]-ma
 40 KÙ.BABBAR le-qé-a : ú-sà-nam : a-na a-wa-/tim
 41 tù-ša-sà-ha-ni-šu : a-na-lí a-na-kam
 42 i-na pá-ni-a e-bu-ut-ma ú ʔup-pá-am
 43 ša a-lim^{ki} a-na ta-ú-ri-šu
 44 al-qé-ma KÙ.BABBAR 1/2 ma-na : ig-ri
 45 ší-ip-re-e ag-mur-ma ší-ip-ru
 46 ik-šu-du-šu-ma : šu-ut i-na pá-né-e
 47 ší-ip-ri : e-ta-ba-at-ma a-mì-ša-am
 48 i-tal-kam : a-pu-tum ih-da-ma : a-na-lí
 Up.e. [ša-á]b-ta-ma l[u-q]ú-tí ša li-bi₄-šu
 50 [lu] ša bi₄-lá-tí-šú lu gám-ri : ša a-na
 51 ta-ú-ri-šu áš-pu-ru-š[u-n]i šá-áš-qí-lá
 52 lá ta-ga-mì-lá-šu
 Le.e. a-šu-mì a-wa-tim ša a-šùr-UTU^š DUMU qá-a-tim [2 1/2 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR]
 54 a-dí-šu-ma : i-la-ak-ma i-na a-lim^{ki} 2 ma-na KÙ.GI iš-ti [um-me-a-ni-šu]
 55 i-lá-pá-ta-ni-ma ù a-šùr-UTU^š i-tù-ra-ma 2 1/2 ma-na KÙ.[BABBAR]
 56 [ú]-ra-da-šu-um ša 2 ma-na KÙ.GI ʔup-pu-šu ih-ri-im-ma
 57 [a]-ma-kam i-ba-ší ù šu-ut ša 2 1/2 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR

¹⁻³Thus (says) Imdi-ilum: say to Puzur-Ištar, Aššur-ṭab and Laliya. Say to Puzur-Ištar.

⁴⁻⁶5/6 mina* of silver are the wages of Laliya for his service as attorney. He received 1/3 mina* 5 shekels* of silver thereof. ⁶⁻⁸The remaining silver – 1/3 mina* 5 shekels* – he will receive the silver upon his return when he wins our case. ⁸⁻¹⁰If he disregards my instructions and goes somewhere else he will have to return the silver he received. ¹¹⁻¹²This has been written down on his tablet with his seal. ¹²⁻¹³5/6 mina* of silver are the wa[ges] of Aššur-ṭab for his service as attorney. ¹⁴⁻¹⁵He is satisfied with the [silver], his wages. He will have to win the [case]. ¹⁶⁻¹⁷[Aššur-ṭab], son of Attaya, will have to win [our case]. ¹⁷⁻²⁰[If he disregards my instructions] and [goes] somewhere else [he will have to return the si]lver he received. ²⁰⁻²¹[This has been] written down on his tablet with his seal.

²¹⁻²⁵I gave them 2 minas* of tin [and x] minas* in sickles (in payment for) their travel expenses from the City to Kaneš, ²⁵⁻²⁷so that they are satisfied concerning their travel expenses, they should not ask for anything else for their travel expenses. ²⁷⁻²⁹It's urgent! Take care to listen to my letters and messages as soon as they arrive, and ³⁰⁻³²according to my instructions, confirm your witnesses and your documents, and win your case. ³²⁻³⁴My heart is truly broken over the fact that you acted inexplicably and (nearly) killed me! ³⁴⁻³⁵When Aššur-ṭab and Laliya have arrived, begin (to pay).

³⁶⁻⁴⁰As for the silver of Usanum – 10 minas* of silver as well as the 1 mina* of silver that I put at his disposal – take care to make Usanum pay the silver, and take the silver. ⁴⁰⁻⁴¹For the case you will have Usanum transferred.

⁴¹⁻⁴⁴Here, Annali has fled from me and I obtained a tablet of the City to effect his return, ⁴⁴⁻⁴⁵and I spent 1/2 mina* of silver for the wages of the messengers. ⁴⁵⁻⁴⁸But when the messengers caught up with him, he also fled from the messengers, and he went over there (where you are)! ⁴⁸⁻⁵¹It's urgent! Take care to seize Annali and make him pay for the merchandise at his disposal, his expenses for porters and the expenses I incurred by writing to order his forced return! ⁵²Do not grant him a favor!

⁵³⁻⁵⁵Concerning the case of Aššur-Šamši, son of Qayyatum, I gave him [5 1/2 minas* of silver], and he will leave, and in the City he will record me for 2 minas* of gold [with his investors]. ⁵⁵⁻⁵⁶Then Aššur-Šamši will return and I will add for him 2 1/2 minas* of silver. ⁵⁶⁻⁵⁷As for the 2 minas* of gold, he certified his tablet and it is deposited there, together with the one concerning the 2 1/2 minas* of silver.

The attorney and legal procedures

Appointed by decision of the City assembly, the attorney would bring with him to Anatolia the official text drafted in this regard; the expression “attorney of my Lord (the King)” recalls his official status (#84-85). His prerogative allows him to force Aššur-malik to return to Kaneš to face his opponent and answer his accusations (Balkan 1992). Aššur-malik takes note of the decisions of the Aššur assembly and returns to Kaneš. There, considering that the legal procedures had not been respected, he asks the attorney to read aloud the decision of the Aššur assembly before the *kārum** Kaneš, and not in private.

For his part, the attorney blames Aššur-malik for the poor grace with which he complies with his instructions, thus delaying the settlement of the case (#86). The interrogation records presented here are not linked to the dispute for which the attorney was appointed, but they testify to the poor management of the procedure by the latter, accused not only of formal defect, but also of having violated the City's legislation even though he is one of its executors (#87).

84. A merchant is called back to Kaneš to hear to a decision of the City assembly

Collection number: unknown

Excavation number: Kt c/k 246

Publication: Balkan 1992, 27 [transliteration, translation].

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 132 no. 87 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

- 1 *a-šūr-ma-lik puzur₂-ištar*
- 2 *e-pu-ul um-ma a-šūr-ma-lik-ma*
- 3 *a-na puzur₂-ištar-ma*
- 4 *ha-ra-ni a-na a-lim^{ki}-ma*
- 5 *ra-bi₄-iš-kà i-na ni-ih-ri-a*
- 6 *ú-ta-e-ra-<ni> um-ma ra-bi₄-iš-kà-ma*
- 7 *a-ma-lá ṭup-pì-im*
- 8 *ša a-lim^{ki} a-na [kà]-né-eš*
- 9 *tù-ur-ma a-ta ù i-tur₄-DINGIR*
- 10 *a-wa-tám a-na puzur₂-ištar*
- 11 *dí-na-a a-na ṭup-pì-im*
- 12 *ša a-lim^{ki} ù[!] (erasure) ra-bi-ší-im*
- 13 *ša be-li-a áp-lá-ah-ma*
- 14 *a-tù-ra-am ba-am*

15 *ṭup-pá-am ša a-lim^{ki}*
 16 *ù be-li-a IGI kà-ri-im*
 17 *ša-áš-me-e-ma (erasure) a-ma-lá ra-bi₄-iṣ-kà*
 18 *i-na ni-ih-ri-a ší-be-e*
 19 *[i]š-ku-na-ni le-pu-uš*
 20 *a-na-ku ša-zu-úz-tí a-šùr-DU₁₀*
 21 *a-ma-lá dí-in kà-ri-im*
 22 *kà-né-eš ša-he-er GAL ú-kà-al*
 23 *a-ta a-na dí-in*
 24 *kà-ri-im kà-né-eš ša-he-er GAL*
 25 *ga-am-ri-i^l(im) <ša> ší-be-e*
 26 *ta-áš-ta-na-kà-<na>-am*

¹⁻³Aššur-malik answered Puzur-Ištar; thus (said) Aššur-malik to Puzur-Ištar: ⁴⁻⁶“When I was on my way to the City, your attorney made me return to Nihriya (saying) as follows: ⁷⁻¹¹‘According to the tablet of the City, return to Kaneš, and you and Itur-ili must answer Puzur-Ištar in court.’ ¹¹⁻¹⁴I respected the tablet of the City and the attorney of my lord, and I returned (to Kaneš). ¹⁴⁻¹⁷Come, let me hear the tablet of the City and my lord before the *kārum**, and ¹⁷⁻¹⁹I will act in accordance with the (statements of) the witnesses that your attorney brought against me in Nihriya. ²⁰⁻²²As for me, I remain the agent of Aššur-ṭab according to the judgment of the *kārum** Kaneš plenary (assembly). ²³⁻²⁶(But) you, for the (final) judgment of the *kārum** Kaneš plenary (assembly) you have repeatedly established witnesses against me.”

85. Interrogation record concerning the procedure about of an official tablet

Collection number: unknown

Excavation number: Kt c/k 283

Publication: Balkan 1992, 26-27 [transliteration, translation]¹⁶

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 132 no. 88 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *um-ma a-šùr-ma-lik-ma*
 2 *uš-kà-in a-na ṭup-pì-im*
 3 *ša a-lim^{ki} ù ra-bi₄-ší-im*
 4 *ša be-li-a a-šùr-ma-lik*
 5 *lá-li-a ra-bi₄-ša-am*
 6 *ù puzur₂-ištar iš-a-al*
 7 *um-ma a-šùr-ma-lik-ma*
 8 *a-na la-li-a ra-bi₄-ší-ma*
 9 *ha-ra-ni a-na a-lim^{ki}-ma*
 10 *i-na ni-ih-ri-a*
 11 *um-ma a-ta-ma i-na*
 12 *ṭup-pì-im ša a-lim^{ki}!*
 Lo.e. *i-tur₄-DINGIR ù a-ta*
 14 *a-wa-tám i-kà-né-eš*
 15 *a-na puzur₂-ištar*
 Rev. *ta-ta-na-du-ur-ma*
 17 *a-ma-lá ṭup-pì-im ša a-lim^{ki}*
 18 *a-wa-tám a-na puzur₂-ištar*
 19 *dí-na a-na ṭup-pì-im*

¹⁶ This tablet presents many erasures on lines 13, 21-22, 30 and 33.

20 *ša a-lim^{ki} ù ra-bi₄-ší-im*
 21 *ša be-li-a áp-lá-ah-ma*
 22 *a-tù-ra-am ba-a-am*
 23 *ṭup-pá-am ša a-lim^{ki} IGI kà-ri-im*
 24 *ša-áš-me-e-ma a-ma-lá*
 25 *ṭup-pì-im ša a-lim^{ki}*
 26 *lu a-na-ku ù <lu> i-tur₄-DINGIR*
 27 *a-na puzur₂-ištar a-wa-tám*
 28 *ni-da-an lu a-na-ku*
 Up.e. *a-pu-tí-a-ma*
 30 *a-da-an ṭup-pá-am*
 31 *ša a-lim^{ki} IGI kà-ri-im*
 le.e. *ša-áš-me-e-ma a-ma-lá ṭup-pì-im a-wa-tám*
 33 *lá-dí-in ha-ra-ni a-na a-lim^{ki}*
 34 *lá ta-kà-li-e ší-bu-tum*

¹⁻⁴Aššur-malik (declared) as follows: “I submit to the tablet of the City and of the attorney of my lord.”
⁴⁻⁸Aššur-malik questioned Laliya, the attorney, and Puzur-Ištar; thus (said) Aššur-malik to Laliya, the attorney: ⁹⁻¹¹“When I was on my way to the City, you (spoke to me) as follows at Nihriya: ¹¹⁻¹³‘In accordance with the tablet of the City, Itur-ili and you – ¹⁴⁻¹⁶you expressed repeatedly your worries to Puzur-Ištar in Kaneš concerning the tablet of the City – ¹⁷⁻¹⁹so according to the tablet of the City, give a statement to Puzur-Ištar.’ ¹⁹⁻²²I respected the tablet of the City and the attorney of my lord, and I returned (to Kaneš). ²²⁻²⁴Come, have me hear the tablet of the City and my lord before the *kārum**, and ²⁴⁻²⁸according to the tablet of the City, either I and Itur-ili will give a statement to Puzur-Ištar, ²⁸⁻³⁰or I will give it on my own. ³⁰⁻³²Let me hear the tablet of the City before the *kārum**, so that ³²⁻³³in accordance with the tablet, I will give a statement. ³³⁻³⁴Do not prevent my journey to the City.” ³⁴This is a testimony.

86. Interrogation record by the attorney concerning a tablet of the City

Collection number: unknown

Excavation number: Kt c/k 581

Publication: Balkan 1992, 32-5 [transliteration, translation].

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 133 no. 89 [translation, commentary]. See also Michel 2000, 133-4 no. 90 for the translation of the duplicate Kt c/k 278, edited by Balkan 1992, 28.

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *lá-li-a ra-bi-šú-um a-šùr-ma-lik*
 2 *DUMU a-lá-hi-im iš-a-al*
 3 *um-ma lá-li-a-ma a-na a-šùr-ma-lik-ma*
 4 *a-dí ma-la ù šé-ni-šu ṭup-pè-e*
 5 *ša a-lim^{ki} ša a-ni-iš-a-ni*
 6 *IGI kà-ri-im kà-né-eš₁₅ ta-áš-me-e*
 7 *a-ta ṭup-pè-e ša a-lim^{ki}*
 8 *ša IGI kà-ri-im kà-né-eš₁₅*
 9 *ta-áš-me-ú ta-tí-ki-ir um-ma a-ta-ma*
 10 *ṭup-pè-e ša a-lim^{ki} IGI kà-ri-im*
 11 *kà-né-eš₁₅ ú-lá áš-<me>-e a-ta*
 12 *tù-ša-a-lá-ni ša ṭup-pè-e*
 13 *ša a-lim^{ki} <ša> a-ni-iš-a-ni ba-a-[am]*
 14 *ṭup-pè-e ša a-lim^{ki} IGI kà-ri-im*
 15 *ší-li-iš-ma ší-me-e ù ší-be-e*

16 *lá ta-áš-ta-na-kà-<na>-am*
 17 *uš-kà-in a-na ʔup-pì-im*
 18 *ša a-lim^{ki} ù ra-bi-šì-im*
 19 *ša be-li-a a-šùr-ma-lik*
 20 *la-li-a ra-bi₄-ša-am e-pu-ul*
 21 *kà-ru-um dí-nam i-dí-in-ma*
 22 *i-na ša-ni-im u₄-mì-im*
 23 *ša ha-mu-uš-tim ʔup-pá-am*
 24 *ša a-lim^{ki} IGI kà-ri-im*
 Lo.e. *tù-ša-áš-me-e-ma a-ma-lá*
 26 *ʔup-pì-im ša a-lim^{ki} e-pá-áš*
 Rev. *i-na ša-ni-im u₄-mì-im*
 28 *ša ha-mu-uš-tim as-ku-ta-ku-ma*
 29 *IGI šé-na um-ma a-na-ku-ma ba-a-am*
 30 *ʔup-pá-am ša a-lim^{ki} IGI kà-ri-im*
 31 *ša-áš-me-e-ma a-ma-lá ʔup-pì-im*
 32 *ša a-lim^{ki} le-pu-uš a-ta*
 33 *sí-ki tù-kà-al ù a-na kà-ri-im*
 34 *wa-šu-ri lá ta-mu-a um-ma a-ta-ma*
 35 *al-kà-am i-dí-tí-im lá-áš-al-kà*
 36 *bé-el a-wa-tí-a tù-ki-iš-(erasure)-ma i-dí-tí-im*
 37 *ta-áš-ta-li ša ʔup-pá-am ša a-lim^{ki}*
 38 *lá-áš-me-ú i-na ʔup-pì-im ta-al-t[a-áp-tám]*
 39 *um-ma a-ta-ma a-dí ma-lá ù šé-ni-šu*
 40 *ʔup-pá-am ša a-lim^{ki} ta-áš-me-e*
 41 *ša ʔup-pá-am ša a-lim^{ki} lá-áš-me-ú*
 42 *ba-a-am u₄-ma-ma ʔup-pá-am ša a-lim^{ki}*
 43 *IGI kà-ri-im ša-áš-me-e-ma a-ma-lá*
 44 *ʔup-pì-im ša a-lim^{ki} ù be-li-a*
 45 *le-pu-uš ra-bi₄-ša-tí a-ta be-el (erasure)*
 46 *a-wa-tí-a lá tù-kà-áš-ma a-pu-tí-kà*
 47 *lá ta-áš-té-né-e-li*
 48 *a-na a-wa-tim a-ni-a-tim*
 49 *kà-ru-um kà-né-eš₁₅ i-dí-ni-a-tí-ma*
 50 *IGI GÌ[R] ša a-šùr*
 51 *ší-[b]u-tí-ni ni-dí-in*
 52 *IGI i-ku-pì-a DUMU pì-lá-ah-a-šur*
 Up.e. *IGI ^dIM-du-ku-ul*
 54 *DUMU dan-a-šùr*
 Le.e. *IGI i-dí-a-bi₄-im DUMU puzur₄-ištar*

¹⁻³Laliya, the attorney, questioned Aššur-malik, son of Ali-ahum; thus (said) Laliya to Aššur-malik: ⁴⁻
⁶“Already once or twice, before the *kārum** Kaneš, you heard the tablets of the City that I brought here. ⁷⁻⁹(But) you, you denied hearing the tablets of the City before the *kārum** Kaneš, (saying) as follows: ¹⁰⁻¹¹‘I did not hear to the tablets of the City before the *kārum** Kaneš.’ ¹¹⁻¹³You, you even asked me if I had brought the tablets of the City here. ¹³⁻¹⁶Come, for the third time, hear to the tablets of the City before the *kārum** Kaneš, and stop bringing witnesses against me!”
¹⁷⁻²⁰“I submit to the tablet of the City and of the attorney of my lord,” Aššur-malik answered Laliya, the attorney, ²¹⁻²⁵“(After) the *kārum** rendered (its) judgment, on the second day of the week, you will let me hear the tablet of the City before the *kārum**, ²⁵⁻²⁶so that I will act in accordance with the tablet of the City. ²⁷⁻²⁸On this second day of the week, I remained silent, but ²⁹⁻³¹it was before two (witnesses

that) I (said) as follows: ‘Come, let me hear the tablet of the City before the *kārum**, so that ³¹⁻³²I may act in accordance with the tablet of the City.’ ³²⁻³⁴(But) you, you hold my hem and refuse to release me to the *kārum**! You (said) as follows: ³⁵‘Come so that I may question you in court.’ ³⁶⁻³⁷You dismissed my adversary, then you questioned me in court. ³⁷⁻³⁸You re[corded] on a tablet the fact that I did not hear the tablet of the City (of Aššur, and) ³⁹⁻⁴⁰you (also declared) as follows: ‘Did you not hear already once or twice the tablet of the City?’ ⁴¹Concerning the fact that I have not yet heard the tablet of the City, ⁴²⁻⁴⁵come today, let me hear the tablet of the City before the *kārum**, so I may act in accordance with the tablet of the City and of my lord. ⁴⁵⁻⁴⁷You are the attorney, (so act as such)! Do not dismiss my adversary, and stop questioning me on your own!”
⁴⁸⁻⁴⁹For these proceedings, the *kārum** Kaneš appointed us (as factual witnesses) and ⁵⁰⁻⁵¹we have given our testimony before Aššur’s swo[r]d. ⁵²⁻⁵⁵In the presence of Ikuppiya, son of Pilah-Aššur, of Adad-dugul, son of Dan-Aššur, of Iddin-abum, son of Puzur-Ištar.

ll. 36 and 46: For the meaning of *nakāšum* and *ukkušum* see Veenhof 2015, 220-5.

A trial against one’s own attorney

According to a fragmentary interrogation record and to a sworn agreement (**#87 and #88**), Puzur-Ištar and his attorney had a falling-out and the case ended in a particularly disastrous way. Disavowed by his employer’s opponent, Laliya also comes into conflict with his employer’s son, who accuses him of having failed to fulfill his contract. Puzur-Ištar stops providing a monthly ration to his attorney and cancels his contract with him.

87. A merchant confronts his attorney, who has been negligent

Collection number: VAT 9261

Publication: VS 26 118 [copy]; CDLI P333934 [photo, transliteration]

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 134-5 no. 91 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. (Broken lines)

- 1' [x]-šu iš-tí be-e[l[?] a-wa-tim x x x]
 2' u₄-ma-am : um-ma a-ta-[ma x x x]
 3' a-na-ku : ú-lá ak-lá-kà : na-[á]š-pè-er-[tám]
 4' ša ku-nu-ki-a lá-dí-na-kum [ù ša ki-/ma]
 5' a-bi-a na-áš-pé-er^l(NI)-tám
 6' li-dí-[i]n-kum ša ki-ma a-wa-[a]t
 7' im-dí-lim kà-áš-da-at-ni a-na É a-bi-a
 8' e-ra-ba-am : lá ta-mu-a ù tù-ni-šu-ma
 9' 2 GÍN.TA KÙ.BABBAR ù 1 BANEŠ.TA G[IG] a-na
 10' ú-ku-ul-tí-kà i-na ITI.1.KAM^{im} a-[ta-na-dí]-na-/ku]m
 11' ša ni-iš a-lim^{ki} ù ru-ba-im ta-m[u]-/ú
 12' kà-i-lá ki-ma sí-ki-i
 13' ú-kà-lu a-na a-lim^{ki} ú be-lí-a a-wa^l(UD)-tí
 14' bi-lá : lá-li-a puzur₄-ištar e-pu-ul
 15' um-ma lá-li-a-ma a-na puzur₄-ištar
 16' a[?]-bu-kà im-dí-lúm [i-na] a-lim^{ki}...]

(Broken lines)

Rev. (Broken lines)

- 1'' ú-ha-ri-m[u ...]
 2'' ša-na-at i-na [...]

3" *i-ba-ší-ú : a-na ku-a-tí [...]*
 4" *um-ma a-na-ku-ma ṭup-pé-e da-[nu-tim]*
 5" *ša a-ma-lá dí-in₄ a-lim^{ki} i-ba-[ší-ú]*
 6" *ú-ha-ri-mu : ku-un-kà-šú-nu-[tí]*
 7" *a-šé-er : im-dí-lim a-bi-kà : [PN₁]*
 8" *lu-bi-il₅ : ší-lá-tám : a-na ku-[a-tí]*
 9" *ù im-dí-lim a-bi-kà lá tù-šar-ša-a-ni*
 10" *a-bu-kà : ṭup-pá-am dan-nam ša ku-nu-ki-a*
 11" *ú-kà-al : ki-ma i-a-tí lá ta-qí-pá-ni*
 12" *a-na DU[MU] um-me-a-ni ke-nim : a-ta*
 13" *mu-ta-tám ù a-na-ku mu-ta-tám*
 14" *[lu] ni-ik-nu-uk-ma lu ni-ip-qí-id-ma*
 15" *[x]-na-tim : a-bi-kà lu-kà-il₅-ma*
 16" *[ší]-lá-tám : lá tù-šar-šé-e-[n]i*
 17" *[na-aš-p]é-er-tám ša a-bi-kà : a- [...]*
 18" *[...š]a²-kà-nim-ma [x ...]*
 19" *[...] an [...]*
 (lines broken)

Le.e.1^{III} [...] -a DUMU DINGIR-e-mu-qí

¹[...] with the ad[versary? ...]. ²Today, you (say) as follo[ws : ³"...] me, I did not detain you. ³-⁶Let me give you a letter sealed by me, [also let the representative] of my father give you a letter ⁶-⁷stating that the case of Imdi-ilum has been won." ⁷-⁸(In fact), you refuse to enter my father's house, and you cheated him. ⁹-¹⁰Also, every month I [give] you 2 shekels* of silver and 30 liters of wheat for your food. ¹¹-¹⁴Keep in mind what has been sworn under an oath by the City and the king. Bring my case to the City and to my lord, since he is holding my hem.

¹⁴-¹⁵Laliya answered Puzur-Ištar; thus (said) Laliya to Puzur-Ištar: ¹⁶"Your father, Imdi-ilum, [in] the City [...]

¹they have certifi[ed...] ²year in [...] ³are available. For you [...] ⁴I (said) as follows: ⁴-⁶"They have certified the authorita[tive] tablets, which, in accordance with the judgment of the City, should be avai[lable]. ⁶-⁸Seal the[m so that PN] may bring (them) to your father Imdi-ilum. ⁸-⁹Do not make me commit an offense against yo[u] and your father Imdi-ilum. ¹⁰-¹¹Your father holds an authoritative tablet with my seal. ¹¹-¹⁵Since you would not grant me a credit, let us seal (the merchandise), you one half, I the other half, and let us entrust (it) to an affiliated trader so that your father may offer (it for sale). ¹⁶You should not make me commit an offense! ¹⁷-¹⁸[A messa]ge of your father [...] ¹["...] son of Ili-emuqi.

88. Sworn testimony. The attorney has been paid but did not win the case

Collection number: NBC 6602

Publication: BIN 6 219 [copy].

Edition: Ichisar 1981, 141-142 [transliteration, translation]

Bibliography: Larsen 1976, 185-6 n. 74-75 (ll. 1-12 and 11'-18'); Michel 2000, 135 no. 92 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *puzur₄-ištar DUMU im-dí-lim : lá-li-a*
 2 *ra-bi-ša-am iš-al um-ma*
 3 *puzur₄-ištar-ma a-na lá-li-a*
 4 *ra-bi-ší-im ša im-dí-lim-ma*
 5 *im-dí-lúm : iš-tù a-lim^{ki} a-na*

6 *ra-bi-šú-tim a-na a-wa-tí-šu*
 7 *kà-ša-dim e-gu₅-ra-a-kà : ù ʔup-pá-am*
 8 *ša a-lim^{ki} : ta-ni-i[š-a]m ša i-na*
 9 *ša-ha-tí-a : ta-za-zu-ma : a-wa-at im-dí-lim*
 10 *ta-kà-šu-[d]u : a-ta ki-ma a-wa-tí-ni*
 11 *kà-ša-dim : t[é]-ta-na-š[l]-a-ni ú sí-ki-i*
 12 *tù-uk-ta-na-al ša mì-ma*
 13 *lá ha-bu-lá-ku-ni ù ʔup-pé-e*
 14 *té-ta-na-p[á]-ša-ni ša [n]a-pá-áš-tí*
 15 *a-BI [x x] x-tí ša-ak-na-at-ni*
 16 *ʔup-pí-[x x x] x ša a-šu-mì*
 17 *be-el a-w[a]-t[í-x x] x ú [x x]*
 18 *a-wa-tí-[x x x x x x x x x]*
 (a few lines broken)
 Rev. *ú šé-ni-šu [x x x um-ma]*
 2' *im-dí-lúm-ma i-n[a UTU^š ša]*
 3' *[e]-ra-ba-[ni] ʔup-pí-ku-nu*
 4' *[l]e-qé-a-nim-ma ʔé-eb-a-[ma]*
 5' *a-ta-al-kà-n[i]m a-na*
 6' *na-áš-pé-ra-tim ša a-bi-kà*
 7' *áp-lá-ah-ma : a-[l]i-kà-[a]m um-ma*
 8' *a-na-ku-ma na-á[p-š]a-tum ša-ak-na*
 9' *ba-a-am : ʔup-pí-ni : lu [n]i-il₅-qé-ma*
 10' *lu ni-ta-lá-ak a-ta [i]-na dí-tí-im*
 11' *ta-ar-ta-ag-ma-am : ù iš-tù*
 12' *a-li-kà-ni-ni : ta-aʔ-ru-da-ni-ma*
 13' *i-ki-dim : wa-áš-ba-ku-ma : ú-ha-ba-al-ma*
 14' *a-kà-al u₄-ma-am KÙ.BABBAR 1 GÍN*
 15' *tù-uš-ta-me-ri ša ni-iš a-lim^{ki}*
 16' *ù ru-ba-im ta-mu-ú kà-i-lá*
 17' *a-na a-lim^{ki} ù be-lí-a : a-wa-tí*
 18' *bi-lá : a-na a-wa-tim a-ni-a-tim*
 19' *kà-ru-um kà-né-eš₁₅*
 Up.e. *i-dí-in-ni-a-tí-ma*
 21' *IGI GÍR ša a-šur ší-bu-tí-ni*
 22' *ni-dí-in*
 Le.e. *IGI a-šur-^dUTU^š DUMU a-ma-a IGI š[u-x]*

¹⁻⁴Puzur-Ištar, son of Imdilum, questioned Laliya, the attorney. Thus (said) Puzur-Ištar to Laliya, Imdilum's attorney: ⁵⁻⁷"Imdilum hired you as an attorney to (come) from the City and win his case. ⁷⁻
¹⁰Then you brought a tablet of the City stating that you would assist me in winning Imdilum's case. ¹⁰⁻
¹²(But) you, instead of winning our case, you constantly cause me trouble, all the while holding my hem. ¹²⁻¹⁴Though I owe you nothing, you constantly present me with tablets to. ¹⁴⁻¹⁵Though my life [...] is at stake, ¹⁶my tablet(s) [...] that concerning ¹⁷my adversary [...] ¹⁸my case [...]"
 (Laliya answered Puzur-Ištar as follows): ^{1'-2'}"[...] or twice [...] Imdilum (said) as follows: ^{2'-5'}"The [very day that he] arrives, take your tablets, and be ready to depart. ^{5'-8'}I was worried about the letters of your father, and I came here (saying) as follows: ^{8'-10'}"Lives are at stake, come, let us take our tablet, and let us go!" ^{10'-11'}(But) you (instead), you made a complaint against me in court, and ^{11'-12'}after I arrived you sent me away. And ^{13'-14'}I am living on the steppe and I have to go into debt in order to get food. ^{14'-15'}Today you have made me see the last shekel* of silver! ^{15'-16'}Keep in mind what has been sworn under oath by the City and the king! ^{17'-18'}Bring my case to the attention of the City and my lord.

^{18'-20'}For these proceedings, the *kārum** Kaneš appointed us (as factual witnesses) and ^{21'-22'}we have given our testimony before Aššur's sword. ^{23'}In the presence of Aššur-Šamši, son of Amaya, of Š[u-...]

STOLEN TABLETS, BROKEN TABLETS

The cases presented above illustrate, among other things, the legal importance of the written document. The reported conflict between Buzazu and Ili-wedaku originally concerned the holding by Puzur-Aššur of a tablet allowing the removal of copper from the trade bureau. The existence of two tablets that might bear the last will of Šalim-Aššur is at the root of the dispute between his two sons. The affair opposing Puzur-Ištar to Aššur-malik, and then to his attorney, mentions the content of an employment contract, as well as the procedure for reading an official text before the Kaneš court.

All major commercial transactions carried out by merchants, as well as family or professional agreements, were formalized by the drafting of a written document. When, for example, a creditor lent silver or grain to a merchant, he had a tablet prepared, usually in the presence of witnesses, indicating the due date for repayment; he kept the tablet carefully in his archives so that he could produce it in time for the loan's repayment (Veenhof 2001). To avoid the falsification of such a document, the tablet was usually wrapped in a clay envelope on which the parties and witnesses rolled their cylinder seals. These certified tablets were then stored in sealed safes, which in turn were stored in sealed rooms. In theory, only the owner of the archive (and his wife, Michel 2020, chapter 4) had access to it. After his death, his heirs and investors could have access to these tablets, as illustrated by the dossier on the succession of Puzur-Aššur.

Thefts of tablets

Despite all these precautions, thefts of tablets are attested by Old Assyrian legal texts and letters, and some cases were brought to court. The sworn testimony and interrogation record presented below are not related to each other, but both testify to such accusations of theft. The first, an exceptionally long text, recounts the double robbery of two boxes of tablets, the contents of which are described in great detail (#89). In the second text, an attorney is confronted by a group of people who hold him responsible for the loss of tablets (#90).

89. Sworn testimony concerning two contested tablet boxes

Collection number: MMA 66.245.05

Publication: CTMMA 1 84a and b [copy, transliteration, translation]; CDLI P273589 [photo, transliteration]

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 136-8 no. 93 [translation, commentary]; Hertel 2013, 255 n. 828 no. 52 (II. 71-84)

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Envelope:

Obv. (seal 31)

2 KIŠIB *a-zu-ú* DUMU *pu*[zur₄]-*a*-[šur]

3 KIŠIB ^d<NIN>.ŠUBUR-*ba-ni* [DUMU] *a-šur-ma*-[ik]

4 *a-na a-wa-tim a-ni*-[a]-*tim*

5 *kà-ru-um kà-né-eš*₁₅

6 (seal 31)

7 *i-dí-ni-a-tí-ma* IGI GÍR ša *a-šur*

8 *ší-bu-tí-ni* [n]*i-dí-in*

9 *da-da-a* DUMU [n]*i-mar-ištar tap-pá-i-ni*

(the remainder of the obverse, the reverse, and the edges have only seal imprints)

Tablet:

Obv.

- 1 *a-na ma-lá dí-in₄ kà-ri-im kà-né-eš₁₅*
2 *ša-he-er GAL sú-en₆-na-da en-um-a-šur*
3 *iš-a-al um-ma sú-en₆-na-da-ma a-na*
4 *en-um-a-šur-ma a-na-ku ù am-tí i-na kà-né-eš*
5 *wa-áš-ba-ni-ma a-ta a-na dur₄-hu-mì-it*
6 *ta-lik-ma ša mì-ma lá ha-bu-lá-ku-ni*
7 *e-ta-lu-tám té-pu-uš-ma a-na É wa-áb-ri-a*
8 *té-ru-ub-ma 2 ta-ma-lá-ke ku-nu-ki-a ù ú-tù-ub-té*
9 *tù-šé-ší i-na li-bi₄ ta-ma-lá-ki-a*
10 *1 ṭup-pu-um ša 12 2/3 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR i-šé-er*
11 *i-dí-ištar ù sú-en₆-na-da ì-lí-a-lúm i-šu*
12 *1 ṭup-pu-um ša 10 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR i-šé-er sú-en₆-na-da*
13 *tám-kà-ru-um i-šu-ú 1 ṭup-pu-um ša a-na hu-bu-lim*
14 *a-ni-e-em i-dí-ištar i-za-za-ni-i 1 ṭup-pu-um*
15 *1/2 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR i-šé-er sú-en₆-na-da ù ^dUTU-tap-pá-i*
16 *ša-lim-a-hu-um i-šu sú-en₆-na-da qá-ta-tum*
17 *1 ṭup-pu-um 1/2 ma-na 3 1/2 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR be-ú-lá-at*
18 *i-dí-sú-en₆ 1 ṭup-pu-um 15 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR hu-bu-ul*
19 *šu-ma-li-ib-ší 1 ṭup-pu-um 15 GÍN KÙ hu-bu-ul*
20 *bu-lu-uṭ-be-li 1 ṭup-pu-um 15 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR hu-bu-ul*
21 *hi-da-dí 1 ṭup-pu-um 4 1/3 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR hu-bu-ul*
22 *^dUTU-tap-pá-i 1 ṭup-pu-um 1 GÚ 20 ma-na SIG₅ hu-bu-ul*
23 *da-da-a 1 ṭup-pu-um 1 GÚ 2 ma-na URUDU SIG₅ hu-bu-ul*
24 *i-dí-Sú-en₆ 1 ṭup-pu-um 1 GÚ URUDU SIG₅ hu-bu-ul*
25 *ki-ki-da-nim 1 ṭup-pu-um 2 GÚ URUDU SIG₅ ša i-šé-er*
26 *sú-en₆-«sú»-na-da ù šál-ma-a-šur DUMU a-dí-a DAM.GÀR*
27 *i-šu-ú-ma sú-en₆-na-da qá-ta-tum 1 ṭup-pu-um*
28 *ša 40 ma-na URUDU lá-mu-nim ù 7 ma-na URUDU SIG₅*
29 *a-du-da-«dí» 1 ṭup-pu-um 40 ma-na URUDU lá-mu-nu-um*
30 *hu-bu-ul li-ip-tí-ištar pu-ùh-ší-a ù šu-^den-líl*
31 *1 ṭup-pu-um 30 ma-na URUDU SIG₅ be-ú-lá-at a-ta-a*
32 *1 ṭup-«ṭup»-pu-um ša 30 GÚ 5 GÚ URUDU SIG₅ ša ší-im i-šú-ra-tim*
33 *il₅-ba-ni DUMU i-a-a ù a-šur-mu-ta-pì-il₅ a-hu-kà*
34 *ša-bu-ú-ni-ma ù a-mur-a-šur ra-bi₄-iṣ-kà i-ša-ha-tí-šu-nu*
35 *i-zí-zu 1 ṭup-pu-um ša 30 GÚ URUDU SIG₅ i-šú-ra-tim*
36 *il₅-ba-ni ù a-šur-mu-ta-pì-il₅ a-hu-kà i-dí-nu-nim-ma*
37 *a-na 30 GÚ URUDU SIG₅ a-na hu-bu-ul i-dí-ištar*
38 *a-na da-šu-šu-ú a-lá-hi-nim a-za-zu-ni 1 ṭup-pu-um*
39 *ša áš-du-ú ù me-er-a-sà ta-ri-ša ta-áš-ú-mu-ší-na*
40 *ù ṭup-pè-e a-hi-ú-tim ša a-na na-áb-šé-e e-zi-bu-ni-ni*
41 *1 ṭup-pu-um ša ku-nu-uk ša-lim-a-hi-im*
42 *ša 1 1/2 ma-na KÙ.BABBAR i-na KÙ.BABBAR^{ap} i-ku-pì-a DUMU a-gi₅-a-a*
43 *ša-lim-a-hu-um im-ší-ú-ma il₅-qé-ú 1 ṭup-pu-um*
44 *ša ku-nu-uk i-ku-pì-a DUMU a-gi₅-a-a ša a-na 1 ma-na*
45 *KÙ.BABBAR a-na ú-zu-a DUMU i-da-a lá i-tù-ú-ru*
46 *1 ṭup-pa-am a-šur-ma-lik DUMU ì-lí-iš-«tí»-kál e-zi-ba-am*
47 *1 ṭup-pa-am qá-i-iš-ma a-mur-ištar DUMU ha-lá-bi₄-im*
Lo.e. *e-zi-ba-am 1 ṭup-pu-um ša dí-in₄*
49 *kà-ri-im dur₄-hu-mì-it a-ta-a e-zi-ba-am*

50 1 ku-nu-ku-um ša i-dí-ištar DUMU a-šur-na-da
 51 i-na bu-ul-tí-šu-ma 4 um-me-a-nu-ú
 Rev. ik-nu-ku-ma ip-qí-du-nim ku-nu-ku-um
 53 ša ^aUTU-tap-pá-i i-na ku-nu-uk
 54 3 ma-ri um-me-a-nim pá-aq-dam
 55 a-ha-ma ṭup-pu-ú ša ší-bi₄-a
 56 lu a-šu-mì-kà lu a-šu-mì i-dí-ištar
 57 ša i-na ba-áb DINGIR ú-ha-ri-mu-ú-ni
 58 ṭup-pu-ú-a i-šú-ra-tù-ú-a
 59 lu ta-ah-sí-sà-tù-ú-a ša URUDU ma-dí-ma
 60 mì-ma a-nim i-na 2 ta-ma-lá-ki-a
 61 kà-an-ku-ma ta-ma-lá-ke ku-nu-ki ù ú-tù-ub-té
 62 i-na dur₄-hu-mì-it a-na É wa-áb-ri-a
 63 té-ru-ub-ma e-ta-lu-tám tu-šé-ší
 64 2 ta-ma-lá-ki ku-nu-ki-a ù ú-tù-ub-té
 65 ša-am-ša-am a-ni-tám-ma šé-ší-a-ma
 66 a-na kà-ri-im lu nu-bi₄-il₅-šu-nu-ma
 67 a-šé-er ku-nu-ki-a kà-ru-um kà-né-eš
 68 li-ik-nu-uk-šu-nu-ma ša-am-ša-am
 69 a-ni-tám-ma a-na-ku ù a-ta a-na a-lim^{ki}
 70 lu nu-ší-ma a-lúm^{ki} ù be-el-ni lu-za-ki-ni-a-ti
 71 a-ma-lá dí-in₄ kà-ri-im kà-né-eš₁₅ ša-he-er GAL
 72 en-um-a-šur sú-en₆-na-da e-pu-ul
 73 um-ma en-um-a-šur-ma a-na sú-en₆-na-da-ma
 74 iš-tù 3 ša-na-tim iš-tù i-dí-ištar
 75 tám-kà-ri-i : i-mu-tù-ú a-na ša i-šé-er-i-a
 76 ù i-šé-er i-dí-ištar tám-kà-ri-a
 77 mì-ma lá tí-šu-ú i-na kà-ri-im dur₄-hu-mì-it
 78 e-ta-lu-tám ba-lu-um kà-ri-im ù tám-kà-ru-tim
 79 a-na É i-dí-ištar tám-kà-ri-a
 80 ša KÙ.BABBAR 5 GÚ ù e-li-iš ha-bu-lá-ni
 81 té-ru-bu-ma ma-ša-ar-tám ša tám-kà-ri-a
 82 ta-am-šu-hu-ma uk-ta-na-ša-ad-kà
 83 ù ší-be-e áš-ta-na-kà-ku-um
 84 ù ú-ra-ki-sú-kà iš-tù 3 ša-na-tim
 85 i-li-ku-ma kà-ru-um kà-né-eš ša-he-er GAL
 86 mì-ší-ih-kà ù sú-ri-i-kà il₅-mu-du-ú-ma
 87 a-na kà-ri-im kà-nè-eš ku-wa-a-tí ù tap-pá-e-kà
 88 ú-ša-sí-hu-ni-ni-ma i-na kà-ri-im
 89 kà-né-eš mì-iš-ha-am ù sú-re-e
 90 a-na ku-wa-a-tí ù tap-pá-e-kà az-ku-ru-ma
 91 ṭup-pu-ni iš-tù ITI.KAM lá-pu-tù-ni-ma
 92 É kà-ri-im pá-aq-du-ú-ni ša a-na
 93 É^{tí}-kà lá e-ru-bu-ma mì-ma-kà lá al-qé-ú
 94 a-na ṭup-pè-e ma-du-tim i-na dí-tim
 95 ta-áš-ta-lá-a-ni ša ni-iš a-lim^{ki}
 96 kà-i-lá a-na a-lim^{ki} ù be-li-a
 97 a-wa-tí : bi₄-lá ki-ma sú-re-e ù mì-iš-ha-am
 98 az-ku-ru-šu-ni-ma šu-ut i-dí-tim
 99 ú-ša-e-li-ni lá tù-na-ha-ni
 Up.e. ú lá tù-ša-a-lá-ni ba-a-am

- 101 *tup-pì-ni li-ip-qí-du a-lúm^{ki}*
 102 *ù ru-ba-ú-um lu-za-ki-ni-a-ti*
 103 *a-na a-wa-tim a-ni-a-tim kà-ru-um kà-né-eš*
 105 *i-dí-ni-a-tí-ma IGI GÍR ša a-šur*
 Le.e *ší-bu-tí-ni ni-dí-in IGI a-zu-ú DUMU puzur₄-a-šur IGI ^d<NIN>-ŠUBUR-ba-ni DUMU*
a-šur-ma-lik
 107 *da-da-a DUMU ni-mar-ištar tap-pá-i-ni*

Envelope:

²Seal of Azu, son of Pu[zur]-A[ššur], ³seal of <Ila>brat-bani, [son of] Aššur-mali[k].

⁴⁻⁷For these proceedings, the Kaneš *kārum** appointed us (as factual witnesses) and ⁷⁻⁸we have given our testimony before Aššur's sword. ⁹Dadaya, son of Nimar-Ištar, was our (absent) companion.

Tablet:

¹⁻³In accordance with the judgment of the plenary (assembly) of *kārum** Kaneš, Suen-nada questioned Ennum-Aššur; ³⁻⁴thus (said) Suen-nada to Ennum-Aššur: ⁴⁻⁶“While my *amtum*-wife and I stayed at Kaneš, you, you went off to Durhumit, and although I owe you nothing, ⁷⁻⁸you acted high-handedly, entered my guest house ⁸⁻⁹and took out 2 (tablet) boxes (sealed) with my seal and passim. ⁹Inside my (tablet) boxes were:

¹⁰⁻¹¹1 tablet stating that Iddin-Ištar and Suen-nada owe 12 2/3 minas* of silver to Ili-alum;

¹²⁻¹³1 tablet stating that Suen-nada owes 10 minas* of silver to the creditor;

¹³⁻¹⁴1 tablet stating that Iddin-Ištar stands (as guarantor) for me for this debt;

¹⁴⁻¹⁶1 tablet stating that Suen-nada and Šamaš tappa'i owe 1/2 mina* of silver to Šalim-ahum and that Suen-nada is guarantor;

¹⁷⁻¹⁸1 tablet (concerning) 1/2 mina* 3 1/2 shekels* of silver, working capital of Iddin-Suen;

¹⁸⁻¹⁹1 tablet (concerning) 15 shekels* of silver, debt of Šuma-libši;

¹⁹⁻²⁰1 tablet (concerning) 15 shekels* of silver, debt of Buluṭ-beli;

²⁰⁻²¹1 tablet (concerning) 15 shekels* of silver, debt of Hidati;

²¹⁻²²1 tablet (concerning) 4 1/3 minas* of silver, debt of Šamaš-tappa'i;

²²⁻²³1 tablet (concerning) 1 talent* 20 minas* of fine (copper), debt of Dadaya;

²³⁻²⁴1 tablet (concerning) 1 talent* 2 minas* of fine copper, debt of Iddin-Suen;

²⁴⁻²⁵1 tablet (concerning) 1 talent* of fine copper, debt of Kikidanum;

²⁵⁻²⁷1 tablet stating that Suen-nada and Šalim-Aššur, son of Adiya, owe 2 talents* of fine copper to the creditor, and that Suen-nada is the guarantor;

²⁷⁻²⁹1 tablet (concerning) 40 minas* of poor copper and 7 minas* of fine copper: Adudadi;

²⁹⁻³⁰1 tablet (concerning) 40 minas* of poor copper, debt of Lipit-Ištar, Puhšiya and Šu-Enlil;

³¹1 tablet (concerning) 30 minas* of fine copper, working capital of Ataya;

³²⁻³⁵1 tablet stating that Ili-bani, son of Yaya, and Aššur-mutappil, your brother, have been fully paid the 30 talents* (and) 5 talents* of fine copper corresponding to the purchase price of the *išurtum**-contracts, and Amur-Aššur, your attorney was at their side;

³⁵⁻³⁸1 tablet stating that Ili-bani and Aššur-mutappil, your brother, gave me the 30 talents* of fine copper (of) the *išurtum**-contracts, and that I stand (as guarantor) for the 30 talents* of fine copper, for the debt of of Iddin-Ištar to Dašušu, the *alahhinnu*-official;

³⁸⁻³⁹1 tablet stating that you bought Ašdu and her daughter [†]Tariša.

⁴⁰Also tablets of outsiders that they had left me for safekeeping:

⁴¹⁻⁴³1 tablet sealed by Šalim-ahum stating that Šalim-ahum on his own authority took 1 1/2 minas* of silver from the silver of Ikuppiya, son of Agiya;

⁴³⁻⁴⁵1 tablet sealed by Ikuppiya, son of Agia, stating that he will not come back to Uzua, son of Idaya, for 1 mina* of silver;

⁴⁶1 tablet Aššur-malik, son of Iliš-<ti>kal left with me;

⁴⁷⁻⁴⁸1 tablet is a grant and Amur-Ištar, son of Halabum left with me;

⁴⁸⁻⁴⁹1 tablet with the judgment of the *kārum** Durhumit, Ataya left with me;

⁵⁰⁻⁵³1 seal belonging to Iddin-Ištar, son of Aššur-nada: when still alive, 4 shareholders placed it under seal and entrusted it to me;

⁵²⁻⁵⁴The seal of Šamaš-tappa-i was entrusted to me under the seal of 3 affiliated traders.

⁵⁵⁻⁵⁷Further, my witnessed tablets, whether concerning you or concerning Iddin-Ištar, which they certified at the Gate of the God, ⁵⁸⁻⁵⁹my tablets, my *išurtum**-contracts, as well as my memoranda concerning large quantities of copper. ⁶⁰⁻⁶¹All this was sealed into my 2 (tablet) boxes, and ⁶¹⁻⁶³in Durhumit you entered my guest house and high-handedly took out the sealed (tablet) boxes and passim.

⁶⁴⁻⁶⁵This very day, produce for me the 2 sealed boxes under my seal, and ⁶⁶let us take them to the *kārum**, ⁶⁷⁻⁶⁸so that the *kārum** Kaneš may seal them in addition to my seals, and ⁶⁸⁻⁷⁰on this very same day, you and I, let us leave for the City, ⁷⁰so that the City (assembly) and our lord may clear us!"

⁷¹⁻⁷²In accordance with the judgment of the *kārum** plenary assembly of Kaneš, Ennum-Aššur answered Suen-nada; ⁷³thus (said) Ennum-Aššur to Suen-nada: ⁷⁴⁻⁷⁵"When Iddin-Ištar, my agent, died 3 years ago, ⁷⁵⁻⁷⁷(even though) you had no claim on me or on my agent Iddin-Ištar, ⁷⁷⁻⁸¹in the *kārum** Durhumit, without (the authorization) of the *kārum** or the merchants, you high-handedly entered the house of Iddin-Ištar, my agent, who owed 5 talents* of silver or more to me, ⁸¹⁻⁸²and you robbed the strong-room of my agent! ⁸²⁻⁸⁴And (since then) I have been continually pursuing you and bringing witnesses against you, and they have bound you over. ⁸⁴⁻⁸⁶Three years have passed, and the plenary assembly of the *kārum** Kaneš has learned of your robbery and your lies, and ⁸⁷⁻⁸⁸once they have transferred your (business) partners and yourself to the *kārum** Kaneš, ⁸⁸⁻⁹⁰and I have declared (under oath) in the *kārum** Kaneš (everything concerning) the robbery and the lies to you and to your (business) partners, ⁹¹⁻⁹²and after our tablets were written down a month ago and were entrusted to the trade bureau, ⁹²⁻⁹³stating that I did not enter your house and took nothing belonging to you, ⁹⁴⁻⁹⁵(after all that) you keep questioning me in court about many tablets!

⁹⁵⁻⁹⁶Keep (in mind) the oath of the City. ⁹⁶⁻⁹⁸Bring my case to (the assembly of) the City and to my lord (concerning the fact) that even though I have made a formal declaration (under oath) against him concerning the lies and the robbery, ⁹⁸⁻⁹⁹he is questioning me in court. ⁹⁹⁻¹⁰⁰You must stop harassing me and questioning me. Come! ¹⁰¹Let them entrust the tablet about us (for transportation). ¹⁰¹⁻¹⁰²Let the City and the king clear us!"

¹⁰³⁻¹⁰⁵For these proceedings, the *kārum** Kaneš appointed us (as factual witnesses) and ¹⁰⁵⁻¹⁰⁶we have given our testimony before Aššur's sword. ¹⁰⁶⁻¹⁰⁷In the presence of Azu, son of Puzur-Aššur, of <Ila>brat-bani, son of Aššur-malik. Dadaya, son of Nimar-Ištar, was our partner.

90. Interrogation record of an attorney facing a counter-claim

Collection number: AMM 1-32-90

Excavation number: Kt 90/k 117

Publication: TPAK 1 191 [transliteration, translation]

Bibliography: Michel 2000, 139 no. 94 [translation, commentary]

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *šu-sú-en*₆ MAŠKIM *a-nu-p*[ⁱ]-*ištar*
2 *ku-ra i-dí-sú-en*₆
3 *ú šu-ku-ba-am e-pu-ul*
4 *um-ma šu-sú-en*₆-*ma*
5 *a-dí 2*^{šé-ni}-*šu i-na*
6 *dí-tim tù-ša-i-lá-ni-[m]a*
7 *a-pu-ul-ku-nu a-na ma-a[k]-ni-ki-im*
8 *pá-té-e-em ú ʔup-pé-e*
9 *šé-šú-ú-tim*
10 *ša a-šur-ták-lá-ku*

11 *iš-ri-qú-ma*
 12 *a-lu-um*
 Rev. *i-sú-hu-šu*
 14 *e-ša-ni-ma i-a-tí*
 15 *a-na ma-ak-ni-ki-im*
 16 *pá-té-e-em ú ʔup-pé-e*
 17 *še-šú-ú-tim*
 18 *i-na dí-tim*
 19 *tù-uš-ta-i-lá-ni*
 20 *lá tù-na-ha-ni*
 21 *ba-a-nim a-lu-um*
 22 *ú ru-ba-um*
 23 *dí-ni : li-dí-in*
 24 *ší-bu-tum*

¹⁻³Šu-Suen, the attorney, answered Anup[pi-lštar], Kura, Iddin-Suen and Šu-Kubum. ⁴Thus (said) Šu-Suen: ⁵⁻⁷“Twice you questioned me in court, and I answered you. ⁷⁻¹¹For the opening of the sealed strong room and the tablets to be produced that Aššur-taklaku stole, ¹²⁻¹³the City transferred him. ¹⁴⁻¹⁹(Now) you have questioned me again in court to open the strong room and the tablets produced. You should not harass me! Come, so that the City and the king may render a judgment.” (This is a) testimony.

Lost tablets, seized tablets

References to broken tablets are exceptional. The author of one letter (#91) has seen the broken pieces of a tablet in the town of Durhumit, with no indication whether or not the tablet was broken intentionally or not. It could have been a legal text, preserved in a sealed envelope, which was broken and thus had lost its legal value. In order to retrieve a valid document, the complainant needs to go to Kaneš and obtain an order from the *kārum**. Only then may the new text be sealed by the *kārum** Durhumit.

In other instances, a merchant wishing to get back a tablet from another merchant’s safe without the consent of the latter, had to go to court. If his appeal was successful, the judgment of the *kārum** could allow him to go into the man’s archive and search for the tablet with the assistance of recognized traders, present as witnesses, and a scribe. The latter was presumably present so as to read the labels on the tablet containers and officially identify the desired tablet (#92).

91. Letter mentioning a broken tablet to be remade and certified by the authorities

Museum number: AMM 1-51-90

Excavation number: Kt 90/k 136

Publication: TPAK 1 7 [transliteration, translation].

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *a-na a-šur-mu-ta-pì-il₅*
 2 *qí-bi₄-ma um-ma a-šur-SIPA-ma*
 3 *a-na dur₄-hu-mì-it*
 4 *né-tí-iq-ma pì-iṭ-ra-at*
 5 *ʔup-pì-im : a-šar DU₁₀-ší-<lá>-a-šur*
 6 *DUMU hi-na-a : né-mu-ur-ma*
 7 *a-na KÙ.BABBAR 10 GÍN ša a-šur-ba-ni*
 8 *e-na-šu il₅-mì-na-ma*
 9 *ʔup-pì-niⁱ(IM) : lá ú-še-<ší>-a-am*

10 *ú a-na še-ri-kà*
 11 *i-pu-ša-am : um-ma*
 Lo.e. *šu-ut-ma i-na kà-né-eš₁₅*
 13 *ṭup-pá-am ša kà-ri-im*
 Rev. *ni-lá-qé-a-am-ma*
 15 *ú ṭup-pì-ni : e-ša-ni-im-ma*
 16 *kà-ru-um*
 17 *dur₄-hu-<mì>-it : i-kà-na-kà-ni-a-tí*
 18 *a-na-kam : ba-áb-ta-am*
 19 *i-šu-ma : a-šu-mì ki-a-am*
 20 *ma-la wa-ra-dí*
 21 *e-ta-pá-áš : a-bi₄ a-ta*
 22 *be-lí : a-ta : a-dí 5 u₄-me*
 23 *a-ma-kam : wa-áš-ba-ku*
 24 *šu-ma <a>-ha-qá : ta-ta-lá-ak*
 25 *ṭup-pá-am : ša i-dí-ku-bi₄-im*
 Up.e. *DUMU a-šur-DU₁₀ : a-na a-mu-a*
 27 *dí-in be-lí a-ta*
 28 *lá tí-de₈-e ki-ma*
 Le.e. *KÙ.BABBAR 1 GÍN i-na qá-tí-a*
 30 *lá i-ba-ší-ú ú pu-ru-i*
 31 *lá i-<ša>-kà-an be-el a-ta*

¹⁻²Say to Aššur-mutappil: thus (says) Aššur-re’i.

³⁻⁴We passed through Durhumit and ⁴⁻⁶saw the broken pieces of the tablet where Ṭab-šilli-Aššur, son of Hinnaya, was (staying). ⁷⁻⁸For the 10 shekels* of silver of Aššur-bani, he became angry with me, and ⁹he did not produce our tablet. ¹⁰⁻¹²He submitted a claim against you (saying) as follows: ¹²⁻¹⁴“At Kaneš we will get a tablet (order) from the *kārum**, and ¹⁵they will replicate our tablet, ¹⁶⁻¹⁷then the trade bureau of Durhumit will seal (it) for us”. ¹⁸⁻²¹Here, he has outstanding claims, and because of this, I will get them released as much as I can.

²¹⁻²³You are my father and my lord. In 5 days, I will be there with you. ²⁴⁻²⁷If you go off to Haqqa, give the tablet of Iddin-Kubum, son of Aššur-ṭab, to Amua. ²⁷⁻³⁰You are my lord, don’t you know that I do not have even 1 shekel* of silver in my hands? ³⁰⁻³¹So he should not slander me! You are the lord!

92. Judgment dealing with the search for a tablet and sealing procedures

Museum number: unknown

Excavation number: Kt a/k 457b

Publication: Unpublished tablet edited by Hertel 2013, 129 no. 13.

Findspot: Kaneš (modern Kültepe)

Obv. *kà-ru-um ha-hu-um*
 2 *dí-nam i-dí-in-ma*
 3 *DINGIR-šu-GAL 2 me-er um-me-a-ni*
 4 *iš-tí DUB.SAR i-ša-ba-at-ma*
 5 *a-na É šál-ma-a-šùr*
 6 *ú-šé-ra-áb-šu-nu-ma*
 7 *ṭup-pì ša DU₁₀-ší-lá-a-šur*
 Lo.e. *i-pá-té-ú-ma*
 Rev. *ṭup-pá-am ša šu-mì*

10 DINGIR-šu-GAL : lá-áp-tù
 11 ú-šé-lu-ú-ma ù ʃup-pì
 12 šu-nu-ma i-kà-nu-ku
 13 ù DINGIR-šu-GAL: iš-tí-šu-nu
 14 i-kà-na-ak

¹⁻²The *kārum** of Hahhum rendered a judgment (as follows): ³⁻⁴Ilšu-rabi will seize two affiliated traders together with the scribe, ⁵⁻⁶he will bring them into the house of Šalim-Aššur; ⁷⁻⁸they will open the (container of) tablets of ʃab-šilli-Aššur, and ⁹⁻¹¹will take out the tablet on which the name of Ilšu-rabi is inscribed. ¹¹⁻¹²Then they will (re)seal the (container of) tablets, ¹³⁻¹⁴and Ilšu-rabi will affix his seal together with them.

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