

WATER DIVISION IN BORDER AGREEMENTS

Did Syrian Kingdoms Share the Waters of the Orontes River according to the Antakya Stela? *

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The Antakya Stela¹ commemorates the setting of a border (*taḥūmu*, l. 4)² by the Assyrian king Adad-nērārī III represented by his commander-in-chief Šamšī-ilu³. The

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1) Published by V. Donbaz, "Two Neo-Assyrian Stelae in the Antakya and Kahramanmaraş Museums", *ARRIM* 8 (1990), pp. 5-24.

2) The term *taḥūmu* means border/territory, see *AHW.*, p. 1303. In my Ph.D. Dissertation (*Biblical Border-descriptions in Light of Ancient Near Eastern Texts*), to be submitted to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, this term and other border/territory terms shall be discussed. The Aramaic equivalent *thm* has the same double meaning (see M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi and the Midrashic Literature*, p. 1660), and is used to translate the Biblical term *gbl* (cf. Targum to *Jos.*, 18:20). The use of *taḥūmu* in Neo-Assyrian seems to reflect Aramaic influence (cf. F.M. Fales, "The Rural Landscape of the Neo-Assyrian Empire: A Survey", *SAAB* 4 [1990], p. 136). Later it penetrated from Aramaic into Middle Hebrew (cf. H. Tadmor, "Comments to the Opening Lines of the Aramaic Contract from Sefire", in Y. Aharoni (Ed.), *Excavations and Studies. Essays in Honour of Professor Shmuel Yeivin*, Tel Aviv 1973, pp. 400-401, in Hebrew), and is still in use in modern Hebrew in the same meaning (E. Ben Yehuda, *A Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew*, p. 7716). The word *taḥūmu* is found again in the Antakya Stela in plural form designating "territories": URU-šú ta-ḥu-ma-ti-šú [x x] a-na mi-šir KUR-šú u-kín (ll. 10-11). The Pazarcık Stela points to another derivated meaning of the word *taḥūmu* — "border-stone" (Donbaz, "Stelae ...", *cit.* (fn. 2, above), p. 9, Obv. 1, 16; Rev. 11), in a similar way to the meanings of the word *kudurru* as "border" and "border-stone" (*CAD* K, pp. 495-496; *AHW.*, p. 499). The inscription on the Antakya Stela refers to the stela itself as a *narû* (*NA.RÚ.A*), "stela" (l. 18; see *CAD* N/I, pp. 363ff.; *AHW.*, p. 749).

3) See J.D. Hawkins, in *CAH*², III/1, pp. 404-405; M. Weippert, "Die Feldzüge Adadnararis III. nach Syrien: Voraussetzungen, Verlauf, Folgen", *ZDPV* 108 (1992), pp. 42-67, esp. p. 58, fn. 97. For Šamšī-ilu see A.K. Grayson, "Assyrian Officials and Power in the Ninth and Eighth Centuries", *SAAB* 7 (1993), p. 27 (cf. A. Lemaire - J.-M. Durand, *Les inscriptions araméennes de Sfiré et l'Assyrie de Shamshi-ilu*, Paris 1984, pp. 38-53).

border was set between Zakur, king of Hamath, and Ataršumki, son of Adramu, king of Arpad⁴. The setting of the border was probably connected with one of the Assyrian military westward campaigns, possibly with Adad-nērārī's campaign in 796 B.C.⁵

The stela included a phrase supposedly declaring equal division of the Orontes River between the sides:

íd.ar-am-tú ina bi-ri-šú-nu [ú-šam]-ši-lu-ma i-zu-zu (ll. 7-8), "They divided the Orontes River between them [equ]ally"⁶.

This literal translation is indeed correct from the syntactical viewpoint. However, the literal translation is highly doubtful when studied in light of other border-descriptions, and when the function of the stela is fully appreciated. As will be shown, division of river waters between two sides was an unparalleled phenomenon according to present knowledge. It is even more questionable since the Orontes River is the largest river in Syria; and the Antakya Stela was found at its lower section where water is always abundant⁷. An agreement to share water in such an area seems pointless. It is also puzzling to find such a phrase in a document which did not serve as an agreement between two sides, but actually—as will be demonstrated—was a land-grant declaration administered to one side only.

What follows is the central part of the inscription which concerns the border set between Zakur, king of Hamath, and Ataršumki, son of Adramu, king of Arpad:

4. [ta]-ḥu-mu šá ina bir-ti ¹za-ku-ri KUR.ḥa-ma-ta-a-a
5. [(u ina) bir]-ti ¹a-tar—šúm-ki A ¹ad-ra-mu ^{1d}10—ÉRIN.TÁḤ MAN KUR—AŠ ¹šam-ši—DINGIR LÚ.tar-ta-nu
6. [iš-ku]-nu-ni URU.na-aḥ-la-si a-di A.ŠÀ.MEŠ-šÚ GIŠ.KIRI₆.MEŠ-šÚ
7. [u d]i-ma-ti-šú gab-be šá ¹a-tar—šúm-ki šu-tú ÍD.ar-am-tú ina bi-ri-šú-nu

⁴) See Pazarcık Stela, Donbaz, "Stelae ...", *cit.* (fn. 2, above), p. 9, Obv. 11; S. Timm, "König Hesion II. von Damaskus", *WdO* 24 (1993), p. 57. For the mention of Ataršumki in the royal inscriptions of Adad-nērārī III see A.R. Millard - H. Tadmor, "Adad-Nirari III in Syria", «Iraq» 35 (1973), pp. 58, 61; A.K. Grayson, *CAH*², III/1, p. 272

⁵) See J.D. Hawkins, *CAH*², III/1, p. 400; Weippert, "Feldzüge ...", *cit.* (fn. 3, above), pp. 58-59; S. Ponchia, *L'Assiria e gli stati transeufratici nella prima metà dell'VIII sec. a. C.*, Padova 1991, pp. 46, 49.

⁶) "Den Orontes teilten sie zu [glei]chen Teilen zwischen ihnen/sich auf" (Weippert, "Feldzüge ...", *cit.* [fn. 3, above], p. 58, fn. 97); "They divided the Orontes River between them" (Donbaz, "Stelae ...", *cit.* [fn. 2, above], p. 7; A.K. Grayson, *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC* (RIMA 3), Toronto 1996, p. 203); "Essi hanno diviso il fiume Oronte in parti uguali tra di loro" (Ponchia, *L'Assiria ...*, *cit.* [fn. 5, above], p. 63).

⁷) The stela was found near the Orontes River "about half-way between Antakya and Samandağ (3 km) ... [in] a flat open valley covered with trees and orchards" (Donbaz, "Stelae ...", *cit.* [fn. 2, above], p. 5).

8. [ú-šam]-ši-lu-ma i-zu-zu mi-šir NAM A⁸ Id10—ÉRIN.TÁĤ MAN KUR—Aš¹ šam-ši—DINGIR <<LÚ>>
 9. [LÚ.tar]-ta-nu ú-za-ki-ú-ma a-na¹ a-tar—šum-ki A¹ ad—ra-mu a-na DUMU.MEŠ-šú
 10. [DU]MU DUMU.MEŠ-šú EGIR.MEŠ ki ri-mu-ti i-ri-mu URU-šú ta-ḥu-ma-ti-šú
 11. [x x] a-na mi-šir KUR-šú u-kín

The lexeme [ta]ḥūmu and the subordinate clause depending on it (*ša ina birti ... [išku]nūni*, ll. 4-6a) have been understood as a heading to the entire passage:

“(This is) the [bo]rder which Adad-nērārī, king of Assyria (and) Šamšī-ilu, the commander-in-chief, [estab]lished between Zakur of the land Hamath [and] Ataršumki son of Adramu.”

The following nominal phrase (*Naḥlasi ... šūtu*, ll. 6b-7a) defines the estate ascribed to Ataršumki:

“The town of Naḥlasi with all its fields, gardens [and s]ettlements is (the property) of Ataršumki.”

The next sentence (*Aramtu ... izūzū*, ll. 7b-8a) will be at the focus of our discussion. As stated above, it has been interpreted up to now as a statement concerning equal allocation of water between the two parties, and was translated:

“They divided the Orontes River between them [equ]ally.”

The translators do not specify who are the subjects of the verb “divided equally”, whether the Assyrian king and his commander-in-chief, or the two Syrian kings.

In the two closing sentences of the paragraph (*mišir annāma ... ukīn*, ll. 8b-11) the inscription specifies the legal status of the land granted to Ataršumki and his posterity:

“That border Adad-nērārī, king of Assyria, (and) Šamšī-ilu, the [comm]ander-in-chief, have given freely and clearly (of all obligation) to Ataršumki son of Adramu, to his sons and his future [gr]andsons. Its (principal) city

8) The sequence *mi-šir NAM A* (l. 8) is enigmatic. We follow Donbaz’s suggestion (“Stelae ...”, *cit.* [fn. 2, above], p. 7), further elaborated by Weippert (“Feldzüge ...”, *cit.* [fn. 3, above], p. 58 fn. 97), that this is a result of an erroneous metathesis, and should be understood as standing for **mi-šir a-nama* = **mišir annāma* (for the CVCV values of CVC signs in Neo-Assyrian see K. Deller, “Zweisilbige Lautwerte des Typs KVKV im Neuassyrischen”, *OrNS* 31 [1962], pp. 7-26). An alternative, equally valid suggestion is Deller’s proposal *apud* Donbaz: *mi-šir NAM A* = *mi-šir ana-a* (*ana* being a logographic value of *NAM*) = *mi-šir annā* (cf. *mi-šir an-na-a* in line 14). Both readings lead practically to the same translation: “that border”.

(and) its territories [...] to the territory of his (*i.e.*, Ataršumki) land he (*i.e.*, Adad-nērārī or Šamši-ilu) made firm.”

The phrase supposedly dealing with the water division must be studied in light of other border agreements, and compared with similar phrases in border-description terminology.

Another border-description which uses the formula *mašālu* Š + *zāzu* G, “to divide equally”⁹, and which must be taken into consideration, is the “Synchronistic History” — an Assyrian document composed in the same period as the Antakya Stela — *i.e.*, the early part of the 8th century B.C.¹⁰:

ul-tú ša-si-li KUR.šu-ba-ri [*a-di* KU]R.kar-du-ni-áš A.ŠÀ.MEŠ *ú-šam-ši-lu-ma i-zu-zu* [*mī*]-iš-ru ta-ḥu-mu iš-kun-nu, “From Šasili (of) Subartu [to] Karduniaš they divided the districts equally, (and) fixed the border.” (Grayson, ABC, p. 160, i, 21'-23').

In the “Synchronistic History” we find a formation of verbs identical in morphology and sequence to the Antakya Stela *ušamšiluma izūzū*, this time however with “districts” (*eqlēti*)¹¹ in the accusative. The border, designated here by *mišru taḥūmu*¹², is connected to the verb *šakānu*, as in the beginning of the Antakya Stela (l. 6). The verb *zāzu* occurs two more times in the “Synchronistic History” concerning the division of land, once the accusative is the general term *mišru*, and once there appears an explicit toponym — the land of Akkad¹³.

⁹) Cf. CAD M/I, p. 357b, § 7b; AHW., p. 624a, *s.v.* *mašālu*.

¹⁰) For the text of the “Synchronistic History”, see Grayson, ABC, pp. 157-170, and see the introductory remark on pp. 51-56. Cf. J.A. Brinkman, “Political Covenants, Treaties, and Loyalty Oaths in Babylonia and between Assyria and Babylonia”, in L. Canfora - M. Liverani - C. Zaccagnini (Eds.), *I trattati nel mondo antico. Forma, ideologia, funzione*, Roma 1990, pp. 85-90.

¹¹) Cf. AHW., p. 232a, *s.v.* *eqlu*.

¹²) The combination *mišru taḥūmu* is unique to this document. Grayson explains it as a hendyadis (ABC, p. 159, commentary *ad i*, 7’); cf. Brinkman, “Political Covenants ...”, *cit.* (fn. 10, above), p. 88.

¹³) In the first occurrence *zāzu* is preceded by *šakānu*: *i-na* UGU *mi-iš-ri ta-ḥu-mu an-ni-me mi-šir-re-šu-nu iš-tu tar-ši* KUR.*pi-la-as-qi ša* GIR.2 *am-ma-⟨ma-⟩te ša* ID.ḪAL.ḪAL URU.*ar-ma-an ugar-sa-li a-di lu-lu-me-e iš-ku-nu-ma i-zu-zu* (Grayson, ABC, p. 161, i, 28'-31'), “As for this very border, from Pilsaqi which is on the other side of the Tigris, (and) Arman (of) Ugarsalli to Lullume they set and divided their territories”. In another section the verb *zāzu* appears alone: KUR.*ak-ka-di-[i] ma[l-m]a-liš i-zu-zu* (Grayson, ABC, p. 167, iii, 29-30), “They divided the land of Akkad e[qu]a[lly]”.

The following phrase, which must also be considered in this context, is found in the “Chronicle P”, from the Kassite period¹⁴:

ina bi-ri-šú-nu mi-šir a-ḥa-meš ú-[k]in-nu, “Together they set the border between them.” (Grayson, ABC, p. 171, i, 3)

Here there is another point of comparison with the Antakya Stela: the words “between them” (*ina bīrišunu*) appear in similar context in both texts. However, while in the Antakya Stela the Orontes River is supposedly “divided equally between them”, in “Chronicle P” it is the border (*mišru*) that is set (*kānu D*) “between them”.

The third document which includes a border-description and must be taken into consideration, is a 14th century B.C. treaty between the Hittite king, probably Tudḫaliya II, and Šunašura, king of Kizzuwatna¹⁵. In this text the words *ina bīrišunu* and the verb *zāzu* appear together in one sentence as in the Antakya Stela:

i-na bi-ri-šū-nu ZAG i-ma-an-dá-dú (ù) i-za-a-(az)-zu, “The border district will be surveyed and divided between them.” (Weidner, *Politische Dokumente ...* [see fn. 15, below], p. 108, 41-42, 47-48, 50-51; cf. ll. 43-44)

As in the aforementioned examples, here too the accusative is a word representing territory (*pātu*)¹⁶.

Although the texts adduced here are from different literary sources¹⁷, and cover a large time span (14th-8th centuries B.C.), they clearly share common formulaic and stylistic features. It is, therefore, noteworthy that in all known sources the verbs of division never refer to rivers. It is always land that is divided equally between the sides, whether the territory is described by one of the words meaning border/territory

¹⁴) For the parallels between “Chronicle P” and the “Synchronistic History” see Brinkman, “Political Covenants ...”, *cit.* (fn. 10, above), p. 89.

¹⁵) KBo I, 5, iv, 40-66 = E.F. Weidner, *Politische Dokumente aus Kleinasien (Boghazköi Studien, H. 8-9)*, Leipzig 1923, pp. 108-111; G. Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts (Writing from the Ancient World, Society of Biblical Literature, 7)*, Atlanta 1994, pp. 13-22. Cf. A. Goetze, *Kizzuwatna and the Problem of Hittite Geography (Yale Oriental Series, Researches, 22)*, New Haven 1940, pp. 50-51; J. Garstang - O.R. Gurney, *The Geography of the Hittite Empire*, London 1959, p. 59.

¹⁶) The word *pātu* like *taḫūmu* means both border and territory (AHw., pp. 851-852; cf. above, fn. 2). This double meaning characterizes all words designating “border” in Akkadian, as well as in other Semitic and non-Semitic languages, such as Hebrew *gbl*, Aramaic *ṭm*, Hittite *arḫa* and Latin *finis/finēs*. For these and other examples see J.B. Palache, *Semantic Notes on the Hebrew Lexicon* (transl. by R.J.Z. Werblowski), Leiden 1959, p. 17.

¹⁷) The “Synchronistic History” and “Chronicle P” are historiographical compositions. The treaty between Tudḫaliya II and Šunašura was an international bilateral contract. As will be shown further in this article, the Antakya Stela functioned in a way similar to a Babylonian *kudurru* (see below, fn. 30).

(*mišru, pātu*) or districts (*eqlu*), or whether it concerns an explicit toponym (the land of Akkad).

Although rivers were not divided according to the existing sources, they did play a significant part in border-descriptions. Their natural features as long as unequivocal demarcation lines on the ground surface made them preferable border-marks. In international covenants the sides are often warned not to cross the river that was the border, an act that would have been considered hostile and offensive. A few examples will illustrate this point:

- 1) In the above mentioned Tudḫaliya II - Šunašura treaty the Šamri River forms a part of the border: *ÍD.ša-am-ri ZAG-šu LUGAL GAL i-na i-di KUR.URU.a-ta-ni-ya.KI ÍD.ša-am-ri ú-ul i-ib-bi-ir 1šu-na-aš-šu-ra i-na i-di KUR.URU.ḫa-at-ti.KI ÍD.ša-am-ra la i-ib-bi-ir*, “The Šamri River is his border¹⁸. The Great King (Tudḫaliya) must not cross over the Šamri River to the side of the land of Ataniya, Šunašura shall not cross over the Šamri River to the side of the land of Ḫatti.” (Weidner, *Politische Dokumente ... cit.*, [fn. 15, above], p. 110, 59-61; cf. 62-66);
- 2) In the Bronze Tablet, a Hittite treaty between Tudḫaliya IV, king of Ḫatti, and Kurunta, king of Tarḫuntašša, the river Kaštaraya marked one section of Tarḫuntašša’s border-line¹⁹.
- 3) In the Hittite treaty between Muršili II and Kupanta-Kurunta, king of Mira-Kuwaliya, two rivers are mentioned as border-marks of Mira-Kuwaliya: the Aštarpa River and the Šiyanta River²⁰. The king of Mira is warned not to trespass and not to settle any town beyond them.
- 4) In the Bible rivers are often mentioned as border-marks between countries or people. Note for example the words of the members of the two and a half tribes dwelling in the eastern side of Jordan to their brothers: “The Lord has made the Jordan a boundary between you and us ...” (*Jos.*, 22:25), or the following statement: “For the Arnon is the boundary of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites” (*Num.*, 21:13b).

¹⁸) The Šamri River is identified with modern Çeyhan, see Goetze, *Kizzuwatna ... cit.* (fn. 15, above), pp. 58-59.

¹⁹) H. Otten, *Die Bronzetafel aus Boğazköy: Ein Staatsvertrag Tudḫaliyas IV. (Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten, Beih. 1)*, Wiesbaden 1988, p. 12, i, 61: “In the direction of the border district of the city of Parḫa, his frontier is the Kaštaraya River” (translation according to G. Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts, cit.* (fn. 15, above), p. 110. This river is known as *Kestros* in classical sources, perhaps modern Aksu (Otten, *cit.*, p. 37, fn. 37). In this border-description the river is but one landmark, mentioned among many other landmarks of Tarḫuntašša’s borders, such as towns, mountains and even specific stones.

²⁰) KBo V, 13, i, 29-32 = J. Friedrich, *Staatsverträge des Hatti-Reiches in hethitischer Sprache*, I, MVAG 31/2 (1926), pp. 95-179, border-description on p. 116, § 9, 29-32; Beckman, *Diplomatic Texts ... cit.* (fn. 19, above), p. 71. See S. Heinhold-Kramer, *Arzawa (Texte der Hethiter, 8)* Heidelberg 1977, pp. 201-202; G.F. Del Monte - J. Tischler, *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der hethitischen Texte (RGTC 6)*, Wiesbaden 1978, p. 270.

It is noteworthy that nothing is said about using or dividing any of these river waters. Again we note that the Antakya Stela shares terminology with other texts, but there is no known example beside the Antakya Stela of dividing river water between the parties. It seems that rivers were often used as border-marks, but it was the land that was divided between the sides.

River waters were not divided according to known sources, but allocation of other water-sources is explicitly mentioned in a Hittite document. The comment referring to sharing of water-sources located on the border is found in the detailed description of the borders of the kingdom of Tarḫuntašša, given in the treaty between the Hittite king and Ulmi-Teššub king of Tarḫuntašša²¹. A parallel description appears in the Bronze Tablet mentioned above, a treaty between Tudḫaliya IV and Kurunta, king of Tarḫuntašša²². In the border-description of the Kingdom of Tarḫuntašša we find an explicit statement regarding the rights of the sides over a mountainous water-source, and it is to be shared by both sides:

“In the direction of the city Wanzataruwa (and) the city Kunzinaša, Mount Arlanta and the city of Alanā are his border. Alanā belongs to the land of the Ḫulaya River, but the water which is upon Mount Arlanta belongs jointly to the land of the Ḫulaya River and Ḫatti.”²³

21) KBo IV, 10, Obv. 15'-32' = E. Forrer, *Forschungen*, I/1, Berlin 1926, pp. 6-8; cf. the emendations by A. Götze, “Randnoten zu Forrers Forschungen”, «Kleinasiatische Forschungen» I/1 (1927), pp. 125-127. Recently re-edited by Th. van der Hout, *Der Ulmitešub-Vertrag (Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten, 38)*, Wiesbaden 1995, pp. 24-31. For an English translation, see Beckman, *Diplomatic Texts ...*, cit. (fn. 15, above), pp. 104-108.

22) Despite the differences in the last two paragraphs of the border-description (Otten, *Bronzetafel ...*, cit. [fn. 15, above], p. 12, i, 50-66; KBo IV, 10, Obv. 29'-32' = Forrer, *Forschungen ...*, cit. [fn. 21, above], p. 8; van der Hout, *Ulmitešub ...*, cit. [fn. 21, above], p. 30), it is obvious that they dealt with the same geographical section, as can be seen from the mention of similar names. For an analysis of differences see Otten, *Bronzetafel ...*, cit. (fn. 19, above), pp. 36-38. On the question of the relationship of the two treaties there are two different approaches. According to one view, Ulmi-Teššub was the successor of Kurunta, and his treaty was later than the Bronze Tablet (Th. van der Hout, “A Chronology of the Tarhuntasša-Treaties”, JCS 41 [1989], pp. 100-114, esp. pp. 104-105). The second opinion is that Kurunta and Ulmi-Teššub are two names relating to the same person, and that the Ulmi-Teššub treaty preceded the Bronze Tablet. According to this view, the Hittite king is to be identified with Ḫattušili III (O.R. Gurney, “The Treaty with Ulmi-Tešub”, AnSt 43 [1993], pp. 13-28; J.D. Hawkins, *The Hieroglyphic Inscription of the Sacred Pool Complex at Ḫattusa (SÜDBURG) (Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten, Beih. 3)*, [Wiesbaden 1995], pp. 61-62).

23) Otten, *Bronzetafel ...*, cit. (fn. 19, above), p. 12, I, 38-42; KBo IV, 10, Obv. 24'-26' = Forrer, *Forschungen ...*, cit. (fn. 21, above), pp. 7-8; van der Hout, *Ulmitešub ...*, cit., p. 28; English translation by Beckman, *Diplomatic Texts ...*, cit. (fn. 15, above), p. 109. The sharing of the water on Mount Arlanta was “clearly for access for watering flocks” (Hawkins, *Sacred Pool ...*, cit. [fn. 22, above], p. 51, fn. 170).

This is the only known example in border-descriptions in which equal rights over water were given to two political entities with a joint border. This example, however, is substantially different from the Antakya Stela. The border-description of Tarḥuntašša is not dealing with a river but with water-source(s) on mount Arlanta. They contain by definition a limited amount of water compared to the abundant flow of the Orontes River. The need to say explicitly that both sides have equal rights over water-sources in a dry mountainous area is not surprising.

Our hesitation in accepting that the Antakya Stela could have denoted division of the Orontes water is enhanced when studying the functional setting of the stela. Several points must be regarded in this context.

First, the stela does not deal comprehensively with the whole Hamath-Arpad border. The estate of Naḥlasi, which had been given tax-free to the Arpadian side, is the only area mentioned in the Antakya Stela (ll. 6b-7a, 8b-11a). Nothing is said about land-grants allotted to king Zakur of Hamath on the other side. In congruity with this fact, the maledictions at the end of the inscription are directed against future violators of Ataršumki's rights only (ll. 14-15a), while there is no mention of parallel concern regarding king Zakur's rights. The stela concentrates, therefore, on the Arpadian side alone, and there, only with the estate of Naḥlasi.

The area in which the stela was found offers another pointer to the stela's functional setting. The stela was discovered north-west of the Orontes River, about half way between Antakya and Samandağ²⁴. As Weippert has pointed out, this area must have originally belonged to the kingdom of Pattina/Unqi²⁵. The historical circumstances of the setting of the Antakya Stela were accordingly, that this area had been expropriated from Unqi and granted by the Assyrians to Arpad, whereas the confiscated area lying south-east of the river had been probably allotted to Hamath²⁶. Although the exact location of Naḥlasi remains unknown, it is clear that it was situated in the immediate vicinity of the spot where the stela was discovered.

The location of the stela and its treatment of only a limited segment of the border belonging to the Arpadian side point to the conclusion that the Antakya Stela was a

24) Donbaz, "Stelae ...", *cit.* (fn. 2, above), p. 5.

25) Weippert, "Feldzüge ...", *cit.* (fn. 3, above), pp. 58-59.

26) A comparable historical situation existed in Ugarit when it became a vassal state to Šuppiluliuma king of Ḫatti in 1366 B.C. As reward for the loyalty of Ugarit, the Hittite king expanded its territory, granting by a royal edict to Niqmadu, king of Ugarit, cities and their surrounding territories at the expense of the vanquished land of Mukiš (RS 17.340 = J. Nougayrol, PRU IV, Paris 1956, pp. 48-52; cf. RS 17.62, 17.339A = *ibid.*, pp. 65-70. See M. Astour, "Ugarit and the Great Powers", in G.D. Young[(Ed.), *Ugarit in Retrospect*, Indiana 1981, p. 21).

document issued to one party — Ataršumki²⁷. We may safely assume that a parallel document declaring the Hamathian land-grant was given to Zakur, and was positioned on the opposite bank of the Orontes River.

It should be further noted that the Antakya Stela exhibits some similar features to the Pazarcık Stela²⁸. The obverse side of the Pazarcık Stela records the setting of a new border between Kummuhu and Gurgum by Adad-nērārī III, and here, too, the stela is directed to one side only, Ušpilulume, king of Kummuhu (ll. 19-20). Of special interest in this context is the text on the reverse, in which Shalmaneser IV reaffirms the border, and states explicitly: “On my return (from Damascus) I gave this boundary-stone (*taḫūmu*)²⁹ to Ušpilulume, king of the people of Kummuhu” (ll. 11-13a).

We may conclude that both the Antakya Stela and the Pazarcık Stela record an agreement between two parties, but that each stela carries a text relevant for one side only. They functioned probably in a way similar to a Babylonian *kudurru* in defining private lands³⁰. In such a context we do not expect to find a sentence commenting on the equal sharing of river water by both sides.

The arguments presented here call for a reconsideration of the generally accepted translation of lines 7-8 of the Antakya Stela: “They divided the Orontes River between them equally”. How can we understand this phrase in a way that would not necessitate such a translation?

27) We also note that while the inscription mentions the name of the country king Zakur rules over (“Zakur of the land of Hamath”, l. 4), there is no parallel mention of Arpad: only its king is mentioned (“Ataršumki, son of Adramu”, l. 5). This could also indicate that the Antakya Stela was a document handed over to the Arpadian king, for whom an explicit mention of Arpad is redundant. In comparison, the Pazarcık Stela, which was given to Ušpilulume, king of Kummuhu, refers to Ataršumki as “Ataršumki son of Adramu, of the city of Arpad” (Donbaz, “Stelae ...”, *cit.* [fn. 2, above], p. 9, 11). Our interpretation of the historical circumstances leading to the setting of the stela, its function and its contents stands in contrast to J. Kuan’s comments on this stela: “The focus of the text is a border dispute between Zakkur of Hamath and Ataršumki of Arpad along the Orontes ... The result was an agreement that allowed both parties equal access to the Orontes” (J. Kuan, *Neo-Assyrian Historical Inscriptions and Syria-Palestina*, Hong-Kong 1995, pp. 77-78).

28) For the text of the Pazarcık Stela see Donbaz, “Stelae ...”, *cit.* (fn. 2, above), p. 9; Timm, “König Hesion ...”, *cit.* (fn. 4, above), pp. 57-59. Literary parallels between the Antakya Stela and the Pazarcık Stela (especially in the maledictions) were discussed by C. Zaccagnini, “Notes on the Pazarcık Stela”, SAAB 7 (1993), pp. 54-55.

29) It is noteworthy that *taḫūmu* here means “border-stone”, see Timm, “König Hesion ...”, *cit.* (fn. 4, above), p. 62.

30) According to Brinkman, “Down to the end of the Kassite dynasty, almost all *kudurrus* were concerned with royal grants of agricultural land, either as a direct gift by the king to a person or god, or the confirmation of such an earlier gift. Toward the end of the period, tax exemptions (*zākūtu*) began to assume a greater role in the texts, especially in land grants made to members of the royal family”; he further states that the *kudurrus* functioned as a “documentary monument intended to strengthen or confirm the efficacy of the legal action; it was essentially for display”: J.A. Brinkman, RIA 6 (1980-1983), *s.v. kudurru*, esp. pp. 268b, 270a.

A new syntactical analysis of the passage in question may indeed suggest, as Elnathan Weissert kindly pointed out to me, that the Antakya Stela does not necessarily refer to the division of the water of the Orontes River. According to Weissert's suggestion, lines 4-8 may be construed in the following way. The lexeme *taḥūmu* does not form part of an independent heading, as suggested in earlier translations: "(this is) the border which Adad-nērārī ...[esta]blished between ..."; but serves as a direct object in the main clause which is comprised of [*ta*]ḥūmu (l. 4) [*u*šam]šilūma izūzū (l. 8). As noted above, *taḥūmu* denotes the zone which belonged to the former Unqi and is now divided between Hamath and Arpad. The identity of the subject remains, however, unclear. It could be Adad-nērārī and Šamši-ilu, who are the subjects of the following subordinate clause, or the Syrian kings, Zakur of the land Hamath and Ataršumki. Since in all other border agreements the subject of the 3rd person plural verbs are the two parties directly involved, it seems that the latter possibility is preferable. However, the Antakya Stela is different from the other examples adduced above in that it is not a bilateral agreement involving two sides, but a land-grant issued by a third party, so the two possibilities are equally valid.

The verbs [*u*šam]šilūma izūzū are separated from the direct object, [*ta*]ḥūmu, by a subordinate clause and two parenthetical clauses:

- a. The subordinate clause poses no difficulty: ([*ta*]ḥūmu) ša ina birti Zakuri Ḥamataya [*u* ina bīr]ti Ataršumki mār Adramu Adad-nērārī šar māt Aššur Šamši-ilu tartānu [*i*šku]nūni (ll. 4-6a).
- b. The first parenthetical clause is a nominal clause, and its interpretation does not present any syntactical problems either: *Naḥlasi adi eqlētišu kirātišu* [*u* d]imātišu *gabbe ša Ataršumki šūtu* (ll. 6b-7a).
- c. The first parenthetical clause is followed, according to this suggestion, by another nominal clause, the copula remaining in ellipsis: *Aramtu ina bīrišunu* (l. 7b). The purpose of the second parenthetical clause is simply to state that the Orontes River lies between the two parties, *i.e.*, constitutes the border. From the syntactical point of view, we may compare the phrase "the Orontes (is) between them" with the phrase *šulmu ina bīrišunu*, "peace is between them", employed in a Neo-Assyrian legal document (SAA VI, 238, 8)³¹.

The sentence [*ta*]ḥūmu ... [*u*šam]šilūma izūzū, regulating the grant of Naḥlasi and its surroundings to Ataršumki, is now followed by a declaration expanding on the tax-free status of the granted land: *mišir annāma Adad-nērārī šar māt Aššur Šamši-ilu* [*tar*]tānu *uzakkiūma ana Ataršumki mār Adramu ana mārēšu* [*m*]ār mārēšu *arkāti kī rīmūti irīmū ālšu taḥūmātišu* [...] *ana mišir mātišu ukān* (ll. 8b-11a).

³¹) Th. Kwasman - S. Parpola, *Legal Transactions of the Royal Court of Nineveh, Part I: Tiglath-Pileser III through Esarhaddon* (SAA VI), Helsinki 1991, p. 187, no. 238, 8.

Lines 4-11a of the Antakya Stela may, therefore, be translated as follows:

“The border zone (*i.e.*, land formerly belonging to Unqi), which Adad-nērārī (III), king of Assyria, (and) Šamšī-ilu, the commander-in-chief, [esta]blished between Zakur of the land of Hamath [and] Ataršumki, son of Adramu — the town of Naḥlasi with all its fields, gardens [and s]ettlements is (the property) of Ataršumki; the Orontes River (is situated) between them — they (*i.e.*, Adad-nērārī III and Šamšī-ilu the commander-in-chief, or the king of Hamath and the king of Arpad) divided [equ]ally between them. That border-zone (actually: its Arpadian side) Adad-nērārī (III), king of Assyria, (and) Šamšī-ilu, the commander-in-chief, have given freely and clearly (of all obligations) to Ataršumki, son of Adramu, to his sons and his future [gr]andsons. Its (principal) city (and) its territories [...] to the territory of his (*i.e.*, Ataršumki) land he (*i.e.*, Adad-nērārī III, or more likely Šamšī-ilu) made firm.”

According to this translation the river Orontes is mentioned only as a border-mark between the sides (*ina bīrišunu*), similar to the mentioning of other rivers in other border-descriptions, discussed above. The verbs indicating division [*ušam*]šī-lūma izūzū, as in other documents, are connected to the border-zone (*[ta]hūmu*). The Antakya Stela does not, therefore, include a remark about division and equal use of the Orontes River between the sides.

It seems that former translations were misled by modern reality and modern concepts of borders. Nowadays, rivers shared by two countries or more, whether the border follows the river or cuts across it, are called “international rivers”³². These rivers are the subjects of detailed international agreements. In cases where a river flows from one country to another agreements define not only the quantity, but often also the quality of river water allocated to each country³³. Modern border agreements include detailed definitions of use of water for navigation, fishing, recreation, flood control, hydroelectric power generation, waste disposal and more. The latest example of water issues settled by bilateral agreement is the peace treaty signed between the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan on 26th October 1994³⁴.

³²) See M.I. Glassner - H.J. de Blij, *Systematic Political Geography*³, USA 1980, pp. 357-363.

³³) In 1974 USA and Mexico signed a treaty defining the quality of the Colorado River that flows from USA to Mexico (see J.E. Chappel Jr., “Where the Colorado Flows into Mexico”, *The Geography of Border Landscapes*, London - New York 1991, p. 249). Other famous international rivers which caused dispute are the Indus River, the Nile, the Columbia River, the Ganges and the Euphrates.

³⁴) The water issue was carefully considered in this treaty. Article 6 declares: “The parties agree mutually to recognize the rightful allocations of both of them in Jordan River and Yarmouk River waters and

The present situation, in which all available water, both above surface and underground, are seen as finite resources, seems to underly the former translations. It is, however, a modern phenomenon³⁵. In order to fully comprehend the possibility of water division and water sharing in the past, one must consider the text in its correct historical context.

Araba/Arava ground water in accordance with the agreed acceptable principles, quantities and quality as set out in Annex II ...". Annex II deals accordingly with water related matters in great detail. It states for example the exact amount of water allocated to the sides from the Yarmouk River, while taking into account fluctuation of quantity of water in different seasons: "a. Summer period — 15th May to 15th October of each year. Israel pumps (12) MCM and Jordan gets the rest of the flow" (Annex II, article I, 1, a). Published in *Kitvei Amana* (in Hebrew), 1069, vol. 32.

³⁵ Cf. Roy E.H. Mellor, *Nation, State, and Territory, a Political Geography*, London - New York 1989, pp. 53, 74.