

Neo-Aramaic and Kurdish Folklore from Northern Iraq

A Comparative Anthology with a Sample of Glossed Texts

VOLUME 1



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CHRISTIAN ARAMAIC OF SHAQLAWA

TEXT 28: §1–21

Geoffrey Khan

Speaker: Seran Sher

Audio: <https://nena.ames.cam.ac.uk/audio/230/>

(1) ʾana šəm-i Serān ʾAdday Šēr-ile.[|]
I name-my Seran ʾAday Šer=COP.3SG.M

My name is Seran Adday Sher.

brāt Ḥane ʾĀwdu-iwan.[|] naš-ət Šāqlāwe-wan.[|]
daughter.of Ḥane ʾAwdu=COP.1SG.F people-of Shaqlawa=COP.1SG.F

I am the daughter of Hane Awdo. I am [one of the] people of Shaqlawa.

šāt ʾalpa=u təša ma=u ʾəšti=u xamša
year.of thousand-and nine hundred-and sixty-and five

hwè-te-wan.[|] gu Šāqlawa.[|]
be.PTCP-SG.F=COP.1SG.F in Shaqlawa

I was born in 1965 in Shaqlawa.

(2) ʾət-i xa ḥūčita šəm-aw trè malaye-le.[|]
EXIST-1SG one story name-its.F two mullahs=COP.3SG.M

I have a story called ‘The Two Mullahs’.

ʾət-wa=u lət-wa[|] mən bāb ʾalaha=u ʾoda
 EXIST-PST=and NEG.EXIST-PST than father God=and mother

Maryam bəš rab-a lət-wa=u qāt-iš la
 Mary more big-SG.M NEG.EXIST-PST=and never-also NEG

k-awe-Ø,[|]
 IND-be-3SG.M

There was and there was not, there was no one who was greater than God the Father and Mother Mary and shall never be,

ʾət-wa trè malaye.[|] ʾāna tre malàye,[|] malay-ət
 EXIST-PST two mullahs these two mullahs mullahs-of

xà mata=wən-wa,[|] xa məzgaft=u xa mātā.[|]
 one village=COP.3PL-PST one mosque=and one village

there were two mullahs. These two mullahs were mullahs serving the same village, the same mosque and same village.

(3) ʾāna tre malàye[|] xəzmət-ət dè məzgaft
 these two mullahs service-of OBL.that mosque

ʾud-i-wa[|] gāwət[|] maşròxe[|] qatət mşalòye=u[|]
 do-3PL-PST in call.INF to pray.INF=and

gu ḥdar-ət taziye=u məndyàne.[|]
 in attend.INF-of funerals=and things

These two mullahs served the mosque by calling to prayer, attending funerals and so on.

- (4) *xa mən dāna malāye,[|] qāmət waxt-ət šlot-ət*
 one from OBL.these mullahs before time-of prayer-of
xuškənta hawe-Ø-wa,[|] baraw bāyani ʾawa ʾəl
 dawn be-3SG.M-PST towards morning he at
məzgəft hawe-Ø-wa.[|] hawar mašrəx-Ø-wa=u[|] qū
 mosque be-3SG.M-PST call call-3SG.M-PST=and rise.IMP
mšaloye=u[|] məndi=u[|] bāng yawəl-Ø-wa.[|]
 prayer.INF=and thing=and call give-3SG.M-PST

One of these mullahs used to be in the mosque at dawn before the time of morning prayer. He would make a call to prayer crying ‘Rise to pray’ and so forth.

- (5) *ʾaw malà xət[|] gālak mətʾəsər payəš-Ø-wa.[|]*
 that.SG.M mullah other very upset become-3SG.M-PST

The other mullah used to get very upset.

- ʾamər-Ø-wa[|] maʿqūl=ila ʾāt[|] qāmet-i l-tāma*
 say-3SG.M-PST possible=COP.3SG.F you before-me to-there
haw -ət?[|]
 be -2SG.M

‘How is it possible for you to be there before me?’

- naše lōm wəd-lu.[|] ʾamr-i ʾāt ʾəl ma məndi*
 people blame do.PFV-3PL say-3PL you for what thing

People began to blame him saying ‘Why

- ʾaxni ʾəty-e-wət lāxa?[|] la xəzmət-an*
 we come.PTCP-SG.M=COP.2SG.M here not service-our
k-ud-ət[|]
 IND-do-2SG.M

have you come to us here? You do not offer us service

la bāṅ ʕ-aw-ət.[|] ʔe qa tsə məndi
not call IND-give-2SG.M yes for no thing

bāš lew-ət.[|]
good NEG.COP-2SG.M

nor do you call to prayer. You are not good for anything.'

(6) *fà[|] gālak mətʔàsər pəš-le.*[|] *xàr-e*[|]
and very upset become.PST-3SG.M look.PST-3SG.M

So, he became very upset. He thought to himself (lit. he saw).

ʔamər-Ø: *ʔaz-ən baqr-ən mən de*
say-3SG.M go-1sg.M ask-1sg.M from OBL.that
xàwr-i[|] ʔaw mən didi qəša haya k-àte-Ø.[|]
friend-my he than OBL.1SG little early IND-come-3SG.M

He said, 'Let me go and ask my colleague, who comes before me a little earlier.

ʔana kut tira dèrang,[|] *gu tsə məndi*
I every time late in no thing

la g-matp-ən.[|]
NEG IND-reach-1SG.M

I am late every time, I do not catch up with anything.

(7) *ʔamər-Ø:*[|] *māla.*[|] *ʔamər-Ø:* *hà ʔaxoni-i.*[|]
say-3SG.M mullah say-3SG.M yes brother-my

mà=ila?[|]
what=COP.3SG.F

He said, 'Mullah.' He said, 'Yes, brother, what is the matter?'

ʿamər-Ø: mur qāt-i, gu mà məndi ʿāt qāmət
 say-3SG.M say.IMP.S to-me in what thing you before
 wəxt-ət mṣaloye lāxe-wət? ʿamər-Ø: qa mà?
 time-of pray.INF here-COP.2SG.M say-3SG.M for what

He said, ‘Tell me, how is it that you are here before the time of prayer?’

ʿamər-Ø: hemən naš-ət ʿawayi lèw-u
 say-3SG.M believe.IMP.SG people-of village COP.PST-3PL
 mən-i razi.
 with-me happy

He said, ‘Believe me, the people of the village are not happy with me.’

k-əmr-i àt dràng k-at-ət=u qat qal-ux
 IND-say-3PL you.S late IND-come-2SG.M=and to voice-your.SG.M
 là k-šām-əx-le.
 NEG IND-hear-1PL-O.3SG.M

They say “You come late and we never hear your voice.

dyara la yan qal-ux bāsim-a lèw-e
 seems NEG either voice-your.SG.M pleasant-SG.M NEG.COP-3SG.M
 yan tām̄bal-iw-ət, là k-at-ət.
 or lazy=COP-2SG.M NEG IND-come-2SG.M

It seems you do not come either because your voice is not good or because you are a lazy person.”

- (8) ʾàmər-Ø: | *mhèmən*, | ʾana xà mändi
 say-3SG.M believe.IMP.S I one thing
 ʾamr-ən-ux ʾàxon. |
 say-1SG.M-O.2SG.M brother

He said, 'Look, let me tell you one thing, brother.'

- ʾàmər-Ø: | *čād-ət mâr?* | ʾana trè ʾišunyata ʾət-i. |
 say-3SG.M know-2SG.M what? I two wives EXIST-1SG

He said, 'Do you know what? I have two wives.'

- (9) ʾāna tre ʾišunyāta | xa har māye g-mašxən-a
 these two wives one always water warm-3SG.F
 qat-i, | xa pəštumāl g-dawq-a-la qat-i, |
 for-me one cushion IND-hold-3SG.F-O.3SG.F for-me

These two wives, one of them always warms water for me [to bathe], one holds a cushion for me,

- xa gòr-i g-matw-a-lu qat-i, | xa jàle
 one sock.PL-my IND-put-3SG.F-O.3PL for-me one clothes
 ḥazər k-ud-a-lu | xa qundər-i-š šūbuḡ
 ready IND-make-3SG.F-O.3PL one shoes-my=also polish
 k-ud-a-lu. |
 IND-make-3SG.F-O.3PL

one puts out my socks for me, one prepares my clothes, one polishes my shoes.

- qa ḥàdax | xa=u tre ʾana ḥazər k-peš-ən. |
 for thus one-and two I ready IND-become-1SG.M
 qa ḥadax qāmēt-ux k-ṭap-ən. |
 for thus before-you.SG.M IND-reach-1SG.M

That is why I get ready in a moment, and this is why I get here before you.'

(10) ʔamər-Ø: mātū?|
say-3SG.M how?

He said, ‘But how?’

ʔamər-Ø| yaʿni raʿy-ux māt=ile?|
say-3SG.M it.means view-your.SG.M what-COP.3SG.M?

He said, ‘I mean, what is your advice?’

ʔamər-Ø:| raʿy-i-le ʔawd-ət-u trè ʔišunyata.|
say-3SG.M view-my=COP.3SG.M do-2SG.M-O.3PL two wives

‘My advice is for you to have two wives.’

ʔamər-Ø: mātʔakkəd-iwət?| ʔamər-Ø: ma de mdzàrəb!|
say-3SG.M sure-COP-2SG.M? say-3SG.M well well try.IMP.SG

He said, ‘Are you sure? He said, ‘Just give it a try!’

ʔaxon-ux māt mare=le qat-ux?|
brother-your.SG.M what say.INF-COP.3SG.M to-you.SG.M

ʔamər-Ø: ha halʿān k-az-ən.|
say-3SG.M well now IND-go-1SG.M

This is your brother’s advice to you.’ He said, ‘I shall go immediately [and marry another woman].’

(11) har pləṭ-le mən mæzgàft| ʔizəl-e
just leave.PFV-3SG.M from mosque go.PFV-3SG.M

xa baxta mte-le.|
one woman bring.PFV-3SG.M

As soon as he left the mosque, he went and married another woman.

ʔite-le qam-yawəl-Ø-a| qam-matù-Ø-la l-beta.|
come.PFV-3MS PFV-give-3SG.M-O.3SG.F PFV-put.3SG.M-O.3SG.F at-house

He came and put her, he helped her settle at the house.

ʿamər-Ø: ʿāna[|] šloθ-ət ʿašərtē=la,[|] b-izāl-ən
 say-3SG.M I prayer-of evening=COP.3SG.F in-go.INF=COP.1SG.M
 qa məzgaft.[|]
 to mosque

He said, 'It is time for the evening prayer. I am going to the mosque.'

(12) hātā dər-e[|] qāl-ət[|] ʿāna tre ʿišūnyāt-u[|]
 until return.PFV-3SG.M voice-of these two wives-his
 l-dāw bal-ət Zaba ʿtape-Ø-wa.[|]
 to-OBL.that side-of Zab reach-3SG.M-PST

By the time he returned home, the cries of these two wives were reaching the other bank of the Zab River.

xà ʿamr-a-wa:[|] kalba xəry-ət mālā.[|]
 one say-3SG.F-PST dog defecated.PTCP.SG.M-of mullah

One said, 'May a dog shit on the mullah!'

ʿaw xət ʿamr-a-wa:[|] ʿatxa ʿələt riš-ət mālā.[|]
 that.M other say-3SG.F-PST thus on head-of mullah

Another said, 'May this [dog's shit] be on the head of the mullah.'

ʿe xət ʿamr-à-wa:[|] kalba l-qawr-ət mālā
 that other say-3SG.F-PST dog on-grave-of mullah
 xare-Ø.[|]
 defecate-3SG.M

Another said, 'May the dog shit on the mullah's grave.'

bejəga mən xatwat-u=u ʿòd-u,[|]
 besides from sisters-his-and mother-his

Besides his sisters and his mother,

ʿani kûl-u qam-mat-i-lu l-gor.[|]
 those all-them PFV-bring-3PL-3PL to-situation

they included them all in their curses.

(13) ma ʾàwəd-Ø?[|] wàr-e[|] ʾamər-Ø:
 what do.3SG.M entered.PFV-3SG.M say-3SG.M

mà=ila?[|]
 what=COP.3SG.F

What could he do? He entered [the house] and said, ‘What is the matter?’

ʾamər-Ø: bāš=ila,[|] ʾaxtun qa mà ʾəli
 say-3SG.M good=COP.3SG.F you.PL for what me
 mšawore=witun?[|]
 curse.INF=COP.2PL

He said, ‘All right, why are you swearing at me?’

ʾana mà?[|] ʾamr-i: xer ʾāt muty-an-iwət?[|]
 I what say-3PL but you bring.PFV-O.1PL=COP.2SG.M

What have I done?’ They said, ‘But it was you who brought us [here].’

(14) ʾàl-mūhəm[|] là ʾide-le[|] mātū[|] tre
 the-important NEG know.PFV-3SG.M how two
 ʾlaha sāʿāt fāt-lu.[|]
 three hours pass.PFV-3PL

Well, he did not know how the next two or three hours passed by.

qāmət yoma bāyəz-Ø, | ʔərəq-le | mən qam ʔidāt
 before day pour-3SG.M flee.PFV-3SG.M from before hands.of
dan trè ʔišunyata | ʔət mara qat-u:
 OBL.those two women SBR say.INF to-him

Before dawn broke, he fled from the hands of the two women as they were saying to him,

ʔāt ʔatxa wəd-lux | ʔāt ʔatxa wəd-lux, |
 you thus so.PFV-2SG.M you thus do.PFV-2SG.M

‘You did this, you did that’,

b-e ga mšawore l-ʔəgdàde. | reš-u
 at-that time swear.INF at-each.other head-his
gālak gālak mrè-le. |
 much much hurt.PFV-3SG.M

at the same time swearing at each other. He had a big headache.

(15) *ʔizəl-e. | lèle-le, | lebe tsə mändi*
 go.PFV-3SG.M night=COP.3SG.M cannot.3SG.M any thing
ʔawəd gu məzgaft. |
 do.3SG.M in mosque

He went away. It was night time and he could do nothing in the mosque.

la ʔib-e mäsraḫ-Ø | la ʔib-e mālā
 NEG can-3SG.M call-3SG.M NEG can-3SG.M mullah
bang ʔawəd-Ø. |
 call make-3SG.M

He could not call to prayer. The mullah could not make a call [to prayer].

la tsə mendi lèb-e ʾawəd-Ø. ʾizəl-e tǎra
 NEG any thing cannot-3SG.M do-3SG.M go.PFV-3SG.M door
qam-patəx-Ø-le. ʾitù-le ʾələl.
 PFV-open-3SG.M-O.3SG.M sit.PFV-3SG.M above

He cannot do anything. He went and opened the door. He sat on the upper floor.

(16) *ʾitu-le ʾələl. ʾamər-Ø qatət mǎla,*
 sit.PRF-3SG.M above say-3SG.M to mullah

He sat on the upper floor. He said to the mullah,

ʾàmər-Ø. wəxt-ət mṣalòye-le. xəz-əx mən-u
 say-3SG.M time-of pray.INF=COP.3SG.M see-1PL with-him
mən jàn-u maḥçoye-le mǎla. k-àmər-Ø.
 with self-3SG.M talk.INF=COP.3SG.M mullah IND-say-3SG.M
wəxt-ət mṣalòye-le?
 time-of pray.INF=COP.3SG.M

It is said that it was prayer time and the mullah began to talk to himself saying ‘Is it prayer time?’

la wəxt-ət mṣaloye lèla. ʾe ga xa gəfwa
 no time-of pray.INF NEG.COP.3SG.F that time one nap
ṣaql-ən-i xantsa ʾèn-i matw-ən-u.
 take-1SG.M-O.1SG a.little eyes-my put-1SG.M-O.3PL

No, it is not prayer time. So let me take a nap and close my eyes for a bit.’

(17) *k-àmər-Ø. xzè-le xa ṭəpṭəp ʾitè-le.*
 IND-say-3SG.M see.PFV-3SG.M one tapping come.PFV-3SG.M

It is said that he heard some footsteps coming.

xze-le ^ʔ*e* *māla* *xət* ^ʔ*ite-le*.[|]
 see.PFV-3SG.M that mullah other come.PFV-3SG.M
^ʔ*āmər-Ø*:[|] ^ʔ*itè-lux*?[|]
 say-3SG.M come.PFV-2SG.M

He saw the other mullah come. He said, 'Have you come [already]?'

^ʔ*āmər-Ø*:[|] *naša* *xoš* *nāša!* *madam* ^ʔ*āt* *bet-ux*
 say-3SG.M man good man if you.SG house-your.SG.M
mṣuṭəm-wa-le,[|] *qa* *mà* *bet-i* *qam-mṣaṭm-ət-e*?[|]
 ruin.PFV-PST-3SG.M for what house-my PFV-ruin-2SG.M-O.3SG.M

He said, 'My friend, if your life was ruined, why did you ruin my own life?'

^ʔ*āt* *bet-ux* *nura* ^ʔ*itən* *gu* *bet-ux*
 you.SG house-your.SG.M fire EXIST in house-your.SG.M
^ʔ*arq-ət-wa* *mən-e* ^ʔ*āna* *šəne*,[|] *qa* *mà* *bet-i*
 flee-2SG.M-PST from-it.M these years for what house-my
qam-awd-ət-e?[|]
 PFV-do-2SG.M-O.3SG.M

Your home was like hell from which you fled all these years, so why did you make my home [the same]?'

(18) ^ʔ*amər-Ø*: *qa* *ma* *bas* ^ʔ*āna* *mər-ux*?[|]
 say-3SG.M for what only me say.PFV-2SG.M

He said, 'Why have you blamed me?'¹

^ʔ*āt* *la* *tləb-lux* *mən-i* *məsà'āda*?[|]
 you.S NEG ask.PFV-2SG.M from-me help

Did you not ask for help from me?

¹ Lit. why have you said [this] only to me?

'ay mäsā'āda dāx lēw-ət bəxʒaya?| qāmet-i
 this help how NEG.COP-2SG.M IN-see.INF before-me
 l-məzgaft-iw-ət,| hāta par-ux hālāl
 at-mosque=COP-2SG.M so.that money-your.SG.M legitimate
 'awdət-u.
 do.2SG.M-O.3SG.M

Do you see how I have helped you? You are at the mosque before me, so you will legitimately earn your money.'

(19) wəlux 'amər-Ø 'āt bet-i nura
 DEIC.2SG.M say-3SG.M you.SG house-my fire
 qam-awd-ət-e.
 PFV-do-2SG.M-O.3SG.M say.3SG.M only house-my ruin
 payəš-Ø,| māt? 'āye=la 'eš-an weta xā,
 become-3SG.M what? this=COP.3SG.F life-our be.PTCP.SG.F one

'But you,' he said, 'have turned my home into a hell.' He said, 'Should only my house be in ruins? So our life has now become the same.'

(20) 'āya hūčīta| k-əmr-i-la qa daw naš-ət
 this story IND-say-3PL-O.3SG.F to OBL.that man-who
 reš-u là (ha)we-Ø mara=u| reš-u
 head-his NEG be-3SG.M ache.INF=and head-his
 mamrè-Ø-le,
 cause.to.ache-3SG.M-O.3SG.M thus lesson from OBL.this man
 k-šaqł-i-la.
 IND-take-3PL-O.3SG.F

This story is told about those who do not have a headache but cause themselves to have a headache, so that people will learn a lesson from [the story of] this man.

k-əmr-i-la *qa dān* *naše^l* *ʾaxtsa gu qūṣət*
 IND-say-3PL-O.3SG.F to OBL.those people thus in story.of
naše *lā* *(a)te-Ø=u* *ʾazəl-Ø,^l* *gu mox-ət*
 people NEG come-3SG.M=and go-3SG.M in mind-of
jān-u *ʾawəd-Ø,^l* *ʾaxtsa gu tānayat-ət* *naše*
 self-3SG.M do-3SG.M thus in speeches-of people
la *qayəm-Ø=u* *yātu-Ø.^l*
 NEG stand-3SG.M=and sit-3SG.M

[The story] tells people that one should not act² according to what other people say, but one should act using one's own mind, rather than stand and sit according to what [other] people say.

(21) *ʾawdza* *ʾite-li* *ʾitè-lī^l* *tsə mändi=š*
 so come.PFV-1SG come.PFV-1SG no thing=also
la *wəl-u* *qa-ti.^l*
 NEG give.PFV-3PL to-me

So, I came back [from the scene of the story], but they gave me nothing [to prove that I saw it].

² Lit. come and go.