

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 ZAKHO

TEXT 10: §21–33

Dorota Molin

Speaker: Ameen Isa Shamoun

Audio: <https://nena.ames.cam.ac.uk/audio/226/>

(21) *fa-Toma pləṭ-le mən madin-ət Samàna.*¹
and-Toma leave.PFV-3SG.M from city-of Samana

Meanwhile, Toma moved away from the town of Samana.

*xà yoma,*¹ *trè,*¹ *Aʿəsbùʿ,* *kāḏa,*^{1A}
one day two week so

*xa fatra zamán-ila mṭe-le l-Zàxo.*¹
some period time=COP.3SG.F arrive.PFV-3SG.M to-Zakho

It took him a day or two, a week or so, he arrived in Zakho.

*ʿiman mṭe-le Zàxo...*¹
when arrive.PFV-3SG.M Zakho

When he arrived in Zakho...

*ʿamir-ət manṭaq-ət Bahdinān bə-daw waqt,*¹
prince-of region-of Bahdinan in-OBL.that.M time

*ʿaw d-iwa b-Amèdiya, b-Zàxo =wa.*¹
that.M SBR-COP.PST.3SG.M in-Amèdiya in-Zakho =COP.PST.3SG.M

The prince of the region of Bahdinan, who would [later] be in Amèdia, was in Zakho at that time.

(22) *šmeʿ-le* *ʾánnuhu* *te-le* *xa* *hòsta.*¹
 hear.PFV-3SG.M that come.PFV-3SG.M one craftsman

He heard that a craftsman had arrived.

u-ʾawwa *hosta* *ʾile* *xùš* *hosta.*¹
 and-that.M craftsman COP.3SG.M good craftsman

This craftsman is a good one.

hole *beny-a* *hatxa* *jàsr.*¹
 DEIC.COP.3SG.M build.PTCP-SG.M such bridge

He has built such a bridge.

ʾjəsr *ʿəmlaq* *fī* *flān* *manṭaqa,*¹ *u-kāḏa* *u-kāḏa,*^A
 bridge great in certain region and-so and-so
*ʾe.*¹
 yes

A great bridge in the region called so-and-so, and so on.

fa-ʾamīr *mà* *mer-e,*¹ *ʾad* *Zàxo?*¹
 and-prince what say.PFV-3SG.M of Zakho

So, what did the prince of Zakho say?

(23) *mè-re,*¹ *ʿAʾaḥsan* *ši* *ʾənnu*^A *ʾawwa*
 say.PFV-3SG.M best thing that he

bane-Ø *xa* *jəsr* *ṭa-leni* *gawət* *mdit-ət* *Zàxo.*¹
 build-3SG.M one bridge to-us inside city-of Zakho

He said, 'The best thing [would be] for this man to build a bridge for us in the town of Zakho.

ləʾán *l-át-wā-le* *ču* *ràbt* *benate-hən.*¹
 because NEG-EXIST-PST-3SG.M none connection between-them

Because there was no connection between the two sides,

ʔamr-əx ʔannu ʔad t-àra.¹
 say-1PL that of of-land

that is, a land (connection).

fa-ʔawwa b-bane-Ø ʔa-leni xa jəsr.^{1ʹ}
 and-he FUT-build-3SG.M to-us one bridge

ʔən ʔamr-əx xa gəšra.¹
 if say-1PL one bridge

So he shall build a passage for us,' let's call [it] a 'bridge'.

(24) fa-qre-le ʔell-ət Tòma.¹
 and-call.PFV-3SG.M to-of Toma

So, he summoned Toma.

ʔamer-Ø ʔà-le,¹ ʔàyyu-Ø Toma.¹
 say-3SG.M to-him come.IMP-SG Toma

He said to him, 'Come, Toma.

k-əb-ən mən-n-ux ban-ət-li hətxa məndi.^{1ʹ}
 IND-want-1SG.M of-you.SG.M build-2SG.M-O.1SG such thing

I want you to build me such a thing.'

ʔamer-Ø ʔà-lu,¹ ʔmà y-xaləf-Ø.^{1ʹ}
 say-3SG.M to-him NEG IND-matter-3SG.M

He said to him, 'Well then.'

fa-bdeʔ-le Toma bə-bnàya.¹
 and-begin.PFV-3SG.M Toma in-build.INF

Toma began constructing the bridge.

ʔamr-i babawàt-an,¹ ʔamr-i ʔannu
 say-3PL fathers-our say-3PL that

Our ancestors say

‘Toma bde’-le bə-bnaya b-jəsr.¹
Toma begin.PFV-3SG.M in-build.INF in-bridge

that he began building the bridge.

ham là-yed-əx xa yoma,¹ ^Aesbù^{c,1} šàhr,¹ sàna,¹ kăḏa,^{1A}
even NEG-know-1PL one day week month year so

’aw hole bə-bnaya.^{1’}
he DEIC.COP.3SG.M in-build.INF

We do not know for how long he was building—a day, a week, a month, a year or so.

bə-ṭlata bène,¹ bə-ṭlata bène,¹ kām-bāne-le
in-three attempt in-three attempts PFV-build-3SG.M-O.3SG.M

jəsr.¹
bridge

He built the bridge in three attempts.

(25) y-maṭe-Ø ^Anihaya l-’axer qāṇṭara^{A,1}
IND-arrive-3SG.M end to-last arch

In the end, he got to the last arch.

wəd-le jəsr-ət Dalāl b-xamšā qanaṭer,¹
do.PFV-3SG.M bridge-of Dalale with-five arches

mù šawwa.¹
NEG seven

He made Dalale Bridge with five arches, not seven.

Samana wəd-le šawwa.¹
Samana do.PFV-3SG.M seven

Samana [however] he had built with seven.

bas *ʿawwa* *kəm-bānè-Ø-le,*¹ *xamšà* *qanaṭər*
 but that.M PFV-build-3SG.M-O.3SG.M five arches
wəd-le *ṭa* *jəsr.*¹
 do.PFV-3SG.M for bridge

But he built this one with five arches, he made five [arches] for the bridge.

bne-le *ʿall-ət* *jəsrət* *Dalāl* *gawət* *mdit-ət*
 build.PFV-3SG.M to-of bridge-of Dalal inside-of city-of
*Zàxo.*¹
 Zakho

He constructed [them for] Dalale Bridge in Zakho.

ʿamr-i *ʿannu* *ṭlata* *bene* *mṭe-le* *Toma*
 say-3PL that three attempts arrive.PFV-3SG.M Toma
nihay-ət *rabəṭ-Ø-le* *jəsr,*¹ *y-napəl-Ø* *jəsr.*¹
 end-SBR connect-3SG.M-O.3SG.M bridge IND-fall-3SG.M bridge

It is said that Toma reached the end to connect the bridge three times, but [every time] the bridge fell down.

(26) *fa-hole* *wil-a* *ʿaḥad-ət* *ʿamir-ət* *Zàxo,*¹
 and-DEIC.COP.3SG.M give.PTCP-SG.M one-of prince-of Zakho
ʿinu... *ʿàwwa,*¹ *ʿamir-ət* *Bahdinān,*¹
 that he prince-of Bahdinan
ʿinu *ʿ-ən* *la-bane-Ø* *jəsr* *b-qaṭəl-le.*¹
 that if NEG-build-3SG.M bridge FUT-kill-3SG.M-O.3SG.M

So, someone belonging to the prince of Bahdinan had given [a warning] that he, [that is] the prince of Zakho, would kill him if he does not build the bridge

ʿawwa y-amer-Ø ʿàna,¹ ʿawwa kəm-qəṭe-Ø
 he IND-say-3SG.M I he PFV-cut-3SG.M

ʿid-i u-ʿawwa b-qəṭe-Ø rəš-i.¹ ʿe, ʿadi.¹
 hand-my and-he FUT-cut-3SG.M head-my yes normal

He said ‘That one severed my hand; and this one will cut my head, [to them, it’s] normal.

u-ʿana mà ʿawd-ən-na?¹
 and-I what do-1SG.M-O.3SG.F

[But] what shall I do?’

(27) fa-b-layle tlab-le mən ʿalaha u-mṣolè-le.¹
 and-in-night ask.PFV-3SG.M of God and-pray.PFV-3SG.M

So during the night, he pleaded with God and prayed.

u-mèr-e,¹ ʿya ʿalàh-i,¹ ʿinu talb-ən
 and-sayPFV-3SG.M Oh Good-my that ask-1SG.M

mənn-ux ʿawd-ət-li xa ḥâl,¹ ʿinu mà
 of-you.SG.M do-2SG.M-O.1SG.M some solution that what

ʿawd-ən.¹
 do-1SG.M

He said ‘Oh, God, I ask you for some solution.

ʿana b-xa ʿide-wən.¹
 I with-one hand=COP.1SG.M

I am with one hand.

u-b-id-ət çaple holi bə-plàxa.¹
 and-in-hand-of left COP.DEIC.1SG in-work.INF

I am working with my left hand.’

- (28) *mən* 'amâle,¹ *u-har* *Tòma* *tama* *y-daməx-wa.*¹
 with workers and-even Toma there IND-sleep-3SG.M-PST

Toma [was] with the workers and even slept there.

ya'ni *gəb* *šula* *dīyu,*¹ *ḥatta* *dāre-Ø-wa* *bala*
 I mean by work his so that put-3SG.M-PST attention

l-šula *dīyu,*¹ *mən* *ganəwe,*¹ *mən* *kāḏa,*¹ *mən*
 to-work his of thieves of such of

zala *u-at-i* *ḥatta* *dare-Ø* *bala* *l-šula*
 go.INF and-come-3PL so that put-3SG.M attention to-work

*dīyu.*¹
 his

That is, he was near his construction site to watch over his building [against] thieves and passers-by, to look after his building.

^A*lə'án* ^ʾ*akíd* ^ʾ*ənnuhū^A* *y-amr-i* *Toma* *gālak*
 because surely that IND-say-3PL Toma very

=wa *mùxləş* *b-šula* *dīyu.*¹
 =COP.PST.3SG.M responsible in-work his

That was also because—it was said—Toma was very loyal to his work.

fa-yom-ət *tlàta,*¹ *mpəl-le.*¹
 and-day-of three fall.PFV-3SG.M

On the third day, [the bridge] collapsed.

mà *ʾawəd-Ø* *ba'd?*¹
 what do-3SG.M afterwards

What shall he do now?

(29) *dmàx-le.*¹ *msole-le* *u-dmàx-le.*¹
 sleep.PFV-3SG.M pray.PFV-3SG.M and-sleep.PFV-3SG.M

So he slept. He prayed and slept.

b-layle te-le *xa ròya, roya, mà?*¹
 in-night come.PFV-3SG.M one vision vision what

He had a vision during the night.

malàxa te-le *'amer-Ø* *ta-lu,*¹
 angel come.PFV-3SG.M say-3SG.M to-him

An angel came and said to him:

*'Tòma,*¹ *lazem* *'awwa jəsr* *'iða* *'ən* *pàyəš-Ø,*¹
 Toma must that.M bridge if if remain-3SG.M

*^Ahày yəbqa^A,*¹ *lazem* *dar-ət* *xa* *rūḥ*
 living remains must place-2SG.M one being

*gaw-u.*¹
 inside-it

Toma, if this bridge is to stand and remain, you must put a living soul inside it.

'iðan rūḥ hawe-Ø barnaša *'ən hawe-Ø* *hàywan.*¹
 if being be-3SG.M human or be-3SG.M animal

It may be either a human being or an animal.

*^Amūhām,*¹ *rūḥ hayya^A.*¹ *dar-ət-la* *gaw-u* *'aw*
 important living being place-2SG.M-O.3SG.F inside-it.M that.M

*hày,*¹ *yalla* *jəsr* *diyux* *b-θàbət-Ø.*¹
 being quickly bridge your.SG.M FUT-hold-3SG.M

But the important thing is that you put a living soul inside it while still living so that the bridge will stand firm.'

*fa-Toma mşole-le u-dmàx-le.*¹
 and-Toma pray.PFV-3SG.M and-sleep PFV-3SG.M

So, Toma prayed and slept.

(30) *qəm-le qadàmta.*¹ *mèr-e,*¹ *‘yà ‘alah-i.’*¹
 arise. PFV-3SG.M morning say. PFV-3SG.M oh God-my

He woke up in the morning. He said, ‘Oh, God.’

*qadamta dà’əman,*¹ *’ət-wā-le kalta.*¹
 morning always EXIST-PST-3SG.M daughter.in.law

In the morning, he had a daughter-in-law.

*hāmka qūšaṣ,*¹ *ḥəkayat y-māḥk-i-wa.*¹
 few stories tales IND-tell-3PL-PST

*xa y-amr-i brāt-u -iwa.*¹
 some IND-say-3PL daughter-his =COP.PST.3SG.F

Some stories, that is, the versions which they used to tell, some of them say it was his daughter.

*xa y-amr-i kàltu -iwa.*¹
 some IND-say-3PL daughter.in.law-his =COP.PST.3SG.F

Some [others] say that she was his daughter-in-law.

*kut-xa xa-məndi y-amèr-Ø-wa,*¹ *ḥāsab mà.*¹
 every-one something IND-say-3SG.M-PST depends what

Each one used to say something different, it depends.

’ana hol-i šəmy-a
 I DEIC.COP-1SG hear.PTCP-SG.M

*’inu y-amr-i kàlt-u =wa.*¹
 that IND-say-3PL daughter.in.law =COP.PST.3MSG.F

I have heard that she was his daughter-in-law.

šəmm-aw Dàlle,¹ Dàlle,¹ mù Dalale.¹ šəmm-aw Dàlle.¹
 name-her Dalle Dalle NEG Dalale name-her Dalle

Her name was Dalle, not Dalale. Her name was Dalle.

fa-Dàlle,¹ kalt-ət ʿam-an Toma,¹ ʾābū
 and-Dalle daughter.in.law-of uncle-our Toma father
 l-bnaya jəsr,¹ fa,¹ yomiya qadamta y-maty-a-wa
 to-build.INF bridge and daily morning IND-bring-3SG.F-PST
 fəṭra,¹ yaʿni fṭarta,¹ ṭa xəmyàna.¹
 breakfast I mean breakfast for father-in-law

So, Dalle, daughter-in-law of our uncle Toma, the builder of the bridge, brought him breakfast daily in the morning, that is, breakfast, for her father-in-law.

fa-ʾət-wa-ləhən mən-aw...
 and-EXIST-PST-3PL with-her
 ʾət-wā-le b-beta xa kàlwa.¹ təkram,¹
 EXIST-PST-3SG.M in-house one dog pardon me

And they had with them... he had a dog at home, excuse me.

xa kalwa u-kòme =wa.¹ kòme =wa.¹
 one dog and-black =COP.PST.3SG.M black =COP.PST.3SG.M

A dog, and it was black. It was black.

fa-y-maty-a-wa-le mən-aw u-raj-à-wa.¹
 and-IND-bring-3SG.F-PST-O.3SG.M with-her and-return-3SG.F-PST

She would bring it along with her and go back.

u-ham mumkən ʿalmud ʾùrxa.¹
 and-even maybe along road

Maybe even the whole way.

*u-kalwa y-āte-Ø-wa mēnn-aw.*¹
 and-dog IND-come-3SG.M-PST with-her

The dog would come with her.

*hole lîp-a ʔəl, ʔall-ət Dalàle.*¹
 COP.DEIC.3SG.M used.to.PTCP-SG.M to to-of Dalale
*ʔall-ət Dàlle, ʔamr-ax.*¹
 to-of Dalle say-1PL

It had got used to Dalale, or shall we say, Dalle.

(32) *fa-qadamta xzè-le...*¹
 and-morning see.PFV-3SG.M

So, he saw in the morning...

bə-daw wàqt, daw wàqt, Zaxo y-amr-i-wa
 in-OBL.that.M time OBL.that.M time Zakho IND-say-3PL-PST
dàʔaman, yaʕni, bas daw jəsr, ʔənnuhu
 always I mean only OBL.that.M bridge that
y-amr-í-wā-le jəsra ^Kmazən^K, ^Kpərá mazən^K,
 IND-say-3PL-PST-O.3SG.M bridge great bridge great
*jəsr ʔaw řàb-a.*¹
 bridge that.M great-SG.M

At that time, at that time, Zakho was always called, I mean, the bridge was called the Great Passage, the Great Bridge, the Great Bridge.

y-amr-i l-màhi? ləʔan,
 IND-say-3PL why because

Why did they say [that]? Because,

- (33) *y-àmri-i,*¹ *ʾaykāt* *ʾawr-ət* *daxel* *ʾapr-ət* *Zàxo,*¹
 IND-say-3PL when enter-2SG.M inside land-of Zakho
y-mbayən-Ø *jəsr-ət* *Dalāl.*¹
 IND-appears-3SG.M bridge-of Dalal

They say—when you enter Zakho, the Dalale Bridge is visible.

- ləʾán* *jəsr-ət* *Dalāl* *ʿàli* *=yewa,*¹
 because bridge-of Dalal tall =COP.PST.3SG.M
u-ār-ət *Zàxo* *kull-a* *ʿādəl* *=iwa.*
 and-land-of Zakho all-its.F flat =COP.PST.3SG.F

Because this bridge is high while the territory of Zakho is flat.

- ləʾán* *Zàxo* *mašhūr-la* *b-^Asāhəl_əs_Səndi.*¹
 because Zakho famous=COP.3SG.F with-Plain.of.Sendi

Because Zakho is famous for the Sendi Plain.

- sāhəl_əs_Sendi^A* *u-Zàxo* *^Adàʾəman* *ʾarq^A* *diya,*¹
 Plain.of.Sendi Zakho always land her
ʾənu *ʾāra* *ʿādəl=ila.*¹
 that land flat=COP.3SG.F

Always, the Sendi Plain and Zakho [with] all of its territory—the land there is flat.

- fa-ʾaykāt* *pàlt-i,*¹ *ʾaykāt* *xàz-i,*¹
 and-when leave-3PL when see-3PL
gārək *xaz-i-le* *jəsr-ət* *Dalāl.*¹
 must see-3PL-O.3SG.M bridge-of Dalal

So, from wherever [people] leave [the city] and look, they have to see the Dalale Bridge.