

*A Hittite-Assyrian diplomatic exchange in the Late 13th Century BCE**

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One of the surprising developments in the rapidly unfolding scene of international relations in the late 13th century BCE is the extent of peaceful contacts between the Hittites and the Assyrians¹. After a stormy offensive at the beginning of his reign, in the wake of which Tukulti-Ninurta I defeated the armies of Tudhaliya IV², the Assyrian ruler turned his aggression towards Babylon, establishing at the same time an "entente cordiale" with his western neighbour. A prolific exchange of diplomatic letters between the enemies of yore³ was accompanied by lucrative trade⁴ and by cultural influences which still need to be investigated in specialized studies⁵. Whereas in the past the study of Hittite-Assyrian relations was almost entirely dependent on documents found at Boğazköy, the last decades have brought a welcome increase in documentation from governmental centres in the

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¹ For a general survey see J. Freu, "De la confrontation à l'entente cordiale: Les relations assyro-hittites à la fin de l'âge du Bronze (ca. 1250-1180 av. J.C.)", *Hittite Studies in Honor of Harry A. Hoffner Jr. on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, G. Beckman, R. Beal, G. McMahon edd., Winona Lake 2003, 101-118. For the Hittite-Assyrian cooperation towards the end of Tukulti-Ninurta's reign, see I. Singer, "KBo 28.61-64 and the Struggle over the Throne of Babylon in the Turn of the 13th century BCE", *VI. Internationales Colloquium der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft (Würzburg, 22.-24. März 2006)*.

² I. Singer, "The Battle of Niḫriya and the End of the Hittite Empire", *ZA* 75 (1985), pp. 100-123. For the different opinions concerning the dating of RS 34.165 (Šalmaneser I or Tukulti-Ninurta I), see refs. in J. Freu, *Studies Hoffner*, 107, n. 35; M. Dietrich, *UF* 35 (2003), pp. 103-139.

³ These have recently been re-published and studied in the masterly monograph of C. Mora - M. Giorgieri, *Le lettere tra i re Ittiti e i re Assiri ritrovate a Hattuša*. Padova 2004 (with refs. to previous studies).

⁴ B.I. Faist, *Der Fernhandel des assyrischen Reiches zwischen dem 14. und 11. Jh. v. Chr.*, Münster 2001, pp. 213-225; eadem, "Die Handelsbeziehungen zwischen Assyrien und Anatolien in der zweiten Hälfte des 2. Jt. v. Chr. unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Metallhandels", *Anatolien im Lichte kultureller Wechselwirkungen*, H. Klinkott ed. Tübingen 2001, pp. 53-66.

⁵ For possible influences in the glyptic domain, see S. Herbordt, *VI. Internationales Colloquium der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft (Würzburg, 22.-24. März 2006)*; for monumental architecture, see provisionally I. Singer, "A City of Many Temples: Hattuša, Capital of the Hittites", *Sacred Space: Shrine, City, Land. Proceedings of the International Conference in Memory of Joshua Praver*, B.Z. Kedar - R.J.Z. Werblowsky edd. London & Jerusalem 1998, 42.

western provinces of Assyria — Tell Šēḫ Ḥamad/Dūr-Katlimmu⁶, Tell Chuēra/Harbe⁷ and Tell Sabi Abyad/Amīmu(?)⁸. Also, the continuous publication of tablets from Aššur and Kār-Tukulti-Ninurta in the Berlin Museum adds further glimpses of Assyrian-Hittite relations⁹. Besides their wealth of historical information, the Middle Assyrian tablets provide most valuable chronological anchors which are notoriously missing in the Hittite texts. The reconstruction of the sequence of eponyms has reached an advanced stage due to the continuous efforts of H. Freydank, W. Röllig and others¹⁰. We are now in the position to narrow down the absolute dates of certain events recorded in the Assyrian documents and to synchronize them with contemporary events reported in documents from Hattuša, Ugarit and Emar.

In a previous article I dealt with the participants of a high-level Hittite expedition travelling to Aššur in the eponym year of Ina-Aššur-šumi-ašbat (c. 1215 BCE), as recounted in Dūr-Katlimmu no. 6 (DeZ 3320)¹¹. In the same year a group of merchants from Emar are reported to have arrived at Aššur in another document from Dūr-Katlimmu (no. 13: 5; DeZ 3311+)¹². Dūr-Katlimmu no. 6 also contains a report on the anticipated prospected exportation of large quantities of linen from Karkamiš to Aššur, which in this year could not be met because of a failed crop (ll. 1'-15'). This topic, which is also taken up in Dūr-Katlimmu no. 7 (DeZ 3835), deserves a separate study for its potential interest for the economic history of northern Syria.

Not everything, however, was as peaceful and lucrative in Hittite-Assyrian relations in the eponym year of Ina-Aššur-šumi-ašbat. According to Dūr-Katlimmu no. 2 (DeZ 3439), a "band" (ERÍN.MEŠ) of people from Karkamiš escaped westwards. It is not entirely clear

⁶ E.C. Cancik-Kirschbaum, *Die mittellassyrische Briefe aus Tall Šēḫ Hamad*. Berlin 1996; cf. also eadem - H. Freydank, "Addenda und Corrigenda zu BATSH 4", *NABU* 1996/3, pp. 65-68 and the reviews of C. Saporetti, *Or* 66 (1997), pp. 455-458 and M. Streck, *ZA* 87 (1997), pp. 271-276.

⁷ C. Kühne, "Ein mittellassyrisches Verwaltungsarchiv und andere Keilschrifttexte", *Ausgrabungen in Tell Chuera im Nord-Ost Syrien*. Saarbrücken 1995, pp. 203-224.

⁸ The tablets have not been published yet, but their general contents has been indicated in preliminary reports, e.g., A. Kouwenhoven, *Archéologia* 344 (1998), pp. 14-17; P.M.M.G. Akkermans - F. Wiggermann, *Archéologia* 358 (1999), pp. 56-65. For the possible identification of the site with Amīmu, see Cancik-Kirschbaum, *Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad*, p. 102; M. Luciani, "On Assyrian Frontiers and the Middle Euphrates", *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 13 (1999-2001), p. 97.

⁹ Published by H. Freydank in the series *Mittellassyrische Rechtsurkunden und Verwaltungstexte (MARV)*.

¹⁰ See, most recently, W. Röllig, *ZA* 94 (2004), pp. 18-51; H. Freydank, *AoF* 32 (2005), pp. 45-56.

¹¹ "The Great Scribe Taki-Šarruma", *Studies Hoffner*, pp. 341-348. For the reconstruction of the caravan's itinerary, see map in Cancik-Kirschbaum, *Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad*, p. 31. For the dating of the eponym year of (Ina-)Aššur-šumi-ašbat between Tukulti-Ninurta's 11th and 16th years, see *ib.*, 17 f. Most documents from Dūr-Katlimmu are dated to this year (*ib.* pp. 14 ff.; 105 f.), in which Tukulti-Ninurta defeated the Kassite army and captured Kaštiliašu (cf. text no. 9, ll. 36 ff.).

¹² A few years later, in the eponym-year of Ninu'ayu (c. 1213/1212), a Hittite diplomatic mission headed by Tili-Šarruma came to Aššur, according to the texts from Tell Chuera (Kühne, *Tell Chuera*, 216-219). On its way back it was joined by emissaries from Sidon and Amurru.

who these people were, a band of fugitives, as assumed by Cancik-Kirschbaum¹³, or perhaps a military unit from Karkamiš that violated the Assyrian border in the vicinity of the Balih River. The author of the letter, Sin-mudammeq, who was the governor of (W)aššukanni¹⁴, excuses himself before his lord Aššur-iddin, the Assyrian viceroy resident in Dūr-Katlimmu, for failing to capture the band, which had meanwhile retreated to Karkamiš. He reassures him, however, that he had fortified his positions along the Balih River all the way from Širda to Tuttul¹⁵. The strategically important region extending to the west from the Balih was disputed territory, but, as shown by the archaeological evidence, Karkamiš was in control of both sides of the Euphrates¹⁶.

The last paragraph of Dūr-Katlimmu no. 2 (ll. 61-68) introduces a new topic which will be the main objective of this paper. It deals with the transfer of a certain person from Aššur to (W)aššukanni, where he was supposed to be entrusted into the hands of a certain Amurru-Ašared. E. Cancik-Kirschbaum has already indicated in passing the possibility that this person might be identical with the Assyrian ambassador to Hatti in the reign of Tuthaliya¹⁷. This possibility will be further explored in an attempt to correlate it with contemporary Hittite sources.

The reading and rendering of this difficult passage is open to deliberation. As already indicated in the review by M. Streck¹⁸, in l. 61 the personal determinative does not follow after DUMU, but rather precedes it. It is therefore difficult to accept the reading ... ^{<m>}Še-eh-ri DUMU ^mMu-ta-^{<kil>}-^dAMAR.UTU, rendered as "(Was den) Şehrü angeht, den Sohn des Mutakil-Marduk, ..." ¹⁹. *şehrü* (which does not have a determinative) could very well be an appellative referring to the person's young age or to his junior rank²⁰. The reading of the theophoric name remains difficult, but it can hardly be Mutakkil-Marduk (attested in another letter from Dūr-Katlimmu). Here is a tentative transliteration and translation of the passage, taking into account Streck's remarks:

(61) *áš-šúm še-eh-ri* ^mDUMU-x-ta-^dAMAR.UTU (6) *ša EN-li iš-pu-ra-ni ma-a i+na*
^{URUD}A-šur (63) *e-ta-az-bu-ni-šu al-ta-pár il-te-qe-ú-né-šu* (64) *i+na* ^{URU}Aš-šu-ka-ni *ú-šab a-*
na ^mAMAR.TU-SAG (65) *uk-ta-il-šu a-na ma-ḫa-ri-ia la-a im-gúr* (66) *ma-a bi-il-tu dan^l-*
na-at

¹³ Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad, p. 94 ("Flüchtlinge").

¹⁴ The toponym is spelled consistently with initial A in the Dūr-Katlimmu texts. For the probable identification with Tell Fahariya, see Cancik-Kirschbaum, Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad, p. 100.

¹⁵ As indicated by the dotted line on the map drawn in Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad, p. 31.

¹⁶ P. Pfälzner, "Keramikproduktion und Provinzverwaltung im mittelassyrischen Reich", *Assyrien im Wandel der Zeiten*, H. Waetzoldt - H. Hauptmann edd., Heidelberg 1997, 340; M. Luciani, SAAB 13 (1999-2001), pp. 100 f.; H. Kühne, "Dūr-katlimmu and the Middle-Assyrian Empire", *Subartu* VII (2000), p. 275 and map on p. 279. See also below on KBo 18.25 (+) KBo 31.69, a Hittite letter apparently dealing with disputed territory between the Euphrates and the Balih.

¹⁷ Correct the reference indicated in Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad, p. 36, n. 137 to KUB 23.103 rev. 11: ^mMAR.TU-a-ša-ri-iš-š(a); H. Otten, AfO 19 (1959-60), p. 42.

¹⁸ ZA 87 (1997), p. 273.

¹⁹ Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad, pp. 98, 105.

²⁰ CAD Ş, pp. 179 ff.

Regarding the *young/junior* (one), ^m...-Marduk, about whom my lord wrote to me: "They released him in Aššur", I had written and they took him. He is (now) in (W)aššukani. I had him ready for Amurru-ašared, but he did not agree to take him from me (saying): "the burden is (too) difficult".

It seems that this *young* or *junior* person had been brought over from Aššur and was waiting in (W)aššukani to be fetched by Amurru-ašared and taken to an unspecified destination. If this Amurru-ašared is indeed identical with Amurru-ašariš, the Assyrian envoy to Hatti according to KUB 23.103 rev. 11, it stands to reason that their final destination was into Hittite territory. For some unknown reason Amurru-ašared refrained from escorting his *young/junior* companion, citing some difficulties.

Turning now to the Hittite evidence, the most important contemporary document which deals with a strikingly similar matter is KBo 9.82 (CTH 197)²¹. This late 13th century letter²² is addressed by a certain Maša to his unnamed lord. The context leaves no doubt that the addressee was a very important person, but not the king himself, who was addressed by his subjects as "my Sun" (^dUTU^š)²³. As for the author, one may readily accept H. Otten's suggestion that Maša is a short form of Mašamuwa, the Hittite envoy to Aššur during the 13th century BCE²⁴. My interpretation of the letter differs slightly from previous ones:

(obv. 1-2) To my lord say: Thus says Maša, your servant. / I fall at the feet of my lord two times, seven times. /

(4-7) As I left Uda did I not say to my lord: "Let the man follow in the morning while the men of Aššur are here!" (8-9) Now, he set out in the morning, (but) your man did not catch up with them²⁵. (9-13) The Overseer of the Scribes-on-wood (GAL LÚDUB.SAR.GIŠ) said: "Write to him! The man should come down to me to Taparuqa and he should be [met^(?)]²⁶ by you!" (13-15) My lord, whatever [you do, send^(?)] to me the man in the morning and he should co[me d]own to me! ...

²¹ For (partial) translations see H. Otten, *AfO* 19 (1959-60), p. 44, n. 43; G.F. del Monte, *RGTC* 6 (1978), p. 399; A. Hagenbuchner, *Die Korrespondenz der Hethiter*. Heidelberg 1989, pp. 149-151; M. Forlanini, *Hethitica* 10 (1990), pp. 112 f.; R. Beal, *The Organisation of the Hittite Military*. Heidelberg 1992, p. 350, n. 1329.

²² Note the spellings *kiš-an* and *UL*.

²³ Hagenbuchner, *op.cit.*, 150.

²⁴ KUB 23.102 i 20; KUB 23.103 obv. 6' (*Maša-A.A-a-*); Otten, *op.cit.*, p. 44, n. 43; cf. also Mora - Giorgieri, *Lettere*, p. 185, n. 6 (with further refs.). Hagenbuchner (*ib.*) is more skeptical. A Mašamuwa, Overseer of the Scribes (*Ma-ša-mu-wa* GAL LÚ.MEŠ DUB.SAR [sic]), is the author of a legal document from Emar certified by Ini-Tešub, king of Karkamiš; see D. Owen, "Pasūri-Dagan and Ini-Teššup's Mother", *Solving Riddles and Untying Knots. Biblical, Epigraphic, and Semitic Studies in Honor of Jonas C. Greenfield*, Z. Zevit, S. Gitin, M. Sokoloff edd. Winona Lake 1995, pp. 573-584. It is doubtful, however, that this could be the same person, unless he was still in an earlier stage of his career.

²⁵ For the verb *damašš-* in the sense "to catch up with, to overtake", see Beal, *op. cit.*

²⁶ Perhaps [*ú-e-mi-i*]-*š-kán-za e-eš-du* (l. 13). For *anda wemiya-*, "eintreffen", see Friedrich, *HW*, 252; "einholen", see Otten, *KBo XI Vorwort* (Nr. 14); *HW*, *Erg.* 3, 36.

Two lines missing.

(2'-3') ... [Whe]n²⁷ he comes down [to me^(?)] I will [send^(?)] him the man of Aššur *straight away*²⁸. (4'-5') May the gods hand over GUR.LUGAL to me and may His Majesty also stand by me! (6'-8') As soon as I send to you the man of Aššur *straight away*, send the man to me in the morning and he should come down to me! /

Despite its relatively good state of preservation, not everything is clear in this interesting letter. As far as I understand, Maša is trying to reschedule a missed meeting between an unnamed "man" (UN-*aš*) and an Assyrian delegation visiting in Hatti. Since this man arrived too late for his *rendez-vous*, he is now to be sent urgently to the new meeting-place in the city of Taparūqa. Here he is supposed to meet Maša (and the Overseer of the Scribes-on-wood?). Meanwhile, Maša sends "the man of Aššur" to his correspondent. It would seem that the two persons, "the man of Aššur" and "the man" (of Hatti), are being exchanged or swapped with each other. This would explain Maša's concern that the "transaction" not be bungled by the Hittite side once again, after the initial missed meeting with the Assyrian delegation. The place-name Taparūqa is a *hapax legomenon*²⁹. There is no need to seek it in the vicinity of Uda in the Lower Land just because Maša was there before he headed towards Taparūqa. As a meeting point between Hittite and Assyrian delegations a location near the Euphrates would be more suitable.

In rev. 4' the name GUR.LUGAL is suddenly introduced and Maša expresses his hope that both the gods and His Majesty will approve of his "handing over" (lit. "leaving behind", *appan tarḥa-*). The best way to integrate this person into the matter discussed in the letter is by assuming that he is the very "man" who is eagerly awaited in Taparūqa. From where he should come is not indicated, but in view of his obvious importance — the king himself and the Overseer of the Scribes-on-wood³⁰ are involved in the affair — Hattuša would be the obvious choice. There is no clue in the letter concerning the identity of GUR.LUGAL, except for his importance. There are two GUR-Šarrumas attested in Hittite texts, both of them scribes³¹: One is the son of Halpaziti (KUB 12.15 l. e.; KUB 51.12 rev. 7'), the other the son of EN-UR.SAG (KUB 37.210 rev. 3). EN-UR.SAG may well be Bēl-qarrad, the Assyrian envoy to the Hittite court during the reign of Hattušili III (KBo 1.14 rev. 11, 18).

²⁷ L. 2' [k]u-[wa-p]f. Hagenbuchner, ib. 149: [am-mu-u]q.

²⁸ SIG₅ and *an-da-an* are written, both in l. 3' and 6', attached to each other. Therefore, I wonder whether they should be rendered separately (Hagenbuchner: "gut hineinschicken"), or rather as SIG₅-*an-da-an*, an adverbial expression which may perhaps be rendered *ad sensum* as "straight away", "aright", "properly", or the like.

²⁹ It should probably be kept distinct from Taparuta, which appears in a cult inventory. The toponym Tabbaruḥe appears in an Alalakh IV text (AT 182: 38), but a connection with Taparūqa is very doubtful.

³⁰ On the importance of the Overseer/Chief of the Scribes(-on-wood) at the end of the Hittite Empire, see Singer, *Studies Hoffner*, 347.

³¹ Strictly speaking, GUR.LUGAL should be read GUR-šarri (Laroche, *Noms*, p. 222), but there are examples for the spelling of the theophoric element -šarruma both as LUGAL-*ma* and (rarely) as LUGAL. E.g., *Ehli-LUGAL(-ma)*, for which see Th. van den Hout, *StBoT* 38, p. 124 f.

The "Assyrian connection" may point to the second GUR-Šarruma, but of course, the identity of GUR.LUGAL in Maša's letter must remain open until more evidence is found.

There are two further documents which may in fact refer to the same event in Hittite-Assyrian relations. I would tentatively suggest that Dür-Katlimmu no. 2 reports the journey of a *youngster/junior* named DUMU-x-ta-^dAMAR.UTU from Aššur westwards, whereas KBo 9.82 describes the efforts to bring his Hittite counterpart, GUR.LUGAL, to a meeting with an Assyrian delegation. The ambassadors of the two lands, Amurru-ašared and Maša(muwa), respectively, had the duty of conducting these persons to the meeting point where they were about to be swapped with each other. Admittedly, this is a daring reconstruction of the meager evidence, but the similarities in the subject matter, the chronological agreement and the "Assyrian connection" call for imaginative thinking. It remains to speculate about the possible motives of this anticipated "diplomatic swap". But before doing so, I would like to refer to two further Boğazköy documents which may possibly be related to this same affair. Unfortunately, both of them are in a very poor state of preservation, obstructing any definitive conclusions.

The first, KUB 23.88 (CTH 175), has been considered since its publication by H. Otten³² to be a letter of an Assyrian king. The name]-^ra-ša-re-ed^r in the damaged opening (l. 2) has been restored as [Šulmanu]-ašared, despite the unique phonetic spelling, and the debate has revolved around the question of whether this Assyrian king is the sender or the addressee of the letter³³. A. Hagenbuchner³⁴ was the first to raise doubts about the attribution of the letter, pointing out that it lacks typical features found in royal correspondence. She suggested that KUB 23.88 is a "private" letter, without however attempting to identify [...]a-ša-re-ed. Finally, Mora and Giorgieri raised the possibility of restoring the name as [Amurru]-ašared³⁵, the Assyrian envoy to Hatti, without ruling out the possibility of the letter belonging to the royal correspondence³⁶.

If the name should indeed be restored as [Amurru]-ašared, who could be his Hittite "brother" (ŠEŠ-YA)? The obvious answer would be Maša(muwa), his Hittite counterpart, in which case this letter may also deal with the previously discussed diplomatic exchange. There is in fact a circumstantial indication that strongly supports the attribution of the letter to Amurru-ašared. The tablet³⁷ is made of a very coarse and grainy white clay, which, according to Otten, cannot originate from Boğazköy. For those scholars who took Šalmaneser to be the author of the letter, this clay composition was explained by its Assyrian origin. But then, why is the letter written in Hittite and not in Akkadian? Otten remained puzzled by this apparent contradiction, but with Amurru-ašared as the author, the solution is at hand. The letter was probably written *en route* by the Assyrian envoy, somewhere near the

³² "Korrespondenz mit Tukulti-Ninurta I. aus Boğazköy", *AfO Beiheft* 12 (1959), pp. 66 f.

³³ For refs. see Mora - Giorgieri, *Lettere*, pp. 150 ff.

³⁴ *Korrespondenz*, p. 441.

³⁵ Actually, the traces in l. 2 may also be read as]^r-a-ša-ri-ša^r, as in KUB 23.103 rev. 11.

³⁶ For *KU-U[Š]-ŠÍ-ia* in l. 3 (rendered as "Kälte" by Otten) Mora and Giorgieri (pp. 153 f.) suggest an alternative reading, *KU-U[Š]-ŠÍ-IA*, "my throne", which could be an appropriate vocable in a royal correspondence.

³⁷ Bo 2211(+)-Bo 2199 in the Istanbul Museum.

Hittite border. Here a Hittite translator could easily be found, in case Amurru-ašared did not himself master the Hittite language sufficiently.

On the obverse the author seems to complain about some delays in the correspondence and about some contradictory messages sent to him by his correspondent³⁸. The reverse seems to address the heart of the letter. A "male child" (l. 21': DUMU.NITA), a "woman" or "girl" (l. 23': SAL-TUM) and possibly their(?) offspring (l. 24': NUMUN) are mentioned. The autograph shows a clear LUGAL at the end of l. 21', perhaps preceded by a trace of SAL. However, on the photograph the surface appears to be totally worn at this spot, thus dashing my hopes that the traces might allow the reading GUR.LUGAL, the mysterious protagonist of KBo 9.82.

Any speculation based on these isolated vocables would be futile, but if it turns out that this letter is indeed related to the previously discussed documents, it may provide a clue on the nature of the entire affair, with a boy, a girl and their future "offspring" involved (see below). Needless to say, the letter might deal with a different matter altogether, but in any case, KUB 23.88 should be removed from the dossier of the royal correspondence. Instead, it may perhaps be considered a rare example of a letter exchange between travelling diplomats.

The second document which may possibly be related to the diplomatic swap postulated above is the letter KBo 18.25 (+) KBo 31.69. The indirect join established by M. Giorgieri on the basis of some rare spellings has been confirmed by C. Karasu in the Ankara Museum³⁹. A chronological anchor is provided by the name Taki-Šarruma, which appears in broken context (KBo 31.69 rev. 9'), assuming that he is identical with the Tagi-Šarruma mentioned in Dūr-Katlimmu no. 6 and in texts from Hattuša and Ugarit⁴⁰. The obverse⁽¹⁾ deals with some cities which were given to the king of Karkamiš (spelled *Kar-ga-maš*), apparently by Tukulti-Ninurta (KBo 18.25 obv. 2'-7')⁴¹. The reverse takes up another subject, which may perhaps be related to the journey described in KBo 9.82. A "man"⁴² is apparently sent out, and an urgent reply is expected from the correspondent (KBo 18.25 rev. 6'-10'). The previous lines are unfortunately almost entirely lost, but in l. 4' one could, very hesitantly, restore the place name *Ta-p]a¹-ru-uk-ku¹* [, which could correspond to Taparuqa in KBo 9.82⁴³. Here too, as in the case of KUB 23.88, the connection with the main body of evidence presented in this article is highly tentative and may eventually turn out to be misleading. This, however, should not invalidate the main theory based on the well preserved letters Dūr-Katlimmu no. 2 and KBo 9.42.

³⁸ L. 4: ŠEŠ-*IA-ma-mu* KASKAL-*ši* KASKAL-*ši ta-ma-i A-W[A-AT ḥa-at-ra-a-iš]* "but my brother [writes] to me each time another thi[ng]".

³⁹ Mora - Giorgieri, *Lettere*, p. 99, n. 1.

⁴⁰ For whom, see Singer, *Studies Hoffner*.

⁴¹ For the place names, which must be located in the vicinity of Karkamiš, see Mora - Giorgieri, *Lettere*, p. 103, nn. 23-26. Šuruwanna (KBo 31.69 obv. 5') may be identical with Šurun, one of the cities given to Piyašili according to the Šattiwaza Treaty (KBo 1.1 rev. 17'). The implications of this most significant (re)transfer of cities to Karkamiš must be dealt with in a separate study.

⁴² The first preserved sign in l. 6' is not entirely clear, but I prefer Hagenbuchner's reading UN-*an* (*Korrespondenz*, p. 245) over Mora - Giorgieri's KAL-*an* or MA-A-AN (ib., p. 102, n. 18).

⁴³ Cem Karasu, who collated the fragment in Ankara, informs me that the vertical wedge in the first sign is in fact a small hole or scratch in the clay.

It is now time to speculate about the possible significance of the postulated swap of individuals between Hatti and Aššur. Unfortunately, neither Dūr-Katlimmu no. 2 nor KBo 9.82 says anything about the status or the profession of these individuals. Of course, the correspondents themselves knew very well who these individuals were and saw no particular reason to ease the efforts of future readers of the letters. Perhaps the names of the respective protagonists will lead to more definitive answers in the future. Presently, several possible scenarios may tentatively be proposed.

The first thought naturally leads towards a royal marriage, which is quite imaginable in consideration of the exceptionally close relations that developed between Hatti and Aššur towards the end of the 13th century BCE. Keeping in mind the royal marriage(s) between Hatti and Egypt, a meeting of the Hittite and Assyrian delegations at the border would be quite possible. But then, we seem to have "men" on both sides of the swap⁴⁴. Still, if both "men" were of royal blood, one may consider a situation recalling the Amurru-Hatti swap, with Bentešina marrying a Hittite princess and Nerikaili an Amurrite one. There is, however, no evidence that the exchanged persons were of royal blood.

A second option might be an exchange of some high-ranking prisoners, fugitives or hostages⁴⁵. The third, and perhaps the best, option could be an exchange of some important professionals, such as diplomats⁴⁶, interpreters⁴⁷, scribes, diviners, artists, etc. There would surely have been ample opportunity for employment for skilled professionals within the diplomatic and economic relations unfolding between the two lands. For the time being, all options must be kept in mind until more evidence turns up.

⁴⁴ Unless one can take the ideogram UN/ÛKU as referring to both genders, which is very doubtful.

⁴⁵ Perhaps something similar to the *zaršiya* proposed by the Hittite king to his Ahhiyawan "brother" according to the "Tawagalawa Letter" (KUB 14.3 ii 62 f.).

⁴⁶ Such a possibility would strongly be supported if GUR.LUGAL would indeed turn out to be the son of the Assyrian envoy Bēl-qarrad.

⁴⁷ Deliveries of garments to an "interpreter (*targumanu*) of Hatti" are mentioned in a MA tablet from Aššur (VAT 19633; MARV III, no. 12); see H. Freydank, "Gewänder für einen Dolmetscher", *AoF* 21 (1994), pp. 31-33.