"Metran Îsa! Do Not Stir Up Trouble, Trouble Is Bad": A Kurdish Folk Song through a Christian Lens[1]

Yulia Furman, Nikita Kuzin, and Gulsuma Demir

Introduction: General Remarks and Plot

In this paper, we would like to present a popular Kurdish folk song, *Metran Îsa*, performed in Kurmanji and Ṭuroyo (Surayt) by an Aramaic-speaking woman, Nisane Ergün (NE). Our performer lives in the Mardin province of Turkey in the vicinity of Kerboran (Turkish: Dargeçit) and belongs to the religious minority of Syriac Orthodox Christians. The number of Syriac Orthodox Christians in this region (also called Ṭur Abdin) is approximately 2,000-3,000. Ṭuroyo (endonym Surayt), an unwritten Neo-Aramaic (Semitic) language, is the first language for most of them. Almost every member of the community above thirty years old is also familiar with Kurdish (Kurmanji), but the level of command varies from native to elementary depending on age and place of living.

The Moscow research group under the supervision of Sergey Loesov started its expeditions into the region in the winter of 2018. Our primary task is to collect the material for further documentation and description of the language. As a secondary goal, we occupy ourselves with oral literature by studying motives and characters of the stories we hear from our consultants (see for example the commentary on motives in Häberl et al. 2020).

Our first meeting with Nisane took place on January 14, 2018, in the village Ḥaḥ (Turkish: Anıtlı), where she stayed at her daughter's place during the Feast of the Virgin of the Crops (Syriac: ʕēḏā d yāldaṯ ʔalāhā d ʕal zarʕē). That time she spontaneously told us several fairy tales and stories about local saints, and since then we regularly came back to her to make more recordings: so far Nisane has contributed most of the material to our corpus, gathered in 2018-19. She is eighty-seven years old, born in 1933 in the village Bequsyone (Turkish: Alagöz). After marriage, she moved to a neighboring settlement called Derqube (Turkish: Karagöl). Her mother tongue is Ṭuroyo (Surayt), and she also speaks Kurmanji fluently as her second language.

The culture of storytelling was thriving in the community of Syriac Christians until the electrification of the region and the arrival of television in the 1980s. The inhabitants of a village

---

used to gather in the evenings for the so-called *ğəvate* (< Kurmanji: *civat*), "assembly," talk to each other, and listen to a storyteller. Nisane has never performed in these assemblies, as this was the men's task, so her only audience must have been her children and grandchildren. However, her natural talent, wit, good memory, and rich and unique language make her a skilled and engaging storyteller. Nisane memorized different tales while attending the above-mentioned *ğəvate* in the Christian villages where she used to live, as well as in places with a mixed population. As a child she spent a couple of years in the village Marbobo (Turkish: Günyurdu), close to Nusaybin on the border with Syria, where Christians, Yezidis, and Muslims came to escape famine. There, she must have become acquainted with Kurdish oral literature and language. Her knowledge of the lives of saints and biblical narratives she acquired from church sermons and conversations with priests. Additionally, she got to know some stories from her late husband, who used to sing them in Kurdish. One of these was the song *Metran Îsa*, which Nisane performed for us in Kurdish and in Ṭuroyo on July 18, 2019, in Derqube.

During our visit we asked Nisane about the Kurdish version of *Mem û Zîn* (in Ṭuroyo, the story is called *Mamoye Ala u Sətya Zin*), the prosaic summary of which she told us in Ṭuroyo in January, 2018. Instead, she offered to sing a song called *Metran Îsa*. According to her own statement, she heard it from her husband and did not remember it well. First, Nisane sang the song in Kurdish and then, being aware of our imperfect knowledge of Kurmanji, elucidated it to us in Ṭuroyo. In what follows, we will present both versions of the song with a commentary and translation. Before we proceed with that, some information about this text and its historical background is provided.

Metran Îsa, also known as *Metrano* or *Elî û Meyrem*, despite being one of the more popular Kurdish *stran* (Kurmanji: "song"), has rarely been the subject of scholarly publications.[2] Still, one can find numerous renditions of it on YouTube.

Although details may vary from version to version, the main plot of the song can be put as follows:[3]

---

[2] One printed version of the song known to us is found in the book by Salihê Kevirbirî, *Filîtê Quto* (2002:19-25). The song itself was performed by the *dengbêj* Salihê Qubinê. A Turkish summary of this version was published by Sinan Gündoğar (2003:54-61). Another variant of the text with a Russian translation was published by Ordikhan Dzhalilov (2003:158-60, 493-95). A short (three-stanza) song mentioning Metran Îsa and some other details particular to this story (the girl Meyrem, elopement, ship, the Aghtamar church) is found in L. Turgut's book (2010:248-49), but it has no clear plot and was not considered for the synopsis.

[3] The synopsis is based upon a number of versions: (1) one by Salihê Kevirbirî (2002:19-25); (2) a version performed by the Kurdish *dengbêj* Miradê Kinê (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxNEH8gcl3c); (3) a version published by O. Dzhalilov (2003). The latter was performed by a Christian (?) *dengbêj* of Armenian origin, I. Oganyan, who was born in the vicinity of Diyarbekir in 1910 and who later lived in Qamishli, Syria, for a long time (for more details on his background, see Dzhalilov 2003:251). This fact places him very close to the place where Nisane lives, and it may be no coincidence that Oganyan's version resembles the version performed by Nisane the most. Admittedly Miradê Kinê, born in 1943 in the village Gêrka Cehfer near Kerboran, must have also spent part of his life in a place not so far from where our storyteller lived, but his version is in many aspects unlike other three versions at our disposal; (4) a version by Mihemed Arif Cizîrî/Cizrawî (1912-1986), who was born in Cizre (Turkey); (5) a version by Miço Kendeş (b. 1966 in Kobane, Syria) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuSWauev8kY); (6) a version by Dr. Metin Barlik (b. 1964 in Van, Turkey) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLV_amcO9dQ).

The governor (*Vali*) of Van falls in love with an Armenian girl, Meyrem, and sends his man, Ali, to fetch her. However, Meyrem falls in love with Ali and persuades him to elope with her. Alternatively, in the version recorded by O. Dzhalilov and in Miradê Kine's version, Meyrem and Ali see each other on the streets of Van and fall in love with each other. In all versions, the couple decides to go to the island of Aghtamar to seek refuge with the famous bishop of the Armenians Metran Îsa. Ali asks him to marry them either according to the Christian or the Muslim rite. The bishop refuses to convert Ali to Christianity, unwilling to violate the established norms and to bring shame upon Islam. He suggests marrying them according to the Muslim rite instead and hides the couple in his church. Having found out that Meyrem and Ali are in the church of Aghtamar under the protection of Metran Îsa, the *Vali* of Van demands from the bishop to hand them over. After Metran Îsa ignores his demands and threatens to confront him, the governor retreats empty-handed. In some versions (recorded by ourselves and Dzhalilov), the Metran starts a battle against the army of the *Vali* and defeats them either single-handedly or with the help of other clerics at the Aghtamar church.[4]

Historical Background

The song belongs to the genre "historical battle song" (*tarîxî*, or *şer*): the story as such and the protagonists are considered to be historical individuals (Allison 2001:142).

It is, however, doubtful that the characters of *Metran Îsa* go back to specific historical personalities. Most probably, the tale reflects a fictitious collective image. However, the song has many details that are anchored in history and traditional life.

Armenians were one of the largest *millets* in the Ottoman State: in the nineteenth century, they constituted around 20% of the entire population (Verheij 2012:87-89; Karpat 1985:51-55; Hovannisian 1997:191-92). They were unevenly distributed across the empire, mostly in the so-called "Six Vilayets" (the provinces of Van, Diyarbakır, Bitlis, Erzurum, Sivas, and Mamuretülaziz), the mountainous parts of Cilicia, and big cities. The majority of Armenians lived to the east and north of the river Tigris. Lake Van and the surrounding area, the scene of the story, was a part of their historical homeland. This region played a great role in the cultural and religious life of the Armenians. Since 1113, the region had its own catholicos, residing on the island of Aghtamar (Hovannisian 1997:25). In the fifteenth century, the Catholicos of Aghtamar gained influence and even managed for a short period of time to occupy the seat of the Catholicos in Etchmiadzin, and thus to assume the office of Catholicos of All Armenians. However, later on, Aghtamar became a regional Patriarchate, and its authority was restricted to the neighboring areas (Hovannisian 1997:35). The office of Catholicos of Aghtamar continued its existence into the twentieth century, when it was finally eliminated in 1916 during the Armenian Genocide.

---

[4] Christine Allison in her book, *The Yezidi Oral Tradition in Iraqi Kurdistan*, mentions another version of the song. According to it, Meyrem is a Muslim and the daughter of the *Vali* of Van. Ali abducts Meyrem, and they take refuge with the Christian bishop, or Metran. The Metran refuses to surrender the couple and is killed (Allison 2001:142-43). The source of the version is not specified.

The prototype of the church of Aghtamar, the seat of Metran Îsa, is the Church of the Holy Cross, located on the island of Aghtamar. The island of Aghtamar, situated on the southern side of Lake Van, was once the center of the kingdom of Vaspurakan and the residence of the Armenian kings of the Ardsruni line. The church, together with the royal palace, was built by Gagik Ardsruni in the tenth century (Adalian 2010:74-75).

Most probably, the character of Metran Îsa, an influential and powerful Christian protector and mediator, is not based on a certain historical figure, but rather represents a collective image with some historical basis. Indeed, the leaders of the Christian communities in this region played an important role in the everyday life of their congregations, ensuring the observance of both civil and religious law, and protecting their flock. For example, Zachariah III (1434-1464), a Catholicos of Aghtamar, the most famous in the line of the Aghtamar Catholicoi, was venerated by both Christians and Muslims. It is said that he protected the region from pillaging by local rulers and mediated the negotiations between Jahan Shah, the leader of the Qara Qoyunlu, and Jahangir, a representative of the rival tribal confederation, the Aq Qoyunlu. This was necessary to prevent a devastating war on these territories (Macler 1923:53-54). Another example comes from the neighboring region of Hakkari, where the Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, who belonged to the family of Mar Shimun, was a temporal and spiritual leader of the Christian tribes living there. At times, his influence reached even further, and he was second to the Mir of Hakkari and could be his *locum* when he was absent from the principality (McDowall 2004:45). Finally, from the eighteenth century onwards the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople had jurisdiction over all Armenians of the Ottoman Empire, except for some places where independent Catholicosates were operating (such as Sis or Aghtamar). As a *Milletbaşı* (head of a *millet*), the Patriarch was responsible for the collection of state taxes and was in charge of religious and educational affairs of the community (Hovannisian 1997:184-85).

The fact that Ali and Meyrem sought protection by Metran Îsa also has its grounds in the traditions of this region and reflects a common practice that is widespread in Kurdish society: after performing *revandin* ("abduction" or "elopement"), the couple stays under the protection of an influential person, who takes part in negotiations to settle the matter (Allison 2001:138-39).

The figure of the *Vali* of Van and its treatment in the song may also have some historical background. Both in the Kurdish versions that we know and in the variant that we recorded the *Vali* of Van is depicted as a villain. Using his power and influence, he wants to marry an Armenian girl, Meyrem, against her will. After he realizes that Ali and Meyrem are hiding in the church of Aghtamar under the protection of Metran Îsa, he is headed to the island to bribe the bishop or to take Meyrem by force. Depending on the version, he either refuses a direct confrontation with Metran Îsa, or he is killed by his own men. Despite his high position, he does not succeed, his power turns out to be illusive, and his end is most disgraceful and miserable.

Most probably, the figure of the *Vali* has its prototype in popular perceptions of Ottoman functionaries, who had a complicated relationship with the local population. When Kurdistan and Eastern Anatolia became part of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Kurdish chiefs accepted the sultan's suzerainty, but in fact remained independent (Shaw 1976:82-83). The process of centralization, which affected all parts of the empire, began only in the nineteenth century (Hanioğlu 2008:49-50, 60, 86). After the Russo-Turkish war of 1806-12, Sultan Mahmud started replacing local *derebeyis*—semi-autonomous rulers of *eyalets*

("provinces") from powerful local families—with officials appointed in Istanbul (Van Bruinessen 1992:176). By the middle of the century, Kurdistan was ruled by Ottoman governors, and the Kurdish emirates were eliminated. The province of Van had a similar fate. The fortress of Van was seized in 1533 by the grand vizier Ibrahim Pasha and finally became part of the Ottoman State in 1555 (Shaw 1976:95; Kılıç 2012:507). After the incorporation of Van into the Ottoman Empire, it was administered by centrally appointed governors (*vali*), but the sub-districts were ruled by local Kurdish families (Van Bruinessen 1992:197, n. 42). Thus, it is not surprising that the *Vali* of Van, a nameless personification of the authorities of the central government, is negatively portrayed in the song. It is quite typical of the Kurdish oral tradition of the late Ottoman period that "the government" is presented as a villain (Allison 2001:128-30).

It remains unclear when the song was created. Some details in the text suggest the late-nineteenth century as the time when Nisane's version might have been composed. It is mentioned that Metran Îsa fought the *Vali* of Van and his army with a Martini rifle (Kurmanji: *eynelî*; Turkish: *aynalı*). This rifle had been adopted by the Ottoman State in the late-nineteenth century and had been used in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78.[5] It is of course entirely plausible that such details were gradually added to the song, whose core elements could be much older.

Features of Nisane Ergün's Versions

Metran Îsa can be performed as an actual song (see the versions of Mihemed Arif Cizîrî/ Cizrawî, Miço Kendeş, and Dr. Metin Barlik) or as sung poetry with interspersed prosaic commentary (the versions of Salihê Kevirbirî and Miradê Kinê). The sung part of the story usually begins with the journey of Ali and Meyrem to the island of Aghtamar, while the opening can be told in prose. The Kurdish version of the text was presented by our speaker as a rhymed song which starts with the words *Ez ê çime Wanê, naçime Wanê. Wan di vê de*. The Ṭuroyo version was performed as a narration; it is more detailed and includes an introduction, which was absent from the original. The very last part of the Kurmanji version, describing the execution of the *Vali*, is told in Ṭuroyo, which may indicate that this ending represents a later addition to the "canonical" version. In the versions performed by Kurdish *dengbêjs*, the *Vali* is not killed but rather admits his defeat in the pursuit of Meyrem, and retreats.

There are other features that single out Nisane's variant from the songs performed by the Kurdish *dengbêjs*. Although the scene of *Metran Îsa* is Lake Van and surroundings, Nisane introduces geographic details from her own region and thus places the song into the world known to her. When the *Vali* of Van threatens to destroy the church of Aghtamar, he says: *Ez ê hêlim çiyayê Bagokê, kevirê dêra te, çiyayê Bagokê xelas bikin, berê top û mitilyoza*, "I will have [my] cannons and machine-guns launch the stones of your church all the way to the Bagok mountains." The Bagok mountains (Ṭuroyo: *Ṭuro d ʿIzlo*, "Izlo mountains") are a chain of mountains north of Nusaybin, near the border with Syria. These mountains are the southernmost part of Ṭur Abdin, the area where Syriac Christians, including Nisane, live. Not only does she

---

[5] The Martini rifle features in both Turkish and Kurdish folk songs. It appears in the song *Hekimoğlu Türküsü*, dedicated to the Turkish folk hero Hekimoğlu. In the Kurdish song *Bişarê Çeto*, two brothers, Bişar and Cemîl, fight against the Turkish government using this weapon (Nikitine 1956:267). See also Gaunt 2012:256.

locate the song spatially closer to her, but also temporally: the *Vali* of Van uses a telephone (probably a mobile) to summon reinforcements.

Additionally, the part which describes the confrontation between Metran Îsa and the governor is exceptionally detailed when compared to the other versions of the song, and it constitutes the core of Nisane's story.

The main emphasis of the versions composed and performed in the Muslim environment is placed upon the reaction of Metran Îsa to Ali's request to marry him and Meyrem according to either religious tradition. The Armenian bishop unexpectedly defends the alien and even hostile religion and the customs ("women follow men") against his own beliefs. That this action is performed by an outsider, who is not a member of the Muslim community, elevates Islam and indicates its higher status compared to other religions. Another point made in the story is Metran Îsa's intention to defend the interests of the common and poor man against a rich and powerful governor.[6]

In our version, the focus shifts to Metran Îsa's defense of his decision, and the story acquires a new interpretation from the perspective of the Christian community, which our storyteller represents. Pro-Christian elements are especially prominent in the Ṭuroyo version. The song starts in the familiar manner: Ali and Meyrem arrive at the island of Aghtamar seeking the protection of Metran Îsa. After Ali requests the bishop to marry them the way he, the bishop, prefers, Metran Îsa upholds the honor of Islam and invites the mullah to perform the rite. The next morning, the *Vali* of Van besieges the church and threatens to destroy it if the bishop does not hand Meyrem over. Then, the story takes a dramatic turn: Metran Îsa, outraged at the *Vali*'s proposition, kills some of the soldiers led by the governor and routs the rest. The *Vali* mobilizes the army, but instead of helping him, the officers make the governor (not the bishop!) responsible for getting his people killed and try to establish the reason for such a heavy-handed reaction. The *Vali*, obviously willing to have the Muslim army on his side, puts forward a pretext for this violence, stating that the bishop converted a Muslim man to Christianity. The Ṭuroyo version conveys the answer of the officers, absent from the Kurdish original: *Hawi ṣuroyo, hawi ṣuroyo*, "So what if he has become a Christian?" The conversion to Christianity does not seem to be a reason strong enough for commencing a war. After the bishop and the mullah have been questioned, it becomes clear that the governor not only wasted manpower but falsely accused Metran Îsa. The *Vali* gets punished and killed, and Metran Îsa is rewarded with decorations from the *Vali*'s shoulders. This action can be interpreted in two different ways: either Metran Îsa received the decorations as a trophy, or it was an indication that from now on he assumed the office of the *Vali* of Van.

Thus, unlike in the mainstream Kurdish version, where the figure of the Metran is used to elevate Islam over other religions, in Nisane's version the firmness and courage of a Christian bishop are praised, and his actions receive approval from the state (the army in this case).

Syriac Orthodox Christians and Kurdish Sunni Muslims have lived side by side in Ṭur Abdin and the neighboring regions for centuries. Their languages, oral traditions, and culture exhibit enormous mutual influence. The case of *Metran Îsa* shows how the material which

---

[6] The discussion of the version published in Kevirbirî 2002 is available in the dissertation by Wendelmoet Hamelink (2016:86-93).

originated in one tradition can be borrowed, adopted, and creatively reinterpreted in a different cultural and religious environment.

Linguistic and Poetic Features of the Kurmanji Version

The text has a number of features common in spoken Kurmanji of this region, as opposed to the standard grammars of Kurmanji (Bedir Khan and Lescot 1970; Thackston 2006):

— Lack of *-n* endings for plural ezafe and plural oblique endings, for example *çadirê kesk û spî* (v. 20), *jin pey mêra diçin* (v. 11).
— Orthographic <*e*> is pronounced as [æ] (Öpengin and Haig 2014).
— The word *çav*, "eye," is pronounced with pharyngealization: [tʃaːʕv] (Öpengin and Haig 2014).

The language and the structure of the text also exhibit a few properties of the sung narrative genre (*stran*):

— Smaller units (lines) often rhyme, for example, *daye - spî ye - ketiye - çi ye*. However, besides shorter lines, longer ones (approximately twice as long) also occur, where the rhyme is present only at the end.
— The meter seems to be unstable, as syllable counts vary, so we have split the lines based on rhymes and, in some cases, on a perceivable fall in pitch. For stanzas, the fall in pitch is more significant (cf. Allison 2001:67), but we did not separate the text into stanzas because of the necessity to align the Kurmanji version with the Ṭuroyo one.
— Vowels are often prolonged, especially at the end, and special words, like *lo*, are added to fit a line to the meter and perhaps to help with singing. For verbs, the present perfect form is preferred possibly because it ends in a vowel: *hatiye* instead of *hat*, *derketiye* instead of *derket*, and so on. Alternatively, verbs receive the directive ending *-e*: *'Eli mahr kire mehreke misilmanî* (v. 25); *Metran rahişte kopala xwe* (v. 31).

In the following section, we provide the text in its two versions, Kurmanji and Ṭuroyo (for audio recordings of the respective performances, consult the eCompanion). The presentation of the text is structured in a way that facilitates comparative analysis and convenience. The two versions have common numbering, and verses with similar content are aligned. If one of the versions lacks the content the other version has, then the verse with this number is left blank in the former. The Kurdish text is mostly split on the basis of rhyming lines: when a rhyme occurs in the text, the following text is put into the next verse until the next rhyme, and so on. Because of this, one verse in the prosaic Ṭuroyo version usually corresponds to two verses in the poetic Kurmanji one.

Special Characters and Signs Used in the Text

Parentheses () mark sidenotes of the narrator, which do not belong to the main text. Parentheses () with a long dash together with an author's note mark clarifications by us, the authors. Square brackets [] denote additions to the English translation to make it clearer and more felicitous. Elements in square brackets are absent in the original text. In the original, these are used to mark the shift from one language to another in the narration.

The Kurmanji version is given in Bedir Khan's system (with a few exceptions as noted above).

The Ṭuroyo text uses the orthography developed by O. Jastrow (1992).

Text

N	Kurdish version	Ṭuroyo version
	Introduction	
	[Ṭuroyo] *Matrān ʕIsa, ša ṭaʕyono,[7] kuḏʕutəlla? Matrān di=ʕito d-Axtaman.[8]*	*D-əmmanwa b-surayt, falga lo=kowe.*
	Metran Îsa, I have forgotten [it] anyway, are you familiar with it? Metran of the Aghtamar church.	If I tell it in Ṭuroyo, then it is not half as good [as the Kurmanji version].
	[Ṭuroyo] *Hawo-ste šar kamilo[9]-yo. Hayo-ste b-Kurmānǧi gdəmmalla, d-əbʕat?*	*E. Kummi . . . d-əmmalla b-surayt?*
	This one is a complete tale. This one I can tell you in Kurmanci if you want.	Yes, they say . . . Shall I tell it in Ṭuroyo?

---

[7] Perhaps a shortened Ṭur. *šx(w)a ṭaʕyono*. For *šx(w)a*, see Ritter 1979:505, and also Kurmanji *ji xwe* "naturally; already" (Chyet 2003:289).

[8] The name of the island and, accordingly, of the church in Kurmanji is *Axtamar*. However, NE consistently pronounces it with a final /n/.

[9] The primary meaning of the word *šar* in Ṭuroyo (and *şer* in Kurmanji) is "war, battle." Here, however, it is used in the derived meaning "a song or a tale about a war or a battle," recognized by some as a subgenre of *stran*, "song" (Allison 2001:65). These meanings are also recognized by the Ṭuroyo and Kurmanji dictionaries we consulted: "Kampfgeschichten, Kampfepen, die beim Tode eines berühmten Helden gesungen warden" (Ritter 1979:489); "type of song in which a fight is portrayed" (Chyet 2003:574).

1		*Əmmi, e, əmmi u=wali du=Wan marfele ʕayne bᵊ-ḥdo arᵊmnayto.*
		They say, yes, they say that the *Vali* of Van cast his eyes on an Armenian girl.
2		*Marfele ʕayne bᵊ-ḥdo arᵊmnayto. Məllele l-ʕAli šawiša (u=ʕaskărayd̲e-wa), omər: Zux, mṭili Merame.*
		He cast his eyes on an Armenian girl. He told sergeant Ali, who was his soldier: Go and bring Meyrem to me!
3		*Aṭi, omər: Merame, ašə́r u=wali du=Wan komər: "Izux, mṭili Merame.*
		He went and said [to her]: Meyrem, the *Vali* of Van has ordered: Go and bring Meyrem to me!
4		*Qa hiye xwᵊšktər mine-wa.*
		Now, he was more handsome than him (the *Vali—the authors*).
5		*Ummo: Madām gmublatli šan u=wali du=Wan, hăma ono hat, tux, mbali šar ruḥux.*
		She said: If you take me to the *Vali* of Van . . . look, you and I . . . come on, take me yourself!
6		*Omər: Ma gmiṣarfoliyo? Omar . . . əmmo: Hăma gəzzán, mḥalqina ruḥan tore w baxt¹⁰ du=ḥasyo du=Wan.*
		He said: Can I get away with that? She answered: We will go and ask the bishop of Van for help and protection.
7		*Kalayo i=ʕitayd̲e bayne falge du=băḥar.*
		His church was situated in the middle of the lake.
8		*Əmmi maḥatwa i=ʕabayayd̲e ʕal u=baḥar, mṣalewa ʕal u=baḥar, d-kətwa mhaymno.*
		They say that he used to lay his cloak upon the [waters of] the lake and pray on top of it because he was pious.

---

[10] The ending -*e* on the word *tore* is the Kurdish ezafe ending -*ê*.

9	*Ez ê çime Wanê, naçime*[11] *Wanê. Wan di vê de.* I will go to Van, I will not go to Van. Van [is] over there.	*Əmmi, qām hedika azzeyo, hedika azzeyo, məblole w azzé mḥalaqle ruḥe bi=gămiyo, bi=hno.* Then he went, they say, he took her and went, he got into a boat, into . . . what's it called?
10	*Bikeve, bi qeyik û bi gemiya lo ser beḥrê de.* Go down, in boats or ships, by sea.	
11	*Here xwe bavêje tor û bextê Metranê dêra Yaxtamanê lo di dêrê de.*[12] Go and ask the Metran of the Aghtamar church for help and protection, in the church.	
	Interjection: ᵀᵘʳᵒʸᵒ *(Kălăwəžəkat, ḥreno kummanne.)*[13] (It is nonsense, I will tell them another one).	
12	*ʕElî çû destê Metrên di dêrê de, dibê, Metrano,*[14] *ḥal û meqseda te çi ye?* Ali went to [kiss] the Metran's hand in the church, and [the Metran] asked: What is the matter?	*Mḥalaqle ruḥe l-gawa di=ʕito, d-əzze l-iḏe du=ḥasyo bi=ʕito: "Mən-yo?" Mḥalaqle ruḥe gab u=ḥasyo.* He rushed into the church and went to kiss the bishop's hand: What is it? He hurried over to the bishop.

---

[11] The form *neçime* is also possible.

[12] It is unclear who pronounces verses 9-11 in the story. In verse 3, it is conceivable that Ali expresses his doubts about going to Metran Îsa. Verses 4-5 are more likely to be Meyrem's words. In all versions known to us, it is Meyrem who convinces Ali to take her for himself and who suggests asking for the help of Metran Îsa.

[13] The meaning of this comment is unclear. The story goes on further without any significant omissions if we compare it to the Ṭuroyo version or to the version found in Kevirbirî 2002. Perhaps a longer monologue/dialogue of Meyrem and Ali has been skipped by NE (cf. Kevirbirî 2002:20-21).

[14] This form is obviously a mistake, because the following question, "*ḥal û meqseda te çi ye?*," must be asked by Metran Îsa himself, and the following verse undoubtedly contains Ali's reply.

13	*Go, Metran Efendî! Meyremê ji dînê te ye, mi revand,*	*Mən-yo? Omər: "Merame mu=dinayḏux-yo. Mhara aʕli kəbʕat b-ṣurayt w kəbʕat b-ṭayət.*[15]
	He said: Metran efendi! Meyrem is from your religion, I have kidnapped her,	
14	*U tê divê li mi mehr ke, te divê filhî, te divê misilmanî.*	What is it? He said: Meyrem is of your religion. Marry her to me according to the Christian rite or the Muslim rite, as you wish.
	And you should marry [her] to me. You may do it according to the Christian or the Muslim rite.	
15	*Go, Lo, ʕEliyo, ez bextê xwe û dêra xwe xira nakim.*	*Omər: ʕAliyo. Omər: Lo=komaḥrawno baxt diḏi w di=ʕitayḏi. W lo=kombaṭanno u=qanūn, i=šăriʕa.*
	[He] replied: O Ali, I am not going to compromise my honor and the honor of my church.	
16	*Firmana dewle . . . dînê . . . şerîʕet û qanûnê*[16] *betal nakim,*	He answered: O Ali! I am not going to compromise my honor and the honor of my church. I am not going to abandon the law and the norms.
	The order of the state . . . the religion . . . I will not abandon the norms and the law.	
17	*Dîne Îslamê rezîl nakim.*	*W lo=komaqənno*[17] *u=dinaṯxu daṭ=ṭaye w lo=komaqəmno fərmān di=dawla aʕli, ʕal i=ʕitayḏi.*
	[and] bring shame to Islam.	
18	*Firmana dewletê*[18] *ser serê xwe dêra xwe narakim.*	I will not disgrace your religion, of the Muslims, and I will not bring the wrath of the state on myself and my church.
	[I] will not bring the government's wrath upon myself and my church.	

---

[15] Normally, unlike in this verse, the expressions *b ṣurayt* and *b ṭayət* (or *b ṭayayt*) refer to the language: in Christian (that is Aramaic) or in Muslim (that is Kurdish) language.

[16] This refers to the late Ottoman legal system with *šariʕa* ("traditional Islamic law"), and the imperial code with its *kanunnâmes* ("code books"). See Hanioğlu 2008:18-19.

[17] This is what NE pronounces on the recording. However, the form does not make much sense. There exists a verb *maqər*, "to tell; to give away; to reveal; to betray," but it has to do with revealing or betraying a piece of information. Alternatively, there is an Arabic root √*qyl* II/IV "aufheben; rückgängig machen" (Wehr 1985:1076). The first-person masculine form of this verb in Ṭuroyo would be exactly *maqənno*. However, the verb is not attested in our corpus and is not familiar to our consultants. We offer an alternative solution—to understand this form as a mistake, while the form *komakəmno*, "to make black; to put to shame," was intended. In its second meaning, it agrees with the verb *rezîl kirin* of the Kurdish version.

[18] For Christian minorities, the word *firman* denoting a decree or order issued by the highest authority is associated with state persecution and genocide (see Talay 2017 for more details). Here, uttered by Metran Îsa, it likely refers to punitive measures against his church and possibly Christian population for converting a Muslim into a Christian.

19	*Miqîmî dinyayê*[19] *jin pey mêra diçin.*	*Məqimi dəna*[20] *i=pire kuzzá bəṭr u=zlam. Madām aṭyo bəṭrux, gməhrínala bi=ṭayuṭo.*
	It's the way of the world: the woman follows the man.	It's the way of the world: the woman follows the man. Since she came with you, we shall marry her [to you] according to the Muslim rite.
20	*ʕElî here melê. Dîsa rabû li ser piya.*	
	Ali, go to the mullah! [Ali] again got up on his feet.	
21	*Pelek kaxez nivisiye ji melê re.*	
	[The Metran] wrote a note to the mullah.	
22	*Hatî,*[21] *mela hatî, bi çelengî ye.*	
	He came, the mullah came in a hurry.	*Hedika mtarasse lu=malla. U malla aṭi, mhirole bi=ṭayuṭo w azzeyo.*
23	*Go, He begê Metrano, ḥewal û meqseda te çi ye?*	
	He asked: Metran Beg, what is the matter?	So then they sent for the mullah. The mullah came, married her [to him] according to the Muslim rite and went away.
24	*Go, Melawo, Meyremê li 'Elî mehr ke mehreke misilmanî.*	
	He replied: Mullah, marry Meyrem and Ali according to the Muslim rite!	
25	*ʕEli mehr kire mehreke misilmanî, mela çû mala xwe.*	
	He married Ali [and Meyrem] according to the Muslim rite. The mullah went home.	

---

[19] This expression is not understood well by Kurmanji speakers we consulted. A few interpretations that have been offered to us include: "(by) an established custom or a way things are done," "(in) the whole world." Cf. perhaps also *miqîmî*, "constance; continuité" (Nezan 2017:1019).

[20] NE apparently just copies the expression *miqîmî dinyayê* from the Kurdish version, but the form is further reduced.

[21] NE pronounces a clear [i:] at the end of both forms, which is unusual. Perhaps this is a shortened variant of present perfect *hatiye*? Cf. forms *şidandî* and *avetî* in verses 45 and 46.

26	*Go, ʕEliyo, here serê ʕolîka banî.*[22]	Omər: *De ánnaqqa zoxu lalʕal, li=ʕolike=bani.*[23] *Azzán hənnək li=ʕolike=bani, u=malla azzé lu=bayto.*
	[The Metran] said: Ali, go to the rooftop room.	The bishop said: Now go upstairs, to the rooftop room. They went to the rooftop room, and the mullah went home.
27	*Berê vê cihê*[24] . . . *dirave*[25] . . . *ga dora dêrê çadin*[26] *daye.*	*Ṣafro koqoyəm, mašəġ iḏe w foṯe, sōm dastəlmēž, koḥōr ga lu=wali du=Wan kosəmle i=ʕaskar hawir di=ʕito, simole qaləb.*
	In front of that place . . . [Ali] wakes up . . . they have put tents around the church!	
28	*Ji çadirê kesk û spî ye.*	In the morning, [Ali] woke up, washed his hands and face, performed his ablutions and saw: the *Vali* of Van had surrounded the church with his soldiers.
	Tents of white and green color.	
29	*Go, çîrîn—misîn ca te*[27] *ʕElî ketiye.*	*Maz=zuḫṯe nafilo i=məssine m-iḏe, hawi čənge diḏa. Nafiqo Merame, əmmo: Mə=mqām aʕlux?*
	There was a loud clank—a pitcher had fallen from Ali's hands.	
30	*Meyremê derketiye go, ʕElî—go—ḥewala te çi ye?*	He became afraid, and the pitcher fell down from his hands with a clank. Meyrem came out and said: What happened to you?
	Meyrem went out and asked: Ali, what is the matter?	
31	Go, *Meyremê, ʕecêba min û te nekiriye,*[28]	Omar: *Nošo lo=səmme aʕ=ʕağobe d-səmlan.*
	He said: Meyrem, [no one else] has caused such a disaster like the one we have.	He answered: No one else has caused such a disaster like the one we have.

---

[22] Only the form *olî*, "maison à étage; chambre à étage" (Nezan 2017:1128), is known to us from the dictionaries, but the variant form *ʕolik* probably existed (or exists) in the Kurmanci of Ṭur Abdin; see Ṭuroyo *ʕolike*, "auf dem Dach eines Hauses aufgebautes Zimmer, höchster Stock" (Ritter 1979:22). According to our consultants, the word denotes a small room or space on the top of a roof.

[23] Again, the expression from Kurmanji is copied, although with modifications. The Kurdish version has *ʕolîka*, where -*a* is the ezafe ending. Ṭuroyo has no case marking, so the default form *ʕolike* is used (loanwords of feminine gender in Ṭuroyo often end in -e). Further, *banî* does not exist in Ṭuroyo. The native word *goro*, "roof," is used later in the text.

[24] Our interpretation is that *berê vê cihê* is syntactically connected with *ga dora dêrê çadin daye*.

[25] *Dirave* < *dirabe*; see *rabûn* in the glossary.

[26] *Çadin* < *çadir*; see *çadir* in the glossary.

[27] *Ca te* < *ji destê*.

[28] Our interpretation is supported by the corresponding verse in the Ṭuroyo version. In this case, the subject for the verb *nekiriye* is not expressed.

32	*Dora dêrê qalib daye,* He has surrounded the church,	*Omər: Ḥēḏr i=ʕito kohawi qaləb mač=čadrat di=ʕaskar.* He said: A belt of tents, full of soldiers, has appeared around the church!
33	*Ji çadirê kesk û spî ye.* With green and white tents.	
34	*Wextê wilo gotiye, Metran bi lez derketiye.* When he said so, the Metran quickly came out.	
35	*Go, ʕElîyo, ḥewal û meqseda te çi ye?* He said: Ali, what's the matter?	
36	Go, Metran begê, te çi ʕecêba wilo bi çaʕvê xwe nedîtiye. He said: Metran Beg, you have never seen such a disaster!	*U=ḥasyo šaməʕ qole, nafəq, omər: Mən-yo? Omər: I=măsăle hawxa-yo.* The bishop heard his voice, came out, and said: What is going on? Ali replied: The situation is like this.
37	*Dora dêrê qalib daye,* He has surrounded the church	
38	*Ji çadirê kesk û spî ye.* With green and white tents.	
39	*Metran rahişte kopala xwe, çiye,*[29] *derge vekir.* The Metran picked up his cane, went down, opened the gate.	*Nafəq, mədle lu=čuganayḏe, azzé baynatte, ftəḥle u=tarʕo di=darga, omər: U=wali du=Wan, xēr-yo aʕlux bu=šăvăqano hawxa?* The bishop went out, took his cane and went towards them (the army—*the authors*). He opened the gate door and said: *Vali* of Van! What is going on this early in the morning?
40	*Go, Waliyê Wanê, hal û meqseda te çi ye?* He said: *Vali* of Van, what do you want?	
41	*Go, 'Lo Metrano, lo Metrano, Metran ʕÎsa. Fitneyê neke, lo, fitne pîs e.* He replied: O Metran, Metran Îsa. Do not stir up trouble, trouble is bad.	*Omər: Matrān ʕIsa!" Omar: Ḥasyo ʕIsa, lo=səm*[30] *fətna, i fətna pīs-yo!* [The *Vali* of Van] said: Metran Îsa! Bishop Îsa! Do not stir up trouble! Trouble is bad.

---

[29] *Çiye < çûye*, "he went"; see *çûn* in the glossary.

[30] Negative commands in Ṭuroyo are usually formed by using another verbal form (subjunctive), so the "normative" variant would be *lo saymat*. Here, the shorter imperative form *səm* is used, perhaps because it better fits the meter.

42	*Kevil û kerîs*[31] *e Meyremê bide min û ez ê bexşîşa te bidim te, hezar kîs e.* I swear to you, give me Meyrem, and I will give you a reward of a thousand sacks [of gold].	*Hawli Merame, gdobenux alfo=kise. W d-obatla l-ʕAli šawiša, kṭoreno ak=kefe di=ʕitayḏux bat=top w mătəlyosa d-šəfʕi u=ṭuro di=Bagoke.*
43	*Tu Meyremê nedê min û tu bidê ʕElî çawîşa,*[32] *ez ê hêlim çiyayê Bagokê, kevirê dêra te, çiyayê Bagokê xelas bikin, berê top û mitilyoza.* If you do not give me Meyrem, and you give her to sergeant Ali, I will have [my] cannons and machine-guns launch the stones of your church all the way to the Bagok mountains.	Give me Meyrem and I will give you a thousand sacks. And if you give her to sergeant Ali, I will have the stones of your church fly all the way past the Bagok mountains from [the fire of] the cannons and machine guns.
44	*Wextê wilo gotiye, Metran qeḥiriye,* When he said so, Metran got angry,	*I=naqqa d-məlle hawxa, qḥir u=ḥasyo, hedika ḥəṣle, maḥatle u=raxt ʕal ḥaṣe, mədle li=tfənge, saləq ʕal i=goro, maḥatle i=kummayḏe ʕal u=šuro, nafəl qərrēn ebe w marəṣle aʕlayye bi=ʕaskar.*
45	*Xwe şidandî bi rextê ʕeyneliya,* Equipped himself with a cartridge belt for a Martini rifle	
46	*Destê xwe avêtî tifînga misraniya.*[33] [And] grabbed an Egyptian rifle.	When he said this, the bishop became angry. He fastened a cartridge belt around his waist, took a rifle, ran up to the roof, put his hat on the wall, shouted and started spraying [bullets] at them, at the soldiers.
47	*Û bi hewa kete serê ʕolîka baniya, qirên Metran Îsa ketiye,* He rushed up to the rooftop, shouted:	

---

[31] The expression is unknown to our consultants. *Kevil* means "(animal) skin, hide, pelt" (Chyet 2003:313), but this word makes little sense in this context. The version in Salihê Kevirbirî's book (2002) has a somewhat similar expression: *ez ê bi qewlê Xwedê, bi hedîsa Resûlallah bînim / Meyrema File lo lo li te mar kim*, "I am going to marry you and Meyrem according to the Lord's commandment and according to the hadith of the Prophet." If we understand *kevil* as *qewl*, then the expression used by NE can be interpreted as a corrupted version of an oath. In Dzhalilov's text, the *Vali* follows up his demands with a threat introduced with *bi xwedê*, "by God," so it seems plausible that *kevil û karîs* should stand for something similar.

[32] The dictionary form is *çawîş* (Chyet 2003:102); the form with the ending *-a* is likely used because it is easier to sing (see the notes on the language of the text above).

[33] We were unable to find any weapon which would be named *tifînga misraniya*, "Egyptian (?) rifle." The *ʕeynelî* rifle is, in turn, well known—it is the Martini rifle (Turkish: *aynalı Martin*), which was used by the Turkish army in the second half of the nineteenth century.

48	*ʕEskeriya waliyê Wanê ḥemû kuştiye û reviye.*[34]	*Ayna d-qṭile w ayna d-ʕarəq. (Hawxa kəmmi, u=šarrayde hawxa-yo.)*
	All soldiers of the *Vali* were either killed or ran away.	Some of them he killed and some of them ran away. (People say this, his tale goes like this).
49	*Hebû zirzira telefona waliyê Wanê.*	*Hawxa kəmmi, qṭile kulle-wayne . . . qṭil. Hawi zərazər du=wali du=wan, hule tălăfūn li=ʕaskar,[35] laš=šawiše, la=zbašiye, lab=binbašiye, lat=toġaye.*
	The telephone of the *Vali* of Van started ringing.	It is said that he killed all of them. They were killed. [The phone] of the *Vali* of Van started ringing. He called other soldiers, sergeants, captains, majors, and brigades.
50	*Û hatine toxay, yuzbaşî, bînbaşî, toxay hatine.*	*Latimi i=ʕaskar kula aʕle. Tux lal=lašat!*[36]
	And the brigade came, captains, majors came.	The soldiers gathered by him. Look how many dead bodies there were!
51	*Go, Erê, waliyê Wanê, hewal û meqseda te çi ye?*	*Kŭro,[37] mə=mqām aʕlux? U wali omar: Lu=zlamano u=ḥasyano səmle zlām ṭayo ṣuroyo.*
	They said: So, Vali of Van, what do you want?	Son, what has happened here? The Vali said: This man, this bishop has converted a Muslim into a Christian.
52	*Go, Vî Metranî zilamekî misilman fileh kiriye.*	
	He replied: This Metran has turned a Muslim into a Christian.	
53	*Go, Cehnema te û bavê wî kiriye, te ewqa ʕesker da kuştin ser çi?*	*Əmmi: Ġaḥnam didux w du=babo. Ma qṭilux, maqṭelux i=qa=ʕaskaraṭe ʕal mə? Hawi ṣuroyo, hawi ṣuroyo.*
	They said: Damn you and his father, for what have you got so many soldiers killed?	They said: Damn you and his father! You have let so many soldiers be killed for what? So what if he has become a Christian?

---

[34] NE omits the way in which the Metran killed and routed the soldiers, but we assume that he shot at them with his rifle, judging by the preceding context and by the parallel verse in the Ṭuroyo version.

[35] The two versions do not agree with each other in this respect. In the Kurdish version, the *Vali* receives a phone call, while here it is said that he calls his other soldiers.

[36] A rhetorical exclamation by NE.

[37] This form of address is unexpected in this case, given that the soldiers and the officers address the governor, who is clearly superior in rank. One possible interpretation would be that NE puts herself, as the narrator, in the story and phrases this question as if she asked the question herself.

54	*Ba kirine Metrên. Go, Metrano, çi mesele ye?*	*Qralle lu=ḥasyo, u=ḥasyo qrele lu=malla, u=malla aṯi, omar "Xayr, ašə́r, mhiroli b-ṭayuṯo.*
	They called the Metran and said: O Metran, what's the matter here?	
55	*Metran ba kire melê, mela hatiye.*	They called the bishop, the bishop called the mullah, the mullah came and said: No, I have actually married her according to the Muslim rite.
	The Metran called the mullah, and he came.	
56	*Go, Çima? Go, Welle mi bi destê xwe mahr kir, mehreke misilmanî ye.*	
	He said: What's the matter? By God, I have married them by my own hands according to the Muslim rite.	
57	ᵀᵘʳᵒʸᵒ *Hedika qṭəʕʕe riše du=wali du=Wan, mʕalaqqe at=terfiyayḏe b-kaṯpe du=ḥasyo.*	*Hedika nḥərre u=Wali, maḥatte at=tarfiyayḏe b-kaṯpe du=ḥasyo. W tŭ žmərra sāx.*[38]
	Then they cut off the *Vali*'s head and pinned his decorations to the bishop's shoulders.	Then they executed the *Vali* and put his decorations on the bishop's shoulders. And you be well for me!

Glossary

Abbreviations for the Glossary

1, 2, 3—first, second, third person
adj.—adjective
adj. m.—adjective masculine
adv.—adverb
comp. adj.—comparative adjective
conj.—conjunction
def. art.—definite article
dem. pn.—demonstrative pronoun
exist. prt.—existential particle
f. s.—feminine singular
fut.—future
gen. prt.—genitive particle
geogr. n.—geographical name
imv.—imperative
interj.—interjection
interrog. pn.—interrogative pronoun
m. s.—masculine singular
n.—noun
n.f.—noun feminine
n. gen.—noun generic
n.m.—noun masculine
num.—numeral
obl. pn.—oblique pronoun

---

[38] A standard formula at the end of stories in Ṭuroyo; cf. Kurmanji *tu ji min re sax (bî)*.

perf.—perfect
pl.—plural
prep.—preposition
pres.—present
pres. cop.—present time copula
pret.—preterite
prp. n.—proper name
prt.—particle
pst. cop.—past time copula
refl. pn.—reflexive pronoun
s.—singular
s.o.—someone
s.th.—something
sub. conj.—subordinate conjunction
subj.—subjunctive
v.—verb
voc.—vocative

Selected Lexical Items from the Kurmanji Version

avêtin v. (1) *xwe* ~ "to ask, to beg s.o.": imv. *xwe bavêje tor û bextê . . .* "ask for help and protection!"; (2) *xwe* ~ "to rush to s.th.": pret. *destê xwe avêtî* "he hastily picked up"

ʕecêb n.f. "disaster, unfortunate thing": *ʕecêba wilo* "such a disaster"

ʕeynelî n.f. "Martini rifle": *rextê ʕeyneliya* "a cartridge belt for a Martini rifle"

ʕolîk(e) "room upstairs": *olîka banî* "rooftop room"

Bagok geogr. n.

ba kirin v. "to call s.o.": pret. *ba kire melê* "he called the mullah"

ban n.m. "roof": *olîka banî* "rooftop room"

ber "bullet, cannonball" n.m.: *berê top û mitilyosa* "cannonballs and bullets"

bexşîş n.f. "bribe, tip": *bexşîşa te* "your reward"

bînbaşî n.m. "major"

cehnem n.f. "hell": *cehnema te û bavê wî kiriye* "to hell with you and his father!"

çawîş n.m. "sergeant"

çelengî n.f. "haste"

çirin onomatopoeic interj., the sound of a metal object falling to the ground

derge n.f. "gate, entrance door"

firman n.f. "order, decree of the state (usually resulting in punishment and persecution)": *fîrmana dewletê* "the order of the state"

kevl û kerîs "?" (see commentary above)

kîs n.m. "bag, sack"

kopal n.f. "stick, cane": *kopala xwe* "his cane"

meqsed n.f. "goal, intention": *meqseda te* "your intention"

metran (voc. *metrano*) n.m. "bishop, catholicos": *metranê dêra Yaxtamanê* "the bishop of the Aghtamar church," *çû destê Metrên* "he went (to kiss) the bishop's hand," *vî Metranî zilamekî misilmanî fileh kiriye* "this bishop has turned a Muslim into a Christian"

miqîmî dinyayê adv. "according to the established way of things"

misîn n.m. "pitcher"

misranî adj. "Egyptian" (?): *tifînga misraniya* "an Egyptian rifle"

mitilyos n.m. "machine gun"; *berê top û mitilyosa* "cannonballs and bullets"

pel n.m./f. "leaf": *pelek kaxez* "a piece of paper"

qalib n.m. "form, mold"

qirên n. "shout, cry"

rext n.m. "cartridge belt": *rextê 'eyneliya* "the cartridge belt of a Martini rifle"

rezîl kirin v. "to bring shame to s.th.": pres. *rezîl nakim* "I am not going to bring shame"

şidandin v. + xwe "to equip oneself": pret. *xwe şidandî bi rexte 'eyneliya* "he equipped himself with a cartridge belt for a Martini rifle"

top n.f. "cannon": *berê top û mitilyosa* "cannonballs and bullets"

tor n.f. "protection"

toxay n. "brigade" (?)

xira kirin "to compromise, to destroy": pres. *xira nakim* "I am not going to compromise"

û conj. "and"

wellah interj. "by God!"

yuzbaşî n.m. "captain"

zirzir n.f. "ringing": *zirzira telefona Waliyê Wanê* "the ringing of the Vali's telephone"

Ṭuroyo Glossary

ʕăbaye n.f. "cloak": *i=ʕăbayayḏe* "his cloak"
ʕaǧobo (pl. *ʕaǧobe*) n.m. "disaster"
ʕal prep. "on"
ʕAli prp. n.
ʕaskar (1) n.m. "soldier": *u=ʕaskărayḏe* "his soldier":
(2) n.f. "army": *i=qa=ʕaskaraṯe* "all these soldiers"
ʕayno (pl. *ʕayne*) n.f. "eye": *ʕayne* "his eyes"
ʕIsa prp. n.
ʕito n.f. "church": *i=ʕitayḏi* "my church, *i=ʕitayḏe* "his church," *i=ʕitayḏux* "your (m.) church"
ʕolike bani n.f. "rooftop room"
aḥna pers. pn. "we"
alfo n.m. "thousand"
ánnaqqa prt. "now then"
arᵊmnayto adj. f. "Armenian"
ašᵊr prt. "in fact"
b- prep. (1) "in, into": (2) "with, by"
Bagoke geogr. n.
băḥar n.m. "sea, lake"
baxt n.m. "honor"
bayne "between": *baynatte* "to them"
bayto n.m. "house"
baṯr prep. "after": *baṯrux* "after you (m.)"
binbaši n. "major"
čadᵊre (pl. *čadrat*) "tent"
čᵊnge n.m. "clank"
čugān n.m. "stick, cane": *u=čuganayḏe* "his cane"
d gen. prt. "of": *u=wali du=Wan* "the *Vali* of Van"
d sub. conj. "that; if"
darga n.f. "gate"
dastᵊlmēž n. "ablution"
dawla n.f. "government"
de hortative prt. "come on!"
diḏ- poss. pn. "of": *diḏa* "her," *diḏux* "your (m.)," *diḏi* "my"
dino n.m. "religion": *u=dinayḏux* "your (m.) religion," *u=dinaṯxu* "your (pl.) religion"
e interj. "Yes"
i= def. art. f. s.
iḏo (pl. *iḏe*) n.f. "hand": *iḏe* "his hands"
i=naqqa conj. "when"
falgo n.m. "half"
fᵊrmān n.m. "order; wrath"
fᵊtna n.f. "trouble"
foṯo n.f. "face": *foṯe* "his face"
ga presentative prt. "aha!"
gab prep. "near, by"
gamiyo n.f. "ship"
gawo n.m. "inside": *gawa di=ʕito* "inside of the church"
goro n.f. "roof"
ha hawxa adv. "like this"
hăma prt. without an easily definable meaning
hawxa adv. "like this; so"
hawīr d- prep. "around"
hedika adv. "then"

hᵊnnᵊk pers. pn. "they"
hiye pers. pn "he"
ḥasyo n.m. "bishop"
ḥaṣo n.m. "back": *ḥaṣe* "his back"
ḥḏo num. "one (f.)"
ḥēḏr prep. "around"
hno n.gen. "whatsit"
kal- presentative prt.: *kalayo* "it (f.) is"
katpo (pl. *katpe*) n.m. "shoulder": *katpe du=ḥasyo* "the bishop's shoulders"
kefo (pl. *kefe*) n.f. "stone"
kᵊtwa pst. cop.
kiso (pl. *kise*) n.m. "sack"
kul- adj. "all": *kulle* "they all," *kula* "it (f.) all"
kumme n.f. "hat": *i=kummayḏe* "his hat"
kŭro voc. n.m. "lad"
l- prep. (1) "to, towards": *zoxu lalʕal, li=ʕolike bani* "go upstairs, to the rooftop room": (2) as a dative marker: *mᵊllele l-ʕAli šawiša* "he told officer Ali"; (3) marker of nominal agents: *lu=zlamano u=ḥasyano sᵊmle zlam ṭayo ṣuroyo* "this man, this bishop has converted a Muslim into a Christian"
lalʕal adv. "upstairs"
laše (pl. *lašat*) n.f. "corpse"
lo=/lᵊ= verbal prefix of negation
ma interrog. prt.
madām conj. "since"
malla n.m. "mullah"
măsăle n.f. "matter, thing"
Matrān n.m. "Metran, bishop"
me prep. used in comparative constructions "than": *hiye xwᵊšktᵊr mine-wa* "he was more beautiful than him"
mᵊqimi dᵊna adv. "according to the established way of things"
Merame prp. n.
mᵊssine n.f. "pitcher"
mᵊn interrog. pn. "what?"
mᵊtᵊlyōs n.m. "machine gun"
mhaymno adj. m. "pious, religious"
nošo n.m. "person; someone"
ono pers. pn. "I"
pire n.f. "woman"
pīs adj. "bad"
qa < annaqqa a particle of transition "now then"
qalᵊb n.m. "mould, form"
qanūn n.m. "law"
qᵊrrēn n.m. "cry"
qolo n.m. "voice": *qole* "his voice"
raxt n.m. "cartridge belt"
rišo n.m. "head": *riše du=wali* "wali's head"
ruḥ- refl. pn. "self": *šar ruḥux* "for yourself," *mḥalqina ruḥan tore w baxt* "we will ask (lit. throw ourselves) for help," *mḥalaqle ruḥe bi=gamiyo* "he jumped (lit. threw himself) into the ship"
ṣurayt adj. (1) "Aramaic language (Ṭuroyo)": (2) *b-*

ṣurayt "according to a Christian rite"
ṣafro n.m. "morning"
ṣuroyo n.m. "Christian"
šan prep. "for": *šar ruḥux* "for yourself"
šar n.m. "epic tale"
šăriʕa n.f. "customs"
šăvăq n.m. "early morning"
šawiša n. "sergeant"
šuro n.m. "wall"
tarʕo n.m. "door"
tălăfūn n.m. "telephone"
tfənge n.f. "rifle"
tarfi n. "medal, decoration": *at=tarfiyayḏe* "his decorations"
toġay n. "brigade"
tope (pl. *tōp*) n.f. "gun"
tōr n.m. "honor"
ṭayət adj. "Muslim": *b-ṭayət* "according to the Muslim rite"
ṭayo (pl. *ṭaye*) n.m. "Muslim"
ṭayuṭo n.f. "Islam"
ṭuro n.m. "mountain"
xayr interj. "no"
xēr n.m. "good thing": *xēr-yo?* "what's going on?"
xwəšktər comp. adj. "more beautiful"
u= def. art. m.s.
-wa pst. cop. 3 s.
wali n.m. "vali, governor"
Wan geogr. n.
-yo prs. cop. 3 s.
yuzbaši (pl. zbašiye) n.m. "captain"
zərazər n.m. "ringing"
zlam n.m. "man"
zuḫṭo (pl. zuḫṭe) n.f. "fear"

ʔb/hw **I** (1) "to give": pres. *gdobenux* "I will give you," *d-obatla* "if you give her," imv. *hawli* "give me": (2) ~ telefon "to call": pret. *hule telefon* "he called"
ʔbʕ **I** "to want": pres. *kəbʕat* "you want"
ʔdʕ **I** "to know, to understand": pres. *gdəḏʕutu* "will you (pl.) understand?"
ʔmr **I** "to say": pres. *omər* "he said": *kəmmi* "they say," *əmmanwa* "if I (f.) told"
ʔty **I** "to come": pret. *aṭi* "he came": imv. *tux* "come (s.)!"
ʔzl **I** "to go": pret. *d-əzze* "in order for him to go," *gəzzan* "we will go," pret. *azzeyo* "he went," *azze* "he went," *azzən* "they went," imv. *zoxu* "go (pl.)!"
ʕlq **II** "to hang": pret. *mʕalaqqe* "they hanged"
ʕrq **I** "to run away": pret. *ʕarəq* "he ran away"
bṭl **II** "to abandon": pres. *lo=kombaṭanno* "I am not going to abandon"
fhm **I** "to understand": pres. *kfəhmutu* "will you (pl.) understand?"
ftḥ **I** "to open": pret. *ftəḥle* "he opened"

hwy **I** (1) "to become": pret. *hawi* "he became": (2) "to appear" perf. *kohawi* "there has appeared"
ḥlq **II** (1) "to jump": pret. *mḥalaqle ruḥe bi=gamiyo* "he jumped into the ship": (2) "to rush": *mḥalaqle ruḥe l-gawa di=ʕito* "he rushed into the church": (3) ~ + ruḥ- tore w baxt "to ask for help": pres. *mḥalqina ruḥan tore w baxt* "we are going to ask for help and protection"
ḥrw **III** (1) "to compromise, to destroy": pres. *lo=komaḥrawno* "I will not compromise"
ḥyṣ **I** "to fasten": pret. *ḥəṣle* "he fastened"
kym **III** "to disgrace": pres. *lo=komakəmno* "I am not going to disgrace"
ltm **I** "to gather (intr.)": pret. *latimi* "they gathered"
mbl **I** "to take (away)": pret. *məblole* "he took her," imv. *mbali* "take (s.) me!"
mhr **I** "to marry": pres. *gməhrinala* "we will marry her," pret. *mhirole* "he married her," imv. *mhara* "marry her"
mḥt **III** "to put": pres. *maḥatwa* "he used to put": pret. *maḥatle* "he put," *maḥatte* "they put"
mty **I** "bring": imv. *mṭili* "bring (her) to me"
myd **I** "to grab s.t. (*l-*)": pret. *mədle* "he took"
nfl **I** (1) "to fall": pret. *nafilo* "she fell": (2) ~ + qiren: "to let out a scream"
nfq **I** "to go out": pret. *nafiqo* "she came out"
nḥr **I** "to slaughter": pret. *nḥərre* "they slaughtered"
qḥr **Ip** "to become angry": pret. *qḥir* "he became angry"
qry **I** "to call": pret. *qrele* "he called," *qralle* "they called"
qṭʕ **I** "to cut off": pret. *qṭəʕʕe* "they cut off"
qṭl **I** "to kill": pret. *qṭile* "he killed," *qṭilux* "you (m.) killed"
 Ip "to be killed": pret. *qṭil* "he was killed"
 III "to let s.o. be killed" pret. *maqṭelux* "you (m.) got (them) killed"
qwm **IIp** "to happen": pret. *mqām* "it happened"
qym **I** "to get up": pres. *koqoyəm* "he gets up": pret. *qayəm* "he got up"
 III "to raise; to bring about": pres. *lo komaqəmno* "I will not bring about"
rfy **III** "to cast": pret. *marfele* "he cast"
ryṣ **III** "to spray (bullets)": pret. *marəṣle* "he sprayed"
slq **I** "to go up": pret. *saləq* "he went up"
sym **I** "to do, to make": pret. *səmlan* "we did": *səmme* "they did," *səmle* "he made," perf. *kosəmle* "he has made": imv. *lo səm* "do not do!"
ṣly **II** "to pray": impf. *mṣalewa* "he used to pray"
ṣrf **IIp** "to get away with s.th. (*l-* introduces the subject): pres. *gmiṣarfoliyo* "will I get away with that"
šfʕ **I** "to pass": pres. *šəfʕi* "so that they pass"
šmʕ **I** "to hear": pret. *šaməʕ* "he heard"
šyġ **I** "to wash": pres. *mašəġ* "he washed"
trs **II** "to send": pret. *mtarasse* "they sent"
ṭry **I** "to let, to allow": pres. *gṭoreno* "I will let"

Freie Universität Berlin

References

Adalian 2010   Rouben Paul Adalian. *Historical Dictionary of Armenia*. 2nd ed. Historical Dictionaries of Europe, 77. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Bedir Khan and Lescot 1970   Djeladet Ali Bedir Khan and Roger Lescot. *Grammaire kurde (dialecte kurmandji)*. Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient.

Allison 2001   Christine Allison. *The Yezidi Oral Tradition in Iraqi Kurdistan*. Richmond, UK: Curzon.

Chyet 2003   Michael L. Chyet. *Kurdish Dictionary: Kurmanji-English*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Dzhalilov 2003   Ordikhan Dzh. Dzhalilov. *Istoricheskie pesni kurdov*. Saint Petersburg: Peterburgskoe vostokovedenie.

Gaunt 2012   David Gaunt. "Relations between Kurds and Syriacs and Assyrians in Late Ottoman Diyarbekır." In *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbekir, 1870-1915*. Ed. by Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij. Leiden: Brill. pp. 241-66.

Gündoğar 2003   Sinan Gündoğar. *Kürt Masallari*. Istanbul: Evrensel Basım Yayın.

Häberl et al. 2020   Charles Häberl, Nikita Kuzin, Sergey Loesov, and Alexey Lyavdansky. "A Neo-Aramaic Version of a Kurdish Folktale." *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 65.2:473-93.

Haig and Öpengin 2014   Geoffrey Haig and Ergin Öpengin. "Regional Variation in Kurmanji: A Preliminary Classification of Dialects." *Kurdish Studies*, 2.2:143-76.

Hamelink 2016   Wendelmoet Hamelink. *The Sung Home: Narrative, Morality, and the Kurdish Nation*. Leiden: Brill.

Hanioğlu 2008   M. Şükrü Hanioğlu. *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Hovannisian 1997   Richard G. Hovannisian, ed. *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*. Vol. 2. New York: St. Martin's.

Jastrow 1992   Otto Jastrow. *Lehrbuch der Ṭuroyo-Sprache*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Karpat 1985   Kemal H. Karpat. *Ottoman Population 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Kevirbirî 2002   Salihê Kevirbirî. *Filîtê Quto*. Stockholm: Nefel.

Kılıç 2012   Orhan Kılıç. "Van." In *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*. Vol. 42. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı. pp. 505-10.

Macler 1923   Frédéric Macler. "Le 'liber pontificalis' des catholicos d'Althamar." *Journal Asiatique*, 202:37-69.

McDowall 2004   David McDowall. *A Modern History of the Kurds*. 3rd ed. London: I. B. Tauris.

Nezan 2017   Kendal Nezan, ed. *Dictionnaire Kurde-Français*. Paris: Riveneuve.

Nikitine 1956   Basil Nikitine. *Les Kurdes: Étude sociologique et historique*. Paris: Klincksieck.

Ritter 1979   Hellmut Ritter. *Ṭūrōyo: Die Volkssprache der syrischen Christen des Ṭūrr 'Abdīn: Wörterbuch*. Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.

Shaw 1976   Stanford J. Shaw. *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, Volume I: Empire of the Gazis: The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1280-1808*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Talay 2017   Shabo Talay. "Sayfo, Firman, Qafle: The First World War from the Perspective of Syriac Christians." In *Let Them Not Return: Sayfo—The Genocide against the Assyrian, Syriac and Chaldean Christians in the Ottoman Empire*. Ed. by David Gaunt, Naures Atto, and Soner O. Barthoma. New York: Berghahn. pp. 132-47.

Thackston 2006   Wheeler M. Thackston. *Kurmanji Kurdish: A Reference Grammar with Selected Readings*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Turgut 2010   Lokman Turgut. *Mündliche Literatur der Kurden in den Regionen Botan und Hekarî*. Berlin: Logos.

Van Bruinessen 1992   Martin Van Bruinessen. *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan*. London: Zed.

Verheij 2012   Jelle Verheij. "Diyarbekir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895." In *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbekir, 1870-1915*. Ed. by Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij. Leiden: Brill. pp. 85-145.

Wehr 1985   Hans Wehr. *Arabisches Wörterbuch für die Schriftsprache der Gegenwart: Arabisch-Deutsch*. 5th ed. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.