

## A Late-Babylonian deed witnessed by gods –

FLP 659 -Sippar, 28.II.23 Dar, I (499/8 B.C.)

1. 10 MA.NA KÙ.BABBAR BABBAR-ú šá AŠ 1 GÍN pit-qa
2. nu-uh-hu-tú šá la gín-nu šá <sup>md</sup>EN-I
3. A-šú šá <sup>m</sup>ha-áš\*-da-a A <sup>m</sup>AD-NU-ZU
4. ù 10 MA.NA KÙ.BABBAR BABBAR-ú šá AŠ 1 GÍN pit-qa
5. nu-uh-hu-tú šá la gín-nu šá <sup>m</sup>KI-<sup>d</sup>EN-nu-uh-šú
6. A-šú šá <sup>m</sup>ki-rib-tu A <sup>ù</sup>Ì.SUR gi-ni-e
7. it-ti a-ha-meš a-na KASKAL
8. iš-kun-nu-<sup>3</sup> mim-ma ma-la AŠ URU
9. u EDIN AŠ UGU<sup>bi</sup> KÙ.BABBAR-ÀM 20 MA.NA
10. ip-pu-uš-<sup>3</sup> AŠ ú-tur <sup>md</sup>EN-I
- 11 u <sup>m</sup>KI-<sup>d</sup>EN-nu-uh-šú a-ha-a-ta šú-nu
12. e-lat MAŠ MA.NA 3 MAŠ GÍN KÙ.BABBAR
13. BABBAR-ú ul-tu É-šú a-na
14. <sup>md</sup>EN-I i-nam-din
15. <sup>ù</sup>mu-kin-nu <sup>d</sup>XXX ù <sup>d</sup>UTU
16. <sup>md</sup>EN-MU-ÛRU <sup>ù</sup>UMBISAG A-šú šá <sup>m</sup>mu-še-zib-<sup>d</sup>EN
17. sip-par<sup>ki</sup> <sup>ù</sup>GU<sub>4</sub> U<sub>4</sub> 28 KAM
18. MU 23 KAM <sup>m</sup>da-ri-mu-šú
19. LUGAL E<sup>ki</sup> u KUR.KUR<sup>mes</sup>
20. 1-en A-TA il-te-qu-ú

## Translation

Ten minas of white silver which have 1/8 (alloy) per shekel, (2) of low (or standard, *nuhhutu*) quality without the *ginnu*- (quality) mark belonging to Bēl-na'īd (3) son of Hašdā descendant of Aba-ul-īdi (4) and ten minas of white silver which have 1/8 (alloy) per shekel, (5) of low (or standard) quality without the *ginnu*- mark belonging to Itti-Bēl-nuhšu (6) son of Kiribtu descendant of Šāhit-ginē (8) they invested (7) together in a business enterprise. (8) Whatever pro-

fit (10) they will acquire (8) in town (9) and abroad beyond the said twenty minas of silver, (10) with regard to the excess, (it) belongs to Bēl-na'id (11) and Itti-Bēl-nuhšu in equal shares. (12) In addition to 33.5 shekels of white silver (which) (14) he will give (13) from his house to (14) Bēl-na'id. (15) Witnesses Sîn and Šamaš. (16) Bēl-šuma-ušur, scribe, son of Mušēzib-Bēl, (17) Sippar, Iyyar, day 28th, (18) year 23 of Darius (19) King of Babylon and the lands, (20) They have each taken a copy.

#### Remarks

I should like to thank Mr. J. Randall Rosensteel, the Librarian of the Rare Book Department, of the Free Library of Philadelphia for permission to publish this tablet, and Dr. Maria DeJong Ellis who kindly allowed me to study the tablet while it was under her care at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia.

Lines lff., 8, 10. It is a *harrānu*-transaction «type B» (cf. H. Lanz, *Die neubabylonischen harrānu-Geschäftsunternehmen*, Berlin 1976, 49f., 54).

Line 5. Itti-Bēl-nuhšu son of Kiribtu descendant of Šāhit-ginē acted as the debtor in a promissory note from Sippar on 11.X.498/7 B.C., where his brother Bēl-ittannu was the creditor (H.G. Stigers, *JCS* 28, 1976, 44: 37, 6 and *pass.*). The deed is witnessed by their father and two brothers (Ina-qībi-Bēl and Saggillu), as well as by the same Bēl-na'id (son of Haš-da-a) and another two witnesses. Itti-Bēl-nuhšu and his brother Bulluṭ are also mentioned a month later (12.XI.498/7 B.C.) in another document from Sippar (Stigers, *JCS* 28, 54: 49, 6, 13, 17, 21f.). For the family of *Šāhit-ginē* see A.C.V.M. Bongenaar, *The Neo-Babylonian Ebabbar temple, Sippar: its administration and its prosopography* (Leiden 1997), 476ff.

Line 15. For deities acting as witnesses see R. Jas, *Neo-Assyrian judicial procedures* (Helsinki 1996), 19, n. 72: Gozan (two NA legal documents; Nabû, Šamaš and Šalam-šarri), B. Parker, *Iraq* 16 (1954), 33 and pl. 5: ND 2080 from Calah (NA) is witnessed by Šalam-šarri and Šamaš (cf. J.N. Postgate, *Fifty Neo-Assyrian legal documents*, Warminster 1976, 9, §1.4). SAA 6, 219 is witnessed by the former and SAA 6, 240 (both from NA Kouyunjik) by Šamaš and Nergal. For Aššur and Šamaš as witnesses of another NA deed see now K. Deller, F.M. Fales and L. Jakob-Rost, *SAB* 9

(1995), 25 *ad* 68, 10. Šin, Šamaš, Ištar and Gula witness a MA deed. Deities are recorded as witnesses in OB temple loans and in MB. Šamaš, the god of justice, occurs as a witness in *ROMCT* 2, 12, 7 (Nippur, 7.III.545/4 B.C.).

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