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The gleaner-woman: a text in the Neo-Aramaic dialect of Peshabur*

1 Introduction

This paper presents an oral text in the North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic (NENA) dialect of Peshabur (NENA *pešābur*, Arabic *Faysh Khābūr*), a village situated in northern Iraq, near Zakho, at the confluence of the Tigris and the Khabur. The main features of this dialect have been outlined in Coghill (2013) along with a short text, while some points of interest were examined in Coghill (2008). The text here is chosen for its human interest (as a true story, witnessed by the speaker as a child) and for its cultural and ethnographic information.

The Peshabur dialect has become endangered, as the NENA-speaking Chaldean population was forced out in the 1970s and scattered across the world, including to Detroit and Sydney, where I interviewed speakers in 2004 and 2005, including Father (now Bishop) Emanuel Shaleta. The dialect shows a close affinity to the nearby dialects of C. Zakho¹ and C. Bidaro, while being quite distinct from other neighbouring dialects, such as Derabün. There are also some similarities to the dialect of C. Alqosh (Coghill 2004), situated further south on the northern edge of the Mosul Plain (see Coghill 2013: 38 for details).

A sketch of the grammar of the dialect can be found in Coghill (2008, 2013), but some features will be given here, to aid in reading the text. Peshabur is one of the few

* Acknowledgements TO BE ADDED

¹ NENA dialects are spoken by Jews and Christians (Assyrians/Chaldeans) and not only distinguished by geography but also by communal affiliation: for instance the dialects of the Christians and Jews of Zakho were distinct. Here the communal affiliation will be given at the first mention of the dialect (C. = Christian, J. = Jewish), thereafter only the place of origin, unless there were two distinct dialects, as for Zakho. Some abbreviations for dialects used here are Alq. = Alqosh, Arad. = Aradhin, Bar. = Barwar, Pesh. = Peshabur, Qar. = Qaraqosh, TK = Telkepe, Zax. = Zakho.

NENA dialects in which interdental fricatives have shifted to sibilants. Thus the fricative allophones of Aramaic /t/ and /d/, which became independent phonemes /θ/ and /ð/ in early NENA (preserved in dialects such as Alqosh), have shifted respectively to /s/ and /z/. Examples from the text include: *māsa* (Alqosh *māθa*) ‘village’, *sela* (Alq. *θela*) ‘she came’, *mṭuṣay-sa* (Alq. *mṭuṣeθa*) ‘hidden’, *baṣar* (Alq. *baθar*) ‘after’, *kezay* (Alq. *keḏi* ‘they know’), *k-xazra* (C. Telkepe *k-xaḏra*) ‘she goes round’. There are some exceptions to the rules, namely *xzd* I ‘to harvest’, *ʾwd* I ‘to do, make’ and *ʾida* ‘hand’. These are discussed in the notes on lines (2) and (8) in Section 5.

Another feature of the phonology is conservative: the preservation of /ay/ and /aw/ as diphthongs. In most other dialects they have become monophthongs. Examples from the text include *qayṭa* ‘summer’, *xaysa* ‘post-natal’, *zawna* ‘time’, *xzaw* ‘see! (pl.)’.

In the pronominal suffix series, Peshabur is notable for having the 3rd person variants with pharyngeals: 3ms. *-əḥ*, 3fs. *-aḥ* and 3pl *-ayḥən*. Compare Alqosh *-əḥ*, *-aḥ* and *-éy*.

There are three basic sets of demonstratives (Coghill 2008: 98–100): for near-deixis ms. *ʾawwa*, fs. *ʾayya* and pl. *ʾanna*; for far-deixis ms. *ʾawāḥa*, fs. *ʾayāḥa* and pl. *ʾanāḥa*. For the latter the distance can be emphasized by extended the vowel, e.g. *ʾawāāḥa* or *ʾawaʾḥa*. This set is used when the thing indicated can be pointed towards. A third set, overlapping with the personal pronouns, is used to indicate things which are non-directional, i.e. which are absent or in the past: ms. *ʾāwa* (ʾaw=), fs. *ʾāya* (ʾay=) and pl. *ʾāni* (ʾan=). An example from the text is *d = ay = dukta* ‘of that place’ in line (5). In this text, the near-deixis demonstratives are also used in this function, e.g. in line (7): *ʾanna faqire d = isənwa gu mántaqa*, ‘Those poor people which there were in the region’.

The basic verbal prefixes attached to the Present Base are indicative *g-*, future *b-* or *bəd-* and past perfective *gəm-* (as opposed to the more common variants *kəm-*, *qam-* and *qəm-*). The first two have morphophonological variants, such as *k-* and *p-*, conditioned by the stem they are attached to.

The two main contact languages for Peshabur are Kurmanji and Arabic, and quite a few loanwords are to be found, the Arabic ones probably being of more recent origin.

2 Text: *The Gleaner Woman*²

The following text was recorded in 2004 in Detroit from a male speaker then in his late 40s, who was born and raised in Peshabur, leaving in his teens. It shows features of dialect-mixing, including Mosul Plain features /θ/ for /s/ and *wewa* for past copula *wāle*. Some of these were corrected later by the speaker on hearing the recording, but I have left them as they were in the original. The story is an account of a memorable event from his childhood.

(1) *wāwa xa = YOMA*, | *wuxwa gu māsət = PEŠĀBUR*, | *gāwət = ČAMMƏT-pešābur*, | *gāwət = čamma qariwa l = ...mar = GIWARGƏS*. | *’əttan xa = dayra zorəd = mar = giwargəs TĀMA*, | (2) *wuxwa... bəxžāda XƏTTE*, | *wewa QAYTA*, | *u zawnəd = XZĀDA-wewa-u* | *u tāma wuxwa zile lə = XZĀDA* | *mħusyəd BĀBI-wewa*, | *mħusyəd HĀBO*, | (3) *balkit mħusyəd ‘AMMI-š mənnan-wewa* | *bas laywən BƏ-TXĀRA kulləš randa*. | *’āna-u XONI-wuxwa*. | *’axnan MĀ=kuduxwa?* | *ZORE=wuxwa*. | *xoni xa=qəšša BƏš-rāba-wāle*, | *GƏMGĀDƏŠWA*. | (4) *mgadoše ’ile ’aygət pa’le KXAŽDILA xətte*, | *kudila bāqa gmatwila BAŞRAYHƏN*, | *kizuxwa ’axnan KŠAQLÚXWĀLA*. | *gmajəm’úxwāla GDĀRÚXWĀLA «...»* | *gəb = xənná-xənnə kəmrúxwāle GƏDİŠA*. | *kuduxwa GƏDİŠA*. | (5) *gədiša gāwewa ’iθənwa gədiše ZORE*, | *gədiše RĀBE*, | *ya’ni* ^{Ar}*hásab*^{Ar}*əd MĀQA=wāwa*. | *māqa=wāla xətəəd d = ay = DUKTA*. |

(6) ^{Ar}*fa ...* ^{Ar}*xzəlan XA-gā* | *kud wuxwa bə-xžāda XƏTTE*, | *u yoma XƏMMĀNA-u*, | *xa = BAXTA*, | *mən d = anna ... YAN³ QARAČĀYE kəmrúxwālay* | *bas* ^{Ar}*ál-akθar*^{Ar}*=wewa mən d = anna ... HURĀYE* | *yan DASNĀYE kəmruxlay*. | (7) *SELA*, | *ta-d = LAQTĀWA xətte*, | *’ayya-wāwa xa = ‘ĀDE*, | *’anna FAQIRE d = ísənwa gu* ^{Ar}*mántaqa*, ^{Ar} | *’aygəd kiziwa kxaždiwa nāšəd = māsə XƏTTE*, | *kəsyāwa xā MƏNNAYHƏN*, | *yan bəš-kābər mən xā’a KIZIWA*, | (8) *başər=ma-d KXAŽDUXWA-u*, | *GƏMGADŠÚXWĀLA*, | *gnapliwa xakma šəBLE*, | *gnapliwa ’əlləd ya’ni mən ’idəd- ... XAZĀDE*, | (9) *kud gnapliwa kisaywa glaqtíwālay ’anna šəblət = XƏTTE*, | *GMAJƏM’ÍWĀLAY* | *kiziwa, gdayqíwālay gu BAYSA* | *ta-d = ... ’awdíwālay luxma ta GYANAYHƏN*. | *’anna FAQIRE kudíwāle bas*. |

² This is transcribed in intonation phrases, divided by ‘|’. The word taking the nuclear stress within an intonation phrase is marked in small caps. Word stress, unless otherwise indicated (with ...), is penultimate. Clitics are indicated by ‘-’ and ‘=’. The former indicates that the morpheme to the left takes the stress and the latter indicates that the morpheme to the right takes the stress.

³ There were two nuclear stresses here, on *yan* ‘either’ and *qaračāye* ‘Gypsies’. The speaker no doubt intended to continue *YAN HURĀYE*, i.e. ‘either Gypsies or Yezidis’, but changed tack to express the probability that she was a Yezidi.

(10) *fa sela* ʔayya = *baxta gəmxāzuxla* BƏ-GYĀNAḤ | *hoola* RAḤUQTA | *yaʿni ... wuxwa* BƏXZĀDA *rahūqe mənnaḥ* | *xa-ʔumma* ʔumma=u XAMŠĪ-mətre. | (11) *fa ... ʔisənwa* XĀ *gu*⁴ *d = anna* XAZĀDE, | *xa-qəşşa* ^{Ar}XASĪS^{Ar}=wewa. | (12) *har xərre kimər hola* ʔayya *baxta* BƏXZĀDA – |⁵ *hola bəlqāta šəBLE* | – *xəTTE*. | *bas kimər kud xa = qəşşa kxazra baθrəd = gədiša*, | *hon mšakkoke* BGĀWAḤ | *balkit hola bəgnāwa mən gədiša* *xəTTE*. | (13) ʔanna *gəmamrile* LĀ, | *LA-kūdi hatxa-məndi* | KEZAY | ʔən GANWI, | *la-kšawqux baʿad ʔāsay ta-d = laqti* *xəTTE*(?).⁶ | (14) LĀʔA, | *kimər* ^{Ar}akíd^{Ar} BƏDGANWA ʔayya. |

(15) *w = axnan hādax* BƏXZĀDA, | *xzelan – ḥabo* *xərre* | *kimər* XZAW | *hola mṯušaysa* *başər* GƏDIŠA | *hola* BƏGNĀWA. | ʔrəqle *zəlle şobəd = gədiša*. | (16) *kud zəlle şobəd = gədiša*, | XZELE ʔay=*baxta* *tāma*. | *u =* ^{Ar}RJƏ^{Ar}LE. ^{Ar} | *DƏRRE*. | *kud* ƏELE | *DƏRRE* *hatxa* | (17) *mux = d = aygəd- ...* SMIQA=*u*, | NXIPA=*u*, | *MĀ=lux?* | *MĀ=brele?* | *mā*, *MĀ(=brēle)* *mən d = ay = baxta?*⁷ | (18) *kimər har* LA=*khayəmnūtən məndi d = amrənnawxən*. | *hola mahwoye* ^{Ar}TƏFƏL. ^{Ar} | (19) *u har kullay* GƏMḤALQILAY *magze=u* | *tūlay pəşlay yā ʔālaha ta-d = ʿĀYƏNNA*. | (20) RAḤUQTA=*wāla māsa*. | *láybāway zāwālay maysaywa xa = baxta (ta-)d = ʿAYNĀWĀLA*. | *ta-d = msaʿdāwāla gu* MAHWOYE. | (21) ^{Ar}fa^A *qəmlay mşulelay* ^{Ar}mbadal^{Ar} *d = ay = BAXTA*. | *d = iwāla mahwoye*, *ta-d = MAHŪYA*. | *la-bāre čU=məndi=llaḥ*, | ^{Ar}wəlla^{Ar} *l-bronaḥ* ZORA. | (22) *baʿdén mʿujəblan* KULLAN, | *başər xa=qəşşa* GƏMXĀZUXLA ʔay = *baxta* | QƏMLA=*u* | GƏMLAYFĀLE *təfəl*, | *gəmdaryāle l-xāşah=u* ZƏLLA. | (23) *bas la=wəlleba šAQLĀLA xətte mənnaḥ*. | QAY? ^{Ar}liʔannahu^{Ar}... | *yaʿni wāwa baʿad* XAYSA. | *baxta* XAYSA=*wāwa*. |

3 Glosses

The glosses follow the Leipzig Glossing Rules with the following exceptions:

MS = M.SG

FS = F.SG

ANT anterior. This glosses the affix -wA which indicates that the time reference should be shifted back.

SPEC specific

^{Ar}...^{Ar} Arabic

(...) elements added to improve the sense (on the advice of the speaker)

For the sake of simplicity, the Past Base stem is glossed with the English past tense (e.g. went), while the Present Base stem is glossed with the English present tense/infinitive (e.g. go). The

⁴ Going over the text later, the speaker said *mən* instead of *gu*.

⁵ The speaker later explained ‘reap’ was a mistake – he corrected this to ‘glean’.

⁶ The word is very unclear, but the speaker heard *xətte* when going through the recording.

⁷ This is very unclear in the original recording, but, on hearing the recording, the speaker interpreted it thus.

subject of a verb is glossed only with the person values, while the object is also glossed with OBJ.

4 Text glossed and translated

(1) *wāwa xa = YOMA, | wuxwa gu mās-ət = PEŠĀBUR, |*
 PST.COP.3FS one = day PST.COP.1PL in village-of = Peshabur
 It was one day, (when) we were in the village of Peshabur,
gāwət = ČAMM-ƏT-pešābur, | gāwət = čamma qariwa l = ...mar = GIWARGƏS. |
 in = river.plain-of=Peshabur in = river.plain(m.) near.MS to = ...St. = George
 on the Peshabur river-plain, on the river-plain near (the monastery of) St.
 George.

ʾəttan xa = dayra zor-əd = mar = giwargəs TĀMA, |
 EXIST:DAT.1PL a_certain = monastery(m.) small.MS-of = St. = George there
 We have a small monastery of St. George there.

(2) *wuxwa... bə-xzāda xƏTTE, |*
 PST.COP.1PL in-harvest.INF wheat
 We were harvesting wheat.

wewa QAYTA, | u zawn-əd = XZĀDA=wewa-u |
 PST.COP.3MS summer and time-of = harvest.INF=PST.COP.3MS=and
 It was summer and it was harvest time,

u tāma wuxwa zil-e lə = XZĀDA |
 and there PST.COP.1PL go.RES.PTCP-PL to = harvest.INF
 and there we had gone to harvest,

mḥusy-əd BĀB-I=wewa, | mḥusy-əd HĀBO, |
 absolved.MS-of father-1PL=PST.COP.3MS absolved.MS-of Habo
 my late father, it was, and the late Ḥabo.

(3) *balkit mḥusy-əd ʿAMM-I-š mǎnn-an=wewa |*
 perhaps absolved.MS-of paternal.uncle-1SG=also with-1PL=PST.COP.3MS
 Perhaps my late uncle was with us too.

bas la-ywən BƏ-TXĀRA kulləš randa. |
 but NEG-COP.1MS in-remember.INF very good
 I don't remember very well.

ʾāna-u XON-I=wuxwa. |
 I=and brother-1SG=PST.COP.1PL

My brother and I were (there).

ʾaxnan mā=k-ud-ux-wa? | *ZORE=wuxwa.* |
we what=IND-do-1PL-ANT small-PL-PST.COP.1PL

As for us, what did we do? We were young.

xon-i xa=qəşša bəš=rāba=wāle, | *GƏ-MGĀDƏŞ-WA.* |
brother-1SG a-little more-big.MS=PST.COP.3MS IND-stack.3MS-ANT

My brother was a little bit older, (so) he did the stacking up.

- (4) *mgadoše ʾile ʾaygət paʾl-e K-XAZD-I-LA xətte,* |
stack.INF PRS.COP.3MS when worker-PL IND-harvest-3PL-OBJ.3FS wheat(f.)

Stacking up is (as follows): the workers harvest the wheat,

k-ud-i-la bāqa g-matw-i-la BAŞR-AYHƏN, |
IND-make-3PL-OBJ.3FS bundle IND-set-3PL-OBJ.3FS behind-3PL

They make it into a bundle, they set it behind them.

k-iz-ux-wa ʾaxnan K-ŞAQL-ÚX-WĀ-LA. |
IND-go-1PL-ANT we IND-take-1PL-ANT-OBJ.3FS

We used to go and take it,

g-majəm^ç-úx-wā-la G-DĀR-ÚX-WĀ-LA «...» | *gəb = xənná-xənná*
IND-collect-1PL-ANT-OBJ.3FS IND-put-1PL-ANT-OBJ.3FS beside = other-other

collect it and put it next to each other.

k-əmr-úx-wā-le GƏDİŞA. |
IND-say-1PL-ANT-OBJ.3MS stook(m.)

we called it a stook (*gədiša*).

k-ud-ux-wa GƏDİŞA. |
IND-make-1PL-ANT stook

We used to make a stook.

- (5) *gədiša g-āwe-wa ʾiθənwā gədiš-e ZOR-E,* | *gədiš-e RĀB-E,* |
stook IND-be.3MS-ANT EXIST stook-PL small-PL stook-PL big-PL

A stook was: there were small stooks and big stooks.

ya^çni ^{Ar}hāsab^{Ar}-əd MĀQA=wāwa. |
that_is depending-REL how_much=PST.COP.3FS

That is, depending on how much it was,

māqa-wāla xətt-əd d = ay = DUKTA. |
how_much=PST.COP.3FS wheat-of of = that.FS = place(f.)

however much the wheat of that place was.

- (6) ^{Ar}fa ... ^{Ar} xze-lan xA-gā | kud wuxwa bə-xzāda xƏTTE, |
 so saw-1PL one-time when PST.COP.1PL in-harvest.INF wheat

So ... we saw once, while we were harvesting wheat,

- u yoma xƏMMĀNA=u, | xa = BAXTA, | mən d = anna...
 and day(m.) hot.MS=and INDF.SPEC = woman from of = these

and it was a hot day, a certain woman, one of those ...

- YAN QARAČĀY-E k-əmr-úx-wā-lay |
 or gypsy-PL IND-say-1PL-ANT-OBJ.3PL

either gypsies (*qaračāye*), we call them,

- bas ^{Arc}ál-akθar^{Ar}=wewa mən d = anna... HURĀYE |
 but mostly=PST.COP.3MS(?) from of = these *hurāye*

but it was most probably one of those *hurāye* (Yezidis)

- yan DASNĀYE k-əmr-ux-lay. |
 or *dasnāye* IND-say-1PL-OBJ.3PL

or *dasnāye*, as we call them.

- (7) SE-LA, | ta-d = LAQT-Ā-WA xətte, | 'ayya=wāwa xa = 'ĀDE, |
 came-3FSfor-COMP = glean-3FS-ANT wheat this.FS-PST.COP.3FS INDF.SPEC-custom

She came, in order to glean the wheat. This was a custom.

- 'anna FAQIR-E d = ísən-wa gu ^{Ar}mántaqa, ^{Ar} |
 these poor-PL REL = EXIST-ANT in region

Those poor people which there were in the region,

- 'aygəd k-iz-i-wa k-xazd-i-wa nāš-əd = māsa xƏTTE, |
 when IND-go-3PL-ANT IND-harvest-3PL-ANT people-of = village wheat

when the people of the village went and harvested the wheat,

- k-əsy-ā-wa xā MƏNN-AYHƏN, |
 IND-come-3FS-ANT one from-3PL

one (f.) of them used to come,

- yan bəš=kābər mən xā'a K-IZ-I-WA, |
 or more=many from one IND-go-3PL-ANT

or more than one would go.

- (8) başər=ma-d K-XAZD-UX-WA=u, | GƏ-MGADŠ-ÚX-WĀ-LA, |
 after=what-REL IND-harvest-1PL-ANT=and IND-stack-1PL-ANT-OBJ.3FS

After we harvested and stacked it up,

g-napl-i-wa xakma šəBL-E,
IND-fall-3PL-ANT some ear-PL
a few ears of wheat would fall.

g-napl-i-wa ʾalləd yaʿni mən ʾid-əd = ... XAZĀD-E,
IND-fall-3PL-ANT to I_mean from hand-of = reaper-PL
They fell on to – I mean, from the hands of the reapers.

(9) *kud g-napl-i-wa*

when IND-fall-3PL-ANT

When they fell down,

k-is-ay-wa g-laqt-í-wā-lay ʾanna šəbl-ət = XƏTTE,
IND-come-3PL-ANT IND-glean-3PL-ANT-OBJ.3PL these ears-PL = wheat
they used to come and glean those ears of wheat.

G-MAJƏMʿ-í-WĀ-LAY | k-iz-i-wa, g-dayq-í-wā-lay gu BAYSA |
IND-collect-3PL-ANT-OBJ.3PL IND-go-3PL-ANT IND-grind-3PL-ANT-OBJ.3PL in house

They would collect them, and go, grind them at home,

ta-d = ... ʾawd-í-wā-lay luxma ta GYAN-AYHƏN.
for-COMP = make-3PL-ANT-OBJ.3PL bread for self-3PL
in order to make them into bread for themselves.

ʾanna FAQIR-E k-ud-í-wā-le bas.
these poor-PL IND-do-3PL-ANT-OBJ.3MS only
Those were poor people, only, who did this.

(10) *fa se-la ʾayya = baxta gəm-xāz-ux-la BƏ-GYĀN-AH |*

so came-3FS this.F = woman PST.PFV-see-1PL-OBJ.3FS in-self-3FS

So, this woman came and we saw her by herself.

hoo-la RAḤUQ-TA |
DEIC.COP-3FS far-FS

She's waaay off in the distance.

yaʿni ... wuxwa BƏ-XZĀDA raḥūq-e mənn-aḥ |
I_mean PST.COP.1PL in-harvest.INF far-PL from-3FS

I mean, we were harvesting at a distance from her

xə-ʾumma ʾumma=u XAMŠÍ-mətr-e.
one-hundred hundred=and fifty=metre-PL

of around one hundred, one hundred and fifty metres.

(11) *fa ... ʾísən-wa xā gu⁸ d = anna xAZĀD-E, | xa=qəšša^{Ar}XASÍS^{Ar}-wewa. |*
 so EXIST-ANT one in of = these reaper.PL a=little stingy=PST.COP.3MS
 Now, there was one among these reapers, he was a little stingy.

(12) *har xər-re k-imər ho-la ʾayya baxta BƏ-XZĀDA -|⁹*
 just looked-3MS IND-say.3MS DEIC.COP-3FS this.F woman in-reap.INF
 When he looked, he says, ‘That woman is reaping
ho-la bə-lqāta šƏBL-E | – XƏTTE. |
 DEIC.COP-3FS in-glean.INF ear-PL wheat
 she’s gleaning ears – wheat.’

bas k-imər kud xa = qəšša k-xazr-a baθrəd = GƏDIŠA, |
 but IND-say.3MS when a = little IND-go_round-3FS behind = stook
 But he says, ‘When she goes round a little way behind the stook,

ho-n mšakkoke BGĀW-AH |
 DEIC.COP-1SG suspect.INF in-3FS
 I am suspecting her.

balkit ho-la bə-gnāwa mən gədiša XƏTTE. |
 perhaps DEIC.COP-3FS in-steal.INF from stook wheat
 Perhaps she is stealing wheat from the stook.

(13) *ʾanna gəm-amr-i-le LĀ, | LA=k-ūd-i hatxa=məndi |*
 these PST.PFV-say-3PL-DAT.3MS no NEG=IND-do-3PL thus=thing
 The (others) said to him, ‘No, they won’t do such a thing.

K-EZ-AY | ʾən GANW-I, |
 IND-know-3PL if steal-3PL
 They know, if they steal,

la-k-šawq-ux baʿad ʾās-ay ta-d = laqt-i XƏTTE(?).¹⁰ |
 NEG=IND-allow-1PL still come-3PL for-COMP = glean-3PL wheat
 we won’t let them come any longer to glean wheat(?).

(14) *LĀʾA, | ki-mər^{Ar} akíd^{Ar} BƏD-GANW-A ʾayya. |*
 no IND-say.3MS certainly FUT-steal-3FS this.F

⁸ Going over the text later, the speaker said *mən* instead of *gu*.

⁹ The speaker later explained ‘reap’ was a mistake – he corrected this to ‘glean’.

¹⁰ The word is very unclear, but the speaker heard *xətte* when going through the recording.

‘No!’ He says, ‘Certainly she is going to steal, that one.’

- (15) *w = axnan hādaḡ bə-xzāda,* | *xze-lan – ḡabo xər-re* |
and = we thus in-reap.INF saw-1PL Habo looked-3MS
While we were reaping like that, we saw Habo look –
ki-mər xz-aw | *ho-la mṡušay-sa baṡər gədiša* |
IND-say.3MS see.IMP-PL DEIC.COP-3FS hide.RES.PTCP-FS behind stood
he says, ‘See! She is hiding behind the stook
ho-la bə-gnāwa. | *ʾrəq-le zəl-le ṡobəd = gədiša.* |
DEIC.COP-3FS in-steal.INF ran-3MS went-3MS towards = stood
and she is stealing. He ran off and went towards the stook.

- (16) *kud zəl-le ṡobəd = gədiša,* | *xze-le ʾay-baxta tāma.* |
when went-3MS towards = stood saw-3MS that.F=woman there
When he went to the stook, he saw the woman there,
u = ʾrjəʕ-le. ʾr | *dər-re.* | *kud ʕe-le* | *dər-re hatxa* |
and = returned-3MS came_back-3MS when came-3MS returned-3MS like_this
and returned. Came back. When he came, came back like this,

- (17) *mux = d = aygəd- ... smiqa=u,* | *nxipa=u,* |
as_if red.ms=and embarrassed.ms=and
like – red(-faced) and embarrassed,
mā=lux? | *mā=bre-le?* |
what=DAT.2MS what=happened-3MS
(we said) ‘What’s wrong with you? What happened?
*mā, mā=(-brē-le) mən d = ay = baxta?*¹¹ |
what what(=happened-3MS) from of = that.F = woman
What (happened) to that woman?’

- (18) *ki-mər har la-k-hayəmn-ūtən məndi d = amr-ən-nawxən.* |
IND-say.3MS ever NEG=IND-believe-2PL thing REL = say-1MS-DAT.2PL
He says, ‘You’re never going to believe what I’m going to tell you.
ho-la mahwoye ʾrṡəfəl. ʾr |
DEIC.COP-3FS give_birth.INF child

¹¹ This is very unclear in the original recording, but, on hearing the recording, the speaker interpreted it thus.

She is giving birth to a child!’

- (19) *u har kull-ay GƏM-MĤALQ-I-LAY magz-e-u|*
and just all-3PL PST.PFV-throw-3PL-OBJ.3PL sickle-PL-and
All of them just threw down their sickles and
tū-lay pəš-lay yā ʾālahā ta-d = ʿĀYƏN-NA. |
sat-3PL started-3PL oh God for-COMP = help.3MS-OBJ.3FS
sat down and started (praying) ‘Oh God!’ So that he would help her.

- (20) *RAĤUQ-TA-wāla māsa. |*
far-FS=PST.COP.3FS village(f)
It was far away, the village.
lá-y-bāway zā-wā-lay mays-ay-wa xa = baxta
NEG-EXIST-in.ANT.3PL go-ANT-3PL fetch-3PL-ANT a = woman
They couldn’t go and fetch a woman
(ta-)d = ʿAYN-Ā-WĀ-LA. | ta-d = msaʿd-á-wā-la gu MAHWOYE. |
for-COMP = help-3FS-ANT-OBJ.3FS for-COMP = help-3FS-ANT-OBJ.3FS in give_birth.INF
to help her, to assist her in giving birth.

- (21) *ArfaAr qəm-lay mşule-lay ArmbadalAr d = ay = BAXTA. |*
so got_up-3PL prayed-3PL for of = that.F = woman
They got up and prayed, for that woman,
d = íwāla mahwoye, ta-d = MAHŪY-A. |
REL = PST.COP.3FS give_birth.INF for-COMP = give_birth-3FS
who was giving birth, so that she would give birth (successfully).
la-bāre ĆU=məndi-ll-aĥ, | ArwəllaAr l-bron-aĥ ZORA. |
NEG-happen no=thing-to-3FS or to-son-3FS small.M
So that nothing would happen to her, or to her child.

- (22) *baʿdén mʿujəb-lan KULL-AN, |*
then were_amazed-1PL all-1PL
Then we were amazed, all of us.
başər xa=qəşša GƏM-XĀZ-UX-LA ʾay = baxta | QƏM-LA=u |
after a=little PST.PFV-see-1PL-OBJ.3FS that.F = woman got_up-3FS-and
We saw that woman get up
GƏM-LAYF-Ā-LE təfəl, |
PST.PFV-wrap-3FS-OBJ.3MS infant(m.)

and wrap up the child.

gəm-dary-ā-le *l-xāṣ-aḥ=u* *zəl-LA.* |
PST.PFV-put-3FS-OBJ.3MS on-back-POSS.3FS=and went-3FS
She wrapped him up, put him on her back and left.

(23) *bas la=wälle-ba* *šAQL-Ā-LA* *xəṭṭe mənn-aḥ.* |
but NEG=was-in.3FS take-3FS-OBJ.3FS wheat with-3FS
But she wasn't able to take the wheat with her.

QAY? ^{Ar}*li'annahu*^{Ar}... | *ya'ni wāwa* *ba'ad* *XAY-SA.* |
why because I_mean PST.COP.3FS still post_natal-FS
Why? Because... I mean, she had just given birth.

baxta *XAY-SA=wāwa.* |
woman post_natal-FS=PST.COP.3FS
She had just given birth.

5 Notes on the text

(1) **wāwa**: We find *wewa* and *wāwa* in this text for the past copula forms 3ms. *wāle* and 3fs. *wāla* (Coghill 2013: 44). This is probably due to influence from Mosul Plain dialects such as Telkepe (which is dominant in the Detroit Chaldean community).

gu, gāwət-: The preposition *gu* 'in' has a variant *(b)gāwəd-*, built on the suffixal form *gāw-* (as in *gāw-əḥ* 'in him', *gāw-an* 'in us') and the construct suffix *-əd*. Note that voicing assimilation often affects prepositions (see Coghill 2004: 34, 298–9 for voicing assimilation in Alqosh).

čamma m. 'river-plain': The *čamma* is more fertile than the *dašta* 'plain'. Like *dašta*, *čamma* is a loanword from Kurmanji. In Kurmanji (as *ç'em* m.) it refers both to a river and to the 'cultivated lands by the banks of a river' (Chyet 2003: 103). Cf. also C. Barwar *čamma* (f.) 'large field near river; plantation' (Khan 2008b: 1255).

xa = dayra zor-əd = mar = giwargəs 'a small monastery of St. George': Note that the NENA construct marker *-əd* is suffixed to the whole phrase, attaching to the phrase-final adjective: [*xa = dayra zor*]-*əd* = *mar = giwargəs*. It normally attaches to the head noun, in which case any adjective would presumably have to be postposed (? [*xa = dayrəd = mar = giwargəs*] *zora*). Another alternative would be to use the looser

prefixal annexation construction ([*xa = dayra zora*] *d = mar = giwargəs*).¹² The precise structure here is attested in other NENA dialects, such as Barwar and J. Zakho (Gutman 2016: 88–9). On the basis of this and other behaviour, Gutman (2016: 89, 92–3) analyses *-əd* in some NENA dialects as a phrasal suffix, rather than an inflectional suffix or a clitic.

(2) *xzāda*: *xzd* I ‘to reap, harvest’ < Aramaic *ḥšd* Peal. The *š has become voiced by voicing assimilation in contexts where it was adjacent to the /d/. The voiced allophone then became generalized. Compare Alqosh *ḡzd* I, where the voicing spread further to the initial radical (Coghill 2004: 20, 24). In Peshabur, as in Alqosh, this resulted in a new (but rare) phoneme: /z/. In the Barwar cognate (*xzd* I, Khan 2008b: 1205), this has been avoided by the phoneme becoming non-emphatic. The /d/ radical found in all three dialects also requires explanation, as one might expect /ð/ instead. It is usually the fricative allophone of historical begadkefat consonants that is found (now as a distinct phoneme) in final root position: compare Pesh. *qyz* I ‘to burn’ (< *yqḏ) and *ksw* I ‘to write’ (< *ktb). There is another exception, namely *ʾwd* I ‘to do, make’ (< Aram. *ʿbd*), though this alternates with *ʾwz* I (< earlier NENA *ʾwḏ) in the speech of this narrator (e.g. *kūdi* ~ *kūzi* ‘they do’). In Coghill (2013: 39) I suggested the /d/ was due to the common NENA shift *ḏ > d* before /l/ (see Coghill 2004: 183, n. 23), which might have occurred in forms with L-suffixes, e.g. *wəḏla* > *wəḏla* ‘she did’. The plosive pronunciation could then have been generalized to all forms of the verb. The same explanation could apply to the /d/ in *xzd* I. But here the presence of an adjacent *z*, which is very similar to the fricative reflex of *d (Pesh. /z/, Alq./Bar. /ð/) makes dissimilation a probable (co-)factor.

mḥusy-əd PN [absolved.M-of PN], loosely ‘the late/blessed PN’: This is an unusual structure involving a kind of reversal, where the syntactic head of the phrase (the adjective) is the semantic modifier, and the syntactic modifier (the PN) is the semantic head. According to the usual rules of grammar, one would expect PN *mḥusya*, i.e. NOUN ADJ. The same construction is found in Qaraqosh (Khan 2002: 738) and Alqosh (*mḥasyəd* PN, f. (*m*)*ḥuseḥəd* PN). The adjective is actually a resultative participle of *ḥsy* I ‘to absolve’. This verb is also found in an active construction, e.g. Telkepe *ʾālā mḥāsèlə* ‘God rest his soul’ (lit. ‘May God absolve him [from his sins]’). A similar

¹² Though the *-əd* construction is much commoner in Peshabur, the *d-* construction is also attested, e.g. *ʾeza d = gzort-əd = mār-an* [festival of = circumcision-of = lord-our] ‘the festival of the circumcision of our Lord’.

construction is J. Amadiya *nix-it bābi* ‘my late father’ (lit. rested-of father-1SG] (Hoberman 1989: 94).

The structure itself (including the Qar. example) is categorized by Gutman (2016: 109, 142) as the ‘emotive genitive’ type. This term was used by Hopkins (2009) for structures of this kind across a range of Semitic languages, as well as English, which often add an emotive force vis-à-vis the normal construction. Hopkins also discussed the construction in Neo-Aramaic (2009: 379–380). *Mḥusyəd* PN appears to be a special instance of the emotive genitive which has become conventionalised for talking respectfully about the dead.

(3) *‘amm-i-š* ‘my late uncle too’: The enclitic *-š* ‘also, too’ is borrowed from Kurdish. In Kurmanji dialects, including the dialect of Zakho, the form is usually *-žī*, but *-š* is attested in the Akre and Sūrčī dialects, as well as in Sorani (Mackenzie 1961: 201–2, 128–9).

’axnan mā-kuduxwa? ‘As for us, what did we do?’: The normally redundant independent pronoun is used here to highlight a shift in topic.

gdš II ‘to stack up, make stooks’: In Barwar this verb is in derivation I (Khan 2008b: 1125). In Maclean’s (1901: 44, 155) NENA dictionary it occurs in both derivations, with Derivation I being attributed to the Mosul Plain dialects (‘Al.’) with the slightly different meaning ‘collect’.

(4) *pa’le* ‘workers’: *pa’la* ‘worker’ < **pa’la* (cf. Syriac *pā’lā*).

k-xaḏdila xaṭṭe ‘they harvest the wheat’: The feminine singular agreement here and in other examples from the text shows that *xaṭṭe* ‘wheat’ is construed as feminine singular and not a *plurale tantum*, as it is in dialects such as Alqosh, Telkepe and Barwar.

gədiša ‘stook’: cf. Bar. *gəddišta* ~ *gdišta* ‘stook of corn’; *gəddiša* ‘pile, pile of wood’ (Khan 2008b: 1057). In Maclean’s (1901: 44) NENA dictionary the form is *gadiša* ‘a stack, heap, stook, shock, haycock’. In the original recording it is hard to hear whether it is *gdiša*, *gədiša* or *gadiša*. In a later session the speaker pronounced it as *gədiša*. That the Peshabur form is *gədiša* and not *gədiša* suggests that the /d/ was originally geminated (blocking the fricative allophone otherwise expected).

(5) *’iṯənwā* ‘there is’: The existential particle is normally *’isən* in this dialect, as elsewhere in this text, due to the shift **θ* > *s*. See also the note for line (16).

xəṭṭ-əd d = ay = dukta. | ‘the wheat of that place’: It is common in many NENA dialects to use a form of the demonstratives prefixed by *d-* in the secondary position of an

annexation construction or after a preposition (see *gu d-anna* in line 11 and *mən d-ay = baxta* in line 17). Gutman (2016: 282–289) views this as the beginnings of a genitive case.

(6) *fa* ‘so’: The speaker later pointed out that *fa* is a borrowing from Arabic and one he picked up after he learned Arabic.

xa = baxta ‘a certain woman’: In this dialect, as in some others, there is no longer any gender distinction in numerals or the indefinite specific article *xa =* (which is identical to ‘one’).

qaračāye ‘Gypsies’: Cf. Bar. *qārāčaya* ‘Gypsy’ (Khan 2008b: 1365). This is borrowed from Kurmanji *qereç(î)*.

dasnāye ‘Yezidis’: Cf. Kurmanji *dasinî*, a synonym for *êzîdî* ‘Yezidi’.

hurāye ‘Yezidis’: The speaker explained later that *hurāye* is the Peshabur term for Yezidis (ms. *hurāya*, fs. *Huraysa*). The Chaldeans of the Mosul Plain (e.g. Alqosh) call them *dasnāye*.

(8) *’id-əd =* ‘hand of’: Instead of *’ida* ‘hand’, one expects *’iza*, to reflect the original fricative allophone of /d/ (**’ida*). The /d/ here may occur by analogy with the plural form, where /d/ is found through a process of dissimilation: *’idāsa* ‘hands’ rather than **’izāsa* (cf. Alq. *’idāθa*, Coghill 2004: 47).

(10) *hoola raḥuqta* ‘She’s waaay off in the distance’: In Peshabur the vowel of the stressed syllable of deictic forms (copulas, demonstratives and adverbs) can be extended to emphasize distance. See Coghill (2008: 97–100) for more details.

(12) *kimər* ‘he says’. Note the use of the historic present to lend vividness to the narrative. This is especially common with the verb ‘to say’ in NENA dialects, as in other languages. See Coghill (2009: 270–274) for a discussion of this.

hon ‘I am’: The expected Peshabur form is *holi* – the deictic copula in Peshabur is inflected entirely with L-suffixes. The inflection *-n* here is probably the result of contact influence with other dialects (for instance, Alqosh has the form *won*, an allegro variant for 1ms. *wowən* or 1fs. *wowan*).

mšakkoke ‘doubting’: Derivation II verbs usually lack the gemination of the medial radical that was characteristic in earlier Aramaic. Cf. *mgadoše* ‘stacking up’. The medial gemination seen here is only found with verbs with identical 2nd and 3rd radicals. Compare Alq. *mlakkoke* ‘to seal’ (Coghill 2004: 155) and Alq./TK *mxallole* ‘to wash’. The example here is a loanverb from Arabic *škk i* ‘to doubt’. Note it has not been borrowed into the cognate derivation I. The reason for this may be to preserve

the characteristic gemination (as in Arab. *šakka*, *yašukk*). Cf. TK *tmm* II (infinitive *mtammomə* ‘to complete’) from Arabic *tmm* i.

(15) *w = axnan hādax bə-xzāda*, | ‘While we were reaping like that’: The copula is presumably omitted because this is a circumstantial clause. Clauses of this type (with or without an introductory *w =* ‘and’) are also found in Telkepe (own fieldwork) and Barwar (Khan 2008a: 850–851).

(16) *θele*: In the Peshabur dialect this should be *sele*, due to the shift $*\theta > s$.

(19) *magz-e* ‘sickles’: Cf. *magsa* ‘sickle’ in Maclean (1901: 156). In Qaraqosh the cognate is *magzunta* (Khan 2002: 39), with both a diminutive *-ona* suffix and f. suffix *-ta*. This is close to the Syriac form *magg³zōnā* ‘sickle’. Another NENA word for ‘sickle’ or ‘scythe’ which is similar in form is *magla* (as found in Alq., TK, Qar., C. Aradhin, Bar. etc. – author’s fieldwork, Khan 2002: 39, Krotkoff 1982: 133, Khan 2008b: 1324). Cf. Syriac *magg³lā* ‘sickle’. A smaller sickle often takes the f. suffix *-ta* in its diminutive function: *magelta* (Qar., Khan 2002: 736) or *magelθa* (Alqosh). Peshabur also has *magəzta* for a smaller sickle.

(20) *lāybāway* ‘they couldn’t’: from *la* ‘not’ + *’ibāway* ‘they could’. To express ability (and location in a place), B-suffixes (inflected like L-suffixes) are attached to the existential particle *’is-* (< *’iθ*). In the present paradigm, the /s/ is elided before the B-suffix, e.g. *’i-ba* ‘there is in it(f.)’. Judging by the forms in other dialects, as well as parallel forms with L-suffixes (Pesh. *’ət-ti* ‘I have’, *’ət-wā-li* ‘I had’), one might expect *’ás-wā-bi* or *’át-wā-bi* ‘I could’. Instead, we find *’ibāwi* ‘I could’, *’ibāway* ‘they could’. The /b/ and /w/ of the suffixes have undergone metathesis in Peshabur, such that the inflection of the B-suffix is now attached to the /w/ of the anterior suffix *-wA*. This may have occurred by analogy with the present tense forms which begin with *’ib/*. A somewhat similar process has occurred in Alqosh final-/r/ verbs in the Past Base paradigm with the anterior suffix. We find *spé-wā-ra* ‘she had waited’ instead of the expected *spár-wā-la*, by analogy with *spera* (< **sparra* < **sparla*) ‘she waited’ (Coghill, forthcoming).

’ayn-á-wā-la, *msa’d-á-wā-la*. Without the L-suffix, these would be *’ayn-á-wa* and *msa’d-á-wa*. Peshabur shares with Telkepe and Alqosh a rule that a long /ā/ is shortened to /a/ when it is stressed and followed by two or more syllables. Another example from line (20) is *zá-wā-lay* ‘they might go’ (cf. *zā-lay* ‘they may go’). Compare Telkepe *kšaql-á-lux* ‘she takes you(ms.)’ vs. *k-šaql-á-loxu* ‘she takes you(pl.)’, *kə-zzā-lan* ‘we go’ vs. *kə-zzá-wā-lan* ‘we used to go’ etc. (author’s fieldwork). This is reminiscent

of trisyllabic shortening in English (*sincēre* – *sincērity*, *divine* – *divīnity*, *humane* – *humānity*, see Lahiri and Fikkert 1999).

la-walleba ‘she wasn’t able’: This is an alternative to *lāybāwa* ‘she couldn’t, wasn’t able’, which has developed out of **lāθwāba* through analogy with the present tense form *lāyba* ‘she can, she is able’ (see note above). In Alqosh, *la-walleba* expresses contingent (temporary) non-ability (‘she wasn’t able right then’), as opposed to the unmarked form *lāθwāba* ‘she couldn’t (in general)’ (Coghill 2004: 186): it may be that the same semantic distinction holds for Peshabur. In Peshabur, the stem *hūle-* is also found, e.g. *hūlebi* ‘*awdanne* ‘I was able to do it(m.)’. The stem appears to derive from *hwy* I ‘to be, become’ (pace Coghill 2004: 185) through the following developments: **hwéle-ba* > **hwále-ba* > **hwále-ba* > *walle-ba*. The /e/ could have shifted to /ə/ through the same trisyllabic shortening rule described above. A /ə/ in an open syllable is disfavoured, so the /l/ was geminated to close the syllable.

In Alqosh, *walle-* is also attached to L-suffixes, to express ‘acquire’ or ‘be born to one’, e.g. *walleli gđa-brāta* ‘A daughter has been born to me, I have had a daughter’, *la-walleli pāra* ‘I didn’t get money’ (Coghill 2004: 185–6).

xaysa: < **xayta*). This adjective describes the state of a woman after giving birth. It ends forty days after the birth. It is apparently based on the root *xyy* (Syriac *hyy* Pe‘al ‘to live’). Cf. Bar. *xaya* ‘alive’, *baxta xεθa* ‘woman who is giving birth or had recently given birth (forty or less days beforehand)’ (Khan 2008: 1437) and J. Zax. *xayeta*, *xeta* ‘lying-in woman’ (Sabar 2002: 196). In earlier Aramaic, including Syriac, *hayyātā* could mean either ‘midwife’ or ‘woman in labour’ (Sokoloff 2009: 449; cf. also the online Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon). In Pesh., the midwife is called a *toto*, literally ‘granny’ (*tota* is ‘grandmother’). When a woman begins to give birth, one says *r’əšla*, lit. ‘she woke up’. When the woman had completed the forty days, one could say *plətla mən* ‘*arbi* ‘She came out of the forty.’ or *layla xaysa ba‘ad* ‘She’s no longer *xaysa*.’

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