

# Neo-Aramaic and Kurdish Folklore from Northern Iraq

A Comparative Anthology with a Sample of Glossed Texts

VOLUME 2



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## 31. FIRYAT AND KHAJIIA

*Masoud Mohammadirad*

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**Speaker: Ahmad Abubakir Suleiman (NK. Khizava)**

Recording: Lourd Hanna

Audio: <https://kurdic.ames.cam.ac.uk/audio/246/>

### Summary

This tale is about a water spring called *kahnika xamā* ‘spring of sorrows’ in the Amedia region. Firyat, one of the nobles of the region, wanted to marry Khajija, but her family did not want to give their daughter to him in marriage, because they were from different religions.

Since Firyat was a powerful man, Khajija’s family would have to agree to the marriage proposal eventually. They gave Firyat a false hope saying that they would give Khajija to him in marriage only if he would build them a canal flowing into a pool to store water.

After a while, Khajija’s family noticed that Firyat was about to finish the canal, and they would have to give him their daughter. They went to Fatiha, who poisoned Firyat and tricked him into believing that Khajija was dead, after which he passed away. The water was called the spring of sorrows ever since.

(1) *nāvē mən ʾAhmat Abūbakər Səlēmān. az ... xalkē gundē Xizavā=ma, ž ʿašīrā Guliyā. kanikā xamā ava ... tangadarāk=a lə vē rē tə-bēžən=ē tangā bānkē. kavrāk=a, kavrē das kolā=ya.*

(2) *ijā diyār=a ku taqriban masāfatā čār mītrā kūr kəriya. bə dās kolā=ya=w ū qiyāsā du mētrā žī fərah=a=w. čār mītrā kūrātīyā kavri=ya. ava būci masalan ... av kavra hāt=a kolānīn?*

(3) *mərovāk lə vē mantaqē bī. hīngī av ... galak jārā dānyā təžī mərov bī=ū jār dīva yā vālā bīva. av mantaqa wī sardamī təžī mərov bī. lə Məninē t-bēžən bāžēr bē hənd bošāytī lē habē.*

(4) *maləkāk lə vē mantaqayā habē mantaqā Məninē=ū hatā bāndorē wē. də-got=ē Fəryāt. Fəryāt mərovākē yē xodān šīyān bī. xodān ... zarv=ū dāst bī. ē xodān šīyān bī. kas lē nā-d-šīyā=yē=w ū tēr mərov žī bī.*

(5) *vējār ... ava gundē Bahninā gundaḵ yē qadīm=a. kəčāk=ē lə wē rē bī. nāvē wē Xajijā bī. nāv=ū dangēt Xajijāyē ... Fəryātī go lē bī. kəčākā barkatī yā pēškēš=a.*

(1) My name [is] Ahmad Abubakir Sileman. I am from the village of Khizava, from the Gulī tribe. The spring of sorrow contains<sup>1</sup> a narrow canal [through which water flows] here, [the canal] is called *Tangā Bānke*. It is a rock [that has been] excavated by hand.

(2) It is evident that the canal has been excavated almost four meters deep. It has been excavated by hand and it is two meters wide. The depth of the canal is four meters. Why was this rock excavated?

(3) There was a man in this region. This [region] was sometimes populated and sometimes unpopulated. At the time [when this story happened] it was highly populated. It is said that the city of Minīn was very rich.

(4) There was a king in these regions, [that is] the Minin area and its environs. He was called Firyat. Firyat was a powerful<sup>2</sup> man. He was wealthy and of great authority. He was powerful. Nobody could compete with him.<sup>3</sup> He was a very rich man.<sup>4</sup>

(5) There is an old village here called Bahnin. A girl used to live there whose name was Khajija. Firyat learned about Khajija's fame. She was a beautiful, gifted girl.

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<sup>1</sup> Lit. is.

<sup>2</sup> Lit. owner of power.

<sup>3</sup> Lit. Nobody was able at him.

<sup>4</sup> Lit. He was a full man.

(6) řā ... əš bənamālā 'awādī bī ... Bahninē bī. | əš bənamālā Faq əbrāhimī bī. | řā-bī čo got, 'tə-vēt hīn vē kəčē bə-dən mən. | mən nāv-ū dangē wē gō lē bī. | kəčakā yā pēškēš-ū barkatī-ya. | tə-vēt hīn vē kəčē bə-dən mən. <sup>1</sup>

(7) āwān žī nà-vīyāt bə-də-yē, | diyānatā wān nà ēk bī. | av lə Bahninē bəsəlmān bī. | avē dītərə —nə-zānəm—, | ijā ān ān masīhī bī | ān zaradaštī bī. | muhom nà-vīyā bə-dən-ē. <sup>1</sup>

(8) awī žī ət-got-ē, 'tə-vēt hiin bə-dən mən! <sup>1</sup> | tab'an šīyānēt wān na-bī. | ya'nī tə-zānī Fəryāt xodān quwāt-a-w | dē har šēt bə-bēt. | balē ... got-ē, 'am-ē takbīrā xwa kəyn. <sup>1</sup>

(9) Fəryāt zəvəřī-vā. | pəštī čan rožakā —žənkak | ... har bənamālākā 'awādī yā lə Bahninē hay, | am də-bēžən-ē bənamālā Kulka. | žənkak šə wē mālē ha-bī. | žənkakā šātořē tēgahaštī bī. | nāvē wē Fatihā bī. <sup>1</sup>

(10) žənkē got-ē, | tab'an ... avānā ... waxtē takbīrā xwa kəri, | šartāk āvēt bar. | awəl šartāk āvēt bar, | go, 'am-ē, go ma šart dē hay | tu yē šartē ma bo mà 'adā kay. <sup>1</sup> | 'šartē ta čī-ya? <sup>1</sup>

(6) She was from [that] so-and-so family in Bahnin. She was from Faq Ibrahim's family. He (i.e. Firyat) rose [and] went [to Khajija's family and] said, 'You must give me this daughter [of yours in marriage]. I have heard about her fame. [I have heard that] she is a beautiful and gifted girl. You must give me this daughter [of yours in marriage].'

(7) They did not want to give her to him [in marriage], [since] their religion was not the same. The one from Bahnin (i.e., Khajija) was Muslim. As for the other one (i.e. Firyat)—I do not know [for sure]—, he was either Christian or Zoroastrian. Anyway, they did not want to give her to him [in marriage].

(8) He (i.e. Firyat) said, 'You must give [her] to me.' In fact, Khajija's family were helpless [in the face of Firyat]. They knew that Firyat was powerful and could take her anyway. They said [to him], 'We will consider [your proposal].'

(9) Firyat returned [home]. After a few days, a woman ...— a family used to live in Bahnin, whom we call the family of Kulkā. This<sup>5</sup> woman was from this family. She was a thoughtful, intelligent woman. Her name was Fatiha.

(10) The woman said,—naturally, when they (i.e. Khajija's family) considered the matter, they made a condition for him.<sup>6</sup> First, they made a condition for him [and] said, 'We have a condition [that] you need to fulfil.' [Firyat said], 'What is your condition?'

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<sup>5</sup> Lit. a.

<sup>6</sup> Lit. throw a condition at his front.

(11) got, 'Fəryāt pî!| tu dē bo ma joaḵē hīnē.| sarī vī rūbārī šə av  
ləū [pē ra bəlā] tēt.| tu johaḵē bo mā īna,| dē lə vē kavri zəvərīn-ē.|  
avē tə-bēžən-ē 'Barbənē Dērē'.| bān-ū řāzgaḥīn-a,| ū jəhē zərā'atē-ya.  
tu-yē bo ma joē vē saldi barbənī.<sup>7</sup>| awī žī got-ē, 'bəlā'

(12) pānē ... wī sardamī šart awādī bīn| bo wān galak gərəng bī.  
řā-bī dastēt bə joyē ḵər.| aw kavəra kolā.| avāna barē xo dā-yē| ku dē  
vī kavri kolən,| ū dē jūyē bət.| ū hār tə-vēt bə-dən-ē.|

(13) žə aw ma got aw žənkā šə wē bənamāla Kulkā,| žənkakā  
tēgahaštī bī| got, 'az-ē řā-bəm čəm.| az-ē řā-bəm čəm kādakā žahrḵərī  
bo wī bəm.| wī kožəm-ū| kās nə-zāna mən kāda[žē ḵər].<sup>7</sup>|

(14) žənək řā-bī pārzīnē xo [īnā].| pārzīn ... yē kurdawārī-ya|  
məštī kādā ḵərən.| kādakā žahrḵərī| yā dasnīšānḵərī| ḵər də nāv  
pārzīnī dā.| ū řā-bī hāt| sahārē dā řē| nīro hāt kahniyā xamā.|

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<sup>7</sup> Speech muffled.



(11) They said, ‘Oh Firyat, [you who are] well-off! You must make a canal from the river for us. It must come straight from the river. Make us a canal, which runs across this rock, the one which is called *Barbine Dere*. It is a highland and flat land, and it is an area [suitable] for agriculture. You shall build a pool for us to preserve the water coming through the canal!’ ‘All right’, he (i.e. Firyat) said.

(12) At that time winning a bet was very important to people.<sup>8</sup> He (i.e. Firyat) rose [and] began to dig the canal.<sup>9</sup> He excavated the rock. They had a look at his work and saw that he was going to carve out the rock and finish the canal [soon]. And [this means] that eventually they should give her to him [in marriage].’

(13) The woman whom we talked about (i.e. Fatiha), the one from the Kulkā family, who was a clever woman, said, ‘I will go and bring him poisonous pastry. I will kill him. Nobody is going to find out that I put poison<sup>10</sup> in the pastry.’

(14) The woman took her carpetbag. A carpetbag is [typical of] Kurdish regions. She filled it with some pastry. She marked the poisonous pastries and put them into the carpetbag. And she set off<sup>11</sup> in the morning [and] arrived at the spring of sorrow by midday.

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<sup>8</sup> Lit. them.

<sup>9</sup> Lit. He put hand on the canal.

<sup>10</sup> Lit. the poison.

<sup>11</sup> Lit. hit the road.

(15) *kahnīyā xamā*<sup>1</sup> | *ava: kahnīyàḵ=a:*<sup>1</sup> | *kahnīyaḵā qadīm=a=w*<sup>1</sup> | *yā ṭāzī āwā bīna=ū.*<sup>1</sup> | *av=a lə pəšt kavri.*<sup>1</sup> | *hāt sar kahnīyē.*<sup>1</sup> | *wārgahē ... Fəryātī hīngē lə sar vè kahnīyē bī.*<sup>1</sup> | *hāt ... bən wē kavərē=ū saḷāf ḵər=ē=ū.*<sup>1</sup> | *ū got, 'mən fərvīn ā bo hīnāy'=ū.*<sup>1</sup>

(16) *pēkva dawr=ū barī dī lē kòm bīn=ū.*<sup>1</sup> | *zāf dā=yē=ū.*<sup>1</sup> | *ē ku kāda dā=yē.*<sup>1</sup> | *aw kādā dasnīšānḵərī*<sup>1</sup> | *ḵər də dastē Fəryātī řā.*<sup>1</sup> | *awāna [disā] xwārənā xwa xwār.*<sup>1</sup>

(17) *waxtē xwārənā xwa xwārī,*<sup>1</sup> | *tab'an avī ... waxtē av kāda ṣahraḵərī xwārī,*<sup>1</sup> | *Fatīhā-yē got Fəryātī*<sup>1</sup> | *got, 'pā tu zānē ava ḵī=ya?'<sup>1</sup>* | *got, 'ḵī=ya?'<sup>1</sup>* | *got, 'ava sērōškā Xajijā=ya*<sup>1</sup> | *Xajijā 'āmre xodē ḵər.*<sup>1</sup> | *'čāwā?'<sup>1</sup>* | *got, 'balē waḷā.*<sup>1</sup>

(18) *Fəryāt ṭēk čo waṣ'i wī ṭēk čo,*<sup>1</sup> | *tab'an kādā ṣī xwār.*<sup>1</sup> | *pəšti māwayakē mā*<sup>1</sup> | *Fəryāt kavīngā sar lē kat.*<sup>1</sup> | *ū kāt.*<sup>1</sup> | *muqdāraḵē mān hātən doṛā,*<sup>1</sup> | *ū xalkī wī řā-kər=ū.*<sup>1</sup> | *kā 'əlāj-ēt wī waxtī čə bīn?*<sup>1</sup> | *həndī hāt=ē, Fəryāt mər.*<sup>1</sup> | *bə vī šīwayī mər.*<sup>1</sup>

(15) The spring of sorrow, it is a spring. It is an old spring which has been reconstructed recently. It lies behind the rock. She (Fatiha) came to the water spring. Firyat was still at the spring. She came close to the rock, greeted him, and said, 'I have brought you lunch.'

(16) [Later] other people gathered. She gave them many pastries. She gave the pastry that she had marked for Firyat. They ate their meal.

(17) While Firyat was eating the poisonous pastry, Fatiha said to him, 'Do you know what this is?' Firyat said, 'What is it?' She said, 'This is Khajija's throat. She has passed away.' 'How come?', [he said]. 'By God, yes it's true!', she said.

(18) Firyat passed out [and] his situation got worse, of course, as he had eaten the poisonous pastry too. After some time, his napkin fell from his head. And he fell. People waited a while. They came around him, lifted him. Let us see what medicine there was at that time. It [things] went<sup>12</sup> so far that Firyat died. He died in this manner.

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<sup>12</sup> Lit. came.

(19) *awānā ži hamîā aw kāda yēt xwārîn.*<sup>|</sup> *kasē həzər nà-ḵər ku*  
*[masalan] ...*<sup>|</sup> *gotî, ‘žə bar čî Fəryāt mər?’*<sup>|</sup> *šə xāmēt Xajijāyē dā mər.*<sup>|</sup>  
*hatā nūkā*<sup>|</sup> *av nāva kat sarē vè kahniyē,*<sup>|</sup> *tə-bəžn-ē kahniyā xamā.*<sup>|</sup> *əž*  
*bar ... Fəryātî.*<sup>|</sup> *ah žə xamēt Xajijāyē [dā] mər.*<sup>|</sup>

(20) *Xajijā-ū Āminā xoškēt dī wè [bî].*<sup>|</sup> *vē gāvē, zīyāratē wānā yē*  
*lə zīyāratē gundē Bahninē.*<sup>|</sup> *ava həkāyātā Fəryātî-ū Xajijāyē.*<sup>|</sup>

(19) Everyone else<sup>13</sup> had also eaten [from] those pastries. No one could understand [the reason for Firyat's death]. They said, 'Why did Firyat die? He died out of sorrow for Khajija's death.' The name [*kahnīyā xamā* 'the spring of sorrow'] has been given<sup>14</sup> to the spring ever since. It is called *kahnīyā xamā* 'the spring of sorrow' after Firyat[']s ordeal]. Yes, Firyat died out of sorrow for Khajija's death.

(20) Amina was Khajija's sister. Their tombs are located in the cemetery of the village of Bahnin. This [was] the tale of Firyat and Khajija.

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<sup>13</sup> Lit. they also all.

<sup>14</sup> Lit. has fallen.

