The meaning of the two clauses in the Pazarcik stela Rev. 18-19 is far from clear. The two sentences are inserted in the curse section at the end of the inscription (Rev. 13-20): "13-17 Whoever shall take (it, i.e.: the boundary stone) away from the hand of Ušpilulume, his sons (and) his grandsons: may Aššur, Marduk, Adad, Sin, Šamaš not stand at his lawsuit (and) not listen to his supplication; 18-19 (...) Taboo of Aššur, my god, (and) Sin, 'who dwells in Harran'.

Donbaz's transliteration and translation of these lines are: 18 Kur-su ki-i SIG₄ lu-ša-x-x ur-ru-u₄₄ mî-ma ina UGU MAN la i-ma-lik "and may they quickly smash his country like a brick. May he no longer give advice to the king". His philological remarks are restricted to suggesting that urruh "presumably [stands] for urruhiš".

Ponchia follows Donbaz's reading and translation of line 18 ("rapidamente distruggano(?) il suo paese come un mattone d'argilla"); as concerns line 19, she reads mâm-ma ina ugu-šâ la i-ma-lik and translates "nessuno gli darà consiglio(?)". Ponchia is well aware of the uncertainty of her translation and points out the main difficulties of line 19: 1) the shift from 3rd plural (lines 16-18) to 3rd singular (line 19) as concerns the subject(s) of the sentences; 2) the unparalleled use of malâku ("to give advice") in association with ina muhhi. As alternative interpretations Ponchia suggests either

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1) V. Donbaz, Two Neo-Assyrian Stelae in the Antakya and Kahramanmaraş Museums, ARRIM 8 (1990), pp. 5-24 (photos: pp. 15-24; cuneiform copy: p. 8; transliteration and translation: pp. 9-10). See lastly S. Ponchia, L'Assiria e gli stati transeaufratici nella prima metà dell'VIII sec. a.C., Padova 1991, pp. 8-11 and p. 12 fn. 2. This article is an issue of the joint research project "Political institutions and economic structures in the ancient world" with the participation of the Universities of Bari, Bologna and Roma I - La Sapienza (national co-ordinator: A. Giardina, of the latter University) and the financial support of the Italian Ministry of University.

2) Ponchia, Assiria, p. 12 fn. 2.
“Nessuno (gli) darà consigli (come) ad un re (ina ugu man)” or “Mai più darà consigli al re”—the latter rendering corresponds to Donbaz’s translation. Finally, she calls attention to a possible use of malâku under the influence of Aramaic mlk “to reign” and quotes the Ugaritic occurrence la-a i-ma-li-ik ugu-su “non può regnare su di lui” \(^3\).

My basic objections against the above interpretations are: 1) the translation of ki-i sig4 lu-śá-x-x “may they smash ... like a brick” is not supported by any (tentative) restoration of the partially broken verbal form and/or by adducing any comparative piece of textual evidence; 2) the various renderings of line 19 hardly make any sense, let aside that such a clause is totally unparalleled in the repertoire of curse formulas attested in the I (and II) millennium.

A closer scrutiny of this passage is in order: a comparison with the curse section in the obverse of the same stela (Obv. 19-23) is revealing:

Obv. 19: man-nu šá <TA> šu-at ¹uš-pi-lu-lu-me
Rev. 13: man-nu šá TA šu-at ¹uš-pi-lu-lu-me

Obv. 20: DUMU.meš-šú DUMU.DUMU.meš-šú e-ki-mu
Rev. 14: DUMU.meš-šú DUMU.DUMU.meš-šú e-ki-mu

Obv. 21: aš-šur ⁴AMAR.UTU ⁴ISKUR ³⁰DUU
Rev. 15: aš-šur ⁴AMAR.UTU ⁴ISKUR ³⁰DUU

Obv. 22: a-na di-ni-šú lu la i-za-zu
Rev. 16: a-na di-ni-šú lu la i-za-zu

Obv. 23: ik-kib aš-šur DINGIR-ia ³⁰DUU a-šib URU.KASKAL
Rev. 20: ik-kib aš-šur DINGIR-ia ³⁰DUU a-šib URU.KASKAL

Clearly enough, Rev. 17-19 represents an amplification of the curse section: three more maledictions are set against any trespasser of the borderline established between Ušpilulume, king of Kummuh, and Qalparuda, king of Gurgum.

The first malediction (Rev. 17: pi-ti up-ni-šú la i-šá-me-u-šú “May they [scil. the gods listed in Rev. 15] not listen to his supplication [lit.: opening of his fist]”) corresponds to the curse which is set at the end of the Antakya stela of the same Adad-nirari: \(^1⁹\) [i]k-ri-bi-šù ul i-šá-mu-á “May they [scil. the gods listed in lines 17-18] not listen to his

\(^3\) Ibid. The passage, which is quoted after D. Sivan, Grammatical Analysis and Glossary of the Northwest Semitic Vocables in Akkadian Texts of the 15th - 13th C. B. C. from Canaan and Syria, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1984, p. 180, in fact is only attested in PRU III, p. 135: RS 15.137: 16. See below, p. 56 and fn. 10.
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prayers”⁴: note that the curse section of the Antakya stela consists of one malediction only, as is the case of Pazarcık Obverse.

The fourth malediction in Pazarcık Rev. 19 shows a 3rd sg. present (īmālīk)⁵: from a syntactic and stylistic viewpoint we should reasonably infer that also the broken verb in Rev. 18 ought to be a 3rd sg. verbal form. In other words, the subject of curses 1) and 2) (Rev. 16 and 17), with the verb in 3rd plur., are the gods, whereas the grammatical/logical subject of curses 3) and 4) (Rev. 18 and 19), with the verb in 3rd sg., is the sinner who dares to remove the boundary stone.

I turn now to Rev. 18-19. As concerns the former sentence, it should be noted that, in curse formulas, the association of “bricks” (libītu) with “countries” (mātu) or “territories, areas” (kaqqaru), does not refer to the “smashing, crushing, etc.” of the country/territory, but to their drastic “reduction in size, narrowing”. See VTE⁶, 527: am-ma-ra sī̄g₃₄ kaq-qu-ru lu-si-qu-ne-ku-nu “May (the gods) reduce the territory as narrow as a brick for you” and cf. the damaged passage in the treaty of Aššu-nirari V with Mati-ilu, I, 5'-7': ᵃ⁻ᵃ⁻ⁿᵃ⁻ᵘ⁻ᶻᵘ⁻ᶻⁱ ša DUMU.M⁻⁻SU ...

In the light of this, I suggest to read lu-ṣa’(ṣṣu)⁷ her⁸ and to interpret Rev. 18 as

⁴) Donbaz, ARRIM, pp. 6-7; cf. Ponchia, Assiria, pp. 10-11.
⁵) Hence Ponchia’s puzzlement, for which see above.
⁷) See lastly SAA II, p. 8, with previous literature which includes the translations of E.Reiner, in ANET, pp. 532-533 and R.Börger, in Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments, I/2, Gütersloh 1983, pp. 155-158. I do not entirely agree with the restorations and the translations proposed by the above scholars: due to its poor state of preservation, the reconstruction of the entire passage (I, 1'-9') is quite uncertain: ᵃ⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻اقلاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقاقة

⁸) I base myself on the photos in ARRIM, 8 (1990), pp. 18 and 24 rather than on Donbaz’s cuneiform copy (ibid., p. 8).
follows: “May his country become quickly(?) as small as a brick”\(^9\).

Let us turn to line 19. Moving from the assumption that the subject of the sentence is the would-be trespasser, we can easily dispose of translations like “May he no longer give advice to the king (i.e. Ušpilulumé)”. On the other hand, an (otherwise unparallelled) curse such as “Nobody will give advice to him” or “Nobody will give advice to him, as if he were) a king” would not at all fit the climax of the curse sequence, especially after the drastic malediction of line 18. The solution of the problem should then be sought in another direction. In my opinion, the meaning of the verb malākū in Rev. 19 of the Pazarcik stela is not that of Akkadian malākū “to give advice” but corresponds to that of III, II and I millennium West Semitic mlk “to reign”\(^10\). All in all,

\(^9\) For the use of ṣēhēru “to become small”, said of countries (many), see briefly CAD S, p. 121a; AHw., p. 1087b, s. v. ṣēhēru G 1 d. As concerns ur-ra-uh, one can either think of an abnormal form of urruhū (so Donbaz, ARRIM, 8 [1990], p. 10) or else to the 3rd sg. present of ururu D “to hasten, to come quickly” used in hendiadys with ṣēhēru (cf. CAD A/2, p. 222a; AHw., p. 63a) although the standard sequence is urruhū + other verb. On the other hand see the expression ḫaḷāq māt uurru “the destruction of the country will be hastened” (C. Virolleaud, L’Astrologie Chaldéenne, Paris 1908-1911, Šamaš, IV, 12, and cf. XIV, 44; cf. CAD A/2, p. 221b; contra, AHw., p. 63b [but then p. 1544b]).

\(^10\) See the important article of J. Renger, Zur Wurzel MLK in akkadischen Texten aus Syrien und Palästina, in A. Archi (Ed.), Eblaite Personal Names and Semitic Name-Giving, Roma 1988, pp. 165-172, where it is convincingly suggested that malākū in the Amarna letters means something like “sich als/wie ein Herrscher/König verhalten bzw. handeln; herrschen, befehlen”. I totally share Renger’s opinion: in a recent note of mine (Breath of Life and Water to Drink, in L. Milano [Ed.], Drinking in Ancient Societies. History and Culture of Drink in the Ancient Near East, in press) I have tried to offer an explanation for two of the three “difficult” passages listed by Renger, ibid., pp. 171-172 (EA 116, 14-17 and 191, 9); the third passage (EA 136, 24-27) shall be commented upon presently. As concerns the occurrence of malākū in PRU III, p. 135 (RS 15.137), 16, the translation of the verb cannot be “to reign” but requires a more nuanced rendering (cf. CAD M/1, p. 158, s. v. malākū B “to rule, to hold power”; AHw., p. 594a, s. v. malākū III “herrschen, verfugen über”; Renger, cit., p. 171, n. [30]: “haben keine Gewalt überhin”) in consideration of the specific context in which this clause is inserted and of the close connection of PRU III, pp. 134-135 (RS 15.137) with three other documents: PRU III, pp. 79-81 (RS 16.239), pp. 83-84 (RS 16.157) and pp. 85-86 (RS 16.250) —all these texts belong to the dossier of Abdu son of Abdi-nergal. The case at hand origins from a royal grant of real estate coupled with exemption from military “aid” and corvée obligations that are commuted into a yearly payment of a specified amount of silver: I have briefly dealt with these texts in Prehistory of the Achaemenid Tributary System, in P. Briant - C. Herrenschmidt (Eds.), Le tribut dans l’empire perse, Paris 1989, pp. 206-207. In PRU III, p. 135, 15-16 we have: “The city mayor (hazannu lāli) and the overseer of the fields (akil egalī) la-a i-ma-li-ik ugu-tu; in PRU III, p. 81, 31-33: “The overseer of the chariots (akil narkabti) shall not rule / have power over PN (la u-a’-ma-’er ugu PN)” (differently AHw., p. 1472b, s. v. (w)āru D 6 a “über senden, schicken”); in PRU III, p. 84, 22-23 and p. 86, 17-18: “He is free (za-ki) from the hands of the overseer of the chariots and of the (city) mayor”. The parallel between malākū and (w)u’uru was already pointed out by CAD A/2, p. 322b and M/1, p. 158a: clearly enough malākū in PRU III, p. 135 cannot straightforward mean “to reign” (cf. CAD H, p. 164a: “The mayor of the city and the overseer of the fields shall not lord it over him”). The isolated Ugaritic occurrence of malākū ugu “to exercise authority
the only reasonable translation of line 19 is: "In no way (mim-ma ... la) may he exercise kingship over the king (scil. Ušpilulume)".

It should be noted that *malāku* in Pazarcik Rev. 19 corresponds to the current formulaic expression *sarrūtu (malkūtu) epēšu* "to exercise kingship, rule, domination": as concerns the pair *malku – malāku* cf. Sefire, I, B, 22: *kl mlky' zy ymlkn b'rp'd* “all the kings that will reign in Arpad”, but see in particular 3R, 66, X, 24'-25': *ugu lugal.meš malkūtu sarrūtu kiššūtu lēpuš* "May he exercise rule, domination and overlordship over (all other) kings".11

Summing up, the translation of Pazarcik Rev. 13-20 should run as follows:

13. Whoever shall take (it = the boundary stone) away from the hand of Ušpilulume,
14. his sons (and) his grandsons:
15. may Aššur, Marduk, Adad, Sīn, Šamaš
16. not stand at his lawsuit

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17. (and) not listen to his supplication;
18. may his country become quickly as small as a brick,
19. in no way may he exercise kingship over the (legitimate) king.

For a better appreciation of the formulaic repertoire of the curse section in the Pazarcik stela — whose dating ought to be set in an early phase of Adad-nirari’s reign (possibly 805 B.C.) whereas the Antakya stela was probably written in 79612 — attention should be drawn to the fragmentary stone inscription recording the treaty between Šamši-Adad V and Marduk-zakir-šumi I of Babylon13. Following Parpola-Watanabe’s suggestion14, this treaty was concluded during the last years of Shalmaneser III’s reign, before Šamši-Adad’s accession (i.e. 827-824). On the other hand, the Aššur-nirari-Mati-iliu treaty is certainly to be dated in Aššur-nirari’s first regnal year (754)15. As concerns the Bar-ga’ayah-Mati’-el treaty, the dating of the three stelae is still a matter of debate, which basically depends on the highly controversial and as yet unsolved problem of Bar-ga’ayah’s identification16.

Clearly enough, we are faced with a cluster of documentary evidence, spanning over some 70 years, that significantly witnesses to formulaic and stylistic continuities but at the same time mirrors the deep change which took place in the military and political interactions between Assyria and its neighbouring countries — a change that drastically affected the formalization of international relationships17.

Coming back to the treaty between Šamši-Adad V with Marduk-zakir-šumi I, R. Borger18 has pointed out the close parallelism between the curses in lines 22'-35' and

12) Cf. lastly Ponchia, Assiria, pp. 46 and 49.
14) SAA II, pp. XXVI-XXVII.
15) Cf. SAA II, pp. XXVII-XXVIII.
16) See briefly SAA II, pp. XXVII-XXVIII, where 754 is suggested (// Aššur-nirari - Mati-iliu treaty) and the opposite view of A. Lemaire - J.-M. Durand, Les inscriptions araméennes de Sîrat et l’Assyrie de Shamshi-iliu, Genève-Paris 1984, p. 58, who date Stela III to the reign of Adad-nirari III (810-783, some time between the years 796 and 783) and Stelae I and II to the first regnal years of Shalmaneser IV (782) and Aššur-dan III [text: II (sic!)] (772).
17) See lastly M. Liverani, Terminologia e ideologia del patto nelle iscrizioni reali assire, in Trattati, pp. 113-147, esp. pp. 120-127; Brinkman, Covenants, pp. 81-112.
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those of the epilogue of Hammurapi’s Laws. Borger’s remarks have met with a general consent. For my part, I would like to draw attention to the important connections between these curses and those of the later treaties: few examples will suffice to illustrate my point.

— 18'-19': “(May Marduk) destroy his country, smite his people [through hunger] and famine (18’ ... KUR-su [u]19’ [li-hal-liq ina bu-bu-t[i] u hu-šah-hi UN.MEŠ-šū li-šam-qiṭ]’); cf. line 33’: [KUR-su ina hu-šah-hi u bu-bu-ti] li-hal-[liq]. Cf. Aššur-nirari - Mati-ulu, IV, 8-10: “May Adad ... put an end to Mati-ulu’s country and to the people of his country through want, famine and hunger (8 ... ina su-un-qi 9 su.KÛ hu-šah-hi šà RN KUR-su UN.MEŠ KUR-šū 10 liq-qat-ti ... )”.


— 34'-35': “(May Adad) [turn] his [country] into [ruin mounds left by a flood] (34’ ... [KUR-šu a-n[a DU₄ a-bu-bi] 35’ [li-tir ... ]”). Cf. Aššur-nirari - Mati-ulu, V, 5-7: “May Aššur ... turn your country into wasteland, your people into an inundation/devastation, your cities into ruin mounds, your house into ruins/wasteland (5 ... KUR-ka ana tū-šā-ri 6 UN.MEŠ-ka ana GI.R.BAL URU.MEŠ-ka ana DU₄ ME E-ka 7 ana har-ba-ti lu-tir)”. Cf. also Sefire, I, A, 32: “May its (i.e. Arpad’s) vegetation be laid waste into a desert; may Arpad be(come) a mound of ruins (wḥt lyšmn ‘hwḥ wthwy ‘rpḍ tl)”.

19) The restorations at the beginning of the lines largely depend on the estimated missing part on the left side of the inscription. As said before, there is a considerable disagreement between Brinkman and Parpola - Watanabe. However, considering that in lines 19'-20' the right edge of the stone is preserved, and that no more than three signs are needed in order to fill the gap at the beginning of line 25’ ([kab-ia-at]), the original width of the stone can be reckoned with a considerable degree of confidence. According to Brinkman, Covenant, p. 107 fn. 102, the surface measurements of the stone are 90 x 123 x 47 mm; according to Parpola - Watanabe, SAA II, p. XLIII, they are 86 x 125 x 44 mm: to judge from the size of the signs and their density in the lines, the original width of the inscription should have measured ca 15 to 15.5 cm, and not 14 as reckoned in SAA II, p. XLIII. My restorations, which do not always coincide with those of Brinkman and of Parpola - Watanabe, try to fit into the actual length of the lacunae.
— 31'-32': "([May Sin]) [bring to an end (days, months and) years of] his [reign in sighing and] [moaning] (UD.MES ITI.MES) MU. MEŠ PA]-LE²-E-SU I-NA TA-NÉ-HI "Ò" [DIM-MA-TI] 32 [LI-SAQ-TI ...]"; see also 23'-24': "([May Illil) determine as his [fate] a reign of exhaustion, scarce days, years of famine] (UD.MES I-SU-TI MU. MEŠ HU-[Sah-hi]) 24 [A-NA SIM-TI LI]-SIM-SU ...)." Cf. Sefire, I, A, 29-30: "May the sound of the lyre be heard no more in Arpad but instead, among its people, the moaning of disease, the noise of cries of distress and of lamentation" (see Appendix). Note that the sequence ûmû – arhû – şanâtî – palû does not occur in later Neo-Assyrian treaties and loyalty oaths.


— 28'a: "([May Šamaš) overturn his kingship (šar-ru-us-su LI-IS-KIP)]." Cf. Pazarcik Rev. 19 (see above, pp. 55-58) and also Aššur-nirari-Mati-ilu, V, 5: "May Aššur, father of the gods, who grants kingship ... (NA-DIŠ LU-gal-TI)]."

— 28'b: "([May Šamaš) not j[udge] his lawsuit (DI-IN-SU A-A T-[DI-IN])]; cf. 25'-26': "([May Mullîtu) not intercede for h[îm] before Illil in the place of judgment and decision (UD.MES I-SU-TI LI]-SIM-SU ...)." Cf. Pazarcik, Rev. 16 = Obv. 22 (see above, p. 54).

The overall scenario in which these treaties are situated can be further enlightened by comparing the Šamši-Adad - Marduk-zakir-šumi treaty, and the Pazarcik stela, with the bilingual inscription of Tell Fekherye (to be dated in the first half of the 1X century, possibly during Ashurnasirpal’s reign [883-859])—to my knowledge, the remarkable connections that trace a significant link between these texts have not yet been entirely perceived.

As is well known, the Fekherye epigraph consists of two different dedicatory inscriptions that were carved on the statue immediately one after the other. The former ("A") was originally composed in Akkadian and then translated into Aramaic (Akk. A: lines 1-18 = Aram. A: lines 1-12); the latter ("B") was originally composed in Aramaic

and then translated into Akkadian (Aram. B: lines 12-23 = Akk. B: lines 19-38)\textsuperscript{21}. Scholars have immediately pointed out and discussed the striking similarities of the curse section in Aram. B, 18-22 (= Akk. B, 30-35) with the curse section in the Bar-ga‘ayah - Mati’-el treaty (Sefire, I, A, 21-24)\textsuperscript{22}. On the other hand, it has been observed that Akk. A (= Aram. A) reproduces the standard format and phraseology of Mesopotamian votive inscriptions\textsuperscript{23}.

Once all this be taken for ascertained, I further suggest that the sequence of invocations in Akk. A, 10-14 (= Aram. A, 7-10)—and, to a lesser extent, in Aram. B, 13-14 (= Akk. B, 21-23)—corresponds to the sequence of curses in the Šamsi-Adad - Marduk-zakir-šumi treaty and in the Pazarcik boundary stone inscription\textsuperscript{24}. Here follows a detailed analysis of Akk. A, 10-14.

\textsuperscript{1} Akk A, 10a: “to keep his life in good health” (\textit{ana bullut(TI-ut)} napsātšu\textit{(ZI.MEŠ-šū)} ... ) (= Aram. A, 7: \textit{IlJ,yy nbšh}) + Akk. A, 11b-12a: “for the welfare of his house, his offspring and his people” (11 ... \textit{šulm(SILIM) biti(\&)-šū zērē(NUMUN. MEŠ)-šū} 12 u nišē(UN.MEŠ)-šū ... ) (= Aram. A, 8a-9b: 8 ... \textit{wlšlm byth wlšlm zr’h wlšlm} 9 ‘\textit{nšwh} ... ).

// Šamsi-Adad 17'-18': “(May Marduk) decree his illfare and the dispersal of his people [ ]. May he pour out his life like water (17' ... \textit{la šät-lamb-šu u sa-pa-ah nišē(UN.MEŠ)-šū} [ ] \textit{liq-bi nāpišta(zi)-šū kima(SIM) mē(A.MEŠ) lit-bu-uk} ... )”; cf. line 21’: “May (Nabû) ... [ ] evil demons, not spare his life (\[ \textit{x gal-le-e lem-nu-ti la i-gam-mi-la nap-šat-su})”.

\textsuperscript{2} Akk A, 10b-11a: “for the prolongation of his days and the increase of his years (10 ... \textit{arāk(\text{gfd.DA}) ūmē(\text{UD.MEŠ})-šū} 11 \textit{šum-ud šanātū(MU.MEŠ)-šū} ... )” (= Aram. A, 7b-8a: \textit{7 ... wlm’rk ywmwh} 8 \textit{wlkbr šnwḥ} ... ); cf. Aram. B, 14a: “for the prolongation of his life


\textsuperscript{24} It goes without saying that the the various stichos that make up the entire sequence also occur in treaties, loyalty oaths, royal inscriptions and letters of later Neo-Assyrian period: cf. Fales, Syria, 60 (1983), p. 237 with references to CAD’s entries.
(\textit{wlm\textprime{}rk hywh}) // Akk. B, 21b: "for the prolongation of his reign (\textit{arāk(gfD.dA)} \textit{pa-lu-sū})".

// Șamši-Adad 31'-32': "([May Sin]) [bring to an end (days, months and) years of] his reign ([\textit{umā arhū} \textit{šanāt} \textit{pa}]\textit{šel-e-sū} ... 32' [\textit{li-šaq-ti} ...])".

Aram. B, 13b: \textit{l'rm wrdt krs'h} // Akk. B, 21a: \textit{ana ti-ri-is kussî(GIš.GU.ZA)-sū} are semantically related to clause [2] but their interpretation is highly problematic, both from the Akkadian and the Aramaic viewpoints. In Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions (and in related textual evidence) \textit{tarāšu} "to be in order, to be right, correct" (cf. \textit{AHw.}, p. 1327b, s. v. \textit{tarāšu} II) never occurs in association with \textit{kussū}: the verb which is normally used is \textit{kānu}. Even more troublesome is the interpretation of the 8-sign sequence \textit{lrmwrdt} —without any word divider— of the Aramaic text, also because it is extremely hard to reconcile it with the corresponding Akkadian "translation". For the time being, and \textit{faute de mieux}, I am inclined to accept Greenfield - Schaffer's proposal to emend \textit{\'rm} to \textit{tr̄} (although the inscription shows a clearly written ') and to interpret \textit{rdt} as the equivalent of Akkadian \textit{rēdātū} (although one would expect a \textit{l} before the noun). Consequently, my tentative translation of the passage is: "for the good order and the (legitimate) succession of his throne" (Aram.) // "for the good order of his throne" (Akk.)

As concerns \textit{tarāšu} // \textit{tr̄(?)} some comments are in order. The occurrences of \textit{tr̄} in Aramaic texts are considerably late; moreover, the expression \textit{kwaršy tr̄} (and the corresponding Akk. \textit{kussē tarāšu}) "to set up a ritual stool" is not pertinent to the Fekherye context. On the contrary, interesting clues can be drawn from an analysis of

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25) See, e.g., Abou Assaf, MDOG 113 (1981), p. 14: "um die Liebe (\textit{wddt}) zu seinem Thron zu befördern"; cf. p. 18: "\textit{l\textprime{}rm}: Inf. cstr. Aphel (??) zu \textit{rwm} 'hoch sein' mit Präp. \textit{l-}"; Bordreuil - Millard - Abou Assaf, CRAIBL 1981/4, p. 646: "Pour l'exaltation et la perpetuation \textit{wrdt} de son trône" = Abou Assaf - Bordreuil - Millard, \textit{Statue}, pp. 23-24 with philological comments at p. 33; A. Caquot, CRAIBL 1981/4, p. 653, suggests "pour Aram et la perpetuation de son trône(?)" or, as an alternative, proposes to split \textit{lrmw rdt} "et voir ici un nom verbal à préfixe de causatif ' (que suppose aussi la traduction 'exaltation' recourant à la racine \textit{rwm}) évoquant le verbe syriaque \textit{\'rm} qui a le sens de 'jeter, poser (des fondements)' "; cf. A. Millard's reply to Caquot's remarks (ibid.), where he points out the difficulty of a simultaneous presence of \textit{aphel} and \textit{haphel} forms in one and the same text and consequently prefers to interpret \textit{\'rm} as a nominal form of the root \textit{RWM} with prosthetic \textit{alef} and adduces the parallel evidence of \textit{\'sm} in the Sefire inscription (I, C, 25; II, B, 7). For additional discussion see above, main text.


27) Fales' proposal (Syria 60 [1983], pp. 248-249) to interpret \textit{wrdt} as a borrowing from Akk. \textit{urdātū} "servitude, vassalage" and to translate "pour la levée de la vassalité de son trône" is not persuasive also because it lacks any comparative evidence both in Aramaic and Akkadian sources.


the use of tarasu in II millennium Canaanite, as revealed by the Amarna letters from Syria-Palestine. Aside from the recurrent expression tarasu analina pani, “to appear, seem right to (someone)”\textsuperscript{30}, note EA 137, 54-55: “My heart was loyal (ia-ri-šu lib-bi) towards the king my lord”; EA 116, 26: “(PN) is not correct with me (ú-ul [a-ra]-iš it-ti-ia)”; EA 109, 60-61: “The city rulers are not correct with me (60 ... Lú. MEŠ \textsuperscript{61}[h]a-za-nu-te ša-ul tar-ša<-ar> it-ti-ia)”\textsuperscript{31}; EA 170, 24: “We could not check the truth of the news (a-ma-ta la nu-tar-ri-šu)”. It seems clear that in the Amarna letters from Syria-Palestine the semantics of tarasu largely correspond to those of kanu/kunnu\textsuperscript{32}: see in particular the expression libbi muhhi sari bēliya (EA 137, 54-55), obviously to be compared with phrases like “Is his heart loyal to [RN]? (5 šu-ba-šu it-ti [RN] 6’ ki-ni-i ... )”\textsuperscript{33} and, above all, with the decisive passage Šurpu II, 55-56: “His mouth is true — his heart is untrue; his mouth: ‘Yes’ — his heart: ‘No’ (55 pi-i-šu tar-su šu-ba-šu la ki-i-ni 56 pi-i-šu an-na šu-ba-šu ul-la)”. In this regard, it is highly significant that in the lexicon of the Amarna correspondence, deeply affected by the Canaanite linguistic background, the verb kanu is totally absent\textsuperscript{34}: it occurs only in lines 19-20 of EA 162, a letter sent from Egypt to Aziru of Amurru: “Also if you have acted with loyalty, nevertheless the words which you have written to me were not true (19 šu-sum-na te-[t]e-[t]u-uš ki-i-ki-it-ti ú-ul ki-i-na 20 gab-bi a-va-te. MEŠ ša ša-špur ...)”. Summing up, tarasu (= *tr.r(?)*) in Late II millennium Canaanite dialects to a great extent corresponds to, and in fact substitutes, Akk. kanu: the occurrence of tarasu (and possibly of tr.r(!)) in the bilingual inscription of Fekheriye would thus mark the earliest re-emerging of this term in the I millennium sources\textsuperscript{36}. 

\textsuperscript{30} E.g. EA 74, 59-60; 92, 46-47; 103, 40; 106, 35, 41; etc. 
\textsuperscript{33} I. Starr, \textit{Queries to the Sungod. Divination and Politics in Sargonid Assyria} (SAA IV), Helsinki 1990, p. 181, n. 172, 5'-6'. 
\textsuperscript{34} Moran’s tentative proposal (\textit{El-Amarna}, pp. 308 and 309) to read [ka-i]a-[a-a-ku] i-na ša-bi-yu in EA 109, 20: “Je suis [fer]me dans ma résolution” (cf. lines 23-24: 23 ... ka-[a-\textsuperscript{24}]-nu i-na) \textsuperscript{24} [š]-ba-šu-nu: “ils sont ferme dans leur résolution” has been challenged by A.F. Rainey, \textit{A New Translation of the Amarna Letters - after 100 Years}, AFO 36-37 (1989-1990), p. 60: “[I (sa]-d(!) (aq-hu a-na-ku) in my heart”; as concerns line 23, Rainey accepts Moran’s reading and translation, albeit “reluctantly”: “One might expect some form of gabò”. 
\textsuperscript{35} Cf. line 23: “And (this) is true (ki-[i]-na)”. 


// Šamši-Adad 30’: “([May SinD [inflict upon him] a great [(physical) punishm]ent not to be removed from his body ((šer-t)a ra-bi-a šā ina zumri(su)-šū la inakkaru(kūk-ru) [limissu]))” 37

[4] Akk. A, 13b-14a: “that my prayer be heard, that my utterance be accepted (13 ... ik-ri-bi-a a-na še-me-e 14 qī-bit pi-ia ana ma-ga-ri ...) // Aram. A, 9b-10a: “that his prayers be heard, that his utterance be accepted (9 ... wlmšm’ tšlwth wl 10 mlḥ ‘mrt pmḥ)”. Cf. Aram. B, 14b-15a: “that his utterance please gods and men (14 ... wlm’n ‘mrt pmḥ ’l’hn w’ll’nšn 15 tytb ...)” // Akk. B, 22-23a: “that his utterance be pleasing to gods and men (22 qī-bit pī(KA)-šū elli(UGU) ilāni(DINGIR,MEŠ) u nišē(UN.MEŠ) 23 tu-ub-bi ...)

// Antakya 19: “May (DNs) not listen to his prayers (pi-ti up-ni-šū la i-šā-me-u-šū)” // Pazarcik Rev. 17: “May (DNs) not listen to his supplication (pi-ti up-ni-šū la i-šā-me-u-šū)”

[5] The final curse at the end of the Akkadian inscription (Akk. A, 18 // Aram. A, 12) has been the matter of scholarly puzzlements and misunderstandings. In contrast with the long sequence of maledictions that appear in Aram. B, 17-23 (// Akk. B, 28-38), the *Akkadian inscription ends with a single curse: “May Adad, the hero, be his adversary in court (18 Adad(u) qar-du lu-ū bēl(EN) di-ni-šū)” // Aram. A, 12: ḥḍā gbr lhwy qblḥ). Abou Assaf - Bordreuil - Millard, Statue, p. 20, remark that “bēl dinišu est une expression banale dans les sanctions des contrats néo-assyriens, mais elle ne se trouve pas dans d’autres inscriptions monumentales”. Greenfield - Shaffer, Iraq 45 (1983), p. 115, observe that “the use of bēl dini is subtler than the Editors realize. In addition to its legal sense, it refers to the epithets bēl bīrī, bēl dīnī (and variations) which Adad shares

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37) Fales, Syria 60 (1983), p. 238 with fn. 29 points out the inconsequent use of the pronominal suffixes in Akk. A, 12-13, and suggests an original formulation ana násāh mursī-ya that would better suit the ebuu-ellu-namru prosodical structure of the entire sequence of lines 12-14. Fales' remarks are entirely appropriate: however, as line 30' of the Šamši-Adad's treaty clearly shows, the formulaic repertoire concerning diseases to inflict upon vs. to extirpate from somebody includes the explicit mention of the human body: cf. the Aramaic translation mnḥ (Aram. A, 9) of Akkadian ša zumrīšu (Akk. A, 13). For a comprehensive treatment of disease curse formulae involving Gula see now Watanabe, adē, pp. 35-40.
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with Šamaš as gods of divination”]. Fales, Syria 60 (1983), p. 237, draws attention to the fact that this phrase is the only Neo-Assyrian intrusion in the final section of the inscription (lines 15-18)—which is entirely Standard Babylonian in its topical, stylistic and grammatical features—and adds that “l’invocation de divinités particulières comme ‘adversaires judiciaires’ a un certain nombre de parallèles dans les documents juridiques néo-assyriens”.

It is my impression that the functional as well as the historical significance of the clause in Akk. A 18 has not been entirely appreciated: the only way to understand its meaning is to relate it with the “judicial” curses that are inserted in monumental inscriptions and in international treaties of the late ninth-first half of the eighth century. More precisely, the invocation to Adad—the god to whom the Fekherye statue is dedicated—that he may act as “adversary in court” against him who will not respect the statue and its inscription, is the opposite of clauses such as “May Šamaš ... not judge his lawsuit” (Šamši-Adad 28’) or “May Mullilitu ... not intercede for him before Ilil in the place of judgement and decision” (ibid., 25'-26’) or “May Aššur, Marduk, etc. not stand at his lawsuit” (Pazarcik Obv. 22 = Rev. 16). In other words, Adad (and Šamaš) may either act as supreme guarantors of correct judicial verdicts—in their capacity of divine “judges” (dayyānu)38—or, vice versa, as mighty “court opponents” (bēl dīnī) against wrongdoers and unlawful people of all sorts.

As specifically concerns the Pazarcik stela, it should further be noted that the “judicial” curse is the one and only malediction of the inscription carved on the obverse of the stela, exactly as is the case of Akk. A 18 of the Fekherye statue39.

Summing up, it is my contention that the Fekherye clause [5] represents the immediate antefact to the more articulated/nuanced curses attested in the epigraphic evidence of the following decades40.

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39) This is not the place to speculate about the (judicial and) historical implications of the joint engraving of two different yet closely interrelated inscriptions, both on the Pazarcik stela and on the Fekherye statue.
40) For later occurrences of the clause in international treaties see e.g. VTE, 422-423: “May Šamaš ... not give you a just and correct (legal) decision (“42 ... di-in kit-ti me-sā-ti 423 a-a i-di-in-ku-nu ...”); SAA V, n. 9, Rev. 9': “(May Šamaš) give us an unjust (legal) decision (di-i-ni pa-rik-ti li-di-n[a-na-šī])”.

1993]
The Akkadian sources that have been discussed so far show a complex and ongoing network of linguistic, structural and literary interactions with the Aramaic element of northern Mesopotamia and upper Syria during the IX-VIII centuries B.C. Sure enough, this is not a matter of novelty and/or surprise. By far less obvious are some connections with the western cuneiform evidence of the II millennium (again, the Amarna letters)—in fact these connections are still almost entirely unexplored.

Let us consider Pazarcik Rev. 19 again: as said before, malāku corresponds to West Semitic mlk and means “to reign, to exercise kingship, lordship, rule, etc.”. We can however proceed a step further. I remind that the curse section in the reverse of Pazarcik is made up of two pairs of maledictions (Rev. 15-17 and 18-19): the latter (“May his country become quickly as small (luṣahher) as a brick, in no way may he exercise kingship (imallik) over the (legitimate) king”) deserves special attention in consideration of an enlightening connection with an Amarna passage. If I am not wrong, the joint occurrence of ṣēḥēru and malāku has a remote and isolated yet unmistakable antecedent in Rib-hadda’s letter EA 136, 24-27. The reading of this Amarna passage poses no problems: 24 ša-ni-tam ü in-du-um 25 yi-sa-hi-ra-am a-na a-si 26 ü im-lu-uk iš-tu 27 ša-ia a-li-ik-mi a-na-ku 28 i-pu-ša’-am tābūta(du₄₀,G)A) [glossed: tu.KA] 29 it-ti-šu ša RN; there is also a general agreement in translating “Furthermore: when I was pressed (lit.: when it became too small/tight for me)”41, I deliberated: ‘Come! I will establish friendly relations with RN’”42.

In spite of its apparent plausibility, this translation fails to grasp the real meaning of Rib-hadda’s utterance. As correctly pointed out by Moran43, EA 136, which was written in Beirut, displays various scribal peculiarities that make it a real unicum in the entire dossier of Rib-hadda. Bearing this in mind, it should be noted that yiṣahārim in line 25 represents the one and only occurrence of the verb ṣēḥēru in the Amarna letters from Syria and Palestine — I shall come back to this point later on. On the other hand, the occurrence of malāku in line 26 should be related to the other two occurrences of the same verb in the final section of EA 136: ū LUGAL EN-ia yi-im-lu-uk a-na ir-šu (lines 35-36 = 39-40) “May the king my lord be/act as a king towards his servant”44.

41) Following CAD §, p. 123a.


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Lines 26-27 are of crucial importance for understanding the whole passage of EA 136, 24-29: therefore, before attempting a new translation, it seems appropriate to focus on some points of detail.

First of all, it is essential to realize that there is no syntactic cesura between *imluk* (1st sg. preterit) and *yisahir-am* (3rd sg. preterit): both verbs are coordinated in the same sentence and depend on the conjunction *indum*.

The occurrence of *malāku* + *libbu* "to deliberate" is attested only in the Gt form: see, e.g. *itti libbišu lummuni šà imtalik*, "he deliberated in his dejected heart"; cf. *amtalkamma ina kabattiya*, "I deliberated in my mind/heart"; *ina ītēm ramaninya amtalik*, "I deliberated by myself in my own mind".

Having ascertained that also in EA 136, 26-27, *malāku* means "to reign, to exercise kingship, etc.", we must look for an appropriate explanation of the sequence *imluk* + *ištlu libbiya*: *libbu* plainly means "heart" (and consequently also "state of mind, intention, will, etc."); quite obviously *ištlu* does not mean "from" but "with", as is often the case in the Amarna letters. Once all this be taken into due account, I propose the following translation of EA 136, 24-29: "When it became too tight (lit.: small) for me and I was (reduced) to reign (only) with my strength of will (lit.: heart), (I said): 'Come! I will establish friendly relations with RN' ".

The above interpretation of EA 136, 24-29 perfectly fits the overall psychological background of Rib-hadda’s correspondence with Egypt. In his incessant pleas to the Pharaoh, one of the recurrent topics is the account of his desperate and impotent forlorness. One example will suffice for all: "Since the king ordered: 'Protect your-

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46) Cf. AHw., p. 1420b, s.v. *unду* II 2 c, where the latter verb is interpreted as a D form: *yusahhirami*.
47) Poor Man of Nippur, 11 = 16; cf. CAD M/1, p. 157a; AHw., p. 594a; differently CAD L, p. 246b: "with his miserable heart he took counsel".
49) OIP 2, p. 145, 11-12.
50) Cf., in line 41, the occurrence of the topic expression *yānu libba šanām* (also attested in EA 119, 42; 169, 4; 371, 18) for which see Moran, El-Amarna, p. 357 fn. 7: "double fidélité ou loyauté"; cf. A. Gianto, Word Order Variation in the Akkadian of Byblos, Roma 1990, p. 57 fn. 18: "There is no other intention" (EA 371, 18), but cf. *ibid.*, p. 62: "because I do not have a divided heart" vs. *ibid.*, p. 42: "because I am without duplicity" (EA 119, 41-42). See further EA 85, 66-67; ... *i-nu-ma 1 ha-za-na 67 lib-bu-šu it-ti lib-bi-ya* "If (there were) one city-ruler only —his heart (being) together with my heart"; cf. CAD D, p. 188a: "if only one governor was of the same opinion with me"; differently CAD L, p. 170b: "if only one regent saw eye to eye with me".
self!; look: formerly, in the times of my forefathers, a royal garrison was with them and the properties of the king were at their disposal; but now here I am: there are no royal provisions for me and there is no royal garrison with me; but now here I am: there are no royal provisions for me and there is no royal garrison with me.

On the other hand, Rib-hadda acts and speaks in his capacity of legitimate ruler ( hazannu) of Byblos and never resorts to the well-known technique practised e.g. by Abdi-hepa of Jerusalem and Abi-milki of Tyre, who do not want to be labelled as "local rulers" ( hazannu) and by all means try to be considered as officials that operate within the ranks of the Egyptian provincial bureaucracy. In Rib-hadda's political conception, the rulership over Byblos derives from his heroic loyalty and total subordination towards the Pharaoh.

Concretely, Rib-hadda's subordinate rulership (EA 136, 26: malâku) depends on the Pharaoh's effective overlordship (again, malâku: EA 136, 36 and 40), i.e. on his material help: how can Rib-hadda exercise the customary duties of a loyal and obedient "vassal" if he can only rely on his well-determined yet powerless "heart"? The concept of libbu is central in the structure of Rib-hadda's political ideology and in the strategy of the messages that he keeps on sending to his far-away and indifferent lord. The same EA
136 provides us with a superb example of how *libbu* can be used as a strictly functional tool for the purposes of the subject-matter dealt with by the ruler of Byblos. The resumptive appeal at the end of the letter (lines 39-43) echoes expressions and arguments already exposed in the preceding lines but introduces a new rhetorical device which is perfectly coherent in its sequential formulation: “May the king my lord be/act as a king towards his servant. Behold! (For my part) there is no other heart: I myself would die for the king my lord. But may the king my lord keep (his) servant alive! (41 *sum-ma i-a-nu ša ša-na-am* 42 *UGU LUGAL EN-ia BA UŠ a-na-ku* 43 *ù LUGAL EN-ia TL.LA IR*)45.

Regardless of whether *šumma* (line 41) is understood as “if” or as “Behold!” (cf. fn. 58), *libbu* can not be referred to the Pharaoh, but to Rib-hadda, as in EA 119, 42; 169, 4; 371, 85; cf. 253, 26-28 (*pānu*). It should further be noted that, from a syntactic and stylistic viewpoint, the sequence of phrases in EA 136, 39-43 is rigidly patterned according to a line-by-line partition: consequently, *muhhi šarrī* in line 42 should not be related to *yānu libba šanām* of line 41 — cf. EA 119, 169 and 371, quoted above, where *libbu šanā* is not followed by *muhhi’eli šarrī* — but to *amāt anāku* of the same line 4259.

EA 137, 52-55 is of particular interest for the topic here under discussion: “My lord knows that I would die for him (52 *ù yi-di be-li i-nu-ša UGU šu a-mu-tu*) When I was in the city, I protected it for my lord and my heart was loyal towards the king my lord (53 ...
On account of the circumstantial, and partly also stylistic, affinities of EA 136, 137 (and 138)—all of which were written from Beirut, after Rib-hadda’s expulsion from Byblos— we may also surmise that muhhi šarri, in EA 136, 42, chiastically connects the two clauses of lines 41-42: “There is no other heart—towards the king my lord—I myself would die”.

APPENDIX

On Sefire I, A, 25

The motive of the “physical reduction” is particularly evident in the Aššur-nirari-Mati-ilu treaty: see VI 3-5: “May [a city of(?)] one thousand houses decrease to one house; may one thousand tents decrease to one tent; may only one man be spared in the city to (announce) my glory”.

The long and still ongoing debate concerning the relation of this treaty with the Bar-ga’ayah-Mati’-el treaty (i.e. the Sefire stelae) cannot be touched here: see firstly the important contribution of F.M. Fales, *Istituzioni* (above, fn. 22), pp. 149-173 (cf. previously the succinct remarks of Parpola-Watanabe in SAA II, p. XXVIII). Within the specific limits of the present discourse I would like to draw attention to the close similarity between the curse section in Aššur-nirari’s treaty V, 5-7 and Sefire I, A, 25. In the former text we read: “5 May Aššur, father of the gods, who grants kingship, turn your country into wasteland (tūšāru), your people to an inundation / devastation (riḫšu), your cities into ruin mounds (tillum), your house into ruins / wasteland (harbatu)”.

SAA II, p.12, interprets tūšāru “battlefield” but the overall scenario of the four maledictions strongly favours the meaning “wasteland” (cf. AHw., p. 1374a).

The understanding of Sefire, I, A, 25, is highly controversial: cf. Lemaire-Durand, *Sfîrê*, p. 133 and lastly Fales, in *Istituzioni*, p. 165, for a substantially different interpretation: “che diventi il suo regno come un regno di forza(?), un regno di violenza(?), su cui domina Ishtar!”.

Fales (*ibid.*, fn. 44) refers to a forthcoming detailed justification for his proposal. I imagine that the stimulus which has prompted his translation derives from VTE, 453 “May Ištart, lady of battle and war, smash your bow in a strong battle (*Iš-tar be-let mūru u mē ina mē dan-ni giš.ban-ku-nu liš-bir*)”; cf the Aššur-nirari-Mati-ilu treaty, V, 12-13: “May Ištart, the goddess of men, the lady of women, take away

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60 See, among other things, Rib-hadda’s insistence on his firm intention to die for the Pharaoh: once been driven away from his city, he is “politically” dead.
their bow and inflict their defeat”: see Watanabe, adê, p. 194: [a-bi-i]ku'-šu-nu liš-kun and lastly W. von Soden, WO 22 (1991), p. 188: [n]a'-pùl-tu-šá-nu liš-kun “[Issar] möge ihr Leben (zur Auslöschung) ‘hinlegen’”. As concerns the “bow-motive” see in particular Sefire, I, A, 38-39: “As this bow and these arrows are smashed, thus may (N)inurta and Hadad smash the bow of Mati'-el and the bow of his magnates”.

While fully acknowledging the ingenuity of Fales’ suggestion, I wonder whether there is sufficient ground for interpreting hāl—which occurs twice in I, A, 25— as hyl “strength, army” and for referring this concept, in a negative connotation, to Mati'-el’s kingdom—as far as I know parallels are missing. All in all, it seems preferable to follow J.A. Fitzmyer, The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sōrei, Roma 1967, p. 14, and to translate “May his kingdom be (come) like a kingdom of sand {(a kingdom of sand)} as long as … shall reign (thwy mlkt kmkt hāl {(mlkt hāl}) mzy ymlk šf)” . The parallel with Dan., 4, 23, seems particularly cogent, although its contents are specular to those of Sefire, I, A, 25: “Your kingdom shall remain stable/firm for you until … (malkūtāk lāk qayyāmān min dī …)”.

As concerns the similes for mlkt, prior to Fales’ hypothesis two terms have been suggested: hilm “dream” and hāl “sand”; the final part of the line has been either understood “(a kingdom) over which Assur will reign” as long as Assur will reign” or “(a kingdom) that fades like fire” : see briefly Lemaire - Durand, Sōrei, p. 133. As far as I know, “dreams” are never used as a term of comparison for kingdoms or the like, either in the Akkadian or West Semitic literature, Old Testament included. This is more so if “dreams” are associated with “fire” (š): “un royaume de rêve qui disparaît comme un feu” (Lemaire - Durand, Sōrei, p. 121), “a kingdom (like) a dream that fades like fire” (F. Rosenthal, in ANET, p. 659). Mentions of fire in curse clauses of Akkadian and West Semitic treaties concern totally different matters (as specifically regards the Bar-ga’ayah - Mati’-el treaty, cf. Sefire, I, A, 35, 37-38). hāl “sand” is normally used in metaphores that aim at stressing the concept of abundance: the Akkadian counterpart in similar expressions is ep(e)ru “dust; (loose) earth”, for which see briefly C. Zac­cagnini, Lo scambio dei doni nel Vicino Oriente durante i secoli XV-XIII, Roma 1973, pp. 66-67. However, ep(e)ru is also used in connection with the idea of total destruction, ruin and abandonment of buildings, cities and lands: see briefly the references listed in CAD E, pp. 185b-186b, s.v. eperu 1 b 2’ and 1 c 2’. Both usages of ep(e)ru are also attested for West Semitic ‘apar “dust; (loose) earth”: for the “abundance motive” cf. Zaccagnini, Scambio, p. 67 fn. 25; for the “destruction motive” see, e.g. 2Sam., 22, 43 // Ps., 18, 43; 2Kg., 13, 7; 1Kg., 20, 10; cf. Isa., 25, 12; 26, 5; etc. Particularly interesting is Ez. 26, 12-13: “They will plunder your wealth, spoil your merchandise, raze your ramparts, break down your lofty palaces; they will throw your stones, your timber and your dust ('āpārek) into the water/sea. And I shall suppress the sound of your songs, and the music of your lyres will be heard no more (qōl kinnūrayk lō’ yīssāma ḕād)”.

(1) Turning into dust / (loose) earth / desert / wasteland and (2) suppression of songs and lyre music: both motives occur in the curses of the Aššur-nirari - Mati-ilu and
Bar-ga'ayah - Mati'-el treaties. (1) In addition to the passages already commented upon (Aššur-nirari - Mati-ilu, I, 4', and V, 5-7, and Sefire, I, A, 25) see Sefire, I, A, 32: “May its (i.e. Arpad’s) vegetation be laid waste into a desert (yšmn). May Arpad be(come) a mound of ruins (ḏl)”; cf. Aššur-nirari - Mati-ilu, IV, 20: “May no vegetation spring forth in the open country and see the sunlight”. (2) Ibid., IV, 19: “May his (i.e. Mati-ilu’s) farmers not sing the harvest song in the fields (LÚ.ENGAR-sú ina EDEN a-a il-sa-a a-la-la)”; Sefire, I, A, 29-30: “May the sound of the lyre be heard no more in Arpad (w‘l ytšm’ ql knr b’rd) but instead, among its people, the moaning of disease, the noise of cries of distress and of lamentation (wb’mh hml mrq w’hm” [yt s’] 30 qh wylh)”: note the use of the word yllh, etymologically corresponding to Akkadian alala in spite of its opposite denotation (“howl, wail” vs. “exclamation of joy, (refrain of) work song”). For the opposition: “harvest songs – cries of desperation” in the inscriptions of Sargon II cf. C. Zaccagnini, An Urartean Royal Inscription in the Report of Sargon’s Eighth Campaign, in F.M. Fales (Ed.), Assyrian Royal Inscriptions. New Horizons, Roma 1981, esp. pp. 263-282 sub motive 4.