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## MULTILINGUAL PROVERBS IN THE NEO-ARAMAIC SPEECH OF THE JEWS OF ZAKHO, IRAQI KURDISTAN<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

§1. All the Jews of Zakho, together with all the Jews of Iraq, emigrated to Israel in the years 1951 and 1952. Some waves of Kurdish Jews had already arrived in Palestine in the 1920s.<sup>2</sup> In Israel, their Neo-Aramaic speech became strongly influenced and gradually superseded by Israeli Hebrew.<sup>3</sup> The Neo-Aramaic speech of the elders, however, was much less influenced by Modern Hebrew and still retains characteristic Kurdistan features, including a large number of loanwords from Kurdish-Persian, Arabic, Turkish, and old, traditional Hebrew.<sup>4</sup> Another typical feature is the coloring of their Neo-Aramaic speech with numerous proverbs in the languages of their neighboring ethnic groups. The multilingual proverbs are an excellent example of the mutual influence of the various ethnic groups and cultures of Iraqi Kurdistan.

AUTHOR'S NOTE. The transcription used here is almost identical with that used by H. J. Polotsky for the dialect of Zakho in Franz Rosenthal, ed., *An Aramaic Handbook* (Wiesbaden, 1967).

The proverbs are arranged alphabetically according to the phonetic transcription. For subject and language classification, see indexes after the proverbs.

Non Neo-Aramaic proverbs are identified following the transcription. K., Kurdish; Ar., Arabic.

The translation is as literal as possible; the word order has not always been preserved. A more literal translation, if necessary, is added between <>. Words in parentheses () in the translation clarify the text.

In parallel references, the number following the author's name refers to the proverb number, unless otherwise indicated.

In the notes and proverbs references are cited by last name of author; dates are supplied only for authors with more than one publication listed.

<sup>1</sup> Presented as a paper at the annual meeting of the Western Branch of the American Oriental Society, Stanford University, 23 March 1975. Proverbs may be analyzed in various ways, e.g., by their origin, structure, content, social message, or the concrete context of a specific proverb. For a discussion and bibliography on these aspects see Dundes. This paper is a comparative presentation of multilingual proverbs of a small Jewish community, with necessary comments on their general linguistic-ethnic context. Any further elaboration is not considered.

<sup>2</sup> For more historical details see Ben-Jacob, pp. 58-62.

<sup>3</sup> See details in Sabar (1975b).

<sup>4</sup> See Sabar (1974b).

§2. Around 1950 Zakho was the largest town in Iraqi Kurdistan, with a population of about 30,000 out of whom 5,000 (or 300 families) were Jews.<sup>5</sup> The rest were Muslim Kurds, Christian Assyrians, Armenians and small numbers of Arabs, Turks, Persians, Yezidi, and gypsy-nomad Kurds known as *qaraçāye*.<sup>6</sup> Zakho is not far from the Turkish-Syrian border adjacent to Iraq. Many merchants of Zakho not only traveled to Mosul and Baghdad, the large Arabic-speaking centers of Iraq, but also often infiltrated beyond the Iraqi border into Turkey for the purchase of typical Turkish imports, such as headscarves, hairy woolen blankets, and shrouding cloth. Many Jews were *tarrāhe*, 'sailor-loggers' who, together with Arabs from Mosul, transported on various kinds of rafts (*kalak*, *karxa*, 'abra) wood for construction from the rural area of Kurdistan to the larger centers such as Zakho and Mosul. Others were *xazāre*, 'peddling merchants', who peddled from one Kurdish village to another throughout Iraqi Kurdistan and beyond. Many villagers would come to Zakho to sell their products, such as furs, cheeses, chickens, wool, lambs, gallnuts (for ink and dyeing), fresh and dry fruits, and crops in general. With the money earned they would buy new clothing (or dye the old ones), needles, candies, tea, sugar, and other such basic staples. The Armenians and Assyrians of Zakho (known as *dehnāye*, originally from Dihé, Turkey), were mainly weavers of homespun suits (*šall-u-šappiksa*).<sup>7</sup> The few Arab residents were mainly officials of the Iraqi administration, such as the *qaymaqam*, 'governor', *ra'is baladiya*, 'mayor', as well as the police, medical personnel, and teachers. Arab nomads, such as the tribe of 'Arab Šammār, occasionally encamped near Zakho. The gypsy Kurds, known also as *muṭurbāye*, 'the music entertainers', played the drum and flute (*dōla-u-zırne*) at weddings and other festivities.<sup>8</sup>

§3. Each of these ethnic groups usually had its own language or dialect. The Muslim Kurds and most of the Armenians spoke Kurdish<sup>9</sup> (Kurmanji), which is an Iranian branch. The Jews and Assyrian Christians spoke Neo-Aramaic (a Semitic branch), each group having its own specific dialect.<sup>10</sup> Arabic was taught in schools in recent times and was the language of instruction. Otherwise its use was limited to official contact or occasional business with Arabs passing by. Turkish and Persian were only rarely used. All the Jewish males and many females spoke and understood Kurdish as well, as it was the language of communication in interethnic contact. With Assyrian Christians, the Jews endeavored to speak the Christian Neo-Aramaic dialect. In any case, both were mutually intelligible. Many Jews had relatives who moved to the Arabic-speaking centers of Mosul and Baghdad for economic reasons. In Baghdad, they lived in their own neighborhood, known as *mā(ha)jirxāna*,

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ben-Jacob, pp. 61-62.

<sup>6</sup> Meaning 'living in black tents'; cf. Maclean (1901), p. 285; see n. 8 below.

<sup>7</sup> See MacKenzie, p. 375 n. 673.

<sup>8</sup> See n. 6 above and prov. 35. They formed a particular class much despised by the Kurdish society; cf. Lescot, p. 195.

<sup>9</sup> See MacKenzie, p. 357.

<sup>10</sup> See Polotsky; Sara.

'immigrant quarters'. Mutual visits in recent times were quite common, and these resulted in importation of a more urban Arabic influence, such as Arabic songs, proverbs, and expressions. Finally, old traditional Hebrew, with its status as the national-religious language of the Jews, had its own impact on the Neo-Aramaic speech of the Kurdish Jews.<sup>11</sup>

§4. The marketplace was the main meeting center for all these ethnic groups. Each group lived in a separate quarter,<sup>12</sup> the Jews spread on one of the lower banks of the river, the Christians on the other, and the Muslims on both upper banks. Individual Muslims also lived in the Jewish and Christian quarters. This separation was not enforced and was mainly for practical reasons, as each group clustered around its own worship house and so could maintain its religious duties more freely.<sup>13</sup> The intergroup relations were usually quite cordial,<sup>14</sup> and mutual home visits were common. No walls, physical or spiritual, separated the various groups.

§5. The intensive intercommunal relations described above exerted a mutual linguistic impact. The Neo-Aramaic speech of the Jews of Zakho is saturated not only with numerous loanwords from the languages of their ethnic neighbors, but also with many loan proverbs.<sup>15</sup> Most of these proverbs remain untranslated into Neo-Aramaic and are simply quoted in their 'original' language, thus indicating the more recent language that loaned the specific proverb to Neo-Aramaic.

§6. The reasons for usually not translating the proverbs into Neo-Aramaic are different in each case. Kurdish and colloquial Arabic were fairly well known by the Jews. Thus, they had no problem in understanding Kurdish and Arabic proverbs. They are naturally incorporated into Neo-Aramaic speech. They may occasionally be preceded by an introductory, indicative remark, for example *kudax gēmür gōra kurđināya'* *arabāya*, 'as a Kurdish/Arab man would say'. But more often they are simply preceded by *nāše gimri*, 'people say', or *ruwwāne wēlu mīre*, 'great men have said'. Mixing speech in the different languages is quite common even in a general conversation, but especially so in folktales. Arabic or Kurdish quotations in tales of Arabic or Kurdish milieu not only add vividness to the story, but are also an excellent device to enhance their literary authenticity and unique realia.

<sup>11</sup> See Sabar (1974b). A few Hebrew or old Aramaic (Talmudic) proverbs were common in the Neo-Aramaic speech and writings of the Ḥakhamim ('Rabbis'). For a modified Hebrew proverb current among women see prov. 112.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Brauer, p. 56; Ben-Jacob, p. 62.

<sup>13</sup> Even in Israel, the Kurdish Jews (as well as other Oriental Jewish communities) generally prefer to live in the same neighborhood together with the members of their old Kurdistan hometown, to be able to pray in their own synagogue. Thus, most of the Jews of Zakho live in Jerusalem, the Old Immigrants (1920s) in the Maḥane Yehuda Quarter, the New Immigrants (1950s) in the Katamonim area.

<sup>14</sup> This is reflected in their folktales as well. See Sabar (1976a), p. 142 n. 2.

<sup>15</sup> For Persian proverbs in Baghdadi Arabic see Ḥanafi, provs. 157, 307, 571, 593, and elsewhere. Cf. n. 11 above. For a Persian proverb in the Talmud, see Sanhedrin 98a: *kar hazār gūnā*. '(Does your) donkey have a thousand colors?' (A reply to the Persian King Šāpūr after offering his horse to be used by the Messiah); cf. Jastrow, p. 342.

§7. Another reason for leaving a proverb untranslated is its specific literary form, such as rhyme, play on words, rhythm, meter, and other prosodic features, which would be lost in translation.<sup>16</sup> If the rhyming words are loan-words in Neo-Aramaic, however, the original proverb may be translated.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, the rhyming Arabic proverb *iza jūt min safar, ihdi walau hajar* is translated into Neo-Aramaic (see prov. 92) for no apparent reason and with no rhyme. Even the Jewish Neo-Aramaic proverbs may indicate various dialects or older strata and include archaic forms or words, some of them unknown or obsolete outside of the proverb.<sup>18</sup> Some foreign proverbs may be translated into Neo-Aramaic, preserving, however, the original rhyming words, even when otherwise unknown outside the proverb. Others may be slightly changed to turn them into rhymes in translation as well.<sup>19</sup>

§8. The important place of proverbs in old traditional societies in general and Near Eastern societies in particular is well known. There are volumes upon volumes of proverbs in Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish.<sup>20</sup> Even these include mainly the more literary proverbs, omitting a great many colloquial ones. Not only in folktales but even in the routine daily speech of the lay people<sup>21</sup> the proverb still has its significant role. It is the poor man's means to make a point, to express an idea, to convince an obstinate party, without having to search for the right expressions or to make long speeches with words vaguely known to him. Instead of all these he finds a way out in the ever ready proverb, assumed to be coined by the great wise men of the past,<sup>22</sup> and thus it has an immediate impact on the listener.

§9. The general content of the proverbs may, in a sense, indicate a community's norms and mores, folk wisdom and lore, and actual or desirable life experience.<sup>23</sup> The proverbs used by the Jewish community, even those borrowed from their

<sup>16</sup> See provs. 64, 65 (Arabic); 125, 140, 159 (Kurdish); 16 (Christian Neo-Aramaic).

<sup>17</sup> In prov. 32 both rhyming words *pire* and *mire* are also Kurdish loanwords in Neo-Aramaic.

<sup>18</sup> See prov. 150. As any folk literature, proverbs, too, may preserve archaic words and forms. In prov. 119, *pisro* has *-o* instead of the regular third person pronoun *-e*, to rhyme with the preceding *yisro* 'Jethro'. Similarly, prov. 120 has *pappe*, a baby word for 'feet' instead of the regular *'aqle*, to rhyme with the preceding *yarappe*; see Sabar (1974a), p. 333. Dialectal Arabic proverbs may occasionally include classical vocabulary; in prov. 64 the classical *faṣīḥ* is replaced by the colloquial *mliḥ* but is retained in all the variants. See, however, Goitein (1952), p. 174. For their relation to pre-Arabic (i.e., Aramaic and even Assyrian) periods see *ibid.*, pp. 174 ff.; al-Fuadi.

<sup>19</sup> See provs. 81, 112. Cf. Stahl, pp. 386 f.

<sup>20</sup> See Goitein (1952), pp. 169 f. To give a general idea, a modern collection of Persian proverbs, that of Dekhoda, contains some 25,000 proverbs, and even that is by no means complete; see Elwell-Sutton, p. 4. The Turkish proverb collection of Tülbentçi includes over 15,000 proverbs. Cf. Stahl, p. 379.

<sup>21</sup> Including educated, 'Westernized', men and women, especially state leaders and politicians (e.g., the President Sadat of Egypt). Cf. Elwell-Sutton, pp. 2 f.; Stahl, pp. 390 f.

<sup>22</sup> See §6 above.

<sup>23</sup> See Subject Index. The collections of Segal (Neo-Aramaic) and Lescot (Kurdish) are arranged according to subject categories.

gentile neighbors, express its own folk wisdom; they were selectively incorporated or modified and many were probably rejected.<sup>24</sup> The stream of ideas expressed by these proverbs may be similar to many in other languages and cultures, and even universal,<sup>25</sup> 'yet as they pass through each cultural area they become changed and transmuted through contact with and absorption by local character, tradition, and custom.'<sup>26</sup>

§10. The proverbs presented here have been gleaned mostly from recorded Neo-Aramaic speech or folktales told by members of the Jewish community of Zakho in Jerusalem.<sup>27</sup> The major informants were: (a) The late Māmo Yona Gabbay, 'Uncle Jonah the Synagogue-Treasurer', who died in 1972 at the age of over a hundred years. He was an illustrious and famous storyteller throughout Iraqi Kurdistan and was the repository of a truly unusual treasury of Jewish-Kurdish folklore. (b) My mother, Miriam Sabar, now in her fifties, a housewife and mother of six (who survived out of twelve pregnancies). (c) My aunt, Raḥel Ma'allım, a widow housewife in her sixties. (d) My uncle, Ilyāhu Şabāğa (=Dyer), now a construction worker, in his fifties. (e) Murdakh Cohen, a gas-station owner, in his early fifties. All, except the last, who grew up in Palestine, emigrated to Israel in 1951.

§11. Compared to the impressive volume of proverbs published in the major languages of the Near East,<sup>28</sup> very little so far has been published in the more minor dialects such as Kurdish and Neo-Aramaic. Lack of publication, of course, does not mean scarcity of proverbs in the minor dialects. The proverbs presented here are probably only a small part of the entire corpus. Professor J. J. Rivlin mentions that he collected over a thousand Jewish Neo-Aramaic proverbs,<sup>29</sup> of which he published only 108 (in Hebrew). One hundred forty-three others were published by J. B. Segal and seven by P. Bar-Adon.<sup>30</sup> Many proverbs in my collection which have appeared in previous publications have been omitted here, but some have been retained, especially if there is a difference in wording, an explanation, or any additional information. None of the previous works includes any Kurdish or Arabic proverbs, although they are quite common in Neo-Aramaic speech.<sup>31</sup> Also, some Neo-Aramaic proverbs may even be borrowed from Christian Neo-Aramaic, as may be indicated by their vocabulary

<sup>24</sup> For specifically modified or Judaized proverbs see provs. 17, 71, 112, 116-124, 129. Cf. Jason, pp. 17 f.; Elwell-Sutton, pp. 5 f.; Allen and Ferguson, p. 124. This is true regarding the process of borrowing foreign words and given names as well. If they carry strong Muslim or Christian connotations they are usually rejected in Jewish dialects. Cf. Stahl, p. 387; Sabar (1975a), p. 290 n. 73.

<sup>25</sup> See Subject Index: Practical Wisdom. Cf. Elwell-Sutton, pp. 4 f.; Goitein (1952), pp. 170 f.; Stahl, pp. 386 f.

<sup>26</sup> Elwell-Sutton, p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> See n. 13 above.

<sup>28</sup> See n. 20 above.

<sup>29</sup> See Rivlin (1945), p. 207.

<sup>30</sup> See References.

<sup>31</sup> Out of 153 proverbs, 108 are Neo-Aramaic, 37 Kurdish, 8 Arabic. See Language Index.

or morphology.<sup>32</sup> References and comparisons, whenever available, are made to proverbs in other dialects of the area. For brevity, the vast ancient Jewish literature of proverbs in Hebrew and Aramaic<sup>33</sup> is almost ignored in our study. It is a moot point whether a proverb, such as 'A live dog is better than a dead lion', is a loan translation from Hebrew (Ecclesiastes 9:4) or from the many colloquial Arabic parallels, or simply an autochthonous creation. Even the identical sense and wording in Yiddish, Neo-Aramaic, and Arabic of the proverb, 'What is left from the thief is spent on the fortune-teller' (prov. 89), is not altogether surprising.<sup>34</sup>

#### THE PROVERBS

1. *'āguro, ž-dā-u-bāba čēturo*. [K.] '(In winter) fire is (even) better than mother and father.' Cf. Tikriti, 2389 ('Fire is the fruit of winter').
2. *'ahūd, hakan nāša fāyit ši 'ibbe, lēbe mbātulle*. 'A promise, even when a person (must) die in (keeping) it, he may not break it.'
3. *'ahl zāxo, 'aklu laban ultāxo*. [Ar.] 'People of Zakho, eat yoghurt and mess themselves up', i.e., they are 'uncouth. Originally said by Baghdadis, but now used by Zakho Jews as well when they want to denigrate each other. Cf. prov. 47; Yahuda, Y. B., 1321.
4. *'āmur pūmmox, šam'i nisyāsox*. '(Whatever) your mouth says, let your ears hear!' Practice what you preach.
5. *'arxe 'arxid 'ilāha-lu*. 'Guests are guests of God.' Treat them well. Cf. Noel, 72, 73, Tikriti, 1333 (var.).
6. *'arxid kēse la 'azīme, latle qīme*. 'A guest coming without an invitation, does not have (any) worth.'
7. *'au 'ilāha dhulle dard, hulle dirmāna dīde*. 'The (same) God Who gives illness, gives its cure (as well).' Cf. Elwell-Sutton, 19; Tikriti, 1622 (var.); Stahl, 416.
8. *'aud gmāzi' buxra, gmāzi' dixra*. 'He who loses a firstborn (son), loses a treasure.'
9. *'au dqam šāqille 'āqilox, la mtahne 'ibbe*. 'He who took away your wit, may he not enjoy it!' said humorously to a simpleton. Cf. Maclean (1895), 117; Socin (1882), p. 119 (204), 1 (var.).

<sup>32</sup> See prov. 16. Owing to the close affinity of the dialects (see §3), it is not always possible to detect the Christian elements in phrases as short as proverbs.

<sup>33</sup> I.e., Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Ben-Sirach, and other apocrypha, the Talmuds and Midrashim, as well as the literary and philosophical writings of Jewish scholars in the Middle Ages. Wherever appropriate, reference is made to Stahl's book for parallel proverbs of the present-day Jewish communities.

<sup>34</sup> The custom of going to a diviner to disclose the identity and whereabouts of the thief was quite common in Kurdistan. I myself served as the 'innocent child' who customarily looks into the glass of oil to 'read' the images reflected in it, to be interpreted by the diviner Ḥakham. This custom and similar ones were common in Europe among Jews and Christians as well; see Trachtenberg, pp. 218–222. Cf. Goitein (1952), p. 172. For other parallel proverbs in Yiddish (= Ayalti.) see provs. 42, 57, 127. Cf. Stahl, pp. 386 f.

10. 'aud *tālb*, *kkēma pāse*; 'aud *la yāwīl*, *kkēmi paswāse*. 'He who begs (alms), (one side of) his face turns black; he who does not give, both sides (his faces) turn black (= doubly embarrassed).' Cf. Rivlin (1945), 1.
11. 'az *na zānm*, *rāhate jānm*. [K.] 'I do not know, peace (to) my mind!' Said sarcastically of fools who ignore a harsh reality. Cf. prov. 39.
12. 'e *dzānt zāmt*, 'e *dmzānt bāqet niska*. [K.] 'He who knows knows, he who doesn't (thinks) (it is because of) a bunch of lentils.' Taken from a folktale about a man whose wife betrayed him with her lover in a lentil field. When the angry husband wanted to kill the lover, he shouted: 'Help, he wants to kill me for stealing a handful of lentils.' Cf. Leskot, 262; Segal, 65; Khayyat, 333; Tikriti, 2649.
13. 'e *hawēsa-la*, 'ay *xrūta wēla pišta l-basra*. 'This is good, the worst is still to come (has been left behind).' Said when one bad event leads to one much worse. Variant: 'ēha *turnīni-la*, *turnāna wēla pišta l-basra*. Same sense, the words *turnīni*, *turnāna* both meaning 'dance', perhaps one slow and mild, and the latter fast and energetic.
14. 'ēna *m'ēna gnaxpa*. 'An eye is ashamed (only) from an eye.' A face-to-face talk is more convincing. Cf. Socin (1878), 45; Tikriti, 1489.
15. 'eri *biš 'āqil-ile mrēše*. 'My penis is smarter than his head.' Said of a dumb person. Cf. Kampffmeyer, 24.
16. 'ēwa *smoqa bišpāre*, *šqōl xāṭōra uysa l-gāre*; 'ēwa *smōqa 'āširta*, *qu mbīnōke udunye basūmta*. [Christian Neo-Aramaic.] 'Red cloud in the morning, take the pounder and come to the roof (to pound its plaster to prevent leaking after rain); red cloud in the evening, get up in the morning and (find) the weather (world) fine!' This weather forecast is universal. Cf. English: Red sky at night, sailors delight; red sky in the morning, sailors take warning; Rivlin, 26; Segal, 103-104. The word *bišpāre* (old Aramaic: *bəšpārā*), while common in the Christian Neo-Aramaic dialect of Zakho, is not used in the Jewish dialect; cf. Maclean (1901), p. 267.
17. 'ēz *mōše*, *qqāzēle mnōše*. 'The holiday of Moses (= Passover), He provides for it Himself.' One should not worry about not having enough provisions for holidays; God (or Moses?) Who gave them will provide for them.
18. 'ize *yarixta*, *pāse kumta*. 'His hand (is) long, his face black.' Said of an ill-mannered guest who grabs much food with no shame or restraint.
19. 'izmāne *šōti da qōqe dsare xodāni*. [K.] 'The tongue burned from the pot (carried) over the head of the (tongue) owner (himself).' Said of one who is responsible for his own troubles.
20. 'o *gēmūr diqni qızla*, 'o *gēmūr qaqwāni mṭāwīla*! 'This (one) says my beard is burning, the other (one) says roast my partridge (over it)!' Said of people who try to benefit from other people's troubles. Cf. Engl.: Nero fiddles while Rome burns. Cf. Mizrahi, 51; Socin (1878), 471; Yahuda, A. S., 49.
21. 'urre *xmāra*, *bṭille zmāra*. '(When) the donkey entered, the singing ended.' Cf. Mizrahi, 38; Maclean (1895) 32; Kampffmeyer, 66; Socin (1882), p. 119 (204), i (vars.).

22. *'azbe šahāre-lu*. 'Bachelors are blind.' They behave irrationally when in love. Cf. Tikriti, 1501 ('Lover's eye is blind').
23. *'ēbox go jēbox; spiqle jēbox, m̄piqle 'ēbox*. 'Your disgrace is in your pocket; (when) your pocket becomes empty, your disgrace comes out.' Disgrace is a companion of poverty.
24. *'urṭisa go šūqid šafāre ʒa 'ta-la*. 'A fart in the coppersmiths' market remains unnoticed (is lost).' Do not compete with experts. Cf. Rivlin, 102; Yahuda, Y. B., 2446; Tikriti, 1327.
25. *'urṭyāsa bširme lag ḥamli*. 'Farts do not tarry in his anus.' Said of over-enthusiasm. Cf. Kampffmeyer, 18, 'His farts come in pairs.' Same sense.
26. *bafra evāre, barāna saḥāre*. [K.] 'Snow at evening, (is followed by) rain in the morning'. Cf. Lescot, 236 (var.).
27. *balūte bxōla la kēse qsāra*. 'Acorns cannot be tied with a rope.' Do not try to do the impossible. Cf. Segal, 39 (var.).
28. *baqbaqiye ttōra, kusya mxalōpe*. '(When) a jug breaks, it may be replaced (not so man).' Do not worry about lost materials. Cf. Hanafi, 1518–1519 (var.).
29. *basir mōsa lēs xrāwid-'ēne*. '(Only) after death there is no eye disease'. Ailments should be expected as long as one lives. Cf. Bar-Adon, 5; Stahl, 65.
30. *bažūre dyōma kēse qam 'ēne bxilmud lēle*. 'Fantasies of daytime, appear to him (come before his eyes) at night dream.' Said to explain children's dreams. Cf. Stahl, 166 (var.).
31. *be'ta dla pūmma*. '(Like) an egg without a mouth.' A compliment given to a well-mannered, quiet girl.
32. *bēs pīre, ula bēs mīre*. 'The house of an old (poor) woman, and not the house of (rich) emirs.' Poor people may be more hospitable than rich ones. Cf. Lescot, 90; Khayyat, 26 (var.).
33. *billūre bo gāyi bēža*. [K.] 'Play a flute to an ox.' Talking to a fool is useless.
34. *bra brāya, bazār judāya*. [K.] 'A brother is a brother, business is business (separate).' Relatives and friends should not expect any favors in business. Cf. Makas, 13; Elwell-Sutton, p. 27; Tikriti, 617; Khal, p. 27.
35. *dāwata muṭrbi bit, de kul dāwa tēkit? de hažīnet, de šraqīnet, de paqīnet!* [K.] '(If) the wedding is of the wedding musician (himself), what kind of wedding will he make? He will make the best one in town! (He will shake it, he will strike it (= the drum), he will blast it).' One performs best when his cause is involved. See above, end of §2.
36. *dāye qadāye, xuške balāye, žine wara pištamine, ta begurīnim ḥami dne*. [K.] 'Mother is bother, sister is trouble, (but to) a wife (one says): Come, (I will carry you) on (my) back, I will hold you to the end of (all) the world.' After marriage, young men neglect their relatives and care only about their wives. Cf. Genesis 2:24; Stahl, 2510–2511.
37. *dehna riš māya la gēzil ʒāyi*. 'Oil over water will not get lost.' Generosity eventually pays.



38. *dēna l-güre, talga l-türe*. 'Debt on men, snow on mountains.' Just as it is natural for the lofty mountains to have snow on top, so it is for men to have debts. Don't be ashamed to borrow money! Cf. below, prov. 131; Bar-Adon, 7.
39. *de-xwa dīnkim, 'iše-xwa xwaškım*. [K.] 'I will make myself a madman, (thus) I will make my living a happy one!' Ignorance is blissful. Said sarcastically. Cf. prov. 11.
40. *dımma l-dımma grāšix*. 'Blood (of a relative) warms (boils) in the presence of blood (of another relative).' Relatives feel tender to each other even if they have not met before. Cf. Tikriti, 975.
41. *dūka mnāše lag 'ēqa*. 'A place is never (too) narrow for people.' One can always make room for guests. Cf. Tikriti, 2170 (var.)
42. *dukıd darba ktarša, dūkid xabra la ktarša*. 'A trace of a blow heals; a trace of a word does not heal.' The pain of insults is everlasting. Cf. Segal, 128 (var.); Lescot, 205-206; Maclean (1895), 111; Socin (1882), p. 118 (204), b ('A sharp word cuts a stone'); Socin (1878), 402; Ayalti, 2 ('A nasty tongue is worse than a wicked hand').
43. *dunye 'ıtla yōma*. 'World has its day.' Sooner or later God will punish the wicked and reward the righteous.
44. *dunye mōsa-xāye-la*. 'World is death (and) life.' Cf. Tikriti, 589, 982 ('World is sweet and bitter'), 983 ('World is a turning wheel').
45. *dunye ta čuxa lak pēša*. 'World will last for none.' Cf. Maclean (1895), 114 (var.); Tikriti, 992.
46. *gēzil l-ēna, 'ēna kkēta*. 'He goes to the well, the well dries up.' Said of a ne'er-do-well. Cf. Yahuda, Y. B., 179; Socin (1878), 174; Tikriti, 1931 (var.); Stahl, 293.
47. *gımri ta kurdīnāya: kēla nāsox yamme? 'ize gımpaştırıa basır nāse çappe*. 'They say to a Kurd: Where is your right ear? He stretches his hand behind his left ear (to reach it).' Probably of foreign, Arabic, origin. Cf. Tikriti, 2554 (var.). Mutual ethnic derogatory proverbs are common among Arabs and Kurds. Cf. provs. 3, 84; Yahuda, A. S., 32; Meissner, 63; Socin (1878), 261-266. On such Kurdish proverbs regarding other ethnic groups (Arabs, Turks, Persians, Armenians, Nestorians) see Noel, 89-101; below, provs. 61, 66, 69 (on Jews).
48. *gımri ta qaṭūsa 'ıxıax dırmāna-lu, qaṭūsa 'ıxıa gımṭaşıyālu*. 'They tell the cat your excrement is (used as) medicine, the cat hides its excrement.' Said of pettiness. Cf. Socin (1878), 286; Meissner, 36; Mizrahi, 32, 57; Yahuda, Y. B., 304-305 (vars.); Drugulin, 91; Tikriti, 1732.
49. *gımırınne kēpa-le, gēmırri gupta-la*. 'I tell him it is a stone, he tells me it is cheese.' Said of an obstinate fool. Cf. prov. 50; Lescot, 193 ('I say he is dumb, he says he is slow'); Hanafi, 166 (var.).
50. *gımırınne xışıya-le, gēmırri kma yalunke 'ıtle*. 'I tell him he is a eunuch, he asks me how many children he has.' Cf. prov. 49; Maclean (1895), 78; Yahuda, A. S. 333; Tikriti, 312 (310, 1724); Hanafi, 165; Landberg, 133.

51. *girān 'arzāna, 'arzān girāna*. [K.] 'Expensive is cheap, cheap is expensive.' Cf. Tikriti, 1504; Goitein (1934), 796.
52. *gmēse baḥus kalba, kalba l-darga*. 'One speaks about (brings the report of) the dog, the dog is at the door.' Said of an uninvited visitor, Cf. English: Speaking of the devil. Cf. Maclean (1895), 48 ('... wolf...').
53. *gnā'is gūda, gāre gim'ābe*. 'He stings the wall, the roof swells.' Said of far-reaching dubious influence.
54. *gāli ṭalab raxīš*. [Ar.] 'Precious (man) requests inexpensive (thing).' Said as a compliment to a frugal guest. Cf. Hanafi, 1344; Tikriti, 1506.
55. *hakan kar na čit bar bari, bar čita bar kari*. 'If the donkey does not move toward the load, let the load move toward the donkey!' One must compromise.
56. *hāl 'imma, ula šōqit yāla šavadar*. 'Give a hundred (coins), and do not let (your) child spend the night in the streets!' Originally, it probably referred to ransoming from military service or jail. Cf. Socin (1883), 775: 'The Jew gave a hundred piasters, so that his son would not sleep even one night away from home.'
57. *hal xlime naqzi, naqize ksapsi*. 'By the time the fat (people) grow lean, the lean ones get rotten.' During lean years the rich may eat less, but the poor die of hunger. Cf. Segal, 49; Ayalti, 183; Stahl, 555-556.
58. *hammam b'urtyāsa lak šāxin*. '(Turkish) bath cannot be heated by farts (alone).' Variant: *be'e b'urtyāsa laq qāle*. 'Eggs cannot be fried by farts.' Said against bragging of lazy people. Cf. Rivlin (1946), 70; Lescot, 8 ('Just by saying "halva, halva" the mouth does not become sweet'); Khal, p. 59; Tikriti, 2718.
59. *ḥaraka baraka*. [Ar.] 'Action (movement) is a blessing.' Said to encourage idlers or spinsters to go out and meet people. Cf. Tikriti, 817; Lescot, 3 ('Your action, God's blessing').
60. *ḥasāso, wara min bigra*. [K.] 'Guard, come arrest me!' (Said the burglar.) Do not unnecessarily complicate your problems!
61. *hatta juhi qutāna-xwa na-xwit, bēša-xwa nā dit*. [K.] 'A Jew does not pay his tax until he is beaten.'
62. *ḥazar aṭ-ta'ām, baṭal al-kalām*. [Ar.] '(When) food is present, conversation is absent.' A dictum against too much talking while eating. Cf. Tikriti, 127; Talmudic, 'ēn māsīḥīn bis'ūdā (Ta'anit 5b) 'No talking at meals.'
63. *ḥussid dōla mraḥqa-le bassīma*. 'The sound of a drum is pleasant from afar.' Foreign places are more attractive from a distance than when visited. Cf. Garbell (1965a), p. 175, §2.42 (Neo-Aramaic, from Turkish); Elwell-Sutton, p. 59 ('The big drum only sounds well from afar.' Virtues attributed to strangers seldom bear closer inspection); Tikriti, 830; Socin (1878), 187; Drugulin, 22 ('Drum afar its sound is sweet').
64. *(id-)dik il-mliḥ mbēza yših*. [Ar.] 'The good rooster crows (while still) in the egg.' A good person is easily recognized. Cf. Yahuda, Y. B., 1306; Tikriti, 1010; Jewett, 6; Khayyat, 181; Landberg, 139 (All have *faših*,

- 'eloquent', instead of *mliḥ*, 'good'); Lescot, 167 (K.); Segal, 36 (Neo-Aramaic var.); Mizrahi, 149 (Judeo-Persian var.: 'A good year is recognized from its spring').
65. (*in-*)*nās bilbās*. [Ar.] 'People (are appreciated) by (the value of their) clothing.' Appearance brings more respect than virtues. The proverb is somewhat critical of this rule, yet it is used to encourage its acceptance. Cf. Goitein (1934), 34; Jason, p. 19 (Example V); Meissner, 54 (var.). It is associated with a story about Bahlul the Jester. When he came to the Shah's diwan wearing rags, he was kicked out. When he came back later, wearing an impressive robe, he was most respected by being the first to be served the traditional coffee. He took it and poured it on his robe, explaining: 'I was here before, but I was kicked out. I, therefore, assume that the coffee is for my robe, as it was not here before.' Cf. Stahl, 1070-1071.
66. *juhīna, dāre škastīna, jahannamīna*. [K.] 'They are Jews, they are (like) a broken tree, they (will go to) hell.' Said by Kurdish ruffians when looking at a Jewish funeral. See prov. 47, above.
67. *kabānīye xsirta-la*. 'The cook (f.) loses (her portion).' After giving each member of the family his food portion, the cook herself is left with nothing or only a small portion. By helping others, one should expect self-deprivation. Cf. Mizrahi, 35 (var.).
68. *kalba bkalbūse, xmāra bxmarūse*. 'Dog (is happy) with his dogness, donkey with his donkeyness.' Be yourself, join your equals. Said in sarcasm to ambitious inferiors.
69. *kalba blišān kalba la kī'e*. '(Even) a dog would not understand (know) the tongue of (another) dog.' Said of a great uproar. Cf. Elwell-Sutton, p. 3 (var.). A Kurdish (Muslim) variant: *kmšta juhīya* '(As noisy as) the synagogue (= prayer) of the Jews.'
70. *kalba mqam garma lag 'ārūqla*. 'A dog will not go away (as long as he sees) a bone.' Said of impolite guests or children who continue to stay as long as they see food on the table. Said also as advice: If you want to get rid of such guests, stop serving food! Cf. Drugulin, 59 ('A dog will not run away from the fodder').
71. *kalba pısr kalba la kēxl*. 'Dog does not eat the flesh of dog.' Malicious people do not harm each other, or as in Rivlin (1946), 108, 'Gentiles harm only Jews, but not other Gentiles.' Thus, the universal sense (cf. Elwell-Sutton, p. 5; Drugulin, 57) is Judaized. See n. 24, above.
72. *kalba šāx bištof min 'arya mīsa*. 'A living dog is better than a dead lion.' Cf. Segal, 70; Ecclesiastes 9:4; Landberg, 192; Socin (1883), 200 ('A free dog . . . chained lion'); Yahuda, Y. B., 1430; Stahl, 4-5. See end of §11, above.
73. *kalbid qāzi mtle, kullu zıllu l-'azāya*. '(When) the dog of the judge died, all went to pay (their) condolences.' (But when the judge himself died nobody did so.) People are kind as long as it pays. Cf. Rivlin (1946), 107 (var.);

- Yahuda, Y. B., 1413 ('We honored the dog for his master'); Jewett, 229 ('The emir's dog is emir'); Tikriti, 2632 (var.).
74. *kālo sēla mmāsa, širma biš kxāzēla mpāsa*. '(After the chaste) bride has come out of (her) village, her buttocks are seen (even) more than her face.' Said of women who are shy before marriage but too free after it.
75. *kar štur rābi*. [K.] 'The donkey stopped farting.' Said when an inferior is removed from a high position.
76. *kāsa swe'ta ma kī'a min kāsa kpīnta*. 'What does a full stomach know of an empty stomach?' Whoever has not experienced hunger cannot have empathy for the hungry. Cf. Segal, 90; Lescot, 143; Mizrahi, 181; Elwell-Sutton, p. 49; Yahuda, Y. B., 81; Socin (1878), 183 (vars.); Tikriti, 1199; Drugulin, 62.
77. *kēpa l-duke yaqūra*. 'A stone is heavy in its (original) place.' A person is respected only as long as he is in his own community. Cf. Segal, 34; Maclean (1895) 122; Socin (1882), p. 119 (204), 1 (vars.); Tikriti, 783; Yahuda, Y. B., 643 (vars.).
78. *kirne ḥatta murme*. [K.] 'Toil (goes on) until death.' Cf. Makas, 11, Khal, p. 111.
79. *krīsa xlīsa*. 'Short (story, speech) is sweet.' Cf. Maclean (1895), 113; Socin (1882), p. 118 (204), d.
80. *kud 'rba b'aqle kēse mtaltōye*. 'Each sheep is hung by its (own) legs.' Each person is responsible for his own sins. Cf. Maclean (1895), 8; Socin, (1883), 434; Landberg, 72.
81. *kud dīnsız gibēle xa 'imānsız*. 'Each faithless one needs an impious one (to worst him).' Cf. Tülbentçi, 4589: *dīnsızın kakkından imansız gelir*. [Turkish.] The rhyming Turkish words are unknown in the Neo-Aramaic dialect outside of this proverb. See §7 above.
82. *kulla 'olām štōya nāše dīdi, ušud hāwe dīzmne dīdi*. 'Let all the world be my relatives, and let them (then) be (even) my enemies!' It is good to have relatives, even if they are bad.
83. *kullu šub'ās 'izox lēwu xa*. 'All the fingers of your hand are not the same (length).' People are of diverse characters; variety is part of nature. Cf. Talmud, Pesaḥim 112b; Mizrahi, 169; Yahuda, Y. B., 61; Socin (1878), 204; Jewett, 240; Tikriti, 214; Stahl, 2119.
84. *kurdi ḥmār*. [Ar.] 'A Kurd is (as foolish as) an ass.' Cf. Yahuda, Y. B., 300-301 (var.). See prov. 47 above.
85. *kutxa nūra qam gyāne ggārīš*. 'Everyone pulls the (heating) fire in front of himself.' People are egoists. Cf. Landberg, p. 303, comments; Socin (1878), 129; Tikriti, 1677.
86. *la kud yōma d-kēsē-be pōxa, kēsē-be mītra*. 'Not every windy day is a rainy day (< . . . that comes in it wind, comes in it rain).' Bad does not necessarily lead to worse. Cf. Stahl, 36 f. (vars.).
87. *libbi kūrd ḥadāde, la blēle ula byōma ghāde, čuga brōni la mṭēle lmurāde*. 'My heart is (like) the bellows of the ironsmiths, neither at night nor at

- day is it quiet, (because) my son never achieved his desires.' Said by mothers of unmarried son.
88. *mād 'āmīr bāba yan 'axōna ruwwa, 'āya-la.* 'Whatever the father or the big brother says, that is it.' Obedience to elders is uncompromised.
89. *mād šuqle ganāwa, šulle fattāh-īl-fāl.* 'Whatever the burglar left behind, was taken by the fortune-teller.' Cf. Segal, 136; Hanafi, 234; Yahuda, A. S., 20; Ayalti (Yiddish), 473; see n. 34, above.
90. *mar(w)ōyit yalunke xwār 'ēne.* 'Raising children is whitening the eyes (= very difficult and wearing task).' Common among women. Cf. Khayyat, 167; 'Raising one body necessitates wearing out another.' Tikriti, 2031 (var.); Stahl, 2223.
91. *māya dpēši rāba lxa dūka ksapsi.* 'Waters that remain long in one place stink.' Cf. Maclean (1895) 112; Socin (1882) p., 118 (204), c; Elwell-Sutton, p. 94; Tikriti, 2378. Cf. prov. 59, above.
92. *mēsi xle'ta, štōya kēpa.* '(When returning from a trip) bring a present, let it be (even) a stone.' Cf. Socin (1883), 633 (see §7 above); Tikriti, 123; Yahuda, Y. B., 447; Segal, 93 (var.).
93. *mevāno, dexwi yān naxwi?* [K.] 'Guest, would you (like) to eat or (rather) not eat?' Said of 'polite' miser hosts.
94. *mun bxwa kirīya, ču dirmān lē nīna.* [K.] 'I have done it (= the error) myself, no remedy is there for it.' One is responsible for one's own errors. Cf. Elwell-Sutton, p. 61.
95. *mpaštīr 'aqlox qēin barrīksox.* 'Stretch your feet (only) as the size of your rug.' Be content with what you can get. Cf. Bar-Adon, 3; Segal, 19; Maclean (1895), 88; Elwell-Sutton, p. 21; Landberg, 135; Yahuda, Y. B., 2044. Tikriti, 2127; Drugulin, 55; Stahl, 550.
96. *n'īs xuwwe kṭāwe', n'īs kīpna la kṭāwe'.* '(A person) stung by a snake is (able) to fall asleep, (but one) stung by hunger is not (able) to fall asleep.'
97. *nača lwē 'adre kasake lete nabit.* [K.] 'Do not go to the place where you have no relatives there!' Cf. prov. 82, above.
98. *nān havāla.* [K.] 'Bread (food) is friend (in long journeys).'
99. *nāš yasrīle 'immīd xmāra, kšākīl bin'āra.* '(Even) a man, (when) tied with a donkey, begins to bray.' Variants: . . . 'apāwa gmāxe pehne. ' . . . he, too, starts kicking.'; . . . glāyīp 'urtyāsa. ' . . . he learns to fart (as loudly).' Said of bad influence on originally good people. Cf. Yahuda, A. S., 42; Yahuda, Y. B., 2038 (vars.); Tikriti, 163; Drugulin, 29 (var.).
100. *nunīsa mrēša kxarwa.* 'The fish head rots first.' Corrupted leaders corrupt the entire society. Cf. Bar-Adon, 4; Tikriti, 1164; Drugulin, 76; Khal, p. 143; Turkish, *balık baztan kokar.*
101. *pār habit halāu zahfa.* [K.] '(If) there is money, halva is plenty.' Cf. Ecclesiastes 10:19, 'Money answereth all things'.
102. *pāra xwāra ta yōma kōma.* 'White money for a black day.' Said to encourage saving for bad times. Cf. Bar-Adon, 2; Benayahu, 20; Elwell-Sutton, p. 71; Tikriti, 1567; Khal, p. 144; Stahl, 515.

103. *parṭe'na kṭā'in ṭe'na*. 'A flea carries a (heavy) load.' Said sarcastically of a person who embarks upon tasks beyond his ability.
104. *pīse pāqiz̄*. [K.] 'The dirty clean.' Said of women who 'clean' one mess by making a greater one, or exaggerate in cleaning where it is unnecessary. Common among women. Cf. Yahuda, Y. B., 1479 ('One hand in shit, one in soap').
105. *pūmmi biš qarīwa myimmi*. 'My mouth is closer than my mother('s).' Quoted by mothers against egoism of grown-up children. Cf. Rivlin, 48; Segal, 81; Tikriti, 659 (ascribed to Baghdadi Jews).
106. *qāzi dyalunke xniqāle gyāne*. 'The judge of children hanged *himself*.' Said humorously of children's noisy and endless disputes. Cf. Tikriti, 1562.
107. *qēṭa bābid faqīrīn-ile*. 'Summer is the father of the poor.' Cf. Tikriti, 1307.
108. *qu mxēsi, la marčimnox*. 'Get up from under me, lest I crush you.' Said by a mosquito to an elephant. Said when a weakling threatens a powerful person. Cf. Yahuda, Y. B., 1563 (var.).
109. *qurban-'ilāha yze'le xuwwe mayle, lauman drēle 'aqle go kāse*. 'God, (may I be His) sacrifice, knew what the serpent was, therefore He put his feet in his belly.' Variant: *xuwwe la hāwēwa xuwwe, 'aqle lag dārēwa-lu go kāse*. '(If) the serpent were not the serpent (= as evil as he was), his feet would not be pushed in his belly.' See Genesis 3:14. According to the midrash his legs were hacked off; see Ginzberg, I, 77. Said when suffering people, such as the blind, behave viciously. People get what they deserve.
110. *rīši ṭamma'kar dar qūni mīṭis*. [K.] 'The beard of the avaricious is in the ass of the bankrupt.' An avaricious person, even if he is wealthy, will end up bankrupt. Cf. Makas, 6; Socin (1883), 206; Landberg, 182; Yahuda, Y. B., 1343 (var.); Tikriti, 1853.
111. *rūvi tēra, tiri ṭrša*. [K.] 'The fox is full, (now he says) the grapes are sour.' Said of guests who complain about the food after having eaten plenty of it. Cf. Maclean (1895), 102 'The fox could not reach the bunch of grapes, and said how sour they were;' Mizrahi, 103: 'The fox said, "I will have grapes, even sour!"' Obviously, all three are variations of the ancient theme, an Aesop's fable, and each has a different sense. Cf. also Tikriti, 2372 (var.).
112. *sēfar bhēxāle, kutxa umanzāle*. '(Like) the Scroll in its ark, everyone and his luck.' Some Torah Scrolls are used very often, while others are rarely used. Thus, if even the Holy Scroll needs a little bit of luck, how much more so people! Based on Hebrew: *hakkol tālūy bəmazzāl, 'āfillū sefer-tōrā šebbəhēkāl* (Zohar, 3:134a), 'All depends on luck, even the Torah Scroll in the ark.' According to the woman informant, it is usually said of a spinster who does not get married, even when she is nice and wise. See end of §7.
113. *si l-dūkat gmabxēlox, ula l-dūkat gmagxikīlox*. 'Go where they make you cry, and not where they make you laugh!' Cf. Ecclesiastes 7:2; Kampff-

- meyer, 52; Hanafi, 173; Landberg, 11 ('Go to a funeral, and don't go to a wedding'); Yahuda, Y. B., 651 (var.); Tikriti, 43.
114. *şay bar dargahe-xwa xurta*. [K.] 'A dog is violent in front of his own door (only).' Said of people who are impudent at home but fearful elsewhere. Cf. Tikriti, 1618.
115. *sātān lēwe mīsa ulag māyis*. 'Satan has not died and will not die.' Sexual desire is everlasting, marriage is a must. Cf. Segal, 56–58 (vars. on libido); Tikriti, 26.
116. *şabsid wa'ēra, sīswa pişle gēra uwēra*. 'On the Sabbath of Wa'erā [Exodus 6:3; ca. mid-January], winter is "cats and dogs".'
117. *şabsid bōl par'o, sīswa mbulbille*. 'On the Sabbath of Bō 'El Par'ō [Exodus 10:1; a week later], winter is mixed up.'
118. *şabsid başallaḥ, sīswa kşālxla şülluxte*. 'On the Sabbath of Bəşallaḥ [Exodus 13:17; end of January], winter (begins) to shed its snakeskin.'
119. *şabsid yisro, sīswa kuşle pişro*. 'On the Sabbath of Yiṣrō, [Exodus 18:1; first week of February], winter's flesh shrinks.'
120. *şabsid rappo yarappe, sīswa türru pappe*. 'On the Sabbath of Rappō Yərappe [Exodus 21:20; mid-February], winter's feet are crushed.'
121. *şabsid tarūma, sīswa pişle yatūma*. 'On the Sabbath of Tərūmā [Exodus 25:1; third week of February], winter becomes an orphan.'
122. *şabsid ki tissa, ž bafre na tırşa*. [Neo-Aramaic-Kurdish]. 'On the Sabbath of Kī Tissā [Exodus 30:12; first week of March], do not worry about snow.'
123. *şabsid wayyaqhel-paqūze, māya şxinnu go gūze*. 'On the Sabbath of Wayyaqhel-Pəqūde [Exodus 35:1; 38:21; second week of March], water becomes warm in water bottles (i.e., winter is almost gone).'
124. *şabsid wayyiqra, sīswa 'qurre min 'iqra*. 'On the Sabbath of Wayyiqrā [Leviticus 1:1; third week of March], winter is uprooted from the root (i.e., gone altogether).'

Weather forecasts such as these are common among Jewish and other communities; cf. Benayahu, 27–29; Goitein (1930–1931), p. 359 (Yemen); Lewinsky, p. 104 (Yiddish); Kampffmeyer, 78 ('On the 14th of Adar [=March] it snows'); Tikriti, 644 ('At Tammuz [=July] water dries up in jugs'), 1584.

125. *şām şakıra, bažēra min şirintira/çētira*. [K.] 'Damascus is (as sweet as) sugar, (but my town is sweeter/better).' Cf. Lescot, 212; Noel, 41; Maclean (1895), 123; Socin (1882), p. 119 (204), s; Tikriti, 1067; Tülbentçi, 11125; Yahuda, Y. B., 1645 (var.).
126. *şirmox bxāzitta, 'āya lak xāzitta*. 'You may see your anus, (but) that one you will not see!' Said of events unlikely to take place.
127. *şul 'ozile xurāsi, kčāhe libbi, gnēxi 'izāsi*. '(When my) work is done by my friends, my heart wears out, my hands rest.' Said sarcastically of people's help, to urge independent work. Cf. Bar-Adon, 1: Segal, 85; Tikriti, 618; Yahuda, Y. B., 1472–1475; Meissner, 20; Jewett, 126 (vars.); Ayalti, 230 ('Hire a servant and do it yourself').

128. *šul zulle, zulle / la 'āzūt basre*. Kurdish variant: *tušte čo / bōri dīv nača*. 'Whatever (thing) is gone, is gone / don't go back to it!' Don't grieve about lost opportunities. Cf. Segal, 76; Rivlin (1946), 60, 73; Lescot, 190 (vars.); Stahl, 764-765.
129. *šugle tēre, mpulle basır 'ēre*. 'He left his saddlebag, to follow (he fell after) his penis.' Said of people who neglect their work and duties and indulge in hedonism. Cf. the following Arabic (Christian?) version: *rabbān xalla dērō, jā ištaḡal bə'ērō*. 'The monk left his monastery, to become occupied with his penis.' Socin (1883), 749. Note that in the Jewish version the word 'monk' is omitted altogether, and the word *dēr*, 'monastery', is replaced by *tēr* 'saddlebag', to avoid typical religious terms. See n. 24 above.
130. *ta 'ilāha glīsa-la, min 'oda ma mṭāšm*. 'It is revealed to God, why would I hide it from (His) servant.' Said as apology before revealing a secret. Cf. Garbell (1965b), p. 307, *gezlin* (var.).
131. *talga š tūre kkāwiš*. 'The snow falls (descends) over the mountains.' Great men are exposed to more afflictions and criticism than lay men. Cf. Lescot, 140; Maclean (1895), 97; Kampffmeyer, 100 (vars.). See prov. 38.
132. *tūšt bxwe, xwe bma'ne*. [K.] 'A dish (thing) (has to be) with salt, (but) salt (should be) with reasonable (measure).' Said against exaggeration. Cf. Lescot, 247; Elwell-Sutton, p. 21 (vars.).
133. *tōr pūmmi, bale 'ōz bxabri*. 'Break my mouth, but do as my word!' 'Contradict me if you wish, but do as I say. Freedom of speech – yes, that of action – no! Cf. Garbell (1965b), p. 324. *pīnna* (var.).
134. *ṭamma' kalb, wala bani 'ādam*. [Ar.] 'Fill with greed (even) a dog, but not a human being.' People's greed is never satisfied. Cf. Tikriti, 1355.
135. *ṭurre či čöyi, fişşe či hāti*. [K.] 'Farter (f.), why did you go, Flatulent (f.), why did you come?' Said by women of one who brags before setting out on a mission, but comes back without accomplishing it. Cf. Tikriti, 652 (var.).
136. *ṭlmsa ttōra lak pēša şāx*. 'A loaf that breaks, does not become whole (again).' Worrying about losses is useless.
137. *ṭlōb bkōčksa, hāl b'itrāna*. 'Borrow by spoon, give (back) by ladle!' Reward well those who help you even a bit. Cf. Hanafi, 231; Noel, 79 (vars.).
138. *ṭūra l-ṭūra lak sāmıq, nāşa l-nāşa ksāmıq*. 'A mountain does not need a mountain, a man needs a man.' People need each other. Cf. Garbell (1965b), p. 292, *s-n-q*; Socin (1878), 87 ('... does not meet...'); Jewett, 167. Aramaic-Hebrew: *ṭūrā bəṭūra lā pāga', 'enāš be'enāš pāga'* (*Nerot Šabbat*, 3 (1945), 42).
139. *waşla la mšāpe lwaşla, lag 'ālıq bwaşla*. '(If) a piece would not resemble (another) piece, it would not meet the (other) piece.' Said to explain a bad marriage. Birds of a feather flock together.
140. *we ḡame bo we dame*. [K.] 'That worry for that time.' Don't worry about



- future troubles. Cf. Talmudic *dayyāh ləṣārā biš'āṭāh* (Berakhot 9b) 'Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof'; Elwell-Sutton, p. 16; Jewett, 185 (vars.); Stahl, 701.
141. *xabir gnāpiq mtre sippāsa, gzāvirra kulla māse*. 'A word that comes out of (just) two lips, circulates (in) the entire village.' Cf. Rivlin (1946), 97; Tikriti, 1141; Hanafi, 89 (vars.).
142. *xilmud lēle baṭīla*. 'Night dream is void.' Said to comfort those who tell of a bad dream they saw. Cf. Zechariah 10:2.
143. *xode dızzexwa nāskit*. [K.] 'God knows His thieves.' Don't cheat or steal, thinking nobody is watching. God is!
144. *xōla qte'le, karta mburbızla*. 'The rope is cut, the bundle is scattered.' Said when a husband or wife dies and their children are dispersed. Cf. Maclean (1895), 107; Socin (1882), p. 119 (204), h; Yahuda, Y. B., 2150 (var.).
145. *xwalli bsar, hačči-ya ta kır, ta bxwa kır*. [K.] 'You loser, (ashes on (your) head), whatever you did, you did it yourself!' Said by a regretful person who is responsible for his own misfortunes. Cf. Meissner, 13; Elwell-Sutton, p. 61 (vars.).
146. *ye girti bar širi, na-bardit ḥatta piri*. [K.] 'That which is imbibed with (mother's) milk, is not given up even at old age.' Said of bad habits.
147. *yōma ggāne, qaṣa-bala lag gāne*. 'The day wanes (or: the sun sets), (but) troubles linger on (don't decline).' As long as one lives, one should expect troubles. Cf. Makas, 16; Socin (1878), 480.
148. *zık-bırsi – min xille, swe'le, 'ēne turra; māl-bırsi – har 'āxil, har 'ēne kpınta-la*. [K.-Neo-Aramaic] '(Whoever his) stomach (is) empty – as soon as he eats (something), he is satiated, his desire (eye) is subdued; (but whoever his) house (is) empty (= indigent) – the more he eats the more his eye remains hungry.' Indigent people are constantly hungry, their desire is never subdued.
149. *zıko, wara taḥmıl bıko*. [K.] '(Big-)bellied, come and carry loads!' Give the task to the wrong person. Said in sarcasm.
150. *zılle xōla basır dōla*. 'The rope has followed the drum (or the bucket?).' My mother, as well as other informants, explained that a wife should follow her husband and do his wish rather than insist on her own, just as the rope, which hangs on the shoulders of the drum player, follows the drum. But Segal, 79 ('When the essential has gone, the rest is of little use'), and Garbell (1965b), p. 340, *xola* ('One loss after another'), have different explanations. Cf. also Yahuda, Y. B., 932; Tikriti, 778; Hanafi, 618; Ecclesiastes 12:6. The word *dōla*, originally meaning bucket (Hebrew *dālī*, Arabic *dalw*), has lost this sense in the Neo-Aramaic of Zakho (for which the word *şaṭle* [Turkish-Arabic] is used) and coalesced with the homophone 'drum.' Hence, probably, the different explanation of the proverb. For identical proverbs interpreted differently by different communities or even in the same community, see Stahl, p. 380.

151. *ž-dāye u-bāb huzār lōn*. [K.] 'From (the same) mother and father (children of) a thousand colors.' Do not expect all your children to be the same in character or appearance.
152. *ži-dirēž 'awa bit, ž-māla xwa na hāti*. [K.] 'Long-living (man) is he, who has not come out of his house.' At times of war only those who stay at home are lucky to survive. Said against the cruelty of battles.
153. *žin mēri jindid-kt, žin mēri pindid-kt*. [K.] 'Wife makes (her) husband successful, wife makes (her) husband good-for-nothing.' Cf. Lescot, 119; Segal, 107 (vars.); Khayyat, 272 ('Mother destroys, mother builds').

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