

ELENA DEVECCHI

Aziru, Servant of Three Masters?***Abstract**

Since its publication, the recently expanded Hittite text KUB 19.15+ has drawn scholarly attention mainly because of its mention of an individual named Arma'a, whose tentative identification with Pharaoh Horemheb has compelled significant revisions of the Late Bronze Age chronology of the Ancient Near East. This document, however, also provides new evidence on the status of Amurru prior to its annexation to the Hittite kingdom, which begs for a reconsideration of the relevant sources as well as of the different hypotheses that have been put forward in order to explain the apparent contradictions among them.

Keywords: Amurru, Aziru, Hittite treaties with Amurru

1.

The historiographical document KUB 19.15+KBo 50.24¹ contains interesting information on the status of Amurru prior to its annexation to the Hittite kingdom, which deserves to be further discussed. The author of the text, in all likelihood to be identified with Muršili II, refers to an Egyptian attack in the land of Amurru, to which he reacts by sending the following message to the Pharaoh:

You are *taking* [ve]ngeance upon the Land of Amurru. But was it I who took the [Land] of Amurru away from you, or was it rather my father who took it away from you? It was the King of the Land of Ḫanigalbat who took the Land of Amurru away from the King of the Land of Egypt, and then my father defeated

* This research was carried out as part of the project “*You will have transgressed the oath*”. An investigation into the forms of political subjugation among the Hittites, funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. After having completed this article I discussed it with Prof. I. Singer, who informed me that he had expressed partially similar, partially different opinions in his lecture ‘On the Credibility of Hittite Historical Texts’, held at the conference ‘Normierung und Emanzipation: Bausteine für eine Kulturgeschichte des 2. Jts. v. Chr. im Alten Orient’ (Berlin, January 2010), and kindly sent me a draft of the written version of his lecture, which will appear in the proceedings of the conference.

¹ The expanded text was published and first discussed by Miller (2008). See also Miller (2007), Simon (2009), Wilhelm (2009) and Devecchi / Miller (2011) for further discussion of the chronological issues.

the King of the Land of Amurru, and [he took the Land] of A[murru away] from the King of the Ḫurri Land. (KUB 19.15+ ii 14'–24'; after Miller 2008: 536).

The description of Amurru's political status at the time of Aziru's defection to the Hittites offered by this passage of KUB 19.15+ seems to contradict the traditional reconstruction of this event, according to which Aziru had been an Egyptian vassal before shifting to the Hittite camp. In reality, as already noted by Miller (2008: 547–549), the account of KUB 19.15+ should not come as a total surprise, since in some Amarna letters and at least one Hittite text one finds hints suggesting that Amurru was playing not only a double, but even a triple game with the three Great Powers that were fighting to establish their supremacy over Syria, i.e. Ḫatti, Egypt and Mittani.

The new evidence provided by KUB 19.15+ begs for a reconsideration of the relevant sources, in particular a highly debated passage of the subjugation treaty imposed by Tuthaliya IV on Šaušgamuwa of Amurru (CTH 105), as well as the different hypotheses that have been put forward in order to explain the apparent contradictions among them.

2.

In the historical prologue of the treaty between Tuthaliya IV and Šaušgamuwa of Amurru the status of this Syrian kingdom prior to ‘Aziru's apostasy’, as Singer (1990) has dubbed Aziru's submission to Šuppiluliuma I, is described as follows:

CTH 105.A i 13–27²

- 13 [K]UR^{URU}A-mur-ra^Γū^Γ[UL³(IŠ-TU^{GIŠT})]UKUL
 14 [(ŠA KUR^{URU}Ha)]-at-ti tar-uh-ḫ[a-an]^Γe^Γ-eš-ta
 15 [m^A-zi-ra-aš ku-w]a-pi IT-TI A-BI A-BI^dUTU-ŠI
 16 [m^{Šu}-up-pi-lu]^Γli^Γ[(u-m)a]^ΓI-NA^ΓKUR^{URU}Ha-at-ti
 17 [(ú-it nu)]KUR.KUR^{HLA}URU^{URU}A-mur-ra⁴nu-u-wa
 18 [ku-ru-u]r e-eš-ta IR^{MES}ŠA LUGAL Ḫur-ri-at
 19 [e-eš-ta]nu-uš-ši^{m^Γ}A^Γ-zi-ra-aš QA-TAM-MA
 20 [p(a-ah-ḫa-aš-t)]a-at IŠ-TU^{GIŠT}TUKUL-ma-an-za-an
 21 [ú-UL tar]^Γuh-ta nu^Γ[m^A]-zi-ra-aš A-BA A-BI-KA
 22 [m^{Šu}-up-pi]-lu-li-u-ma-an AŠ-ŠUM EN-UT-TA⁵PAP-aš-ta
 23 [(KUR^{URU}Ha-a)]t-ti-ia⁶pa-ah-ḫa-aš-ta
 24 kat-ta-ia^mMu-ur-ši-li-in AŠ-ŠUM EN-UT-TA
 25 pa-ah-ḫa-aš-ta KUR^{URU}Ha-at-ti-ia PAP-aš-ta

² See also Kühne / Otten (1971) and Fuscagni et al. (2008).

³ B obv. 5: KUR A-mur-ri [na-at-i]a.

⁴ B obv. 6: KUR A-mur-ri.

⁵ B obv. 8: -TIM.

⁶ B obv. 8: IT-TI KUR^{URU}Ha-at-ti-ia.

26 nu IT-TI KUR URU *Ḫa-at-ti ū-UL ku-it-ki*⁷
 27 wa-aš-ta-aš

[Previously⁷ the] land of Amurru was not defe[ated] by the force of arms of the land of Ḫatti. [Wh]en [Azira] came to the forefather (lit. grandfather) of My Majesty, [Šuppiluliuma, in the land of Ḫatti, the lands of Amurru were still [hostil]e. They [were] subjects of the King of Ḫurri, and Azira was likewise loyal to him (= the King of Ḫurri), but he (= Šuppiluliuma) did not defeat him by the force of arms. Azira, your forefather (lit. grandfather), protected Šuppiluliuma in (his) overlordship and protected the land of Ḫatti, and afterwards he protected Muršili in (his) overlordship and protected the land of Ḫatti. In no way did he commit an offense against the land of Ḫatti.

CTH 105.A i 17–18 // CTH 105.B obv. 6–7

A number of authors have tried in various ways to reconcile the statement that at the time of Aziru's apostasy Amurru was subject to the Hurrian king with the evidence provided by other sources that suggests instead that Amurru was an Egyptian vassal. On the basis of this passage of the Šaušgamuwa treaty and of some Amarna letters that seem to suggest the same scenario, Kestemont (1978: 31–32) proposed that during the Amarna Age Amurru 'faisait partie intégrante de la société internationale mitannienne' and turned to Egypt when Mittani started losing its power in and control over its Syrian territory following Šuppiluliuma's military expeditions. His reconstruction, which has been almost universally discarded by scholars who have subsequently worked on this topic,⁸ now needs to be reconsidered in light of the above-mentioned passage of KUB 19.15+. In fact, while it is probably farfetched to assume that Amurru was a proper Mittanian vassal, it is not unlikely that Mittani's interest in maintaining and even expanding its control over Western and Central Syria found fertile ground in Amurru's 'uninhibited' political attitude, resulting in some kind of alliance between the two and thus an ambiguous situation that could have been used by the other Egyptian vassals in order to place the rulers of Amurru in an unfavourable light and by the Hittites in order to minimize their responsibility for the Egyptian loss of Amurru.⁹

The new evidence provided by KUB 19.15+ also forces one to review Zaccagnini's suggestion, according to which the Hittite chancellery of Tuḫaliya IV, in consideration of the friendly political relations between Ḫatti and Egypt at the time, preferred in CTH 105 to

⁷ The space between *pa-aḫ-ḫa-* and *wa-aš-ta-aš* in B obv. 9 is too small to restore this line according to A i 25–27. The fragment could not be collated, thus the suggested restoration at the end of CTH 105.B obv. 9 (KUR URU *Ḫa-at-ti-ia pa-aḫ-ḫa-[aš-ta nu] wa-aš-ta-aš ū-UL[?] ku-it-ki[?]*) is only tentative and based on the presence of sign traces as indicated in the cuneiform copy (Kühne / Otten 1971: 80). For other occurrences of the indefinite pronoun following the finite verb, see GrHL § 18.34 and § 26.7.

⁸ Cf. Liverani (1983: 120 n. 34); Zaccagnini (1988: 296); Murnane (1990: 139 ff.); Singer (1990: 153 n. 1; 1991b: 71–72); Altman (2003: 351 ff.). See however Klengel (1995: 162), who assumes that Aziru acknowledged the supremacy of the king of Mittani even while still somewhat bound to the pharaoh.

⁹ See also Miller (2008: 547–549).

pass over the fact that Amurru had previously been an Egyptian vassal.¹⁰ In his view, Egypt had been the main enemy earlier, while during Tuḫaliya's reign it was an ally, and 'it would have been unpolitical to stress the negative implications attached to former relations of Amurru with the Pharaohs', which would explain 'the clever evocation of the kingdom of Mittani' as a scapegoat (Zaccagnini 1988: 299).¹¹ Since the events recounted in KUB 19.15+ very likely took place during Muršili's 7th year, when Hittite-Egyptian relations were still hostile,¹² and Mittani is already being blamed for the Egyptian loss of Amurru, Zaccagnini's paradigm can no longer be considered valid.

Similarly, the account in KUB 19.15+ prohibits one from simply dismissing the debated passage of CTH 105 as a 'blatant lie', as proposed by Altman. He explains this supposed falsification of historical truth by assuming that the Hittites needed to deny the fact that Amurru had been Egyptian territory because otherwise its rebellion at the time of Muwatalli II might have looked like a rightful attempt at redressing the wrong perpetrated when the Hittites took Amurru from Egypt.¹³ Now there are two Hittite texts giving the same account. Are they both 'blatant lies'? Even if one assumes that KUB 19.15+ contained the original lie and that the (badly informed?) author of CTH 105 used this as a source for the historical prologue of the treaty, one must still explain why Muršili II would have felt the need to lie in KUB 19.15+ but not in the almost contemporary subjugation treaty imposed upon Tuppi-Teššup of Amurru (CTH 62), where there is no mention of any Hurrian claim upon the Syrian kingdom. Furthermore, one must ask what benefit Muršili might have hoped to have gained by uttering a false statement in an argument with the Pharaoh, who surely knew very well who was to blame for the loss of Amurru. Again, all elements seem to suggest that there must have been at least some truth to the scenario handed down by CTH 105 and KUB 19.15+ and that Mittani must have been somewhat involved in the political games played by Aziru before he finally decided to turn to the Hittites.

A totally different solution to the apparent contradiction between the historical prologue of CTH 105 and the other sources was offered by Singer. He proposed that the plural 'Lands of Amurru', attested in CTH 105.A i 17, is not a simple variant of the singular 'Land of Amurru', used throughout the rest of the treaty text. He suggested that the first geographical designation would refer to 'the broad geographical entity of the Syrian states west of the Euphrates that were indeed controlled by Mitanni prior to Šuppiluliuma's takeover', while only the 'Land of Amurru', in the singular, would indicate the kingdom of Aziru (Singer 1991b: 72). Singer, however, fails to mention an important detail, namely the fact that, where A i 17 reads KUR.KUR^{HLA} URU *Amurra*, B obv. 6 has the singular KUR *Amurri*.¹⁴ Furthermore, one should consider the other occurrences of the plural designation 'Lands of Amurru' in the Late Bronze Age sources.

¹⁰ See already the doubts raised by Altman (2003: 356).

¹¹ Similarly Murnane (1990: 144).

¹² For the possibility that at a certain point during the reign of Muršili (probably some time after his 12th–13th year) the relationships between Ḫatti and Egypt might have enjoyed a phase of *détente*, see now Devecchi / Miller (2011: 139–146).

¹³ Altman (2003: 355 ff.), where he also modifies his previous theory on the same topic expressed in Altman (1998).

¹⁴ See also Altman (2003: 357; 2004: 450 n. 21).

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|-------|---|---------------------|--|
| 1. | [KUR].KUR ^{MEŠ} <i>A-mur-ri</i> | KBo 6.28+ obv. 25 | Edict of Ḫattušili III for the <i>ḫekur</i> of Pirwa |
| 2. | KUR ^{HLA} <i>A-mur-ri</i> | EA 145, 24 | Letter of Zimrida of Sidon to an Egyptian official |
| 3. | KUR ^{MEŠ} <i>A-mu-ri</i> | EA 179, 19 | Letter of a vassal to the pharaoh |
| 4. | KUR ^{MEŠ} <i>A-mu-ri</i> | EA 158, 15 | Letter of Aziru to Tutu |
| 5.–6. | KUR ^r MEŠ <i>A-mur-ri</i> ¹ | RS 20.162, 6 and 18 | Letter of Paršu to the king of Ugarit |

While the contexts of the first three occurrences are admittedly ambiguous and could indicate either the kingdom of Amurru *stricto sensu* or western Syria more generally, the other three cases are unequivocal. In EA 158 Aziru tells the Egyptian official Tutu:

[A]s you are my father and my lord, [and] I am your son, the lands of Amurru (KUR^{MEŠ} *A-mu-ri*) are your [land]s, and my house is your house (EA 158, 14–16; after Moran 1992: 244).

In this passage one could understand the ‘Lands of Amurru’ as a reference to the whole Syrian territory under Mittanian control only if assuming that Aziru was speaking on behalf of all the other Mittanian vassals, but this is surely not the case; thus, one can only conclude that Aziru himself was referring to his own kingdom as the ‘Lands of Amurru’.¹⁵

The case of the letter RS 20.162, sent by an otherwise unknown individual named Paršu to the king of Ugarit, is of added interest because it might provide an attestation more or less contemporary to that of the Šaušgamuwa treaty:¹⁶

My lord, has the king of Amurru (LUGAL KUR^rMEŠ *A-mur-ri*¹) not said thus unto you: ‘When you hear anything about the alien enemies, write to my countries (KUR^{MEŠ} *-ia*)’? (RS 20.162, 6–11; after Izre’el 1991, vol. 2: 99).

Furthermore, my lord, the lands of Amurru (KUR^{MEŠ} *A-mur-ri*) and the lands of Ugarit (KUR^{MEŠ} *U-ga-ri-te*), they are indeed one (RS 20.162, 17–19; after Izre’el 1991, vol. 2: 99).

Who could the king of the ‘Lands of Amurru’ in such a context be? Surely not a king of all the Mittanian territories west of the Euphrates, since the existence of such an authority is nowhere attested in the sources, and even if it had ever existed it would be totally ana-

¹⁵ One may recall here also the expression ‘the whole of Amurru’ attested in a letter of Abdi-Aširta, Aziru’s father: ‘As I am a servant of the king and a dog of his house, I guard all Amurru (KUR *A-mur-ri gab-ba-šu*) for the king, my lord’ (EA 60, 6–9; after Moran 1992: 132). Cf. also EA 61 rev. 5, another letter of Abdi-Aširta.

¹⁶ The document is usually dated towards the end of the 13th century because it was recovered in the archive of Rap’anu, which was in use during the last period of Ugarit’s existence and due to the atmosphere of impending danger evoked in it, which can perhaps be linked to the approach of the Sea Peoples (Singer 1991a: 175–176; 1999: 721).

chronistic here, because at this time the kingdom of Mittani did not exist anymore. The king of the ‘Lands of Amurru’ can only be the ruler of the kingdom of Amurru, and indeed this is the usual interpretation of the passage.¹⁷ One may object that this is just an idiosyncrasy of the scribe, who used the plural also for the ‘Lands of Ugarit’ (RS 20.162: 18); even so it is an indication that the plural designation was conceived as a possible alternative to the more common singular one. In this regard, it should also be noted that in the LBA other political entities of the Syro-Palestinian area could be referred to with plural designations as well. Beside the ‘Lands of Nuḫašše’ (KBo 1.6 obv. 34; KUB 14.17+KBo 50.30 ii 18’ // KBo 50.21, 5’), which might in fact have been a sort of confederation as suggested by the several occurrences of the ‘kings of Nuḫašše’ in the Amarna letters and in the texts of Šuppiluliuma recovered in the Ugarit archives,¹⁸ one can also point to the cases of Kinahḫa, Japu and Zalḫu.¹⁹

Summing up, the evidence collected here on the use of the plural militates against Singer’s solution, suggesting instead that the attestations of the ‘Lands of Amurru’ from the time of Aziru and from the late 13th century can hardly be interpreted as anything but references to the kingdom of Amurru *stricto sensu* and making it likely that ‘Lands of Amurru’ in CTH 105.A i 17 also refers to the kingdom of Aziru, an hypothesis supported also by the singular variant ‘Land of Amurru’ in CTH 105.B obv. 6.²⁰

CTH 105.A i 19–20 // CTH 105.B obv. 7

The sentence *nu=šši* ^m*Azira=š* *QATAMMA pahḫaštāt* has also been variously interpreted. Since this is one of the very few attestations of a medio-passive form of *pahḫš-* governing the dative,²¹ scholars agree that the author of the text likely wanted to give the sentence a nuance other than ‘to protect someone’, which is the basic meaning of *pahḫš-* with the accusative.²² It has therefore been proposed to translate *pahḫš-* with the dative as ‘to be/remain loyal to someone’ (Kühne / Otten 1971: 7; Singer 1991b: 71; 2000: 99; Fuscagni et al. 2008), ‘to give allegiance to someone’ (Beckman 1999: 104), ‘to be subject to someone’ (Altman 2003: 353; 2004: 440, 448ff.) and ‘to seek protection with someone’ (CHD P, *pahḫš-* 6, 7). The choice among the proposed meanings depends mainly on the context and on the identity of the referent of the 3rd sing. enclitic personal pronoun *-šši*, which should be identified according to some authors with the Hurrian king (Kühne / Otten 1971: 29; Altman 2004: 440, 448ff.), according to others with Šuppiluliuma I (CHD P, *pahḫš-* 6, 7;

¹⁷ Izre’el (1991, vol. 2: 99–100); Singer (1991a: 175–176; 1999: 721).

¹⁸ See RGTC 12/2, 213.

¹⁹ See under the relevant entries in RGTC 12/2.

²⁰ Altman (2003: 357) suggests that the ‘Lands of Amurru’ in CTH 105.A i 17 is a scribal error, but the existence of the other attestations makes it likely that it should be seen as a variant of the singular designation.

²¹ The only other occurrence of *pahḫš-* with the dative in CHD P, *pahḫš-* 6, 7 comes from a letter of Tuḫaliya IV (KUB 23.103 obv. 5), the fragmentary condition of which disallows any further conclusions. A fragmentary example mentioned by Neu (1968: 162) and Kühne / Otten (1971: 29) is more likely to be interpreted as a form of *ir-ahḫ-* (Otten 1981: 16–17).

²² See CHD P, *pahḫš-*, 2 ff.

Beckman 1999: 104). Linguistic considerations, already pointed out by the editors of the treaty, favour the first possibility, because enclitic personal pronouns usually refer to someone/something mentioned in the immediately preceding sentence, which in this case is the Hurrian king, not Šuppiluliuma. This interpretation is supported also by the presence of the Akkadian adverb *QATAMMA*, ‘likewise’, which makes sense if this sentence is connected to the previous one, while it is hardly explicable with reference to what follows. All these elements support the interpretation of the passage as ‘they [were] subjects of the King of Hurri, and Azira was likewise loyal to him (= the King of Hurri)’.

3.

In the previous paragraphs it was shown how the new evidence provided by KUB 19.15+ no longer allows one to discard the statements of CTH 105 as simple falsification of historical events, but rather supports the hypothesis that Amurru might have enjoyed the more or less official support of Mittani during the Amarna Age, to the point that the relationship between the two might have looked like that between suzerain and vassal. It will now be examined how this scenario can be reconciled with the other Hittite accounts on the events that led to the Hittite subjugation of Amurru.

The first relevant document is the treaty between Šuppiluliuma I and Aziru (CTH 49), where one can find the most detailed, although fragmentary, description of Aziru’s apostasy. The better preserved Hittite version relates that when ‘[all the kings, (namely)] – the king of Egypt, the king of Hurri, the king of [Qatna²³/Aštata²⁴], the king of Nuḥašše, the king of Niya, the king of [Kinza²⁵], the king of Mukiš, the king of Ḫalpa, the king of Karkemiš – a[ll] (these) kings became hostile to His Majesty, but Azira, king of [Amurru], rose up from the [borde]r²⁶ of Egypt and submitted himself to His Majesty, k[ing of Ḫ]atti’ (CTH 49.II i 14–19). This is the ‘traditional’ scenario of Aziru’s subjugation, according to which the king of Amurru shifted of his own free will from the Egyptian to the Hittite side, without any ‘Hurrian interlude’. Interestingly enough, though, in the Akkadian version of the same treaty one finds a tiny, but perhaps not irrelevant, variant. Here, the list of hostile countries has ‘the king of Amu[rri]’ (LUGAL KUR URU *A-mu[r-ri]* CTH 49.I B obv. 11), where the Hittite version has the king of Hurri. This is admittedly probably just a scribal error, with Singer (2000: 94 n. 4), but it could have been a Freudian slip, revealing of how ambiguous Amurru’s behaviour might have looked to the Hittites.

The next source reporting on these events is the treaty between Muršili II and Tuppi-Teššup of Amurru (CTH 62). In the historical prologue there is no information on Amurru’s political stance prior to its subjugation to the Hittites, but in the normative section of the agreement one finds the only explicit claim in a Hittite text of Amurru having

²³ Thus tentatively Freydanck (1959–60: 359), followed by Klengel (1964: 441) and del Monte (1986: 128). The tiny trace could indeed be the end of a *Winkelhaken*, supporting the reading [ZA]G. Singer (1990: 147) and Altman (2004: 325 n. 7) proposed instead ‘[gat]e’ in agreement with the Akkadian version, which has here KÁ.GAL.

once been an Egyptian vassal.²⁴ Here Muršili II warns Tuppi-Teššup not to behave like his ancestors, who used to pay tribute to Egypt (CTH 62.II).²⁵ It is, however, worthwhile to compare how Aziru’s apostasy is described in the Akkadian and Hittite versions of the treaty:

CTH 62.I obv. 2–4

2 ^mAzira ana kâša ^mTuppi-^dX-u[p] abi abîka šū itti abîya i[tt]a[kir]
3 abîya ana ìr-uttîšu uttêršu LUGAL^{MEŠ} URUNuḥašši u LUGAL KUR^{URU}Kinza itti [abîya]
4 kî ikkirû u ^mAzira abi abîka itti abîya ul ikkir

Azira was to you, Tuppi-Teššup[p], your grandfather. He was h[os]t[ile]²⁶ to my father, (but) my father reduced him into servitude. When the kings of Nuḥašše and the king of Kinza became hostile to [my father], Azira did not become hostile to my father.

CTH 62.II A i 3–6²⁶

3 ^mAziraš tuel ša ^mTu[ppi-^dX-up ABI ABÎKA]
4 ANA ABÎYA ìr-aḫtat u[(er=ma LUGAL^{MEŠ} KUR^{URU}Nuḥašši)]
5 kuwapi LUGAL KUR^{URU}Kinza=ya i[TTI ABÎYA kururiyah(her)]²⁷
6 ^mAziraš=ma UL kurur[(iyaḫta)]

Azira – [grandfather] of yours, Tu[ppi-Teššup] – submitted himself to my father. When then [(the kings of Nuḥašše)] and the king of Niya [became ho(stile)] t[o my father], Azira did not beco[me hostile].

First, it may be noted that according to the Akkadian version Šuppiluliuma subjugated Aziru, while in the Hittite version it was Aziru who submitted himself to the Hittite king. The other documents tend to agree with the Hittite version, but in KUB 19.15+ it is also said that Šuppiluliuma defeated the king of Amurru, and it might not be a coincidence that the two sources that describe Amurru’s annexation as an act by Šuppiluliuma are both dated to the reign of Muršili II.

Second, the verb restored at the end of CTH 62.I obv. 2 is of some importance. The form *i[tt]a[kir]* was first proposed by Weidner (1923: 76) and was retained by del Monte (1986:

²⁴ The passages where Aziru is said to have come ‘from the gate/border of Egypt’ to Ḫatti could theoretically be interpreted as a merely geographical, rather than as a political, indication, as J.L. Miller pointed out to me.

²⁵ This passage is not preserved in the Akkadian version, CTH 62.I.

²⁶ Restorations in parentheses are based on CTH 62.II B and C.

²⁷ Collation on photograph confirms that the traces before the break correspond to the beginning of an IT and that the space seems to be sufficient for the proposed restoration, based on the parallel passage of the Akkadian version. Alternatively one could think of *i[TTAKRÛ]*, based on the equivalence Hitt. *kururiyahh-* = Akk. *nakāru* (for which see HHw, 119, sub *kururiyahh-*).

156–157), but Singer (1990: 150–151; see also Beckman 1999: 123 n. 12) subsequently suggested restoring *i[t]-t[a]-[al-ka]*, ‘he came’, instead, because ‘there is no need to restore a verb with a negative connotation. Quite the contrary. The whole gist of the passage is to emphasize Aziru’s loyalty towards Šuppiluliuma, in sharp contrast to the rebelliousness of Nuḫašše and Kinza’. Altman (2004: 362 n. 35) agrees that ‘there is no place for a verb with a negative connotation. The argumentation here stresses the fact that ever since Aziru’s self-subjugation to Ḫatti, he and his son, Ari-Teššup, maintained their loyalty to the Hittites. A reference to a negative act on the part of Aziru would entirely contradict this argumentation’. It seems, however, that Aziru’s hostility *before* the Hittite annexation of Amurru must not necessarily be seen to clash with the depiction of Aziru and his successors as loyal vassals *after* the Hittite annexation of Amurru. At the same time, this claim provides the Hittites with the ideal excuse to justify the subjugation of the Syrian kingdom. Furthermore, the restoration of a form of *nakāru* seems more likely because of linguistic considerations. In fact *nakāru* is usually constructed with *itti*²⁸ and agrees very well with *itti abīya* preceding the fragmentary verbal form (CTH 62.I obv. 2), while one would rather expect *ana abīya* if some form of *alāku* had stood in the break.²⁹ If the restoration *i[tt]a[kir]* is accepted, it would supply yet another hint supporting CTH 105’s account of Amurru being hostile to Ḫatti before Aziru decided to shift to the Hittite side.

Finally, there is the historical prologue of the treaty between Ḫattušili III and Bentešina (CTH 92), which recounts that Aziru’s submission was a spontaneous act that took place after he ‘revoked/changed [... o]f Egypt’ (CTH 92 obv. 5). One can only speculate about the missing object of the verb *enū*, but in view of the context it is usually assumed that it should have been a term related to Aziru’s political status.³⁰ Importantly, there is no mention of Mittani.

To summarize the Hittite accounts of Amurru’s annexation, two variables are generally indicated, namely the identity of the Great Power to which Amurru belonged before becoming a Hittite vassal (Variable 1) and whether Aziru submitted of his own volition or was subjugated by Šuppiluliuma (Variable 2), as shown in the following table:

Source	Variable 1	Variable 2
CTH 49.I	Egypt	Aziru submits voluntarily
CTH 49.II	Egypt	Aziru submits voluntarily
CTH 62.I	– ^a	Šuppiluliuma subjugates Aziru
CTH 62.II	(see n. 31)	Aziru submits voluntarily
KUB 19.15+	Mittani	Šuppiluliuma subjugates Amurru
CTH 92	Egypt	Aziru submits voluntarily
CTH 105	Mittani	Aziru submits voluntarily

^a As noted above, in the historical prologue of both versions of the Tuppi-Teššup treaty there is no mention of Amurru’s previous overlord.

These two variables are combined in different ways, but two patterns are apparent. The Syrian kingdom was either taken by Šuppiluliuma from the Hurrians, or it became a Hittite vassal because Aziru decided to betray the Pharaoh and submit to Šuppiluliuma. One can also identify a very important element of consistency in both presentations of the events, i.e. the main concern of the Hittites was to show that they were not directly responsible for the Egyptian loss of Amurru, and this is the message ultimately conveyed by all the available sources.

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²⁸ See CAD N 1, *nakāru*, 159 ff. and AHw II, *nakāru(m)*, 718 ff.

²⁹ The preposition *itti* is only very rarely attested with the meaning ‘to, towards’ in combination with *alāku* (CAD A 1, *alāku* 4c 5’ b’). In peripheral Akkadian it occurs in the texts from Alašiya and the Southern Levant (Cochavi-Rainey 2003: 104, with reference to previous literature) but not in those from Ugarit (Huehnergard 1989: 188–189; van Soldt 1991: 452–453) and Amurru (Izre’el 1991, vol. 1: 310–311). Lisa Wilhelmi (SOAS, London) was kind enough to inform me that she encountered no such use of *itti* with *alāku* in her analysis of the Akkadian of Boğazköy. Another possibility would be that the Akkadian might have been influenced by the Hittite use of combining the preposition *ITTI* with the verb *uwe-*, ‘to come’, attested for instance in CTH 105.A i 15–17 and CTH 105.B obv. 6.

³⁰ The proposals include ‘loyalty’ (Singer 1990: 152), ‘vassalage’ (Beckman 1999: 101) and ‘servitude, suzerainty, lordship’ (Altman 2004: 376).

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Elena Devecchi

Institut für Assyriologie und Hethitologie

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1

D - 80539 München

E-Mail: elena.devecchi@assyfak12.uni-muenchen.de