STEP II, 2014, Q9

9 A uniform rectangular lamina $ABCD$ rests in equilibrium in a vertical plane with the corner A in contact with a rough vertical wall. The plane of the lamina is perpendicular to the wall. It is supported by a light inextensible string attached to the side AB at a distance d from A. The other end of the string is attached to a point on the wall above A where it makes an acute angle θ with the downwards vertical. The side AB makes an acute angle ϕ with the upwards vertical at A. The sides BC and AB have lengths $2a$ and $2b$ respectively. The coefficient of friction between the lamina and the wall is μ.

(i) Show that, when the lamina is in limiting equilibrium with the frictional force acting upwards,

$$d\sin(\theta+\phi) = (\cos\theta + \mu\sin\theta)(a\cos\phi + b\sin\phi)\,. \qquad (*)$$

(ii) How should $(*)$ be modified if the lamina is in limiting equilibrium with the frictional force acting downwards?

(iii) Find a condition on d, in terms of a, b, $\tan\theta$ and $\tan\phi$, which is necessary and sufficient for the frictional force to act upwards. Show that this condition cannot be satisfied if $b(2\tan\theta + \tan\phi) < a$.