

# Neo-Aramaic and Kurdish Folklore from Northern Iraq

A Comparative Anthology with a Sample of Glossed Texts

VOLUME 2



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## 22. A TALKING GOAT

*Masoud Mohammadirad*

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**Speaker: Hawsar Najat Bapir (CK. Shaqlawa)**

Recording: Lourd Hanna

Audio: <https://kurdic.ames.cam.ac.uk/audio/237/>

### **Summary**

A peddler named Uncle Jarda (K. *Mām Jarda*) went to Erbil with a caravan. He brought some goods such as grape syrup and dried cherries from Shaqlawa to trade them for other goods in Erbil. On his way back to Shaqlawa, Uncle Jarda came across a young goat abandoned in the countryside. As it was getting dark, Uncle Jarda put the goat on his shoulders and headed towards Shaqlawa.

The goat wanted Uncle Jarda to put it down. It did not want to speak to him, however, so as not to frighten him. Instead, the goat put more pressure on Uncle Jarda's shoulders to make him tired of carrying it, but Uncle Jarda did not realize this. Instead, he complained that the goat was being arrogant. Finally, the goat decided to speak, 'Hey Jarda! Hey Jarda! Hey Jarda! How much do my testicles weigh?' On hearing this, Uncle Jarda dropped the goat and returned to the village alone. He had lost his mind because of this incident with the talking goat.

(1) *mən nāw-əm Hāwsār Nadzāt Bāpīr-a.*<sup>1</sup> *xarkī Šaqrāwāy=ma.*<sup>1</sup>  
*wa ēstā=š d-ēm=a sar faqaray duwām la satsa baqarakī<sup>1</sup> ka pē gotrēt*  
*hà-bū na-bū.<sup>1</sup> la faqaray ha-bū na-bū tsīrokī aw ... aw jāray ka*  
*pēwist-a bās-i kam ka<sup>1</sup> moṛtabtāb=a kaltūrī Šaqrāwāy.<sup>1</sup> aw-iš-yān*  
*tsīrokī Mām Dzardā=ya.<sup>1</sup>*

(2) *a-rē ha-bū na-bū Mām Dzardāk ha-bū.<sup>1</sup> xarkī Šaqrāwāy*  
*būwa qadīm.<sup>1</sup> —wa ba wāqā<sup>ʿ</sup>=iš aw rūdāwa rū=y dāya balām<sup>1</sup> ya<sup>ʿ</sup>nī*  
*muṛtabət=a ba trārīxī Šaqrāwā=ū<sup>1</sup> ba hakāyāti Šaqrāwā=š.<sup>1</sup>*

(3) *pēštər la mā<sup>ʿ</sup>baynī šarakān=ū tsī ... Hawlēr=ū Šaqrāw=ū aw*  
*dzēyāna=ū Ankāwa=ū awāna kārwan̄tsī ha-būwa.<sup>1</sup> xarək ba kārwanē*  
*safar-i kərđiya.<sup>1</sup> dzā kārwanakān zīyātər ba payān būwa,<sup>1</sup> wa*  
*zəyātər=iš ba kār būwa.<sup>1</sup> à!<sup>1</sup>*

(4) *wa dzārētən aw Mām Jarđaya la Hawlērē a-gařētawà=ū<sup>1</sup>*  
*barabari dzēžnān=a=ū<sup>1</sup> dzēžnak<sup>ʿ</sup>i gawrā=ya<sup>1</sup> ya<sup>ʿ</sup>nī dzēžnī qurbānī ka*  
*dzažnakī gawrā=ya.<sup>1</sup> a-gařètò=ū šət=ū mak<sup>ʿ</sup>=i lagar xwa=y hīnà=ya=ū.<sup>1</sup>*

(5) *aw šətay ka la Šaqrāwāy bo lo nəmona<sup>1</sup> wakī došāw=ū<sup>1</sup> tū=ū<sup>1</sup>*  
*aw šətāna<sup>1</sup> la wēn darē a=y-gořt-owà<sup>1</sup> baw šət=ū maka=y ka xwa=y*  
*da=y-hawē.<sup>1</sup> d-ēt-owa, la nəžik<sup>ʿ</sup>i Šaqrāwāy<sup>1</sup> la Kāwānyān a-bīnī*  
*g<sup>ʿ</sup>iskàk la wēn dar katiya.<sup>1</sup>*

(1) My name is Hawsar Najat Bapir. I am from Shaqlawa. Now I move to the second series of stories called ‘there was [and] there was not’. The series of stories that I am going to narrate now are specific to the folklore<sup>1</sup> of Shaqlawa. One of them is called ‘The tale of Uncle Jarda’.

(2) It is said that once upon a time<sup>2</sup> there was [a man called] Uncle Jarda. He was from Shaqlawa. This story has really happened. It is linked to the history of Shaqlawa and the tales associated with Shaqlawa.

(3) In the past there were caravansaries between cities and such, [for example] between Erbil and Shaqlawa, and between Shaqlawa and Ankawa, and so on. People would travel with caravans. The caravans were mostly on foot, but also with donkeys. Yes!

(4) Once Uncle Jarda was coming back from Erbil a few days before a religious feast. It was a big festival: [it was before] Eid al-Adha, which is a big festival. He was coming back to Shaqlawa. He had brought back goods with him.

(5) He would take things which were particular to Shaqlawa—for instance, grape syrup, and dried cherries—[to Erbil] to trade them for other goods that he needed. On his way back to Shaqlawa in the Kawanyan region, he saw that a young goat had fallen on the ground.

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<sup>1</sup> Lit. Shaqlawa’s culture.

<sup>2</sup> Lit. there was and there was not.

(6) *aw=iš ewāra=ya=ū šaw=a<sup>1</sup> g'iskakay la sār mālē xo dā-a-nēt=ū<sup>1</sup>  
baraw Šaqrāwāy řē a-kā.<sup>1</sup> a-rē dē=ū bara bara da Šimonī baraw  
Zandorē d-ētən.<sup>1</sup> tā<sup>c</sup> nāzīk a-bt-owa<sup>1</sup> tā<sup>c</sup> nāzīk a-bt-owā<sup>1</sup> g'iskaka  
ziyātər la sar šān-i qurstər=ū gərāntər a-bītən.<sup>1</sup>*

(7) *g'iskaka=š har maqsad=īt=i dā=y-bə-nē.<sup>1</sup> ka qūr̄z bī dā=y-bə-nē  
la wē<sup>1</sup> řəzgār=i bī,<sup>1</sup> nāk kābrā bə-tərsētən.<sup>1</sup> Mām Dzarda=š har g'ö nā-  
dāt=ē=ū<sup>1</sup> har a-rē, 'awa tsī=ya aw g'iska qarawa?<sup>1</sup> xo tāza har=əm-gərt  
har sūk bū!<sup>1</sup>*

(8) *waḷā Mām Jarda har tē nā-gā=ū,<sup>1</sup> g'isk=i lē wa juwāb d-ē.<sup>1</sup>  
g'isk a-rē,<sup>1</sup>*

*'hay Dzarda Dzarda Dzardā!<sup>1</sup>*

*sang<sup>yē</sup> gunān=əm tsānd=a?<sup>1</sup>*

(9) *aw dzā Mām Dzarda wa xo a-kawītən.<sup>1</sup> g'iskakay fəřà a-dā=ū  
har-d-ē.<sup>1</sup> d-ēt-owa nāw gundī=ū nāw xark<sup>yē</sup>=i=ū.<sup>1</sup>*

(10) *a-rē, 'pē=m dā d-ān=ū<sup>1</sup> garmā=īt=m=ū<sup>1</sup> sarmā=īt=m=ū.<sup>1</sup> ya'ni  
aqriyat=ū away tēk a-tsītən.<sup>1</sup> aw dzā aw tsirōka nāw Šaqrāwāy ba  
wāqa'ī řū=y dā=y-awa=ū.<sup>1</sup> awa=yš faqaray ha-bū na-bū bū.<sup>1</sup>*

*amn=iš gařām-awa=ū hīts=əm pē na-bəřā.<sup>1</sup>*

(6) As it was getting dark,<sup>3</sup> he put the goat on his shoulders and set off for Shaqlawa. It is said that he passed Simoni on his way and went in the direction of Zandor. As he got closer [to Zandor], he felt that the goat had become heavier than before.

(7) The young goat wanted Uncle Jarda to put it on the ground, that is, to be heavy [on his shoulders] so that he would put it down, lest he be scared. Uncle Jarda continued on his way without noticing, and kept saying, 'What is wrong with this fat goat? When I [first] put it on my shoulders, it was light!'

(8) As Uncle Jarda did not understand what was happening, the young goat started to talk to him.<sup>4</sup> The goat said,

'Hey Jarda! Hey Jarda! Hey Jarda!

How much do my testicles weigh?'

(9) Only then Uncle Jarda realised<sup>5</sup> [the goat's intention]. He threw the goat aside and fled. He came to the village, among people.

(10) He said, 'Come to my aid!<sup>6</sup> I'm warm! I'm cold!' In other words, he lost his mind. This story really happened in Shaqlawa. This was another story.<sup>7</sup>

As for me, I have come back [from these events] and they [i.e. the characters of the story] have given me nothing.

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<sup>3</sup> Lit. It was evening and night.

<sup>4</sup> Lit. It came to respond to him.

<sup>5</sup> Lit. He fell to himself.

<sup>6</sup> Lit. Give to me.

<sup>7</sup> Lit. There was, there was not.

