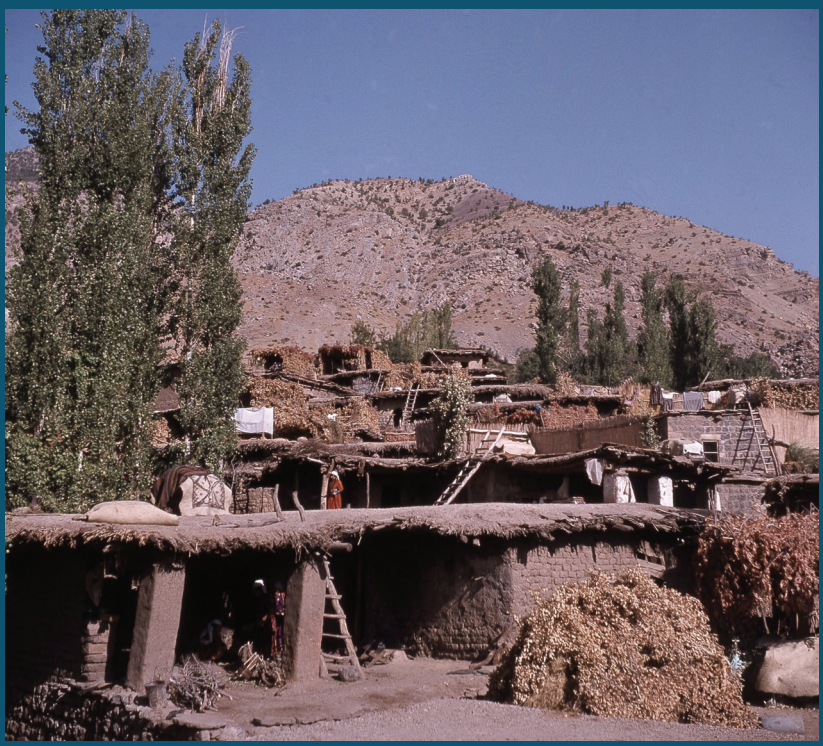
Cambridge Semitic Languages and Cultures

Neo-Aramaic and Kurdish Folklore from Northern Iraq

A Comparative Anthology with a Sample of Glossed Texts

VOLUME 2



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Geoffrey Khan, Masoud Mohammadirad, Dorota Molin and Paul M. Noorlander, *Neo-Aramaic and Kurdish Folklore from Northern Iraq: A Comparative Anthology with a Sample of Glossed Texts, Volume 2*. Cambridge Semitic Languages and Cultures 12. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2022, https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0307

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Semitic Languages and Cultures 12.

ISSN (print): 2632-6906
ISSN (digital): 2632-6914

ISBN Paperback: 9781800647695
ISBN Hardback: 9781800647701
ISBN Digital (PDF): 9781800647718
DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0307

Cover images:

Cover design: Anna Gatti

8. THE BRIDGE OF DALALE

Geoffrey Khan

Speaker: Dawid Adam (ChA. Dure)

Recording: Geoffrey Khan

Published: Khan (2008, 2156–2157)

Audio: https://nena.ames.cam.ac.uk/audio/231/

Summary

The arch of the bridge in Zakho could not be completed. An agha had seven water-mills, seven daughters-in-law and seven horses. An angel told him in a dream that he must stop one mill and kill one daughter-in-law and one horse so that the bridge could be completed. He stopped one mill and killed one horse. He sent his youngest daughter-in-law, Dalale, to take food to the workers on the bridge. It was said that the first soul to come onto the bridge would be killed. She came with a dog, but the dog was distracted by the scent of carrion. As a result Dalale was the first to come to the bridge and she was killed. They put her in the bridge and the arch of the bridge was completed. The story finishes with a song lamenting the death of Dalale.

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(1) *gu Zàxo| bnaya wɛwa xa gəšra,| gəšra y-amrəxle gəšrət Dalàle,| b-zonət ʿAbbasìye.| kəmət baníwale tat qaṭərwa ʾo gəsra,| là qaṭərwa.| yaʿni la maxewa l-ġðàðe.|*

(2) *xa yòma| ʾo gòṛa,| ʾàġa,| xzele b-xəlme.| ʾaw zàngīn=wewa,| xɛlàna.| ʾíθwale šawwà ʾarxaθa,| ʾíθwale šawwà kalaθa.| ʾíθwale šawwà susyaθa.| malaxa məre ʾəlle dìye,| ‘mən kul xa mən dànna| lazəm xa mbàṭlət.| mən kalaθux ða kalθux qàṭlət.| mən susăwaθux xa susta qàṭlət.| mən ʾarxaθux xa ʾarxe màklət.’|*

(3) *ʾanna malaxa məre ʾəlle diye ta ṯ-awədla| tat ʾo-gəšra| maxe l-ġðàðe,| qàṭər.| mara ʾo gəšra| b-šənne,| b-šənne,| šuryela bnaya tat maṭe l-ġðàðe,| lɛle màṣya.|*

(4) *qìmɛle| xa ʾarxe mbùṭləlla.| ʾu xa mən susyaθe qṭìləlla.| ʾu Dalàle,| kalθe diye zurta šəmma Dalàle=wewa,| ʾɛ Dalàle| qímɛle mšùdra| mənna ʾixala tat nábla ta-palàxe| ṯ-ila plàxa| rəš gəšrət Dalàle.|*

(5) *ʾanna mìrəlla,| ‘ku nəšma| t-màṭya| rəš gəšrət Dalàle| ʾɛ nəšma bəd-pèša| prìmta,| qṭìlta.’| ʾitla kalba mənna.| ʾən-hawewa kalba zila qămàya,| qaṭliwa kàlba.| là qaṭlíwala Dalàle.| qìmela| kalba šqille rìxa| t-xa kàlləš.| kalləš yăðət mòdi=la?| xa ʾərba mìθa.|*

(1) In Zakho, they were building a bridge. We call the bridge the bridge of Dalale. [This was] in the time of the Abbasids. However much they built the bridge in order for its arch to be completed, its arch was not completed, it was not put together.

(2) One day, the chief, the agha, saw in his dream that he was rich and powerful. He had seven water mills. He had seven daughters-in-law. He had seven horses. An angel said to him (in the dream), 'You must get rid of one of each of these. You should kill one of your daughters-in-law. You should kill one of your horses. You should stop one of your water-mills.'

(3) The angel told him to do these things, so that the bridge would come together and its arch would be completed. Indeed, they had started building the bridge (and had been working on it) for years and years in order for it to come together, but it could not (be completed).

(4) He went and stopped a water-mill and killed one of his horses. Now, Dalale—his youngest daughter-in-law was called Dalale—he sent food with Dalale for her to take to the workers who were working on the bridge of Dalale.

(5) They said to her, 'Any soul that comes onto the bridge of Dalale—that soul will be slaughtered, killed.' She had a dog with her. If the dog had gone first, they would have killed the dog and not killed Dalale. But the dog picked up the scent of carrion. Do you know what a carrion (*kalləš*) is? It is a dead sheep.

(6) *zille kalba rəš dɛ̀ kalləš.*| *ʾayya Dalale pišla qamɛ̀θa.*| *zìlla,*| *mṭela l-gəšra,*| *qəm-dawqìla,*| *qəm-parmìla.*| *mattila gu gə̀šra,*| *gəšra qṭìrre.*| *mxele l-ġðàðe.*| *bena y-àmri:*|

(7) *Dalal, Dalal, Dalale,*
gəšrə Zaxo ramana
selət xoθe milana
Dalle dwiqa l-xəmyana.

(8) *gəšrət Zaxo daqiqa*
ʾu selət xoθe raqiqa
ʾu Dalle l-xəmyana dwiqa.

(9) *m-o kalbət p̰arruš wele*
ṣlele rəš kalləš klele
xəmyanət Dalle bxele.

(6) The dog went to the carrion. So, Dalale became the first one. She reached the bridge and they seized her and slaughtered her. They put her on the bridge and the arch of the bridge was completed, it came together. So, they say:

(7) Dalal, Dalal, Dalale,
The high bridge of Zakho
The river under it is blue (with grief).
Dalle (= Dalale) has been seized by her father-in-law.

(8) The narrow bridge of Zakho,
The river under it is narrow.
Dalle (= Dalale) has been seized by her father-in-law.

(9) On account of that dog which was treacherous,
which went down and stood over carrion,
The father-in-law of Dalle wept.