

"AND A THORNBUSH SPRANG UP
BETWEEN THEM": STUDIES ON
"MEM U ZIN", A KURDISH
ROMANCE
VOL. 2

CHYET, MICHAEL L.
1991

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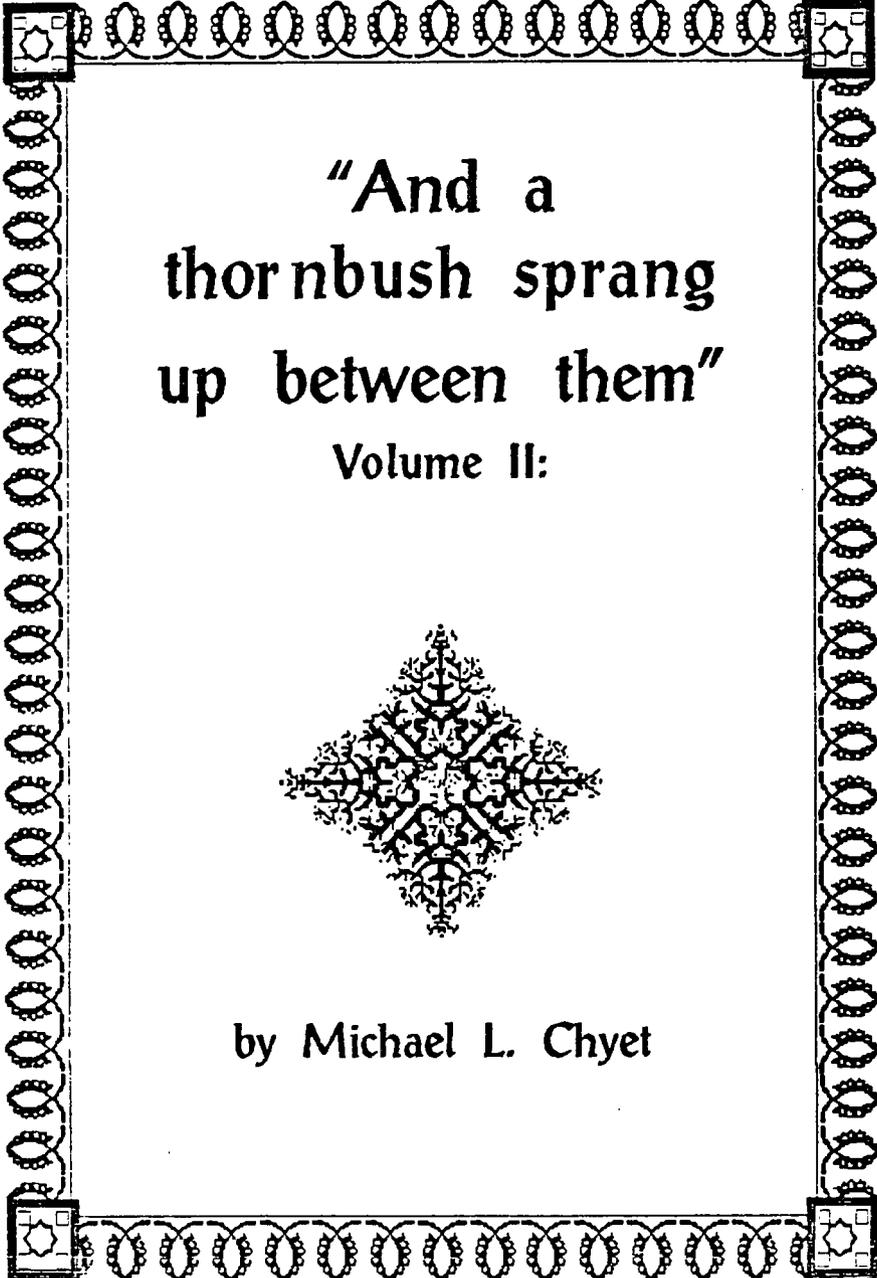
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**"And a
thornbush sprang
up between them"**

Volume II:



by Michael L. Chyet

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Illustrations





Memê Alan

(After Baran, *Destana Memê Alan: Kürtçe - Türkçe*, Istanbul, 1978)



(After Baran, *Destana Memê Alan: Kûrtçe - Tûrkçe*, Istanbul, 1978)



Bozê Revan (Colt of the Sea)

(After Baran, Destana Memê Alan: Kûrtçe - Tûrkçe, Istanbul, 1978)



Mem on the road to Jezira Bohtan

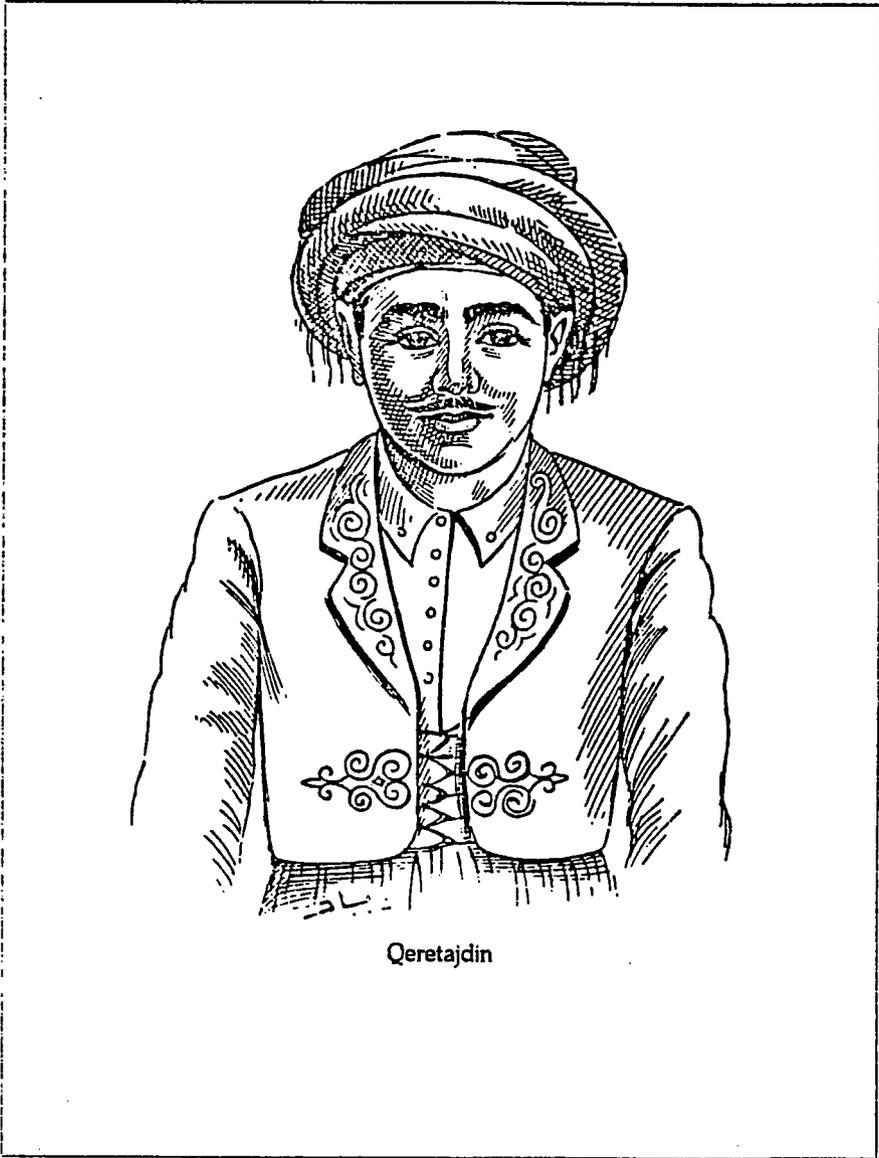


Bekoyê Awan

(After Baran, Destana Memê Alan: Kûrtçe - Tûrkçe, Istanbul, 1978)



Mir Ezin (Mir Sevdin)



Qeretajdin

(After Baran, Destana Memê Alan: Kürtçe - Türkçe, Istanbul, 1978)



Çeko



Translations



Frym. Eugen & Albert Socin. Der Neu-Aramäische Dialekt des Tür 'Abdin ; a. Die Texte; b. Übersetzung. (Göttingen : Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1881), v. 1, pp. 1-5; v. 2, pp. 1-8, [375] [Neo-Aramaic (Turoyo) text in phonetic transcription (v. 1) + German translation (v. 2)] (PN)

- PN. Collected by Frym and Socin in May 1869 in Damascus, Syria, from Jano ("Dschano"), a Jacobite Christian who had migrated to Damascus three months earlier with a group of his compatriots from the town of Midyat ("Midhjät") in the region of Tür 'Abdin, in what is today in the province of Mardin in Kurdistan of Turkey. A plague of locusts which befell Midyat for six consecutive years forced Jano's people to leave their homes. Although in Midyat he worked his own piece of land, in Damascus Jano was reduced to being a simple handyman. He could neither read nor write, but was endowed with the wonderful memory peculiar to the illiterate; he also had good common sense and was a quick learner. As a result of the ethnic mix of his homeland, Jano spoke Kurdish and (Northern Mesopotamian) Arabic in addition to his native Syriac (or *Turoyo*, a Neo-Aramaic dialect), and had also picked up some Turkish during a brief stay in Adana. Jano apparently was uniquely suited to the task of being a native informant, and Frym describes him as "der berufene Erzähler seines Heimatortes" ("the appointed tale-teller of his native place). The following text, dictated in the variety of Aramaic called *Turoyo*, is the first one in Frym and Socin's collection. They call it a romantic legend, which Jano told as a true story.

(PN)

[1] There was once an agha¹ Yusif Agha, who lived near the land of India. He had a cousin² whose sister he was in love with. He went to her in secret, while she was still a girl, [and] she became pregnant at home³.

"From whom are you pregnant?" asked her brother.

She said, "I'm pregnant from Yusif Agha."

¹-Village mayor.

²-Paternal lateral male (first) cousin, i.e. the son of his father's brother.

³-Without having been married off, which would automatically have meant leaving her parent's home.

The residents of the village sided with the girl's brother, [and] said, "Yusif Agha, marry⁴ the girl."

He said, "Just because you've tried to force me to, I won't marry her."

Fighting broke out in the village, but no one could overcome Yusif Agha. The girl gave birth to a son and a daughter. They called the boy Mammo, and the girl Aminah. [When] Mammo grew up, he asked, "Who is my father?"

"They said, "Your uncle⁵ is your father."

[Mammo] said, "No, he's not my father."

Mammo fell in love with a girl. His beloved said to him, "Do you know who your father is?"

"Who is it?" he asked.

She said, "It's Yusif Agha: he went to her when she was a girl, and your uncle's people fought with him over it, but they couldn't overcome him. So you were born out of wedlock."

"Is that so?" he said.

"Yes," she said.

He came home, then went and cut off his mother's gold coins⁶, and bought with them a sword and a pair of pistols. He hung the sword over his shoulder, and the pistols from his belt. He went to Yusif Agha's room, without Yusif Agha suspecting anything. [Yusif Agha] said, "Come, Mammo, sit down!" Mammo sat down, and they talked. [Before long] an argument broke out. Mammo pulled out a pistol and aimed it at Yusif Agha. [Mammo] shot straight into his heart, [giving him time] to say only, "Mammo has killed me." Yusif Agha's brothers and sons came after Mammo. They attacked him. A rumor reached Mammo's uncle that he had been killed. Mammo's uncle came to Yusif Agha's room, and they

⁴-lit. "Take"

⁵-Maternal uncle, i.e. your mother's brother.

⁶The headdress or coil of Kurdish and Jacobite women consists of a cap ("Haube" in German) or simply a chain of gold coins worn across the forehead. One would only sell these gold coins in the case of dire need.

went at each other with swords⁷. Mammo slew six of Yusif Agha's people. He came home, [and] everyone in the village came to him saying, "Be our agha!"

"All right," he said, and Mammo became the agha. It took him two years to learn how to be agha.

One of the villagers went into the woods, where a ferocious⁸ lion devoured the man and his mule. People thought he had gotten lost, so two men went out looking for him. They saw blood on the ground, and followed the traces of blood, until they reached the lion's cave. There they saw the cross-bars (*Sattelhölzer*), axe, rope, and pack-saddle. [2] The lion jumped out, grabbed one of them and ate him. The other one ran away. He returned to the village shouting, "There's a ferocious lion there, who has killed the two men."

"What did you say?" asked Mammo.

He told him what had happened. Mammo arose, put on his sword and shield, and went after the lion, taking a cow along with him⁹. The lion came out, and flew into a rage when he saw that Mammo had a sword. All the villagers watched as Mammo swung at the lion, while protecting himself with the shield. The lion could not grab Mammo, while Mammo jabbed [the lion] with his sword. Until noontime they fought together as two men would fight. [Finally] Mammo slew the lion and went home. Mammo had made a name for himself: his fame spread far and wide.

There came to India a merchant from Mosul, who went to visit Mammo. [The merchant] asked, "Are you Mammo?"

[Mammo] said, "Yes."

"We've heard your name in Mosul. You're not married, are you?"

"That's right," [Mammo] said.

"Zine, from Jezirah, the daughter of mir Zerav, is just right for you. She has three brothers, mir Sevdim, Hasso, and Chakko. She lives in the castle of Jezirah, the chains of her gate are made of gold."

⁷i.e., Mammo and his uncle against Yusif Agha's brothers and sons.

⁸-lit. "Crazy."

⁹We are never told why he took a cow with him.

Mammo asked, "Who is going to go there?"

The merchant said, "I am."

"When you get there, give her this ring," said Mammo.

"Gladly!" said [the merchant].

"But bring me back news of her," he besought the merchant.

The merchant went to India, transacted his business, then came back to Mammo's house. He took Mammo's ring and went home to Mosul. Then he rode up to Jezirah, to Zine. He saw her in the window and called to her. She was not willing to speak with the merchant. He called to her again.

"What is it?" she asked.

"I've brought you something from a certain place," he said.

"What have you brought?" she asked.

He said, "Have a look."

She unfastened the belt from her waist and passed it out through the window below which the merchant was standing and at which she was sitting, saying, "Whatever it is, tie it to the end of the belt."

The merchant tied it fast. Zine pulled up the belt, and undid the thing. Then she saw that it was a ring, with a diamond, a pearl, and a stone with Mammo's name written on it. "Where is the owner of the ring?" she asked.

"He's in his own country," he replied.

She said, "I've heard his name, but let me ask you about him. Is he handsome or not?"

"You won't find a finer youth," he said, "I've gone to India and come back to Mosul, nowhere have I seen a better or manlier fellow than he."

"Are you going back there?" she asked.

"Yes," he said.

She sat down and drew¹⁰ a picture of herself on paper, and wrote on the paper, "Come to our country. May it be forbidden for me to marry any man but you. It is not a disgrace for men to seek women, but for women to seek men is a disgrace." She gave the paper to the merchant, but kept the ring.

¹⁰=lit. "Wrote." Cf. Eberhard, Wolfram and Pertev Naili Boratav, *Typen türkischer Volksmärchen* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1953), pp. 217-218, Type 188 *Hüşn ü Yusuf*, motif 2.

The merchant returned to Mosul, packed up his bundles of wares and went to the land of India. When he reached Mammo, he went up to him. Mammo said to the merchant, "Welcome! Speak, merchant!"

"What shall I say, Mammo?" he said, taking the paper from his breast pocket, and giving it to Mammo. [3] He looked at the paper and saw Zine's picture and the words she had written him. He kissed the picture and asked, "Where's the ring?"

"Zine has it," he said.

For two years he and Zine sent letters back and forth. Then Zine grew impatient with Mammo. She hired a messenger for 1,000 piasters and sent him to India with a letter for Mammo (in which) she said if he's coming, let him come now, otherwise I'll marry mir Akabir, agha of Van. The man¹¹ went, and after asking around for Mammo, delivered him the letter. Mammo read it, then began to make preparations to go. He mounted his horse, and took forty two of his villagers with him -- they were not his brothers, although in the story they are called his brothers¹². They set out with Mammo, but he didn't tell them where he was going. "Mammo," they said to him.

"Yes?" he said.

"Where are you headed?" they asked.

He said, "I'm going to Mosul. Those who want to come with me are welcome to do so, and those who don't want to may do as they please. I want to go abroad."

They turned around in their tracks and left Mammo. He came across a spring on the way, and slept beside it. There were no villages around the spring. Mammo's horse¹³ had no fodder, and was hungry. Mammo had four loaves of bread. He crumbled them into pieces (and put them) into the horse's feedbag, but the horse would not eat. He said to himself, as there was no one with him, "I don't know why the horse won't eat." By God's grace the horse was given the gift of speech and said, "Mammo!"

¹¹i.e., the messenger.

¹²This is apparently a digression by the storyteller Jano.

¹³-lit. 'Mare.'

"Yes!" said Mammo.

"Turn around and go back home!"

[Mammo] said, "That's not possible; until I go get Zine, that's not possible."

"As you wish," said the horse, and spoke no more. Mammo spoke to her, but she did not answer. [Mammo] sang to the spring and cried over Zine.

The next morning he got up and travelled another stage¹⁴. He came to a meadow, where he lay down while the horse grazed. A snake came and wrapped itself around his leg.

"Get off, beast!" said [Mammo].

"Don't be afraid, I won't bite you," said [the snake], "for your time is not up yet." The snake got down [off his leg] and said, "If your time had come, I would have bitten you no matter what you might have said."

Mammo got on his horse and continued on his way until he reached the threshing floors before the city of Jezirah. He got down off his horse to see the city from outside. There was one Bakko Awan who was always in the council of the emirs. When he said something, he didn't need to say it twice¹⁵. Bakko had a daughter whose name was Zine also. Bakko's daughter had gone down to the river to wash clothes when she saw Mammo. She fell in love with him. [The first] Zine's relatives had heard that she and Mammo were sending letters to each other. [When] they told her to marry, she said, "I won't marry anyone but Mammo." Everyone in town had heard this, both young and old. Bakko's daughter spoke to Mammo, [saying], "Who are you?"

"I'm Mammo," he said.

"What are you looking for?" she asked.

"For Zine," he said.

She said, "Would you know her if you saw her?"

"Yes," he said.

"I'm Zine," she said.

¹⁴=The distance travelled in one day. See OM, note 1.

¹⁵i.e., He had a good deal of authority.

He looked at her and said, "No, you're not Zine. [4] By the description they give of Zine, there's none prettier than her. You're not pretty. You're lying."

She said, "Mammo, God knows that I'm Zine."

"Your name may be Zine," he said, "but you're not the Zine I'm looking for."

"Mammo, my name is Zine," she said, "I'm the daughter of Bakko Awan. Zine from the house of the prince is my friend."

"Then go call her over here!" he said.

Bakko Awan's daughter went and called, "Zine!"

"What?" she answered.

"Come, let's go down to the river to watch the birds. There is a strange bird there, the likes of which have never been seen. I left my laundry and came after you, so that you might see this bird."

After putting on her shoes, Zine came down and went into town. The townspeople and shopkeepers said, "She has never before left her quarters." They went to the riverbank. Mammo took one look at her, and his heart was on fire. She sat beside him and massaged his heart, while the daughter of Bakko Awan looked on. As [Zine] rubbed his heart, Mammo came to. Then she took one look at Mammo, and *her* heart started burning; Mammo massaged her heart. Her chest was white and soft as silk. Zine revived, and they kissed.

She said, "I'm going home. Get on your horse and come to our house."

"All right," he said.

Zine went home and climbed to the top of the castle. She looked about with flaming heart. Mammo came to the prince, to mir Sevdin, and sat in the [guest] hall.

"Where are you from?" they asked.

"I'm a stranger," he said.

They took one look at him, and saw that he was more beautiful than they. They couldn't take their eyes off him. Zine said to her brothers Chakko and Hasso, "This is Mammo. Treat him with honor and respect." Mammo and the brothers became inseparable.

Bakko Awan's daughter said to her father, "He doesn't want me, he wants Zine."

"I'll have him killed," Bakko said.

One day mir Sevdin said, "Let's go gazelle hunting!" He told Mammo, and Mammo said, "Okay." Zine said to Hasso, "Don't take Mammo hunting! He's a guest! It's a disgrace and besides, Bakko might have him killed."

"Don't worry, Sister, we'll be with him," he said.

The servants saddled up the horses, but Zine came down from her quarters and prepared Mammo's horse herself. Chakko and Hasso saw her, but said nothing, [it was sealed] in their hearts. Mir Sevdin knew nothing of this. They went out to hunt gazelles. A gazelle jumped up, and they ran after it. Mammo caught it and gave it to mir Sevdin, but he refused, saying "It's a gift for you."

"I accept it from you," said Mammo. He then said to Hasso, "I'm thirsty. Let me wait for you at home!¹⁶."

"Go!" said [Hasso].

Mammo left them. Zine was on [top of] the castle watching the road¹⁷, saying, "When is Mammo coming?" Then Mammo came, and together they went up to the [guest] hall, where they embraced. [Meanwhile] the brothers came back from hunting and went to the hall, leaving no way of escaping. [Zine] hid behind Mammo, and he covered her with his coat. Mir Sevdin came in, and there was Mammo sitting down. He greeted him, but Mammo did not rise in his presence. If he got up, everyone would have [5] seen Zine. Mir Sevdin and Bakko sat down. Bakko said, "Mir Sevdin gave you greeting, and you didn't rise before him"

"He's like an older brother to me!" said Mammo.

¹⁶-lit. "Let me go home until you come."

¹⁷i.e. waiting. A common way to say 'To wait' in Kurdish is *Çavê x-ê li rîya bk-î bûn* (= lit. "For one's eyes to be on someone's road"). See ZK-1 note 59.

Hasso and Chakko knew that Zine was under Mammo's coat. They winked at each other and said to mir Sevdin, "Let's all go out to the garden."

"I'm not coming," said [mir Sevdin], growing angry.

Then Hasso went out and killed his wife, and set fire to his house, in order to get mir Sevdin to get up and leave the hall so that Zine could escape from behind Mammo. He did this for Mammo's sake. They came and told mir Sevdin, saying, "Hasso has killed his wife, and has set fire to his house." Mir Sevdin got up and left the room. He and Bakko Awan went to see Hasso, leaving nobody in the hall but Mammo and Zine. Zine came out from under his coat and went up to the castle.

Bakko said to mir Sevdin, "Mammo wouldn't rise before you because Zine was under his coat. That's why Mammo didn't get up."

Mir Sevdin and Hasso began arguing. Hasso and Chakko got angrily on their horses and rode off to Damascus¹⁸.

Mir Sevdin had Mammo put in prison. Zine came to the door of the prison, crying over Mammo. Mammo said to Zine, "Don't cry! You're breaking my heart!" She cried, then he cried. From so much grief, Mammo came close to death.

A dervish came along and asked Zine why she was crying. She told him, then asked him, "Where are you going, dervish?"

He said, "I'm going on the pilgrimage¹⁹."

"Aren't you going by Damascus?" she asked.

"Yes, I am," he said.

"Go tell my brothers," she said, "that Bakko has seized Mammo, and he's about to die. They should come without delay."

"Give me a kiss," said the dervish.

"Come and kiss me for Mammo's sake," she said.

He kissed her and then set out. She brought Mammo food, but he would not eat. [Finally] he died, and from so much grief Zine also expired.

¹⁸It will be remembered that the storyteller was living in Damascus and that this version was collected there. This may be seen as a digression.

¹⁹i.e., to Mecca.

They buried Zine and Mammo in the same grave, back to back; by the grace of God they turned around, facing each other. The dervish arrived (in Damascus) and delivered the message to Chakko and Hasso. They mounted their horses and returned home. [When they got there] they asked, "Where is Mammo?"

"He's dead," they were told.

"And Zine?" they asked.

"She's dead (too)."

They opened the grave to cry over them. Mir Sevdin and Bakko went with them. Bakko said, "As they loved each other in this life, so do they love each other in the next life."

"How so?" they asked.

"We buried them back to back, and they've turned to face each other," said Bakko.

Hasso said, "Just as when they were alive you didn't leave them alone, so now in death you won't let them be," and so saying he drew his sword and cut off Bakko's head. A drop of his blood dripped into the grave between Mammo and Zine, which became a thornbush between the two of them. Then the grave was resealed.

May you be healthy for me²⁰.

²⁰[Tu şmera saḥ] = Tu ji me (or: min) Fa saḫ. This phrase is in Kurdish. It is a common concluding formula for folktales. HR-1, a Tūroyo version of Mem û Zîn collected by Helmut Ritter in 1960, ends with the same formula.

Prym, Eugen & Albert Socin. "Mäm u-Zîn"/"Mäm und Sin," in Kurdische Sammlungen. Zweite Abteilung: Erzählungen und Lieder im Dialekte von Bohtan; a. Die Texte; b. Übersetzung. (St.-Petersbourg: Eggers et Cie., 1890), v. 2a, pp. [71]-83; v. 2b, pp. 100-117. [Kurmanji in Latin phonetic transcription (v. 2a) + German translation (v. 2b)] (PS)

PS Collected by A. Socin in late June (or early July) 1870 in Zakho province of Bohtan (presently in Kurdistan of Iraq). Exact details about the informant are not given, but the following extract from his introduction should furnish some information: "... In about an hour and a half I reached the little town of Zakho on the Habur [River]. I had to cool my heels there for a few days while waiting for letters [to be delivered]; to pass the time, I began to study the Aramaic dialect of the Jews who lived there. I soon realized that Zakho was the ideal place to continue collecting Kurdish material, and consequently decided to prolong my stay there, particularly since the life in the town agreed with me. The heat was not particularly strong, the water of the river wonderfully cool and ideal for both drinking and bathing. The people staying in the khan (=inn) took a lively part in my studies. After a time, I even succeeded in procuring Kurdish singers. But when it turned out to be extraordinarily difficult to get the people who were brought to me to dictate/recite what they knew in an orderly fashion, I realized it would be practically impossible to elicit from them any explanation whatsoever of the texts I had written down; for on the one hand, these people knew too little Arabic – Zakho lies right at the edge of the area where Arabic is understood – and on the other, they were simply mentally incapable of meeting the demands which I placed on them. It even got to the point where I got a bad name in town as someone who asks for the impossible, and the singers hesitated to recite any poems for me at all, fearing that I would ask them to explain them as well. In spite of these difficulties, I succeeded in collecting a number of texts, and in having them explained: the latter work was undertaken, generally in the presence of the 'Rawî' (=reciter, tale-teller), by a Kurd who knew Arabic. I got some items from a very aged Jew named Pinehas; he was a native of Zakho and spoke Felihi (=Neo-Aramaic) as well as Kurdish. Moreover he had a reputation as a master-Rawî, and continually travelled among the Kurdish tribes of Bohtan and Hekkari." (Vol. 1:1, p. xvii) Unfortunately, it is not made clear whether the afore-mentioned Pinehas was the source of the present text.

Mäm u-Zîn (PS)

[71] O peoples of the world,
 Listen to a man,
 We will speak of Zin and Mem.
 O people in attendance,
 Listen with [all] you heart,
 From Memê Ala's face red roses rained¹.

Note: When quoting Kurdish words, the standard orthography will be followed in brackets by the spelling encountered in this text, which is written in a phonetic script predating the Hawar Kurdish orthography in Latin script. E.g. [Çih.] [j]h means that the standard spelling is 'Çih,' but in the text it appears as 'j'ih.'

¹A traditional way of describing one's beauty. Cf the following from versions of a Turkish folktale from Erzurum: "Gülende yüzünde güller açılın" = "When she laughs, may roses open on her face" (Dilge Seyidoğlu. Erzurum Halk Masalları üzerinde Araştırmalar: metinler ve açıklama (Erzurum: Atatürk Üniversitesi, 1975), p. 277); "Ben o güzime bir hediye verirem ki gülende güller açılın, ayagının

On one day among the days,
 Two angels made a bet in heaven,
 One said Zin is more beautiful, the other said Mem is.
 This second one said, "Let's bring Zin next to Memê Alan."
 They placed the two of them on one bed,
 They were both asleep, neither of them was awake.
 Then they both woke up,
 They both arose and sat down.

Zin said, "You've come to my place²; Mem said, "I am in my own castle, not in yours."

Zin said, "I'll call my servants, then they'll come kill you." [Mem said] "Call your servants; if this is your place, let your servants come kill me!" Zin called her servants, "Osman! Shahi Mus³!"

When Zin called,
 No one gave answer.
 [He] said, "Now you know this is my place, not yours,"
 It was Memê Ala who said "Now you know this is my place, not yours."

Then [she] said, "Memo, for heaven's sake!⁴
 God made this happen⁵,
 This isn't the work of humans,
 This is the work of heavenly angels."

Then [he] said, "Get up and make us something [to eat]." Zin got up and made rice, they ate it together, she boiled a pot of coffee, each one drank two cups.

Then they stuffed their pipes.
 When they had smoked their pipes,

basdigi yerlerde çimenler bitsin" = "I will give this girl of mine a gift such that when she laughs roses will open up, wherever her foot steps meadows will grow" (ibid., p. 285). The reference to roses is presumably a symbol of rosy cheeks, a sign of beauty.

²Cih [jîh] (also Cî) means both "Place" and "Bed."

³In PS, Sodin took the liberty of changing this name to *Shahin Mustafa*. I prefer to retain the original form. It is to Sodin's credit that he informed us that he was taking liberties with the text: many of his contemporaries were not so scrupulous.

⁴Star bike' [Sitâr bikâ] = "Take refuge [in God]." In PS this is translated as "Make no noise!"

⁵it = "This happened from [the presence of] the great Lord."

Memê Ala was sleepy.

When he got up to go to sleep, Zin asked him, "What are you going to do?" He said, "I'm going to sleep." [She said] "If you sleep, tomorrow you will get up and say, 'It was a dream, last night I had a dream'". He said, "What do you want?" She said, "We should exchange tokens⁶." He said, "As you wish." So they exchanged rings, then they exchanged kerchiefs⁷. Then [72] they both went to sleep. [Mem] said [to himself], "Satan is a powerful man",

Mem got up and drew his dagger,

Placed his dagger between himself and Zin⁸,

He placed the dagger's handle on Zin's breast, and the dagger's blade⁹ on his own breast, then put his arm around her neck. The two of them slept. When they had both gone to sleep, the angels lifted Zin up [and] took her to her own bed¹⁰. Memê Ala stayed in his bed. When he woke early the next morning, Memê Ala said, "It was a dream." When he went to the water to wash his hands and feet, he took out his kerchief. When he was wiping his face, he realized that the kerchief was not his kerchief, that it was Zin's kerchief, Zin the lady of Bohtan. He looked at his ring, [he saw] Zin's seal [on it], Zin the lady of Bohtan.

Mem was very distressed,

He went to his father in the diwan, told him the news,

⁶Nîşan [Nîşan] = 1) Sign, mark, token; 2) Engagement ring (i.e. a sign or mark of being betrothed). In PS, this is translated as 'Erkennungszeichen', i.e. "Badge," "Sign by which one can recognize someone or something," which lacks the suggestion of marriage implicit in the word 'Nîşan.'

⁷'K'eff' [kâffî] or 'K'off', from the Arabic word küfiyah كوفية, a headdress. Whereas according to Kurdoev among the Kurds it is specifically a women's headdress, among the Arabs it is more often used to designate the man's headdress (the more common word for this, at least in colloquial Palestinian Arabic, is ḥaṭṭah حطّة). A few lines further on, Mem uses the 'k'eff' to dry his hands and face, which strongly suggests that the word 'k'eff' means simply a kerchief.

⁸This is a very common motif in Middle Eastern folk narrative. In the Turkish romance *Köroğlu*, the hero *Köroğlu* places his sword between himself and *Telli Nigâr*, his beloved, as a sign that they did not have sex. Motif T351. **Sword of chastity. A two-edged sword is laid between the couple sleeping together.** cf. Aarne-Thompson tale-type 303 *The Twins or Blood-brothers*. In HM's version of *Mem û Zîn*, when Mem's grave is opened up by *Qeretajdîn* (at the end of the story), he finds Mem and Zin sleeping in the same grave, with a sword of day placed between them.

⁹= lit. "Mouth."

¹⁰See note 2 above

When he told the tale in the diwan,
 Mem's father was amazed,
 He said, "My son, I've never heard the name of Jezira Bohta,
 Whoever you want, I will request for you!¹¹"

[Mem] said, "Father, I don't want anyone but Zin the lady of Bohtan. [His father] said, "Come now, my son, I too know that you are handsome, but what you ask is beyond my power. [Mem] said, "Father, if it's beyond your power, I will go out into the world. [His father] said:

"My son, if you want this very much,
 [If] you and Zin have fallen in love,
 Take these one hundred horsemen with you,
 Take this treasure of coins with you,
 And go seek your fortune, see in what direction Jezira Bohta
 lies,
 It is beyond my ken and I've not heard the name Jezira Bohta."

[Mem] said, "O my father, I won't take any soldiers with me,
 I won't take any treasure of coins with me,
 I will mount my horse,
 Roam the world like a dervish,
 Until I find Jezira Bohta."

[His father] said, "My son, I won't have it so,
 You are the sole child of my heart, I won't consent."

Mem made preparations, took out his horse and combed him down. He saddled him up, and fastened his saddle-girth¹². He filled his [own] pockets with gold, picked up his equipment, but his dagger in his belt, fastened his sword to his waist, took his golden¹³ lance in his hand and mounted his horse. By the time he

¹¹ Among the Kurds, as among other Middle Eastern peoples, a marriage is initiated by the family of the prospective groom requesting the hand of the prospective bride from her father.

¹² =lit. "girth and over-girth."

¹³ For some reason, PS doesn't like the word "Golden": the German translation reads, "He took the ... lance in his hand", and in the original there is a footnote which explains [rumāna zārīn] as meaning 'rumh al-aşfar' (= "Yellow lance") in Arabic the reader is then referred to the entry for [Rm] = "Lance" in Jaba and Justi's dictionary, where one finds [rhm nezeh] meaning "Bamboo lance."

mounted, his father had assembled two hundred¹⁴ riders for him. Memê Ala was not aware of this, and when he set out and saw two columns of riders were following him, he stopped and said, "O riders, where are you going?" They said, "Your father sent us with you."

He didn't want to go against his father's word.

He got up and went on,

For two days¹⁵ [73] he went on,

Then gave a command to the riders,

He said, "Go home, I can't take it any more, I may not return for up to four years, I don't want to be responsible to your families [if anything should happen to you]. Go on home, I'll go on without you." The riders turned back, [and] Memê Ala went on. He went to Amadiyah¹⁶, from Amadiyah he went further, until he came to Zakho¹⁷; in Zakho he asked the way to Jezir. From Zakho he rode on to Nehervan, from Nehervan he went towards Jezir. When he stopped under a pair of mulberry trees to rest, he saw a gentleman coming towards him; [Mem] asked him, "When a foreigner goes to Jezir, whose house does he go to?" [The man] said, "If he is a ruler, he goes to Mir Zeidin's house, if he's a noble tribesman, he goes to Qaratazhdin's house, if he's a slanderer or a troublemaker, he goes to Bâkroke Awan's¹⁸ house." Then he up and left. Memê Ala rode on and asked for Qaratazhdin's house. He rode on like one who is totally lost¹⁹, [until] one like me²⁰

¹⁴-lit. "one hundred and two hundred", which PS translate as "one to two hundred."

¹⁵[qonax]- "Stage", "The distance travelled in one day of riding." Cf. OM, note 1.

¹⁶A town in Kurdistan of Iraq. The places mentioned in this and the following note are an indication that the storyteller was from this area. In ZK-2, a version from an Armenian who spent his childhood near Diyarbekir, that city's Fîra Reş (Black Bridge) is mentioned, and in HR-1, a Neo-Aramaic (Turoyo) version from a Jacobite Christian who spent his childhood in the Tûr 'Abdîn region of Mardin, the town of Midyat (main town of the Tûr 'Abdîn region) is mentioned. See also note 27 below.

¹⁷Another town in Kurdistan of Iraq, where this text was collected.

¹⁸Awan' is both Beko/Bekir/Bâkrok's family name and a word meaning "Intriguer," "Troublemaker." This is no coincidence.

¹⁹I am assuming that [xasim] is the same as Arabic ghashim = "Naïve", "Inexperienced"; it is immediately followed by nezana (nazâna), which means more or less the same thing.

²⁰An interesting side comment by the storyteller. Unfortunately, we do not know who the storyteller is, much less what he looks like, so it is not possible to fully appreciate this comment.

came out in front of him and led him to Qaratazhdin's house. When they came up to the gate, servants came out, took hold of the bridle, and helped Mem dismount. They spread a felt carpet before him, and placed cushions at his side. Mem stretched out on the cushions, and smoked the pipe they had filled for him²¹. As he was looking about the hall²², Qaratazhdin's wife²³ went from the house to the hall. His eyes fell on Qaratazhdin's wife, who is the sister of Zin, the lady of Bohtan. He thought she was Zin and that she was already married²⁴, so he got up and said, "Bring me my horse".

The servants said, "But Memê Ala²⁵, you can't go until Qaratazhdin comes." [Mem] said, "That was my heart's desire, it is over, I'll get up and ride away." No matter what the servants did, in the end Mem got up; the servants would not bring him his horse, so he got up and got him for himself; then he got on, took his lance in hand, and rode off. He [got as far as] the gate at the bridge, when the servants went to the diwan [of Mir Zeidin] and said to Qaratazhdin, "Come, mîr, such and such is the situation." Qaratazhdin stood up and when he got home he said, "Bring me my horse." His horse was brought out and combed down, a saddle was put on his back. [Then] he said, "Bring me my equipment." His equipment was brought, and he put it on; he took his lance in hand, girded himself with his sword, threw his pair of carbines²⁶ over the saddle's pommel, mounted and rode off, passing the bridge of Jezir. He tightened the stirrups, slackened the reins, and galloped full speed ahead after Memê Ala. He came to the Castle of Dela²⁷, but

²¹This is a portrayal of the ideal way of treating an honored guest. Here we have an example of folklore functioning as a culture reflector, to use Boas' term. Sometimes in folk narrative a society's norms are accurately reflected, as in this passage, but sometimes the opposite is true: sometimes cultural taboos are portrayed as being acceptable in folk narrative, as when Mem and Zin find each other in bed together.

²²[evân], equivalent to the 'diwan' spoken of in other versions.

²³[ḥarâm], literally "Ritually forbidden," hence the English word "Harem." See also OM note 75.

²⁴=lit. "She has attained her *ḥaqq* [= '(legal) right'; 'portion']."

²⁵Here PS adds the words 'Em nahêlin' [am nâhêlin] = lit. "We won't let [you]." Again, I must thank Prym and Socin for being honest enough to tell us when they tampered with the text.

²⁶Or. "Double-barreled carbine", according to PS.

²⁷Qaser Dala 1/2 hour east of Jezir on the river.

didn't see him. He ran on to the Pass of Siri²⁸, where he caught up with him. He said, "Hey, Mem, where have you run off to? I'm crazy Qaratazhdin²⁹." He got in front of Memê Ala, and when he did, Memê Ala stopped. [Qaratazhdin] said to him, "Mem, come back. [Mem] said, "Qaratazhdin, I'm not coming back." [Qaratazhdin] said to him, "Mem, come back. [Mem] said, "Qaratazhdin, I'm not coming back. [Qaratazhdin] said, "Then at least tell me what you have on your heart, why you came to my house and why you left dissatisfied!" [Mem] said, "Qaratazhdin, [74] I have no wish in my heart." [Qaratazhdin] said, "That can't be, you tell me the truth, no one leaves my house dissatisfied!" [Mem] said, "Then I'll tell you. I came to your house. ... My situation with Zin is such and such." [Qaratazhdin] said, "So you're Zin's betrothed!" [Mem] said, "So I came to your house, I saw Zin in your house, she has gone back on her word, because Zin and I had made an agreement, but she is married to you, [and] I saw her in your house." [Qaratazhdin] said, "Mem, you're telling the truth, but the one you saw in my house is Zin's sister, not Zin herself, she's Zin's older sister.

Zin is just Zin,
A newborn dove,
The sister of my Mir Zeidin.
Zin is not yet married,
No one has laid eyes on her yet,
Not even a cool breeze has touched her body³⁰.
If this story is true,
As you tell it,

Then come under the protection³¹ of us four brothers. Mem and Qaratazhdin returned together, passing by the bridge on the way back to Qaratazhdin's house.

²⁸Located one hour east of Jezir.

²⁹[qaratâzdînedînm]. There is a pun here: dîn = "Crazy", and the syllable 'dîn' is repeated. 'Crazy Qaratazhdin' is a stock phrase, consisting of name and epithet.

³⁰A curious statement considering the fact that the Stith Thompson Motif Index has a motif T 524. Conception from wind!

³¹[râi u-baxt] 'Bext' is a cultural concept, similar to Classical Arabic 'jîwâr'/'istijârah.' In tribal societies, it is important to belong to one or another tribe. When a newcomer arrives on the scene, he must seek refuge or protection (Bext or jîwâr) from one of the local tribes. In the present context, Qaratazhdin has just invited the newcomer Mem to seek refuge with him (and his tribe).

They made up a place³² with cushions for [Mem], and he and Qaratazhdin sat together. Chako, Mako, and mir Mahmud, the other three brothers, sat on their seats, and the coffee kettle was thrown on the fire. Coffee was boiled, and

Each one drank a cup of coffee.

Qaratazhdin was very pleased,

May the universe be damned, Memê Ala is very handsome.

Dinner was made ready,

It was brought in,

The five of them ate their dinner together.

Until midnight they sang songs together,

Then they slept.

In the morning they got up early,

They went to the fountain to wash³³.

Then they returned home and sat down.

Qaratazhdin up and said to Mem, "Bring me Zin's token, so that I will be sure this is right." Mem said to Qaratazhdin, "Show me Zin so that I can show you the token³⁴." [Qaratazhdin] said, "Wait till tomorrow, tomorrow is Friday, Zin will go down to the river, [then] I'll show her to you." That day they got along amiably, and that night they had musicians play for them until midnight, and even later. Then they drank coffee. In the morning they got up early.

In the morning they got up early,

Heated up their coffee,

Each one drank a cup of coffee,

They sat in their places.

As they looked on three maidens approached them,

[Qaratazhdin] said, "Mem, go bring me a token."

Then poor Mem stood up,

He saw the three maidens walking by the river,

Mem got up, came down and greeted khatun Zin:

³²See note 2 above

³³[nemêž kerina] = lit. "They performed the ritual ablutions (preparatory to prayer, part of the Muslim prayer ritual)."

³⁴According to PS, this whole sentence was added later. Again, I must thank Prym and Socin for being honest enough to tell us when they changed the text

[75] [She] said, "O Mem, you have on your head two feathers and
 a sash,
 We have in the world servants and maidens,
 If you've come here to bathe, we will withdraw."
 "It's morning, oh, what a cool morning."
 Mem saw that three girls had come,
 He said, "My lady, tell me who the three [of you] girls are."
 She said, "The last one is the daughter of Bâkroke Awan³⁵,
 The next one is Zin's maidservant³⁶,
 The other one is Zin herself,
 A newborn dove,
 The sister of Mir Zeidin."
 [He] said, "O goose-necked lady,
 I swear by God on high,
 And by the angels around him,
 Until you hand me a token, I won't let you go."
 He said, "O Zin, I swear by God above us,
 And by the angels beside us,
 Until you give me a token, there's no letting you go."³⁷
 He said, "O goose-necked lady,
 You have on your breast a *berber*³⁸, earrings and a
*gelvaz*³⁹."
 She took off a chain of gold coins, bracelets and earrings
 and put them into poor Mem's hands.
 [She] said, "O Mem, I swear by God,

³⁵or Bâkroke the Troublemaker See note 18 above

³⁶The text is ambiguous here: it is unclear whether the maidservant's name is Zin, or if she is the maidservant of Zin. Most versions of the story feature two Zins, the one Mem's beloved, and the other the daughter of Bekir/Beko/Bakrok the villain.

³⁷These two sets of three-line verses are almost identical in form and meaning, the only difference being the rhyme scheme [ližōra/ liđōra/ dastūra] for the first set, and [lesar-ma/ gal-ma/ nādama] for the second.

³⁸A golden necklace, worn from ear to ear.

³⁹A necklace which hangs down in front.

Seated with his attending angels,
 This is Zin's token, which she has given to Memê Ala.
 O Mem, this is our token⁴⁰ until Judgement Day."

Memê Ala took the token,
 Went straight to Qaratazhdin,
 Qaratazhdin, mir Mahmud and Chako were seated all three,
 Mem showed the token to Qaratazhdin,
 Saying, "O Qaratazhdin, this is Zin's token which I have
 brought you."

[He] replied, "Mem, a most hearty welcome⁴¹!

You and I are brothers⁴² for life. You are under the protection of us four
 brothers⁴³, no one can say a bad word about you."

[76] Although Qaratazhdin was Mir Zeidin's major-domo, he hadn't been to
 the [mir's] diwan for three or four days.

Mir Zeidin sent his servant boy
 Who came to Qaratazhdin
 [And] said, "Mir Zeidin asks,
 'Why haven't you come to my diwan for the past four
 days?'"

Qaratazhdin said to him,
 "Go tell Mir Zeidin that I am not ill-humored⁴⁴.
 A beloved brother [I] has come to me.

Go tell Mir Zeidin about this news." The servant boy went back to Mir
 Zeidin,

⁴⁰See note 6 above

⁴¹-lit. "You have come on the head of me and my father." Cf. ZK-1, note [28].

⁴²*destbira*[tl] is similar to the concept of 'blood brother[hood]' in our culture. See LT, p. 372, note #97.

⁴³See note 31 above

⁴⁴-lit. "My heart has not stayed [behind]."

[And] said, "O mir, Qaratazhdin is not ill-humored,
But rather a dear friend [I] has come to [see] him.
Because of this friend he hasn't come to the diwan for four
days."

Mir Zeidin said, "Boy, go tell them both to come to the diwan."

The servant boy then returned to Qaratazhdin,
Saying, "O Qaratazhdin, Mir Zeidin says:

'This dear friend [I] should come to the diwan.' Qaratazhdin, Memê Ala and
the boy got up and went to Mir Zeidin's diwan.

When Mir Zeidin saw Memê Ala,
Mir Zeidin was smitten with love for Memê Ala,

He said, "Qaratazhdin, is this your friend [I]?" [Qaratazhdin] said, "Yes, if you
please, this is my friend [I]." He said, "Qaratazhdin, this is your friend [I]?" He said,
"Yes, if you please, he's my friend [I]." The mir said, "I've become enamored of Memê
Ala; Qaratazhdin, let me ask you something." He said, "Ask, if you please."

[Mir Zeidin] said, "I want you to give me your friend [I],
I have been smitten with love for him,
I want him to bear my tobacco pouch and pipe,
To always stay by me."

[Qaratazhdin] said, "My mir, he is your equal⁴⁵: just as you are the bey of
Bohtan, so is he the son of the mir of the Alan tribe, the pasha of Yemen⁴⁶, and
[therefore] your equal."

⁴⁵Beramberê teye [barambarê-tayê]. In PS's footnote, we are told that this was originally [bar ham
payâ-tayâ, which would mean something like 'before your feet', perhaps meaning the opposite. In this
context, I concur with PS's choice, as it makes good sense. Again, I must commend Prym & Socin for
their candor.

⁴⁶This phrase was apparently left out after the dictation of the text. In OM's text also, Mem's father
is the king of Yemen.

He said, "Qaratazhdin, I beg your pardon, I didn't know he was of noble birth: if he is the son of the pasha of Yemen, it would not do to make him a servant. Let him sit with me always, his seat across from mine. We will drink our coffee together. Let him be with me from morning till evening, then in the evening you can take him home again"; I will await you and your friend [I] early every morning. Do not be offended by these words which I say to you, for I have become enamored of him. [Qaratazhdin] said, "Of course, as you wish, he has come under the protection of (me and) the four brothers. In other words, if anything were to happen to him, my brothers and I would give up our lives for him." [Mir Zeidin] said to him, "Qaratazhdin, don't you worry about anything⁴⁷." In the evening they got up and left the diwan. Zin was listening. That night they went home, and they got up early the next day. Memê Ala said, "O Qaratazhdin, we have come under your protection; I will do whatever you ask⁴⁸."

A cup of coffee was boiled for each one,
 Then each one drank his cup.
 The servant boy filled their pipes,
 Putting a coal⁴⁹ on top of each one;
 [77] They went straight to Mir Zeidin's diwan.
 Their coming pleased the mir greatly;
 He had a throne set up for Memê Ala,
 Memê Ala sat on the throne,
 Which please the mir greatly.
 There was a window between the diwan and the ladies's
 [quarters],
 Zin came and sat at the window,
 Right across from Mem,
 Which pleased Memê Ala greatly.
 Mir Zeidin said to Qaratazhdin:

⁴⁷-lit. "Don't let anything turn/upset you heart."

⁴⁸-lit. "How[ever] you like, I am at your word."

⁴⁹-lit. "a [piece of] fire"

"Qaratazhdin, I want us to go hunting." [Qaratazhdin] said, "At your service, as you wish." He called accursed Bâko⁵⁰ [and] said, "Go tell the town crier [to announce that] the mir has proclaimed that we must [all] go hunting tomorrow. Bâko got up and went, saying, "As you wish, I will go." He went and told the town crier, "The mir has ordered [that you] go announce in town that he has proclaimed a hunting expedition." They sat around until evening, [then] Qaratazhdin and Memê Ala got up and went home. Memê Ala said to Qaratazhdin, "If you please, I can't go hunting." Qaratazhdin said, "Mem, don't come; when we go, you go sit in Mir Zeidin's diwan and play chess with lady Zin, don't worry about a thing. If Mir Zeidin asks about you, I'll answer for you." [Mem] said, "Yes, if you please." On that day the town crier made the announcement, accompanied by drums and a band of musicians⁵¹. Mir Zeidin went hunting. He went to the plains, leaving the city. At the same time, Memê Ala went to the diwan. Zin, the lady of Bohta[n], descended the stairs, coming to sit beside Memê Ala. They played chess together, oblivious of the whole world.

When Mir Zeidin's hunters went to the plains,
Along came a raincloud.

Mir Zeidin's hunters crossed the plains,
With a raincloud overhead.

When Mir Zeidin inspected the nobles of Bohtan,
He exclaimed to Qaratazhdin,

"O Qaratazhdin, Memê Ala didn't show up for this hunting
expedition."

[Qaratazhdin] answered, "O Mir Zeidin, this morning at
dawn,

Mem was suffering from a headache,
When he got up this morning he could not speak.

O mir, when the morning overtook him,
Memê Ala washed his hands and face,

⁵⁰This is the nickname of the villain Bakroka Awan. See note 18 above.

⁵¹me'terxane. In Turkish, **mehterhane** = 'Janissary band (of musicians)'. The janissaries (Turkish **yenîçeri**) were an elite corps of soldiers during the period between the 14th century and the late 19th century.

[78] And was beset with a fit of shivering,
 He didn't find it at all [fitting] to come hunting with mir
 Zeidin and the nobles of Bohtan.
 Mir Zeidin's hunters went to the plains,
 With a raincloud overhead.
 Mir Zeidin's hunters crossed the plains,
 And along came a raincloud.

[Mir Zeidin] said, "Accursed Bako, go back home, go to the
 diwan,
 Spread out carpets and kilims⁵² in the hallway,
 Wash plates and trays for a feasts.
 Today our hunt is constrained because of the rain."
 Accursed Bako returned home, then headed for the diwan,
 arriving at the door. Morning, early this morning,
 Memê Ala and Zin were playing chess together.
 They were only aware of each other, when cursed Bako
 came to the door.
 Memê Ala could do nothing.
 Zin, Lady of Bohtan, could not go to her place. Memê Ala got
 up and sat down.
 He hid Zin beneath [his] sheepskin coat.
 The accursed Bako shook out a rug⁵³.
 Then he saw that Mir Zeidin had arrived at the door of the
 diwan.
 Zin, Lady of Bohtan, was stuck under [Mem's] coat.
 All the nobles of Bohtan assembled in the diwan.
 When Mir Zeidin returned from the hunt,
 He greeted Memê Ala.
 Memê Ala returned his greeting without rising⁵⁴.

⁵²Kilims (called *gelt* in Kurdish), are flat-weave, pileless carpets.

⁵³[*taîşag*] = ? "a piece of carpet." Meaning uncertain.

⁵⁴=lit. "From the buttocks", i.e. 'on his ass'

Accursed Bako rose up before him and said, "Mem, are you better than the nobles of Bohtan?"

When Mir Zeidin, Lord of Bohtan, passes by,
How⁵⁵ do you greet him?"

[?Mem] said, "Bako, early this morning,
Mem had a bad headache,
For this reason [⁵⁶ can't speak to Mir Zeidin, Lord of Bohtan."

Mir Zeidin's diwan was full,
The nobles of Bohtan were seated all around.
Zin, Lady of Bohtan, was stuck under [Mem's] coat.
Memê Ala looked around the diwan,
[And] saw Qaratazhdin coming.
Memê Ala waved with his hand to Qaratazhdin.
Qaratazhdin came over to Memê Ala,
Qaratazhdin sat down beside Memê Ala,
Memê Ala could do nothing.

He turned pale⁵⁷.

He showed Qaratazhdin two of Zin's braids under the hem of his coat.

Qaratazhdin filled up his pipe.
Qaratazhdin [leisurely] smoked his pipe in the diwan,
Until it went out.

Qaratazhdin was very distressed.
This was a serious matter which had befallen him.
Qaratazhdin shook out his pipe in the diwan.

[79] Qaratazhdin rose to his feet,
Both of his eyes red with grief.
Qaratazhdin left the diwan,
He went home, called to his wife,

⁵⁵-lit "From where."

⁵⁶Note the shift from third person to first person.

⁵⁷-lit "Memê Ala's [facial] color changed."

[Saying], "Bring out the Koran and the baby's cradle,
I will set fire to our cottage, let it be a sacrifice."
[She] said, "Crazy Qaratazhdin,
We are neither guilty nor at fault.
Why should we burn down our cottage?"
[He] said, "Woman! You've talked long enough about this
matter!
I'll grab your arm and stab you four times!
Is it God's justice that Memê Ala and Zin, Lady of Bohtan,
should be taken to task⁵⁸?"
[She] said, "Qaratazhdin, in that case,
Let only the Koran -- the name of God -- be rescued⁵⁹.
Let the golden cradle stay in its place,
That our good reputation⁶⁰ be known in the world."
Crazy Qaratazhdin got up,
Taking flame in hand,
Set fire to his colorful cottage.
Flames shot up from it, some red and others blue.
[When] word reached the diwan of Mir Zeidin, Lord of
Bohtan,
For haste the slippers on their feet split⁶¹.
Suddenly the diwan was empty.
Even Mir Zeidin got up and left.
When he had gotten as far as the outer gate,
He realized that he had left one shoe⁶² inside⁶³,

⁵⁸Li ber deftera hatin =lit. "To come before the notebooks/registers." In my opinion, this means something like "To be taken to task for something", or "To be held accountable for something." In P5, it is explained as meaning '*den Blicken ausgesetzt sein*' = "To be exposed to glances", i.e. "To be publicly disgraced."

⁵⁹-lit. "Not stay inside."

⁶⁰Nav û namusek [nāv u nāmūsak] = lit. "Name and honor"

⁶¹i.e., Everyone ran out to see the fire so quickly that they split their shoes

⁶²Ṕēlay = "A type of shoe, high and pointed in back" (according to P5)

And said, "Bako, go get my shoe." When Bako went back
 [And] grabbed the shoe,
 He saw Zin, Lady of Bohtan, emerge from under Mem's
 sheepskin coat.

Accursed Bako watched with his own eyes,
 As she ascended the stairs [to her room].
 By the time everyone got there,
 The house had burnt to the ground.
 Mir Zeidin came back
 [And] sat on his throne.
 The diwan filled up [again],
 The nobles of Bohtan were seated all around.

Mir Zeidin said, "From top to bottom⁶⁴
 Qaratazhdin's house has burned down, we must take up a collection so
 that his [new] house is [even] better than the last one.

Qaratazhdin said one day, "O mir,
 Bring rooks, queens, and a chessboard,
 So that we can ask about each other's beloved⁶⁵."
 Accursed Bako arose,
 Brought rooks, queens, and a chessboard,
 [And] placed them before Mir Zeidin and Memê Ala.
 Mir Zeidin and Memê Ala played chess together.
 Lady Zin was seated at the window.
 Memê Ala beat Mir Zeidin three times.
 Then accursed Bako got up
 [And] said, "Mir, you're [both] still boys,

⁶³-lit. "One of his shoes had stayed in the house"

⁶⁴Ji hiştir fieta pêştir [ze hiştir hâtâ pêştir] -lit. "From camel to front." The saying places more importance on sound (the fact that *hiştir* and *pêştir* rhyme) than on meaning. This is a fairly common phenomenon in Middle Eastern languages. An Arabic example is the expression "Ana fi ħilm wa-lâ fi 'ilm?", meaning more or less "Am I dreaming?" The idea is "Am I in reality or in a dream", however the word 'ilm' means 'knowledge' rather than 'reality', but the meaning is apparently deemed close enough to justify not foregoing the rhyme of ħilm (Classical Arabic ħilm = "dream") and 'ilm.

⁶⁵According to the rules of the game, the loser must reveal who his beloved is to the winner

You're showering one another with blows,
Why don't you get up and change places?"

Memê Ala and the lord of Bohtan got up
[And] exchanged places.

After the rooks, queens, and chessboard were set up,
Memê ala lifted his eyes,

[And] saw Lady Zîn [80] above his head.

He put the chesspieces down any which way⁶⁶.

This time Mir Zeidin, Lord of Bohtan, beat Memê Ala at
chess.

Then he said, "Hey Mem, who is your beloved?"

[Mem] said, "I beat you three times,

But I never asked you who your beloved is⁶⁷.

[Mir Zeidin] said, "Mem, my beloved is a wild bear

With cracked feet and heels,

With a thistle⁶⁸ stuck in her bosom in the marketplace of
the city of Jezir⁶⁹."

[Then] Memê Ala replied, "My beloved is as black as ink⁷⁰,

She is [like] soot [from] flame and fire-brands.

She used to sell yoghurt in the marketplace of
the city of Jezir."

Thereupon accursed Bako arose,

⁶⁶lit. "badly"

⁶⁷i.e. So why are you asking me about mine?

⁶⁸*Kereng* or *kerger* is cardoon, bot *Cynara cardunculus*, a large perennial thorny plant related to the artichoke and cultivated for its edible root and leafstalks.

⁶⁹This may seem like nonsense in English, but it rhymes in Kurdish. Mir Zeidin is mocking Mem.

⁷⁰In PS, this last word, [dota] is translated as soot (German *Ruß*), presumably for *di*. I think ink is more likely, both because another word for soot (tent) is used in the next line, and because in Jaba and Justi's dictionary, the form [dot] دوت has a cross-reference to [devit] دویت, apparently a misprint for [devid] دوید (since [devit] دویت does not appear in the expected place in the dictionary), akin to Turkish *dīvît*, both from Arabic *dawâh* دواة = "inkwell", cf. Hebrew *dəyot* דיו = "ink."

[And] said, "Mem, why are you telling lies in your beard?"⁷¹
 Why don't you say your beloved is Zin,
 The newborn dove,
 Sister of my prince, Mir Zeidin?"

When Bako said this, Mir Zeidin said in a rage, "Hey, what's
 going on here?"

Grab Memê Ala by the arms and put him to the dagger;
 No sons of fathers shall say a word contrary to the word of
 the man at the top⁷²."

As [those in] the diwan sprang to action,
 Memê Ala pressed his back up against the wall,
 [And] pulled out his crooked dagger,
 They saw Qaratazhdin and his three brothers come in.
 When he saw that they were about to kill Memê Ala,
 Qaratazhdin said, "By Allah the great,
 By the Koran and the [holy] books and registers,
 If anyone stirs from his place, I'll expel his spirit from his
 body."

Not a soul moved from his place;
 A trembling broke out in Mir Zeidin's diwan,
 Qaratazhdin took Memê Ala by the arm,
 Led him out of the diwan,
 And headed for home.

Accursed Bako said, "Mir Zeidin, you yourself know that in front of
 Qaratazhdin and his three brothers you can't say anything." [Mir Zeidin] said, "Bako,
 what shall I do? I can't strike them: I'm afraid they would kill me." [Bako] said, "Shall
 I give you some advice?" [Mir Zeidin] said, "Tell me!" [Bako] said, "Send for

⁷¹In PS, this is translated as, "Why do you lie to the people in the beard?"

⁷²The meaning of this line is obscure.

Qaratazhdin to come. Since you have to donate gifts⁷³ to the Kaabah⁷⁴, say, 'I beg you, Qaratazhdin, I have to send gifts to the Kaabah: I need you and your brothers to take them there for me. Take a company of horsemen with you and deliver these gifts to the overseer of the Kaabah. I trust no one [else].' After he goes, we can take Memê Ala and throw him in the dungeon; then we'll have a way out. [Mir Zeidin] said, "Bako, go tell Qaratazhdin to come here." Bako got up and went. He said, "Qaratazhdin, the mir said for you to come."

Qaratazhdin got up and came,
Gave greeting to the diwan.

[Mir Zeidin] said, "Qaratazhdin, I sent word to you,
Something has happened to me."

[Qaratazhdin] said, "Mir, tell me what has happened."

[Mir Zeidin] said, "Last night, I dreamt

That I owed a donation to the overseer of the Kaabah;

I don't trust just anybody to deliver this money, [81] I need
you and your three brothers to take it

[And] deliver it to the overseer of the Kaabah,

Then return in goodness and safety.

[Qaratazhdin] said, "Well, your highness, we wouldn't go [of
our own accord],

But for your sake we will go."

[Mir Zeidin] said, "Put your things together⁷⁵."

Then Qaratazhdin went home. When he told his brothers, they said, "Brother, as you wish: you are our eldest brother, you can do as you wish." He went to the mir and said, "Mir, make your package ready!" [Mir Zeidin] said, "Gladly!" The mir got his package ready and had it tied up. Early in the morning it was loaded up. That night they went home and sat around. The following day they got up, put on their armor, prepared their horses, mounted them and rode off. They loaded up the gifts; a few horsemen went with them, and they left the city. When they were

⁷³Mal [māl] = lit. 'Property', from the Arabic māl مال

⁷⁴Central site of the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca

⁷⁵i. e. Get ready for the journey

gone, some servants came, took Memê Ala and threw him in the dungeon. They locked the door of the dungeon, leaving [only] a hole in it. Everyday they left him three [loaves of] bread and a pitcher of water. Lady Zin heard that Memê Ala had been taken. She put a black kerchief on her head, and wore black clothes.

Mem remained imprisoned for seven years. At the end of the seventh year, Qaratazhdin returned. His wife said, "God bless it⁷⁶, how have you treated your beloved brother []? You've been gone seven years, while Memê Ala has been imprisoned, thrown into the dungeon. By now his bones have probably rotted away."

The four brothers removed their armor. They entered the diwan,
 Saying, " We've come to set Memê Ala free,
 We will marry him to Lady Zin.
 Otherwise we will smear the diwan of the lord of Bohtan
 with blood and killing."
 Accursed Bako got up,

He would not let Mir Zeidin speak, but said, "He's not our prisoner, he's Lady Zin's prisoner, let her go set him free." He sent word to Lady Zin, saying, "Come set Memê Ala free!" Lady Zin went to the hamman⁷⁷, bathed, made up her eyes, let her hair hang loose. She put on whatever festive dress she had.

Lady Zin adorned herself in green and red⁷⁸,
 Betook herself to the dungeon,
 Saying, "Mem, arise! Goodness has come, strife has ended,
 if God wills it so."
 When Memê Ala lifts his eyes
 [And] sees Lady Zin above him in her finery,
 He softly sheds tears,
 Saying, "Lady Zin, you haven't come to see me,
 You've come to take the sweet spirit from my body."
 Memê stood up

⁷⁶This must be ironic, meaning really "God curse it."

⁷⁷Bathhouse

⁷⁸In a Bulgarian folksong, two flags are ordered, one green and one red. The green one is for battle, the red one for the wedding. It would be interesting to know if the same color symbolism is intended here, on the other side of what was the Ottoman Empire.

[And] asked Lady Zin for a bowl of water.
 Lady Zin ran and brought him a bowl of cold water.
 When she put it in the hands of Mem the miserable⁷⁹.
 Mem the miserable slowly drank,
 [Then] gave up his sweet spirit.
 Lady Zin said, "Every hour has been a year⁸⁰ for me,
 The world has become narrow for me,
 I swear by God, in this world there was only one Mem for
 me."

- [82] Lady Zin put her headkerchief on the ground, put on a black
 one⁸¹,
 Draped the door with colors of mourning⁸².
 Mir Zeidin said, "O Zin, Zin,
 Why are you crying?
 If I could buy you Memê Ala,
 I'd buy him for you with the gold of my treasury.
 Come now, Zin, don't be sad,
 I will assemble the noble of Bohtan for you,
 You choose one for yourself instead of Memê Ala.
 [She] said, "O Brother, from this side to that,
 I will paint [the room] indigo and [alum].
 After Memê Ala, may no boys remain to replace him."

She took Memê Ala[’s body] out of the dungeon, heated up a pot of water, and washed his corpse, [then] went to the market and bought linen cloth, made him a

⁷⁹This is Mem’s new -- albeit shortlived -- epithet.

⁸⁰The text has [sâ,ag] an obscure form. In PS this is translated as, "Every hour of my life I shall think of this hour."

⁸¹or, made it black or dust-colored by throwing it on the ground.

⁸²[šm u-haš] šm has two meanings: a) Mourning; b) in Southern Kurmanji dialects, such as the one in which this text was dictated, the word *hešm*, meaning both green and blue, takes the form *šm*. *heš* is also apparently a shortened form of *hešm*: in Jaba & Justi’s dictionary, there is a form [hech] هەش

= indigo, from [hechin] هەشین .

shroud of linen, sewed it [on him] and took him to the graveyard, dug him a grave, buried Memê Ala, and came back home.

[She] said, "I'm afraid it will rain,
It will leak through to Mem's grave,
Inside, Mem will fall to pieces⁸³.

[Mir Zeidin] said, "Zin, what do you want?" She said, "Mir
Zeidin, by God do as I say,

Take a handful of straw on your breast,

[Then] go spread it over Memê Ala's grave,

Give him a thousand greetings from Zin⁸⁴."

Mir Zeidin arose,

Did as his sister asked,

Took a handful of straw on his breast,

Gave Mem a thousand greetings from Zin.

Praised be the Lord, Memê Ala returned Mir Zeidin's
greeting.

He said, "Your and Zin's greeting is welcome;

Eight days from now,

Mem and Zin will go to heaven together."

Then Mir Zeidin, lord of Bohtan, wept,

Tears fell from his eyes.

He set out for home.

Zin came out to meet him. (She said, "Brother, why are you crying?" [He] said, "As I was walking, some dust got in my eye." She said, "Brother, I know what happened, but tell me the truth." He said, "Sister, it is from God")⁸⁵. He said,

"Zin, I did everything you told me to,

I took a handful of straw on my breast,

I went and spread it on Mem's grave,

Gave him a thousand greetings from Zin,

⁸³Will fall to pieces' is PS's rendering of this line.

⁸⁴-lit "From Zin's mouth."

⁸⁵According to PS, the sentences in brackets were added later.

Praised be God, Memê Ala returned my greeting
 [And] said, 'Your and Zin's greeting is welcome;
 Eight days from now,
 Mem and Zin will go to heaven together.' "

Zin got up,
 Went to make herself ready.
 Eight days later she died too.
 Responsibility for this was put on her brother⁸⁶, she said,
 "Bury me beside Memê Ala."

Some women washed Zin's body, bought her a linen shroud, [then] took her to the graveyard and buried her beside Mem. Then Mir Zeidin brought [83] ten mullahs there, read the Koran over them (this is the custom of the Kurmanj): from Sunday to Friday they recited the sūrah⁸⁷ Yâsin over the graves.

Mir Zeidin ordered that whoever goes to Mem and Zin's
 grave
 May not bring any weapons.

Seven days later, Qaratazhdin strapped on his dagger. He went to the graveyard and saw Bako there. While he stood, the nobles of Bohtan sat. He said, "Look, in this life⁸⁸ Zin would not let go of him, and in death⁸⁹ too she won't leave him alone." People said to him, "God damn you, while they were alive you never left them alone, now that they're gone you're still not letting them be." Bako said, "Memê Ala has gone to Zin's grave." The mir said, "Boys, dig up Zin's grave." When they had dug up her grave, they saw that Zin had gone to Mem's grave. Mir Zeidin was very grieved [and] said, "May the Aleppo blight befall the house of Bako's father, may it be forever intertwined with his family." Qaratazhdin stood up, put his

⁸⁶=lit. "She put her sins on her brother's neck."

⁸⁷A chapter of the Koran is called a sūrah.

⁸⁸=lit. "On/above the world"

⁸⁹=lit. "Below the world"

hands on the back of accursed Bako's neck, took out a dagger from his belt, and stabbed Bako with it. A drop of his blood fell between the two of them⁹⁰. At that instant a thornbush grew up between them. At that instant Zîn went to her own grave, [while] Memê Ala stayed in his place. The two of them were once again covered with dirt, and everyone went back home. I came from there⁹¹, God's mercy on the parents of the listeners⁹².

⁹⁰i.e. Mem and Zîn

⁹¹This is reminiscent of a common Sorani Kurdish concluding formula for folktales: **Minîş hatmewe û hiçyan nedamê** = "As for me, I came back, and they didn't give me anything"

⁹²This is almost identical to a common Kurmanji Kurdish introductory formula for folktales. Cf. the first several folktales in PS, collected in the Tur 'Abdin district of what is today the province of Mardin, Kurdistan of Turkey

Makas, Hugo. "Mamu und Zine", in *Kurdische Texte im Kurmanji-Dialekte aus der Gegend von Mardin*. (St-Petersburg/ Leningrad, 1897-1926; reprint Amsterdam : APA - Philo Press, 1979), pp. 15]-20. [Kurmanji in Latin phonetic transcription + German translation] (HM)

HM. Collected c. 1896 by Hugo Makas from the merchant Mohammed Emîn bin Shemdîn el-Mendilkânî (henceforth Emîn) during the latter's year-long stay in Brünn/Brno, Moravia (today in Czechoslovakia). Emîn dictated the text to Hugo Makas. Emîn was born in Mardin, to a family of Kurdish chieftains originally from the now ruined town of Mendile. Emîn's family, known as "beit Ismail beg" was Muslim, and was bilingual in Arabic and Kurdish, as is still common in Mardin today. Emîn himself travelled widely in his business dealings, and although he was illiterate in Arabic script, had a passing knowledge of several languages. According to what Makas says in his introduction, it is possible that 20 years had passed since Emîn, who was approximately 40 years old when this text was collected, had last heard the story recited. He apparently stuck to a fixed form of the story, first telling the whole tale in minute detail in Arabic. In reciting the Kurdish version, he left out certain details, such as the true reason why Mamu died, which he claimed any Kurd would know, and therefore needed no explanation.

Mámu u Ziné (HM)

"Yes lo lo o Father. Last night I saw a dream, in the
dream

I was going around asking where Qaratajдин's house was.
By God, Ziné and I swapped rings."

"O son, don't. You are the son of the mir¹ of the
Alan [clan].

Whom does your heart desire from the daughters of mirs
and the daughters of aghas ?"

Mámu said, "By God, O father, I shall go." Mir Alan said, "Okay son, go. May God not let your affair turn out right. May your neck break. May your throat dissolve." Mámu went to the country of Jeziré Botá. He was a guest at the house of Báko Awân. Báko Awân asked him, "O guest, how are you?" Mámu Alan said, "By God, my mir, I have come because of [my] love of Ziné."

¹=prince.

²=feudal lords.

Báko Awân said, "My guest, whom are you asking about? That's my daughter." When Mámu Alan looked at Báko Awân's daughter, he was shocked, and struck dumb. Báko Awân took Mámu Alan to the diwan of mir Sevdîn. When Qaratajdin saw Mámu Alan, he was astounded. He asked him, "O cousin, where are you from?" Mámu Alan said, "O cousin, I am the son of the mir of the Alan [clan]." Qaratajdin said, "What business do you have in these parts?" Mámu Alan said, "By God, cousin, I have come because of [my] love of Ziné. When I saw Ziné³, I was shocked. The one I saw [6] in my dream was different." Qaratajdin said, "O brother, we are three brothers. You will be the fourth. I know who your betrothed is. It is the sister of mir Sevdîn. They are going hunting for two or three days. You act sick [so that you can stay behind]. You will see Ziné." Mir Sevdîn went hunting with his men. Báko Awân went to mir Sevdîn and said, "My mir, how can you leave Mámu Alan alone in the diwan? He is a stranger⁴. Perhaps he will see your wife [or] your sister. It is a disgrace among us [to do such a thing]." Mir Sevdîn said, "Go bring him, even if he is in the middle of dying⁵." The men went and brought Qaratajdin [and] Mámu Alan. He rode on the horse lying on his stomach⁶. They went for half an hour. Qaratajdin went to mir Sevdîn and said,

"Lo lo o mir,
We are going hunting and the like,
Dragging a corpse around with us."

Mir Sevdin said, "Tie up Mámu's horse. If Mámu feels better, let him go to the diwan. If he doesn't feel better, we will return from hunting, we will take Mámu back to the diwan ourselves." Mir Sevdîn went hunting with his men. They descended from a hilltop, [and] went. Mámu looked for them, [but]

³According to Makas, Báko Awân's daughter is intended here.

⁴=lit. "That man is a stranger/foreigner."

⁵=No matter what he is doing, bring him to me.

⁶=to feign illness.

they were not apparent. Mâmu Alan got on his horse, and headed for the diwan. When he got to the diwan, he sat down there and fell asleep. Zinë, the sister of mir Sevdin, came to the diwan with two maidservants. They looked at [7] Mâmu Alan, and all three girls fell in love with him. The two maidservants said to each other, "He's mine." Zinë said, "He's neither yours, nor hers, nor mine. Each one of us will sing a song⁷ for Mâmu Alan. Whoever's voice makes him wake up and open his eyes, he's for that one." First the one maidservant sang her song, [but] Mâmu did not wake up. Then the other maidservant sang her song for Mâmu, [but] he did not wake up. Zinë sang her song for Mâmu. Before she could finish her song, Mâmu Alan opened his eyes and woke up, and saw Zinë. The two maidservants went away. Mâmu and Zinë stayed there. They fell in love.

Mir Sevdin was returning from the hunt. There were two hours of travelling left before he'd reach the diwan. Qaratajdin knew that Mâmu and Zinë had fallen in love. Qaratajdin said to his brothers, "Brothers, what⁸ should we do? I fear that mir Sevdin will come to the diwan and see Mâmu and Zinë have fallen in love⁹. They don't know what time we are returning from the hunt. We'll make a racket, and shoot off our pistols. Perhaps Mâmu will hear, so that Zinë, who is with Mâmu, will leave the diwan, so that mir Sevdin sees nothing." Qaratajdin and his brothers raise a racket, shoot off their pistols, sing in shrill voices, as they approach the diwan. Qaratajdin was afraid that Mâmu and Zinë had fallen in love¹⁰, and would not hear. Qaratajdin went to his mir and said, "My mir, I'll go to the diwan and prepare the coffee and the place. [8] So that when my mir gets down [off his horse], his place will be ready." Mir Sevdin ordered, "Let Qaratajdin go." Qaratajdin went. Bâko Awân said to mir Sevdin, "My mir, it's not necessary for Qaratajdin to go to the diwan to make the place ready. Order him to return." Mir Sevdin ordered a

⁷-lit. "throw a song."

⁸-lit. "how."

⁹The original Kurdish could mean 'making love'.

¹⁰Same as note 9.

horseman, "Make haste, go quickly to Qaratajdin, and tell [him] that mir Sevdin has ordered him to return: it's not necessary that he go to the diwan." Qaratajdin returned. Mir Sevdin and his men went as far as the diwan. Mir Sevdin got down off his horse, went into the diwan, and saw Mâmu Alan alone. Mâmu Alan did not greet him, which shocked mir Sevdin. Mir Sevdin's men came to the diwan and sat down. Mir Sevdin ordered Qaratajdin, "Today you give the men coffee." Qaratajdin went around the diwan, giving out coffee. When he came to Mâmu Alan, Mâmu opened his overcoat, and Qaratajdin could see Zînê's hair.

Qaratajdin went crazy, and went out and called his brother Arfo, saying, "What should we do to rescue Mâmu?" Arfo said, "Brother, pretend you're crazy, and go bum down mir Sevdin's tent." Qaratajdin went and burnt down mir Sevdin's horse and tent. Arfo went to the diwan and said, "My mir, Qaratajdin has gone stark raving mad: he has burnt up your horse and tent." Mir Sevdin stood up. Bâko Awân said, "My mir, for a horse and a tent you get up? Tomorrow I will bring you [9] better than that horse and that tent ." Mir Sevdin returned to his place and sat down. Qaratajdin said, "Brother, this won't do. Let's do this: say to your wife, "Will you give your blood¹¹, so that we can rescue Mâmu Alan?"¹² Arfo went to his wife and said, "Hey girl, will you give your blood for the sake of Mâmu Alan?" Arfo's wife said, "Yes, I'll give my blood for the sake of Mâmu Alan." Qaratajdin went and said to Arfo's wife, "Stand up, and take your son with you. Go seven feet away from me. When I say, 'Run', make a shrill cry and run. When I reach you, I'll kill you and your son." Arfo's wife obeyed Qaratajdin, and ran with her son. Qaratajdin set out after her, reached her and drew his sword. With one blow he struck her down, killing her and her son. Arfo went and informed mir Sevdin, [saying.] "My mir, Qaratajdin has gone stark raving mad: he's killed my wife and child." Mir Sevdin stood up. Bâko Awân said, "My mir, why have you stood up? He killed my sister, no harm done." Mir Sevdin said, "Everyone speaks for himself." Mir Sevdin got up and went out.

¹¹=life.

¹²According to Makas' notes, Qaratajdin chose Arfo's wife because she is Bâko Awân's sister.

Zinê came out from under Mâmu's overcoat and went up. Mîr Sevđîn returned to the diwan and saw the tip of Zinê's caftan. He didn't know whether it was the caftan of his wife or the caftan of his sister. They sat down. Bâko Awân said, "My mîr, let's all take an oath by the sword and the Koran. We'll say who our beloved is [10]." Mîr Sevđîn said, "Yes." Mîr Sevđîn was the first to take an oath. All the men took an oath. It was Mâmu Alan's turn. Qaratajđin got up and said, "My mîr, this isn't right. I'll swear an oath in Mâmu's stead." Mîr Sevđîn said, "If you trust him, take the oath." Qaratajđin took an oath, saying:

"Yes lo lo o Bâko Awâno¹³,
 You've placed sword and Koran before Mâmu Alan.
 God knows that Mâmu Alan does not have a herd of
 lovers¹⁴,
 Except for one of the Arabs; it was the daughter of the lady
 of Qâra Oglânî"

Bâko Awân said, "My mîr, each one of you should take an oath." Mîr Sevđîn ordered, "Mâmu Alan, take an oath." Mâmu Alan took an oath, [saying]:

"Yes lo lo o Bâko Awâno.
 You placed sword and Koran before me.
 God knows that I don't have a herd of lovers,
 There is only one: her name is Zinê.
 She is the daughter of the lady of Qaratajđin,
 the sister of mîr Sevđîn.

¹³Additional -o at the end of Awâno is a vocative form.

¹⁴This line is troublesome: Makas translates it as "there is no secret about a beloved of Mâmu Alan," but understanding 'surâjâ' (suraye) as secret, does not make sense grammatically: perhaps the Turkish *sürû* = 'herd' is meant. 'döstê mâmu alân' is also troublesome, as grammatically it could not mean a *female* lover of Mâmu Alan's. However, it could be plural (irrespective of gender): If am right, this passage would mean something like 'Mâmu Alan does not have a herd of lovers'.

Yes lo lo miro ¹⁵,
 Get up and chop off my head, stuff it up the wife of Bâko
 Awân."

Mir Sevdîn said, "O men, get up; thrust your daggers all around in Mâmu Alan."¹¹ Mâmu Alan put his hand on his dagger, drew it out, [and] its handle broke: it fell from his hand. Qaratajdin saw Mâmu Alan: never in his life had he seen such a man. Qaratajdin got up, went stark raving mad, and said:

"Yes lo lo miro miro miro.
 If you so much as throw a rose at Mâmu Alan,
 I will send mir Sevdîn's very head a-flying."

Mir Sevdin said, "Bread and salt are forbidden to you [from now on]¹⁶." Qaratajdin and his brothers and Mâmu Alan got up and left. They walked for three or four hours. Qaratajdin saw that Mâmu Alan [was walking] one step forward, and four back¹⁷. Qaratajdin said, "Mâmu, I know you are in love with Zîné. Take care of yourself." Mâmu went back to the diwan of mir Sevdîn. Qaratajdin and his brothers went to Sham¹⁸. Mir Sevdîn said, "Mâmu Alan, let's play chess. If you win, I'll give you Zîné. If I win, I will imprison you in the diwan." Mâmu accepted, saying, "My mir, all right, I accept." The two of them played together from morning till noon. Mâmu won. They went and had something to eat, then returned to their places. Bâko Awân was there and

¹⁵Additional -o is a vocative form, as in note 13 above.

¹⁶According to Ibrahim Muhawi and Sharif Kanaana, "Salt symbolizes the bond that holds people together. The phrase "They've share bread and salt" (bēnhum 'ēš u-maīh) describes a strong bond, and when someone breaks a trust he is said to have "betrayed the bread and salt" (yxūn il-'ēš w-il-maīh)." See their *Speak Bird, Speak Again* (Berkeley et al.: University of California Press, 1989), p. 107, note 10. See also: Ernest Jones. "The Symbolic Significance of Salt in Folklore and Superstition," *Imago* 1 (1912), 361- ; reprinted in his: *Psycho-Myth, Psycho-History : Essays in Applied Psychoanalysis* (New York : Hillstone, 1974), pp. 22-109, esp. 37-8.

¹⁷-lit. "Qaratajdin saw Mâmu Alan [was walking] one foot forward, and four back", i.e. he kept turning around and looking back, thinking of Zîné.

¹⁸-Syria.

said, "My mîr, change places." Mâmu sat in mîr Sevdîn's place and mîr Sevdîn sat in Mâmu Alan's place. They played on. Then Mâmu Alan just happened to look up and see Zînê. [12] He became bewildered, and lost [the game]. Mîr Sevdîn said, "You have lost. I will imprison you in the diwan."

Bâko Awân came to mîr Sevdîn and said, "My mîr, have you imprisoned Mâmu Alan?" Mîr Sevdîn said, "Yes." Bâko Awân asked, "Where have you imprisoned him?" Mîr Sevdîn said, "In the diwan." Bâko Awân said, "How can you imprison him in the diwan?" Mîr Sevdîn said, "Where should I imprison him?" Bâko Awân said, "Let's throw him in the dungeon." Mîr Sevdîn said, "Fine." They threw Mâmu Alan into the dungeon. Zînê was sick [with grief]. Every day she took bread and meat and gave it to Mâmu Alan. Time passed and one day, Zînê saw a traveller¹⁹ coming by. She called out to him, "Hey man!" When the man saw Zînê, he fell in love with her. He turned around, opened his eyes, looked at Zînê and said, "Yes, Zînê, how are you doing?" Zînê said, "O man, can you take a letter for me to Sham? Give it to Qaratajdin²⁰." The traveller said, "I can take a letter in seven days and nights and give it to Qaratajdin. Swear that if I return safe and sound, you will marry²¹ me." Zînê swore, saying, "May God's oath fall on the spirit of my soul. If you return safe and sound, I will marry you." Zînê wrote the letter. In the letter she wrote to Qaratajdin, "As soon as you get this letter, at that very moment kill this man²². I have sworn that I will marry him if he returns safe and sound." Zînê finished the letter [13] and gave it to the traveller. The man took it from Zînê and went on. When he got to the country of Sham, he asked for Qaratajdin. He found Qaratajdin in a coffee house, gave him the letter and left. Qaratajdin opened the letter and read it, [then said,] "Mâmu is in a bad state, and Zînê has sworn to marry this man." He got up, and all three brothers got on their horses and left Sham. They saw the man running. Qaratajdin spurred his horse on, went

¹⁹peya = man or pedestrian/walker.

²⁰lit. = "to the hand of Qaratajdin."

²¹lit. = "take."

²²Motif K978. Uriah letter. Man carries written order for his own execution. This famous motif appears in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

up to the man and killed him. They rode to Jezîrê Botâ in four days and four nights. They rode to the diwan of mîr Sevdîn, dismounted, went inside and greeted [the mîr]. Qaratajdin said, "Where is my brother Mámu?" Mîr Sevdîn said, "My dear, come sit down. We'll bring Mámu Alan in a moment."

Báko Awân went to Zîné and said, "Come Zîné. Go invite forty girls and musicians and go together to take Mámu Alan out of the dungeon." Zîné was delighted. She went and called forty girls and musicians, and they went to Mámu Alan's prison. Zîné called out, "Hey Mámu, get up!" Mámu Alan opened his eyes and said:

"Yes Zîné Zîné Zîné, with black eyes and golden spangles.
 You have not come to take Mámu Alan out of prison.
 You have come to let Mámu Alan's soul out of its cage.
 One eye has gone, one eye remains,
 One hand has gone, one hand remains,
 [14] One foot has gone, one foot remains."

Zîné said:

"A word has escaped the mouth of Mámu Alan;
 Three drops of blood have dripped from the nose of Mámu
 Alan;
 At this time, at this hour Mámu Alan is shivering in the
 dungeon."

They took Mámu Alan [his body] out of the dungeon and placed him in a grave. Zîné died eight days after Mámu Alan. They took her [body] and put her in the grave in another place. Mîr Sevdîn said, "Let's make a bet, and play jirid²³, and see where the lance falls. If the lance falls on Mámu's grave, we'll open up his grave: if it falls on Zîné's grave, we'll open her grave up." They played on Friday, and by the power of God the lance fell on Mámu Alan's

²³A game played on horseback with lances, similar to polo.

grave. They opened his grave. Qaratajdin opened it. They found Mâmu and Zînê together in the same grave, with a sword of clay between them. Qaratajdin called out, "Hey Bâko Awâno, come see God's strength, what there is here." Bâko Awân came and looked from above, and was amazed. Qaratajdin grabbed hold of him and pulled him into the grave. He said, "What is this?" Qaratajdin drew his dagger to kill him. Mir Sevdîn called out, "Qaratajdin, don't kill him: in the grave, his blood will be harmful." Qaratajdin did not listen to mir Sevdîn and did not wait. Twenty one times [15] he thrust his dagger into Bâko Awân and killed him. They climbed out of the grave, covered it with earth²⁴, and left. Bâko Awân's blood became a thornbush on the grave of Mâmu and Zînê, which came out of the treachery of Bâko Awân.

²⁴ijt. "put earth on it."

Le Coq, Albert von. "Hikāyēi māmī ālan," in *Kurdische Texte: Kurmanġi-Erzählungen und -Lieder nebst einer Zāzā Erzählung, gesammelt und herausgegeben in der Urschrift und in Transkription* (Berlin, 1903; reprint Amsterdam : APA - Philo Press, [198-?]), pp. 36-44; ٤٢ -٥٢ . [Kurmanji in Latin phonetic transcription + Arabic script; translation planned but never published (?)] (LC-1)

LC-1. Collected by Albert von Le Coq in the fall of 1901, from Ja'far Oġlu Seidi Bîyâ, at Zincirli (Zengirli), near the town of Islâhiye (Eş-Sâlihiye) in the western part of the modern province of Gaziantep, i.e. in the extreme western part of Kurdistan of Turkey. We know little about the informant other than the fact that he is a native of Zincirli. The text is in rhyming verse, although it has not been printed as such on the page: in my translation, I have indicated where each line begins and ends. The poetry of this version bears a great deal of similarity to that of ZK-2, which was collected in 1970 from an elderly Armenian man who grew up among the Reshkot (a Kurdish tribe of the Yezidi religion) in the province of Diyarbekir: this fact tells us much about the formulaic character of Mem û Zîn, and of Kurdish verbal art in general. Zincirli is the site of the ancient Greek ruins of Samal, where some important early Aramaic inscriptions were uncovered: Le Coq exploited the opportunity of accompanying an archaeological expedition that was excavating there, to study the language of the indigenous Kurds of the region by collecting a series of texts. The texts, which include two versions of Mem û Zîn, were first published in 1903 in primitive Latin phonetic transcription + Arabic script; a German translation was planned, but was apparently never published.

Hikāyēi Māmī Alan (LC-1)

[36] O Sir, in the country of Mughrib,¹ in the very city of Mughrib, my heart is sad²

The city of Mughrib is black and wide,
[It rests] on top of forty four stone heaps,
On top of twenty four mountains,

Note: In the text, numbers in brackets [] refer to page numbers in the original text in Latin transcription; numbers in parentheses () refer to line numbers in that text.

¹Mughrib, from the Arabic word for "West," *مغرب* maghrib. In most versions, the imaginary city which Memê Alan hails from is called Mukhurzemîn or Mikhurzemîn. *Zemîn* is a Persian word meaning 'Land' or 'Country' (cf. Russian *zemlia* земля); Mukhur-/mikhur- may be derived from the Arabic word *maghrib*. In one version (MC-1), the place is known as *Merkebzemîn*, i.e. 'The Land to the West.' In OM and several Southern Kurmanji versions, Mem is from Yemen.

²This last part is 'filler,' unessential to the meaning of the verse. It does, however, serve the important function of setting the rhyme scheme, which in this case is in *-ane*.

[With] three hundred and sixty six town quarters,
 Every quarter with three hundred and sixty six slender minarets.
 But there are three begs³ in this city, all three are brothers; they have no children,
 their households are empty, their lineage is lost⁴.
 One day⁵ (5) in the city of Mughrib five holidays coincided⁶, one an *eed*⁷ of the
 Christians,
 One an eed of the Jews,
 And one an eed of the Muslims,
 One the day of the imperial session, and one the day of the Prophets, Friday, Eed
 of the Seers,⁸
 All three begs, the rulers of Mughrib
 [Sat] on their imperial thrones watching the people of Mughrib,
 Hearing everyone going to visit their father's house in goodness,

³=Princes chieftains

⁴War wundane =lit: "Their encampment is lost." This is a variant of the curse *Eñn war wunda bin* (Kurcoev) or *Wara wund bin!* (Khamoian), which means "May your race/family perish!" The Arabs have a similar curse, *yikhrab bêtak بيتك يخراب*, "May your household be destroyed."

⁵=lit. "One day from under the days of God."

⁶=lit: "reached each other"

⁷E'yd or Id, from Arabic عيد , is a major religious holiday.

⁸nöyâ nabîâ wa ênbrâ röyâ inâ idâ paigâmbârâne =lit. "The day of the nabîs and anbiyâ (from nabî نبي, Arabic for 'Prophet,' and anbiyâ أنبياء, the broken plural of nabî, Friday, the eed of the peyghamber [from peyghambar پيغمبر, Persian for 'Prophet,' literally 'Bearer [-bar] of the message | peyghâm پیام |]. Hence, the Prophets are mentioned three times in one line, twice in Arabic and once in Persian.

Young wives⁹ took hold of their children's hands and went to their father's house¹⁰,

Fourteen year-old boys mounted (10) their horses,

Setting out merrily, while the three begs watched from their imperial thrones, from their five-colored mansion.

The three begs saw with their own eyes the happiness of the city of Mughrib,

The three begs looked each other in the eye, stood up and took hold of the keys to the treasury.

They were not indifferent¹¹ to the treasury and its contents,

The three begs followed on each other's heels¹² and went to their imperial thrones, each one holding a handkerchief ready, and crying (15) together.

In the city of Mughrib, 450 sheikhs and *ulemas*¹³ assembled and went to pay a holiday visit to the three begs.

The royal sheikh¹⁴ preceded the ulema

In climbing up the 64 steps.

All around they stood respectfully with crossed hands¹⁵, looking up to see the three begs crying.

9-lit. "Brides"

10-This recalls the *zeyf*, when a [newly] married woman goes to visit her father's household. See ZK-2, note #10.

11-lit "Their hearts were not cool from the treasures" Although this expression does not appear in the dictionaries, one reminiscent of it does. *Ditê xwe sar kirin* - lit. "To make one's heart *axê*" (rather than *axê*) according to Khamoian, this means: 1) To lose heart, become despondent, discouraged, or disillusioned; 2) To become indifferent.

12-lit "Took hold of each other's foot"

13-Learned men, from Arabic 'ulamâ' علماء

14>*şêxî hünkârê*, a fixed epithet for the sheikhs, or Muslim religious men. One of the epithets of the Ottoman sultans was *Hünkâr*, from Persian *khun(d)kâr* خوندنگار. Hence, the Hunkar sheikh would be "a sheikh of the Ottoman sultan (or some other ruler)," or "a royal sheikh."

15>*yacıytrdâ* < Turkish *yedi yerde* - "in seven places" i.e. everywhere *el-pañcâ diwân skînin* < Turkish: *el pençe divan durmak* - "to stand in an attitude of respect with joined hands, to stand ready to receive orders" In a Turkish romance epic, "Letif Şah ve Telli Mehriban," collected in *Kars*

The sheikh and ulemas spent three hours before them¹⁶,
 The royal sheikh respectfully asked the three begs,
 "Sires, what is the cause¹⁷? Today is a special day, the eed of Arafat¹⁸,
 We are not afraid of the seven kings and the nation of Ali Osman,
 We are not afraid (20) of Ethiopia or of India.
 We have no need of treasures or of riches.

What is the reason that on the day of the eed of Arafat you three brothers have
 burst into tears?"

An hour later the three begs had finished their crying and grieving, and called on
 the royal sheikh,

"O my sheikh, truly we are not afraid of the seven kings and the nation of Ali
 Osman,

But I am the master of the land of Mughrib, and of Ajamistan¹⁹

Are under my rule, but the cause (25) of our weeping is that we are three
 brothers,

We have no children, our lineage is lost,
 Fate is not on our side²⁰.

After we die there is no one to sit on the imperial throne,
 Our throne will remain in the hands of servants and the like,
 We are crying for [lack of] male offspring."

The royal sheikh and the 450 ulema arose in anticipation of the three begs,

by Ahmet Caferoglu in 1942, there is a recurrent phrase very similar to this one, and in a similar context, i.e. describing the respectful obeisance performed when coming into the presence of a king. The phrase in Azeri Turkish as spoken by members of the Karapapak or Terekeme tribe is *yeddi yerde temenah etedi* = "in seven places he made the oriental salute (bringing the fingers of the right hand to the lips and then to the forehead)." See Ahmet Caferoglu, "Letif Şah ve Tellî Mehriban Hikayesi," *Doğu İllerimiz Ağızlarından Toplamalar*, vol 3 : Karş, Erzurum, Çoruh İlbaylıklar Ağızları (İstanbul : Burhaneddin Basımevi, 1942), pp. 119-47.

¹⁶barkoşâne, which perhaps means "before their breasts," i.e. in front of them.

¹⁷i.e. of your grier?

¹⁸Arafat is the name of a mountain and the adjacent plain east of Mecca, where devout Muslim pilgrims (Hâjj, plural Hujjâ) spend the ninth day of the Pilgrimage (al-Hajj)

¹⁹i.e. Persia

²⁰-lit "Fate is not (or. doesn't take) for us."

They all burst into tears,

The sheikh and elders washed themselves again²¹, turning to face Mecca (30) the Venerated and Medina the Enlightened, in the posture for praying to the Lord of the World, and cried.

The ulemas took out a book of incantations and a seal, looked at the stars and read their fortunes, perusing books of tradition and [the book of] the fairies²².

They wept to the Lord of the World for three days,

In the evening, on Friday night, at *yatsi*,²³

At the hour of the third [division],²⁴

The royal sheikh stood in the posture for prayer, then for the *yatsi* prayer; he performed two prosternations to the Lord of the World; he performed two prosternations, then looked up and saw four brothers.

[37] (35) Four brothers: One was Ezraïl, one was Gabriel, one was Michael and one was Israfil, God rest his soul.²⁵ They called out, "O Roya! Sheikh! Your begs' house won't flourish²⁶ except from the house of Qureysh²⁷.

²¹ i.e., performed the *aptes* (Turkish)/*âbdasti* (Persian)/*wuđû'* (Arabic), or ritual ablutions that precede the Muslim prayer ritual

²² This line includes several words whose meaning is not clear. I am guessing at the meaning of the following: *ismu 'azim* = "a book of incantations"; *kitâbe sinâ* may be a garbled version of the Islamic expression: *al kitâb wa-al-sunnah* **الكتاب والسنة** = the book (i.e. the Koran) and the traditions.

For a brief discussion of this expression, see E. W. Lane *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (reprint: Beirut : Librairie du Liban, 1980), vol. 4, p. 1438, col. 2 at bottom

²³ *Yasîjan*. This is for the *Yatsi*, the Turkish name for the fifth daily call to prayer, two hours after sunset. Cf. LT, p. 22. I. 198 "Şeva li *yasiyan* be...", translated as "À l'heure de la prière de la nuit" (=at the hour of the nighttime prayer)

²⁴ This could not mean 3:00 for two reasons: 1) It is stated above that night has fallen; 2) *Yatsi* occurs around 8:00 P.M. Moreover, the Kurds divide the day into three 8-hour periods called *Dan/De'n*; the onset of the third period could very well coincide with the fifth call to prayer (*Yatsi*).

²⁵ These are the four patron angels, according to Islamic belief

²⁶ -lit "Their hearth won't grow/be green." See M. Mokri "Le Foyer Kurde" in: *Recherches de la Kurdologie. Contribution scientifique aux études iraniennes* (Paris : Librairie Klincksieck, 1970), p. 23.

²⁷ Tribe of the Prophet Muhammad.

The royal sheikh went to the eldest brother, Rijal Hasan, [who said,] "O my sheikh, good evening to you!" The royal sheikh said, "O my king, last night at the *yats*/prayers, the voices of four brothers came to me: these four brothers were angels for the Lord of the World, by God's decree, according to the angels, your household will [only] flourish from the house of the Sheikh of Qureysh."

(40) The next day they called the sheikhs and elders, the faithful and mystics, the learned and ulemas of Mughrib, who assembled and mounted their horses and mares, and headed for the house of the Sheikh of Qureysh.

For three days and three nights they roamed around the city of Mughrib,

They came across a community of cadis²⁸, and saw that they were performing the Friday prayers; they came out to look at the community of cadis, and saw a house with four doors,

With forty four arches²⁹,

Three hundred and sixty windows,

They asked whose house this was, and were told, "It's the house of the Sheikh of Qureysh."

They dismounted (45) before the gateway,

And saw that there was a sheikh and a guard standing before each door,

The sheikhs split up [and went] to different rooms,

The royal sheikh went to the diwan of the Sheikh of Qureysh,

Where he was a guest for three days and three nights,

After three days the royal sheikh said to the Sheikh of Qureysh,

"O my sheikh, today I have been your guest together with the 450 ulema of Mughrib for three days and three nights,

Why don't you ask [why we have come]." The Sheikh of Qureysh [said], "Don't I know why you have come³⁰,

Royal (50) sheikh? Sir, it is known that your begs of Mughrib, possessors

²⁸Turkish *kadı camiası* = "Community of cadis [=Islamic judges]."

²⁹Qantirmâne. I am guessing that this is like the Arabic word *qanṭarah* قنطرة - 'arch,' 'vault.'

³⁰=lit "Why you were guest."

Of the royal throne are three brothers whose households are empty, their lineage lost,

They have asked you for the daughters of women,
By order of God and the call of the angels."

The Sheikh of Qureysh said, "Call the sheikhs and elders, call the ulema of Mughrib."

324 dervished and sufis and 450 ulemas of Mughrib

Took out a pair of flags and wagons and gloves,

The Sheikh of Qureysh said, "My heart is crazy, brings me wagons and [pêtûn],

(55) Bring out my daughter Zelikha Khatûn,³¹

Send her to the master of the royal throne,

Bring her out by God's command, the shariah, and the prophets."

They brought Zelikha out,

They brought her out of the mansion of the Sheikh of Qureysh,

They took her to the begs' mansion, they made her a guest of the mîr of Mughrib.

The royal sheikh went to the eldest brother [and said],

"O my mîr, I have brought you the daughter of the Sheikh of Qureysh."

Rijal Hasan said, "I am eighty five (60) years old,

I don't need any women,

It is too late for me, don't put me in the hands of women,

There are two brothers younger than me."

The royal sheikh went to the middle brother, Sheikh Ibrahim:

"O Sheikh Ibrahim, I have brought you the daughter of the Sheikh of Qureysh."

Sheikh Ibrahim said, "I am fifty five years old,

I don't need any woman,

There is one younger than me, Shirin Elma³²."

The royal sheikh went to Shirin Elma:

"O my mîr, by the order of God, by the call of the angels,

By the good will of the Sheikh of Qureysh,

(65) [dengî e'rebane purê purê] (flutter?) the flag of the group of ulema.

³¹i.e. Lady Zelikha

³²This is Turkish for "Sweet Apple"

I have brought you the daughter of the Sheikh of Qureysh,
 So that your household may flourish from a daughter of the Qureysh."
 Shirin Elma said, "There are two brothers older than me,
 Without their permission³³ I won't marry any woman³⁴."

The royal sheikh and Sheikh Ibrahim and the group of the ulemas of Mughrib
 Betrothed Zelikha Khatûn to Shirin Elma.

Some time passed,³⁵

Nine months, nine days, nine hours and nine minutes,
 Zelikha brought forth a male child.

(70) The towncrier called out all over Mughrib,
 However many prisons there were in the city of Mughrib,
 They were all emptied out,
 Many alms and charity were given.

They sent a towncrier around the city of Mughrib,
 On the day when God on high gave one child³⁶, he gave 366 children,
 They bound up the wages of these children with the mîrs' treasury,
 They gave sustenance to the parents of these children,
 The three of them³⁷ gave in.

The sheikhs and ulemas of Mughrib gathered (75) around this child, [asking],
 "How is it that
 They have named this child Shirin Memê Alan?"
 When Memê was six months old,
 [He was] in his parent's embrace,
 When Memê turned six years old,

³³-lit: "Without their command/order."

³⁴-lit: "I won't go (to) the bridal chamber [Turkish *Gerdek*] of women."

³⁵-lit: "[he] fell to the day of time and hours"

³⁶The word used for child is [maħsûm] محصوم , which seems to be derived from the Arabic word ma'sûm محصوم , originally meaning 'sinless,' 'innocent,' and then by extension coming to mean 'child' in Ottoman Turkish and Kurdish

³⁷Presumably this refers to the three brothers Rijal Hasan, Sheikh Ibrahim, and Shirin Elma

Anyone who happened to see him would say, "I suppose he's twelve years old."

My heart is a crazy heart, *[dîlimin dîlikî dîne]*

Those who see Memê

Are all [worthy of] shrines

and all [36] [worthy of] paradise.

My heart is an apparent heart, *[dîlimin dîlikî lâxâne]*

When Memê turned ten years old,

Those who looked at Memê's face couldn't

Tell it apart from the sun and the moon.

They took Memê away from his parents

And his two uncles,

They handed him over to (80) teachers and ulemas,

They made a school pavilion for Mem.

When he was six going on seven,

Memê read the Psalms, the Gospel, the Torah and the Koran,³⁸

He finished reading the four books of tradition³⁹, and read the [book of] incantations, the [book of] seals, the art of fairies,

And they took Memê away from the ulemas.

One day fishermen threw their nets⁴⁰ into the sea, and brought out a sea colt⁴¹; they brought the colt and tied him up

In the stable of the Sheikh of Qureysh.

The Sheikh of Qureysh gave the fishermen gifts and rewards,

He (85) sent the sea colt to Memê Alan, and they tied it up in Memê's stable.

Memê named the wide-stepping⁴² animal Bozî Rewan⁴³.

³⁸The four holy books according to Islam

³⁹See note 22 above

⁴⁰*şangi* = Torç/Torvan = "fisherman"; *târ* = Tor = "fishnet."

⁴¹See ZK-2, note #129.

⁴²*Seyrek basan* is the Turkish name given to one of the extraordinary companions (Motif F601.), specifically F681 (1) 'Marvelous runner'. These motifs occur in a folktale commonly told among the Turks, Kurds, Greeks and Armenians, AT 513C 'The Son of the Hunter' = EB 207 + 77

He called the sons of the sheikhs and elders, got hold of a falcon⁴⁴, and brought
 out greyhounds and dachshunds,
 And went hunting for wild deer.
 Past Memê came running some rabbits⁴⁵,
 Memê set loose his dachshunds,
 The dachshunds came back empty-handed.
 Past Memê came running some wild deer,
 Memê set loose his greyhounds,
 His greyhounds also came back empty-handed.
 A flock of turtledoves crossed their path,
 Memê set loose his falcons on the turtledoves.
 There was a flutter of wings, as the (90) falcons chased the turtledoves through
 the seven heavens,
 The falcons and the turtledoves both disappeared.
 Memê called out, "Gentlemen, wish me good luck⁴⁶ and send my greetings to my
 mother and father,
 And to my two uncles.
 My greyhounds and dachshunds have come back empty-handed,
 My falcons have disappeared together with the turtledoves,
Dilimin dilikî lāyāne,
 I have disappointed the sheikhs and the elders.
 May the city of Mughrib be forbidden to me;
 Until I find my falcons, I won't return home."
 The sheikhs and elders⁴⁷ (95) put their arms around Memê's neck and wept,
 [Saying], "O my mir, how can we go back to the city, to your mother and father?"

⁴³Cf. ZK-2, where the horse is called Bozê Rewal.

⁴⁴teri sinjar = some sort of hunting bird

⁴⁵It is unclear what vēxoadîke means.

⁴⁶-lit. "Make your bread and salt blessed for me." See FK-2 note # (48).

⁴⁷Earlier it was their sons who accompanied Memê.

Memê felt adamant, and said, "Brothers, this was my first time, and they came back empty-handed.⁴⁸

How can I face the city of Mughrib?"

Memê dug his spurs into Bozî Rewan,

And left them like a bird escaping its captor's fist.

He wandered through the deserted wilderness,

And the ulema ⁴⁹ of Mughrib returned home empty-handed,

Giving news of Memê to his mother and father,

And to his two uncles,

Who wept for him.

Memê roamed around the barren prairies

Thanks to Bozî Rewan,

He rode for (100) twenty four hours

On Bozî Rewan.

He came to a rose garden,

And dismounted under a cypress tree near a rose covered spring.

Memê washed⁵⁰ and stood in the posture for prayer, when he heard the flutter of the wings of fairies.

The three turtledoves took the form of women,

And entered the rose covered pool.

The youngest sister's name was Sherwaneh,

She noticed Memê Alan,

And saw how beautiful he was; She picked up the clothes of her two sisters and flew to a tree, calling out, "O sisters, (105) let's see⁵¹ between humans [and us, and] women and us, who is the best, the most pleasing, the finest?"

The eldest sister, whose name was Qamer Tai, [said]

⁴⁸This line is not totally clear to me. The translation is my interpretation

⁴⁹Earlier it was the *sans of the sheikhs* who accompanied Memê

⁵⁰See note 21 above

⁵¹*baxalim*, from Turkish *bakalım*. Cf. note 77 below.

"No one is more pleasing than us among humans, but it's a wide and full world, and it can't be without humans.

Our clothes are on the tree, the human must not lay eyes on them, or we will be disgraced.

Sherwaneh said, "My sister, I'm very sorry but until you tell me who is better or more agreeable than us, I won't give you back (110) your clothes."

The middle sister, whose name was Mahî Beirûz, said,

"O Sherwaneh, my heart is sad,
Bring us our clothes from the tree,
The world is wide and full,
It can't be without humans.

We are fairies, we'll be disgraced, Sherwaneh."

[Serwane said], "Come on, sisters, you haven't yet told me from among humans, and us and women, who is the best!"

Mahî Beirûz said, "My sister, I am sorry,

One day I put on my fairy wings,

And flew around the world, corner by corner, and came across a city called (115) Mughrib,

A very great city, with 366 quarters.

In the center of the city I saw a mansion of four colors⁵²,

Before the mansion is a study chamber⁵³,

In front of the chamber is a rose-covered pool,

And a stone mounting block for horses and a place for men to stand.

I saw the most beloved⁵⁴ of boys sitting there.

I asked, 'Who is this boy?'

They said, 'It's mir Memê Alan, the king of Mughrib.'

I looked [39] at the bottom of the stone, it was pleasant,

The top of the stone was [bedecked with] jewels, with a lit candle on top,

With chains of gold;

⁵²Above, after line (10), it is called a five-colored mansion.

⁵³hûgrake fâqâna.

⁵⁴sâugûluki lâwâne. Saugûlu- must come from the Turkish word *sevgili*, meaning 'beloved.'

This man, wearing a sable cloak, master of the palace mansion with a (120) bronze dome, they call him Memê Alan.

Shirin ⁵⁵ Memê Alan is better and more pleasant than us.

Now bring us our clothes from the treetop, sister, (my heart is grieving),

Memê Alan is better than us."

Sherwaneh said, "O sister, (my heart grieves),

Of women who is better than us?"

Qemer Ta'i said, "O my sister, one day I was roaming from town to town, when I came across a small town of seven quarters,

Every quarter with three minarets,

They call it Jezira Botan.

I saw a mansion of three (125) colors,

Before the mansion [was] a mansion of the Jelalis⁵⁶.

I saw before the mansion of the Jelalis a bronze-capped dome on which the most beloved of girls was sitting..

I asked, 'Whose daughter is she?'

They said, 'She is the daughter of Mîr 'Azîm, the sister of Mîr Zendin, the first cousin of Hasan-Cheko, Qumsî-Beko, Qaratashdin,

Her name is Dilber⁵⁷ Zîn.

She is better and more pleasing than us, (my heart is obvious);

One is Memê Alan, and one is Zîn of Zeydan.

(My heart says) you bring us our clothes from the treetop."

Sherwaneh said, "(My heart is obvious),

I swear to you by the (130) science of fairies,

Until you make Zîn Memê's guest,

I won't bring any clothes down from the treetop.

⁵⁵It will be recalled that his father's name was Shirin Elma

⁵⁶Jelali [Celali] is the name of a Kurdish tribe living in the area extending from the north of Lake Urmia (in Kurdistan of Iran) to the area of Bayazid [Bazid] (in Kurdistan of Turkey, on the Soviet border). According to Jaba and Justî (J), it can also mean 'brigand,' which may hint at the attitude some people held about the Jelali tribe!

⁵⁷Dilber is a Persian word which means 'one who takes [my] heart.'

My heart says that they are humans⁵⁸ and we are fairies,
 But if humans have not laid eyes on us,
 We can go away from these trees, (my heart is obvious).
 Between Jezira Botan and the city of Mughrib is a journey of six months,
 We can't make Zîn Memê's guest."

But Sherwaneh said, "My sister, a man is standing in the shade of the cypress tree, (my heart grieves),

Until you promise, I won't bring any clothes (135) from the treetops (my heart grieves)."

Those turtledoves are the daughters of the King of the fairies,

They assumed the appearance of turtledoves,

They swore to Sherwaneh (my heart grieves),

"Tonight we will make Zîn Memê's guest,

(My heart grieves), now bring our clothes from the treetop.

This world is a wide world,

Without human beings⁵⁹ it cannot be."

(My heart grieves), the three fairies put on their clothes, (my heart grieves),

And headed for Jezira Botan.

(My heart grieves), Memê finished his prayers,

He looked up and saw these three (140) turtledoves,

With a flutter of wings the falcons announced the place of the turtledoves.

Memê said, "(My heart grieves)," he took the falcons and put them on a bench.

Memê mounted Bozi Rewan and set out for the city of Mughrib.

Memê Alan reached the city of Mughrib,

Great joy befell the city of Mughrib for Memê Alan's sake.

The news reached his two uncles,

About the mîr riding Bozê Rewan, Memê Alan.

(My heart grieves), Memê entered the (145) bronze covered dome and sat on the royal throne, (my heart grieves),

And the three turtledoves headed for Jezira Botan.

⁵⁸The word used here is *bani âdam*, Arabic for 'sons of Adam.'

⁵⁹The word used here is *insan ođlu*, Turkish for 'son of human.'

In the evening between the two calls to prayer⁶⁰,
 They set down on the window sill,
 Admiring the loveliness of Zîn of Zeydan.
 (My heart grieves), Zîn called on her forty maidens, (my heart grieves),
 The forty maidens came running.
 Her oldest maiden was named Reyhan⁶¹.

Zîn called out, saying "Sisters and maidens, (my heart grieves), last night I had a dream, (150) I have been busy thinking about the dream from last night until the early morning ⁶².

The three turtledoves looked at each other and said, "(My heart grieves)."
 Mahî Beirûz said, "My sister Sherwaneh, take care of Zîn and her maidens."
 Sherwaneh said, "(My heart grieves),
 She cast a spell over Zîn and her maidens, and blew,
 (My heart grieves), Zîn and her maidens fell asleep.
 Sherwaneh said, "(My heart grieves)," she called the other [two] fairies,
 They tied fairy wings onto Zîn,
 Cast another spell, (my heart grieves),
 And took her to the city of Mughrib.

At six o'clock they deposited⁶³ her (155) in the bronze covered mansion in the residence of Memê Alan,

Making her his guest.
 The turtledoves made for⁶⁴ the windowsill,
 From where they observed Memê and Zîn⁶⁵.

⁶⁰i.e. between: Maghrib, the call to prayer at sunset and 'Ashiyah, the call to prayer at about 8:00 P.M. See also note 23 above.

⁶¹-lit: 'basil'

⁶²-lit. "until the morning call to prayers" i.e. Fajr, at about 4:00 A.M.

⁶³-lit. "threw"

⁶⁴-lit. "threw themselves to"

⁶⁵-lit "They did a heavy/serious watching and observing of Memê [and] Zîn."

Memê lifted his head up and saw sitting on his pillow the most beloved of all girls.

Memê said, "(My heart grieves), whose daughter are you, in the middle of the night what are you looking for on my pillow?

Do you have a bad reputation or have you heard my name?⁶⁶

Get up from (160) my pillow⁶⁷,

Are you high on hashish or drunk on wine?"

Zîn said, "*Dilimin debê*,

Whose son are you?

In the middle of the night (40) what are you looking for on my pillow?

It is the act of the men of an agha

To bribe their way into a lady's bed.

Get up! I will call the Jelalis, our butchers, they will kill you;

My name has become dirty in the world because of you."

Memê: "*Dilimin debê*, this is women's work, they call it slander;

If you have been slandered, then no one has seen me send you to your abode."

Zîn said, "Don't say that, *Dilimin lâxâne*, this is my abode, your are trying to take it over,

You are acting as if you were the master here.

I will call my maidens to have your arms made defamed, but (165) it is a disgrace.

Whose son are you? Get out of my bed⁶⁸"

Memê said, "*Dilimin debê*, whose daughter are you, that you are lording it over my abode?

I will give news of this to the derebeys⁶⁹ and heroes of Mughrib,

Then they'll kill you for me, and rescue you from the suffering of the world.

Come, don't defame yourself in my bed and abode, don't lord it over [me]."

⁶⁶-lit: "Have you been slandered or did you hear my name," i.e. "Are you here because you are a loose woman or because you've heard my name [this last a bit vainglorious]?" This use of the word *bohtân* meaning "slander" suggests a pun, because Zîn is from the province of Bohtân.

⁶⁷-lit "the pillow of my head."

⁶⁸-lit "Get up from here"

⁶⁹**Derebeyi** is a Turkish word from the Ottoman period. It means 'feudal lord'; 'local potentate'; 'despot'

Zin said, "*Dilimin lâxâne.*"

She called her maidens,

"O maidens! What hashish-smoker is this that has come to my bed tonight?

It's a disgrace⁷⁰! Send news of this to my cousins the Jelaîs, our butchers, so that they will send (170) his arms to the other world for me."

Memê said, "*Dilimin debê*, as for smoking hashish, whose daughter are you, *Dilimin lâxâne*, that you are taking over my abode?

Dilimin debê, where have you come from?

You're shouting [as if] you are taking over my abode!"

Zin and Memê got into a heated argument,

Memê didn't know, nor did Zin,

Whose abode they were in⁷¹.

Memê said, "*Dilimin debê*, you are in my abode, acting as if you own the place, *dilimin lâxâne*,

Where is your home?⁷²

Dilimin debê, tell me who your cousins (175) are,

Whose daughter you are."

Zin said, "*Dilimin dîne*,

My cousins are Hasan-Cheko, Qumsi Beku, Qaratashdîn,⁷³

My father is Mîr 'Azîm,

My brother is Mîr Zendîn,

They call me Dilber Zin,

Dilimin lâxâne,

Our abode is a small city made up of seven quarters,

⁷⁰Jaksîge! This word, which occurs three times on this page alone, does not appear in any of the Kurdish dictionaries. *Eksîk* means 'lacking,' 'deficient,' 'missing' in Turkish, synonymous with *Noksan*, an Arabic borrowing. According to the thirteen-volume dictionary of colloquial Turkish, the *Derleme Sözlüğü*, vol. 5, p. 1698. *Eksîk iş* = "an action or matter considered *ayıp*, i.e. disgraceful." This meaning fits the context of the present text as well; moreover, the language of this text, from the western part of the province of Gaziantep, i.e. in the extreme western part of Kurdistan, is permeated with Turkish words and expressions.

⁷¹-lit. "Their location was which."

⁷²-lit. "What is your abode?"

⁷³Apparently these are the Jelaîs mentioned above

Known as Jezira Botan,
 In our abode our butchers are the Jelaîfs,
Dilimin dîne,
 For me, Dilber Zîn."
 Memê said, "*Dilimin lâxâne,*
 Our city is black and wide,
 [With] three hundred and sixty six town quarters,
 Every quarter with three hundred and sixty six (180) minarets lit up in it,
 It rests on top of twenty four mountains,
 On top of forty four stone heaps.
 They call it the City of Mughrib⁷⁴
 My mansion is in the center of the city,
 They call it the four-colored bronze-covered dome,
 With sixty four steps,
 Before my mansion is a study chamber,
 And a stone mounting block for horses
 My pool is a rose[-covered] pool,
 Above are cypress trees, below are three pomegranate trees, in front are rose
 bushes⁷⁵,
 They call me the son of the king⁷⁶ of the Mughribis, Shirîn Memê Alan.
 At my feet is a pleasant stone,
 At my head (185) a bejeweled stone,
 On my head is a candle,
 Made of chains of gold.
 My uncles are Rijal Hasan and Sheikh Ibrahim,
 My father is Shirin Elma.
Dilimin debê, whose daughter are you?

⁷⁴or, the City of the Mughribis.

⁷⁵-lit "rose trees"

⁷⁶-lit "the shah"

Come, let's walk about this abode and see⁷⁷ where we are⁷⁸."
 Memê and Zîn held hands and wandered about the mansion, corner by corner,
 Down the sixty four steps
 They went to the feet of the sea colt Bozî Rewan,
 When Zîn laid eyes on him, she gasped and grew weak⁷⁹.
 Zîn said, "Memo, *dilîmin lâxâne*, you are not at fault,
 (190) It is the fault of us women,
Dilîmin dilekî dîne, then where is my abode? Take me to it!
Dilîmin leyâne,
 Memê and Zîn climbed the stairs,
 The girl said, "*Dilîmin dîne*,
 Where is my mansion? Memo, take charge and take me there,
Dilîmin lâxâne,
 Memê said, "I don't know where your mansion is,
Dilîmin dilekî dibiri,
 Zîn looked up,
 And called out to Hasan and Cheko, Qumsî Beku, and Qaratashdîn,
 saying, "*Dilîmin debê*,
 O brothers, come, what has happened to me and this one? It's a disgrace⁸⁰!"
 Not a sound was (195) heard in reply.
 Memê said, "Zîn, be patient, let me call [now]."
 Memê said, "Brothers, birākhan, derebeys, where are you? It's a disgrace⁸¹!"

⁷⁷baqállim - "Let's see" in Turkish. Cf. note 51 above.

⁷⁸-li: "our location is whose"

⁷⁹kâbe zîne şikîâne = "Zîn grew weak". Although this exact expression does not appear in the dictionaries, Jaba & Justî feature the word [kâbe] كَابَة = "knee" (<Arabic ka'b كعب = "heel"); hence, I am assuming that this expression is equivalent to one that does appear in the dictionaries. *Qudûmê [çokê] fî-ê şkest* (=lit. "Someone's knees broke") appears in Khamoian with two meanings: 1) To grow weak; 2) To be terribly frightened; To lose one's head (metaphor).

⁸⁰See note 70 above

⁸¹See note 70 above

Through the garden, amid hashish smokers and drunkards it has entered the mansion!"

Memê and Zîn looked up to the top of the mansion, *dîlîmin lâxâne*,

Whence came the gnashing of swords and Egyptian sabres,

The derebeys called down,⁸²

"Memo, fear not, where is the disgrace?"

Zîn threw herself at Memê's feet and said,

"Don't do to me what I threatened to have done to you⁸³!"

Memê called, "O derebeys, *dîlîmin xâne*,

(200) There's no one with me, it must be the blind devil who is laughing, may God's curse be upon him."

Memê's guards and derebeys went back⁸⁴,

Dîlîmin lâ yirmişbû, Memê and Zîn's rings moved onto each other's finger⁸⁵,
dîlîmin debê,

The daughter of the king of the fairies said to the three turtledoves⁸⁶,

"Sisters, *dîlîmin debê*, Zîn's abode [41] is far, six months away,

Come, let's take Zîn to her parents' abode."

Dîlîmin lâwâkir,

Sherwaneh cast a spell on Memê and Zîn, and blew.

[The sisters] called to each other,

They picked Zîn up and (205) fastened fairy wings to her,

And flew her to Jezira Botan.

Dîlîmin debê, in the seventh heaven, the angels espied,

⁸²Meaning undear

⁸³-lit: 'I did, don't you do'

⁸⁴-lit: 'returned empty'

⁸⁵*dengilmîş bû dengilmîş* appears to be the past participle of a Turkish verb. According to the *Derleme Sözlüğü*, *Dingildemek* (and variants) = 'to move, sway, wave (intransitive)' (v. 4, p. 1504). The locations in which this word has been attested include Gaziantep, Maraş and Osmaniye in the province of Adana, all of which are near the site where this text was collected.

⁸⁶i.e., one of the sisters said to the other two.

Dilimin debê, the body⁸⁷ of a human⁸⁸ in the hands of the fairies,
The angels ran up and took Zîn's bed from the fairies.

Dilimin leyâne,

The angels said, "What is this? The body of a mortal?"

The fairies said, "It's the body of Zîn of Zeydan,

We brought her from Jezira Botan to the city of Mughrib, made her Memê's
guest,

This is Zîn's bed, we are taking it [back] to its proper place⁸⁹."

Dilimin debê,

Zîn's bed fell into the hands of the angels,

The fairies (210) flew at⁹⁰ the angels, saying,

"For heaven's sake⁹¹, morning is near, but Jezira Botan is far,

Help⁹² us bring Zîn to her parents' abode,

It's a sinful disgrace for Zîn⁹³,

Dilimin kânî,

The angels and fairies called to each other,

They took Zîn and set her down at Mir Zendîn's mansion,

Dilimin debê,

In the morning, Zîn awoke, and upon seeing Memê's ring on her finger,

She fell deeply in love with him.

In the morning Memê woke up,

[And] while in the posture of prayer,

He saw Zîn's ring,

⁸⁷-ii: "the corpse"

⁸⁸or, mortal. See note 58 above

⁸⁹-ii: "to its owner/master"

⁹⁰-lit. "threw themselves at"

⁹¹Aman.

⁹²[Yardım kin], using the Turkish word for help, Yardım.

⁹³i e. if we don't get her home by daybreak.

And shouted out, "O brothers, *dilîmin leyâne*,
 I (215) have found a woman's ring,
 I thought perhaps the devil, may God curse him, was laughing at me,
 But wasn't there [a girl], the cousin of Hasan-Cheko, Qumsî Beku, Qaratashdîn,
 The daughter of Mir 'Azîm, sister of Mir Zendîn,
 Who they call Dilber Zîn?
Dilîmin laxâne,
 Call my two uncles for me,
 Let's see⁹⁴ how to get to Jezira Botan."
 They called his two uncles and gave them the news,
 The royal prince, king of the fairies,⁹⁵
 Memê's father Shirin Elma,
 And Memê Alan's mother all gathered about him,
 Memê's uncle, Rijal Hasan, said, "Memo, my son,⁹⁶ *dilîmin debe*,
 What melancholy⁹⁷ is this that has befallen you this morning?"
 Memê said, "O Uncle, *dilîmin laxâne*,
 Don't ask me (220) any questions,
 Take out my sea colt Bozî Rewan for me,
 [And] show me the road to Jezira Botan."

⁹⁴ See note 77 above

⁹⁵ This does not make sense, because we already know that the three turtledoves are the daughters of the King of the fairies

⁹⁶ The Turkish word *Oğul* is used here

⁹⁷ [sawda] = 'Melancholy'; 'Love' Kurdish *Sewda*, Turkish *Sevda* and Serbo-Croatian *Sevdah* all come from the feminine form of the Arabic word for black, *sawdâ* سودة. According to old physiology, the body consisted of four humors: Black bile; Yellow bile; Blood; and Phlegm. Melancholy (which derives from the Greek word *melas*, melan- = 'black') was believed to be the result of an excess of black bile in one's body; melancholy was equated with lovesickness, and so *sawdâ* came to mean 'Love' or 'Passion'. This was probably helped along, at least in Turkish, by the similarity in sound between the native Turkish word for 'Love', *Sevgi* (and the whole root *Sev-*), and *Sevda*, with a similar meaning.

Memê's uncle said, "Memo, I've never heard of this Jezira Botan you speak of,
not from merchants, nor from travellers⁹⁸,

I have only heard in books⁹⁹ that there is a Jezira Botan on Ottoman soil.

Son, this isn't melancholy, it's a devil's curse,

You are sixteen years old,

They call you the son of the (225) king of the Mughribis,

They call you the royal mîr Shirin Memê Alan,

Dilimin debê,

Get rid of this melancholy,

Let's find you a Mughribi girl."

Memê said, "Uncle, *dilimin laxâne,*

My melancholy is very great,

It's not the devil,

May God curse him, but I am grateful, *dilimin dîne,*

Bring me Bozî Rewan,

Put me on the road to Jezira Botan."

Memê's uncle Sheikh Ibrahim called out, "Memo, *dilimin laxâne,*

They call me the royal kingly mîr in Mughrib,

O son, we are not lacking¹⁰⁰, neither in treasures,

Nor in riches,

But we are three begs with empty households and lost lineage,

None of us (230) knows the road to Jezira Botan.

O son, you are master of the bronze-covered dome, the mansion of the Jelalis,

And master of treasures and riches,

Come, rid yourself of this nighttime dream,

⁹⁸ *gazira bôtan dedêge mâ nazi dîlî tûgârâ wa nazi sayîhâ nabîstî.* This sentence includes two Turkicisms *dedêge* and *dîl*. The first is apparently an attempt to apply the Turkish relative verbal participle in *-dik* [*dedêgin* = which you say] to Kurdish. The second is the Turkish word for 'Tongue,' *DİL*. Such Turkicisms are not surprising in a transitional region such as the one from which this text comes.

⁹⁹ Perhaps the informant was illiterate, and unable to *read* in books.

¹⁰⁰ [*yoxsul*], from Turkish **Yoksul**

I'll have a golden throne made for you.¹⁰¹
 Memê said, "Uncle, *dîlimin dine*,
 You say that Memê is simpleminded,
 My mansion is made of stones of diamond and jewels,
 I already have a golden throne!¹⁰² *dîlimin dilikî debîrî.*"
 Memê thought to himself,
 He brought his hands to his uncle's neck,
 And let out a cry.
 Memê's uncle Rijal Hasan shouted out, "*dîlimin (235) debê*
 Call the Sheikh of Qureysh!"
 They called the Sheikh of Qureysh, and he came,
 They called Memê and said, "Memê, get up! The Sheikh of Qureysh is coming."
 Memê Alan went out to greet the Sheikh of Qureysh,
 The Sheikh of Qureysh sat down on Memê's throne,
 He called to Memê, saying, "My son, I've heard that you've fallen into
 melancholy.¹⁰³ *dîlimin xâne*,
 The city of Mughrib is black and wide,
 They call you the master of the sultan's throne,
 Get rid of this melancholy, I'll find you a girl from the tribe of Qureysh."
 Memê said, "O my sheikh, (240) I am indebted to you, you are my grandfather,
 show me the road to Jezira Botan."
 The Sheikh of Qureysh, seeing that there was no possible remedy for Memê, said,
 "*dîlimin laxâne*,"
 They brought out eighty Mughnibi horsemen for Memê,
 Took out the sea colt Bozi Rewan,
 With great rejoicing they led Memê out of the city of Mughrib.
 Memê's mother and father wept over him,
 Then his two uncles fell sobbing to the ground.

101 [dökmiş km], from Turkish *Dökmüş* = 'having poured'; 'having smelted/forged.' Literally, this verse means "I will have a crown throne poured/smelted for you from gold."

102 =lit. "I am the master of the golden throne."

103 or, "that you've fallen in love" See note 97 above.

The Sheikh of Qureyshr mounted his horse, and called to Memê's friends the derebeys,

"O beys [42], (245) *dîlimin dîne*,

Then bring Memê back *dîlimin dîne*."

For three days and three nights they went with Memê, *dîlimin lāyāne*,

They took Memê to a great highway and said, "Memê, this is the road to Jezira Botan."

Dîlimin lāxāne,

Sixty¹⁰⁴ derebeys on horseback¹⁰⁵

Then came back to the city of Mughrib with Memê,

They brought Memê,

Seated him in the City of Mughrib on the golden throne,

They brought news to Memê's uncles, and in the morning once again they gathered around Memê¹⁰⁶,

In the morning Memê woke up to find himself seated on the golden throne,

He (250) said, "O derebeys, *dîlimin lāwākir*,

What has happened to me¹⁰⁷, *dîlimin dîne*,

Memê's father was crying and mourning over him,

Memê said, "*Dîlimin debêe*,

Take Bozî Rewan out for me, put me on the road."

However many [people] there were in the city of Mughrib, [they all] came,

Memê said to them, "O derebeys, bless for me your bread and salt¹⁰⁸, call out the merchants and travellers for me,

[So that I may ask them] which way to Jezira Botan, *dîlimin lāxāne*."

They brought Memê to the highway, weeping and mourning behind his parents,

¹⁰⁴Or. six hundred (Le Coq's note).

¹⁰⁵-lit. "riders of the derebeys"

¹⁰⁶-lit. "at the head of Memê"

¹⁰⁷-lit. "to my head" This same expression exists in Turkish, Persian, and Neo-Aramaic. The meaning of *késâ* is un.dear

¹⁰⁸See note 46 above

Saying, "Memo, this is the road to Jezira (255) Botan."
 The sheikhs and elders came back from [escorting] Memê.
 Under the guidance of Bozî Rewan, Memê hit the road,
 For twelve days and twelve nights he went, guided by Bozî Rewan,
 Memê said, "*Dilîmin layâne*,
 He washed himself¹⁰⁹ in the posture¹¹⁰ for prayer,
 And wept to the Lord of the world.
 "O God, what melancholy is this
 That has befallen me? I have lost my bronze-covered dome in the city of
 Mughrib."
 After praying he mounted Bozî Rewan,
 And headed for the city of Jezira Botan,
 For forty days and forty nights he rode on to Jezira Botan¹¹¹,
 After (260) forty days, on the outskirts of Jezira Botan there was a great river,
dilîmin layâne,
 Memê espied a girl on the far bank of the river; Memê said, "*Dilîmin layâne*,
 Where can this river be crossed?¹¹²
 The girl called to Memê, saying, "*dilîmin debêye*,
 Promise to marry me¹¹³, and I'll tell you where to ford the river."
 The girl said, "*Dilîmin debêye*, don't you recognize me? It's me!
 Zîn of Zeydan, the sister of Mîr Zendîn,
 I am Dilber Zîn!"¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ e. performed ritual ablutions required of Muslims before prayer.

¹¹⁰ or, "in the place"

¹¹¹ -lit "He beat the road of Jezira Botan"

¹¹² *Gaşûti vê avê kužâne* -lit. "The crossing/fording of this water/river is which?" *Gaşûti* which does not appear in any of the Kurdish dictionaries, is from the Turkish word *Geçit* = 'Passage(way), 'Mountain pass' 'Ford'

¹¹³ *qaûlu sözi*ke.

¹¹⁴ Although not specifically stated in this version, we know from other versions that this woman is the daughter of the villain Beko (called Qumsî Bâku here), and that she is also named Zîn. She is often the maidservant of the 'real' Zîn

Memê said, "*Dilimin dîne,*

You're not Dilber Zîn,

Dilimin debêye,

Perhaps you're Zîn's maidservant, waiting on the road for me,

But (265) tell me where to ford the river."

The girl said, "*Dilimin lâxâne,*

Until you give me the big promise,

I won't tell you where to cross the river."

Memê said, "*Dilimin debêye,* tell me where to cross the river,

Perhaps you have dressed up in Zîn's clothes,

Tell me where to cross the river, and I'll also take you with me to the city of Mughrib."

The girl said, "Come, the crossing point is right in front of you."

Memê said, "*Dilimin layâne,*

The mansion of Hasan-Cheko¹¹⁵ is in the center of Jezira Botan,

They call it the Jelafis'."

Memê rode Bozî Rewan, and dismounted (270) at the mansion of Hasan-Cheko, [where] he became a guest.

The news reached Jezira Botan,

The sheikhs and wisemen without exception gladly came to the diwan for Memê,

Due to Memê's beauty, nobody could tell [him apart from] the sun and the moon.

The people of Jezira Botan exclaimed, "This is the son of the king of the Mughribis!"

Dilimin debêye, Zîn's maidservant stopped before the mansion of Hasan-Cheko and Qaratashdin,

She saw that the people of Jezira Botan were gathering.

When Zîn's maidservant caught sight of Memê in the pavilion¹¹⁶ of the mansion, her hands and feet froze,

¹¹⁵It is not clear whether this is two people, Hasan and Cheko, or one person named Hasan Cheko.

¹¹⁶koshak ?=lit: "kiosk" or "pavilion."

After the noon prayers she returned with (275) empty buckets:¹¹⁷
 Zin asked her maidservant, "What is the reason that you¹¹⁸ have returned from
 the river empty-handed?"
 The servants said, "O Zin, *dilimin lâyâne*,
 At the mansion of Hasan-Cheko the son of the king¹¹⁹ of the Mughribis has
 alighted, They call him Shirin Memê Alan."
 Zin said, "*Dilimin kânî*,
 She picked up the buckets,
 And headed, *dilimin debirî*,
 For the front of Hasan-Cheko's mansion,
Dilimin debirî,
 She headed for the water spring,
 Hasan-Cheko saw Zin as she was going
 To the spring; Hasan called out to Memê, saying, "Memo, get up and go
 Water Bozî Rewan, the sea (280) colt!"
 Memê said, "[mâ yâk lê nâ bibe âvê]"
 Hasan said, "Nobody may approach Bozî Rewan from in front [žepêrâ]
 [hâri vâ gezâye]
 [žepârâ hâri bâ çiftâye]
 Except for Memê nobody may
 Ride Bozî Rewan."
 Memê understood¹²⁰ that Zin had gone to the river, *dilimin xâne*,
 Memê mounted Bozî Rewan,
 And headed for the spring of roses.
 Zin looked up and approaching her she saw the king of the Mughribis,¹²¹
 Shirin Memê Alan.

¹¹⁷It will be remembered that she had gone to draw water from the river.

¹¹⁸Here *you* is in the plural

¹¹⁹-lit. "the shah of the Mughribis"

¹²⁰*anamiş kir*, from Turkish: *anlamiş* = 'having understood.'

¹²¹i. e., the son of the king of the Mughribis

Memê caught sight of Zîn of Zeydan at the spring,
 [And] said, "*Dilimin debêye,*
 Bozî Rewan is coming,
 Bring water for his (285) bucket."
 Zîn said, "*Dilimin lâyâne,*
 They call you the son of the king of the Mughribis,
 Come dismount at the spring of roses,
 I'll give you a kiss on both cheeks."
 Memê said, "*Dilimin diliki dîne,*
 He gets his kiss from Zîn,
 Memê said, "*Dilimin lâyâne,*
 Give water," and she watered Bozî Rewan,
 He returned [43] to the mansion of Hasan-Cheko, the mansion of the Jelalis,
Dilimin dîne,
 They gave news to Mir Zendîn,
 Mir Zendîn said, "*Dilimin lâyâne,*
 Today makes three days that Memê has been your guest, *dilimin dîne,*"
 Memê Alan, Hasan-(290) Cheko and Qaratashdin,
 Went together to Mir Zendîn's mansion, *dilimin lâyâne,*
 For a week they were Mir Zendîn's guest,
 After that Hasan-Cheko called on Mir Zendîn and said, "*Dilimin lăxâne,*
 Let's take up your greyhounds and dachshunds,
 And go hunt mountain goats."
 They called the Jelalis,
 Mounted their horses,
 And Memê mounted Bozî Rewan,
 They headed for the wilderness and plains,
 Hasan-Cheko called (295) to Memê and said, "You won't last long!²² on Bozî
 Rewan,
 You should return to the Jelalis' mansion."
 Then Memê turned back, dismounting at Hasan-Cheko's mansion, *dilimin dîne,*

²²dâmûş nâbi. Dâmûş is from Turkish: *dâyanmış* = 'having withstood.' It also occurs in Kurdish as *Teyamîş*

The wives of Hasan-Cheko brought Zîn
 To the mansion, and left her with Memê,¹²³
Dilimin lâxâne, news reached Mîr Zendîn with the mountain goats,
 Qumsî Beku said, "Mîr Zendîn, *dilimin lâxâne*,
 He returned home riding Bozî Rewan,
 For your sister, Zîn of Zeydan."
 Mîr 'Azim called to Hasan-Cheko, saying, "Let's go home."
 Hasan-Cheko said, "We won't go home, we've come to hunt mountain goats."
 Qumsî Beku said, "*Dilimin xâne*,
 He went to the house of (300) Zîn of Zeydan."
 Afterward they came back empty-handed,
 They came and dismounted at the house of the three brothers¹²⁴,
 Hasan-Cheko took a look at Memê, and saw a woman's skirt hem sticking out
 from under Memê's cloak,
 Qaratashdin didn't know if it [belonged to] Hasan's wife or [to] Mîr Zendîn's
 sister,
 Or [to] Mîr Zendîn's wife, *dilimin dine*,
 He gazed at Hasan-Cheko [thinking], "I wonder¹²⁵ if that isn't Dilber Zîn."
 Hasan-Cheko got up, saying, "*Dilimin debêye*,
 He took his sword in hand,
 Entered the horse stable, putting the horses to the sword,
 Qaratashdin called to Mîr Zendîn,
 Saying, "Come (305) after Hasan-Cheko, *dilimin debêye*,
 He's killed the horses in the stable."
 Mîr Zendîn got up to go see:¹²⁶

123:his parallels the fairies' actions earlier in the story.

124:Ever: this reference to three brothers does not solve inconclusively the problem of whether 'Hasan-Cheko' refers to one or two people: the three brothers could be 1) Hasan, 2) Cheko, and 3) Qaratashdin; or they could be 1) Hasan-Cheko, 2) Qumsî Beku, and 3) Qaratashdin. Both enumerations occur more than once in the text.

125:*ağabā* from Turkish: *acaba* = 'I wonder,' from an Arabic root meaning 'to wonder at,' 'to be amazed at.'

126=lit. "to come forward"

Qumsî Beku took hold of the sable coat, and would not let go,
 Hasan-Cheko drew his sword and rode to the mansion,
 [And] set the mansion on fire.

Qarataşdin called to Mîr Zendîn, saying,

"Arise and come forward, Qumsî Beku has taken hold of the hem of the fur coat,
 he won't let go,

Qumsî Beku, O Mîr Zendîn, is about to look under Memê's coat."

Mîr Zendîn asked no question about Qumsî Beku, he went to Hasan-Cheko,
 Then Mîr Zendîn turned and saw through (310) the window, *dîlimin lâxâne*,
 A woman's skirt was sticking out!¹²⁷, *dîlimin debêye*,

Doubt befell Mîr Zendîn,

He didn't know if it was his sister or his wife!¹²⁸, *dîlimin lâxâne*,

Mîr Zendîn called to Memê, saying, " *Dîlimin debêye*,

Come, let's play checkers, I am restless!¹²⁹,

But on condition that we tie ropes of chains about each other."

They played checkers, Memê [won] three times,

Mîr Zendîn [won] twice,

Qumsî Beku called to Memê and said, "Mîr Zendîn is like a father-in-law to
 you!¹³⁰

Let him win once, it's a disgrace (315), [Mîr Zendîn lâ girân nêye],¹³¹

¹²⁷i e from under Memê's coat

¹²⁸i e under Memê's coat

¹²⁹dîşîqê min nêye =lit. "My peace of mind doesn't come." Dîşîq [dîşîq] does not appear in any of the Kurdish dictionaries, but according to the thirteen-volume dictionary of colloquial Turkish, the *Devleme Sözlüğü*, vol 4, p. 1473-4, Dîşîk = 'Peace of mind,' 'Freedom from anxiety,' 'Repose,' 'Quiet,' which fits the present context. Moreover, the geographical distribution of Dîşîk fits also. It is found in Elâzığ, Urfa, and Kilis in Gaziantep the present text is also from what is now the province of Gaziantep.

¹³⁰=lit. "is in the place of your father-in-law."

¹³¹This is the end of the rhymed verse from here to the end is in prose.

Memê forfeited one game!¹³² Mir Zendîn said, "Memo, how can you be overpowered?" Memê said, "I can be overpowered with chains and shackles." Chains and shackles were brought, Memê was tied up. Memê snapped the chains immediately, Mir Zendîn said, "Memo, in God's name, who are you? How can you be overpowered?" Memê said, "I can only be overpowered by the tail of Bozî Rewan." Mir Zendîn sent a man to Hasan-Cheko's house to bring a bunch of Bozî Rewan's tail hairs, then tied Memê's feet, and that evening they took Memê and (320) threw him in prison.

Zin asked, "Where has Memê gone?" They said, "The Mir has thrown Memê into prison." Zin took a hodja!¹³³ and dictated!¹³⁴ a letter to Hasan Cheko!¹³⁵ [to the effect] " *Yâ wallah*, Mir Zendîn has thrown Memê into prison, come without delay!¹³⁶" Hasan-Cheko and Qaratashdin immediately mounted [their horses] and came asking. They were told that Mir Zendîn had thrown Memê into prison. Hasan-Cheko immediately went to the prison and called out, "Memo!" Memê said, "Heh," and let out a weak sound. They brought Memê out of prison and took him home. Qumst Beku went to Zin and said, "Get (325) dressed up!¹³⁷ and go see!¹³⁸ Memê without raising your eyes." Zin immediately got up, got dressed up, and went to Memê. When he laid eyes on Zin, he gasped and expired on the spot!¹³⁹ They carried Memê in a coffin, washed [his body] and took him to be buried. Zin said, "Brother, in a week

132=lit: 'gave a game'

133i e a religious teacher, someone who could read and write.

134 *yazmî:z kir*, from Turkish *Yazmîş* = 'having written.'

135 Although not stated in this version, we know from other versions that at this point in the story Qeretajdir = Hasan-Cheko leaves on a mission, at which time harm comes to Mem.

136=lit. "You (singular) don't stop, come." The fact that *you* is in the singular suggests that Hasan-Cheko is one person. See note 115 above.

137 *xâ dônatmîş buke*, from Turkish *donatmîş* = 'having dressed up.'

138 For *kâtânîkâ*, the meaning of which is unclear.

139=lit: 'gave up the sweet soul.'

I too shall die; bury me beside Memê's grave; then one day while playing jireed¹⁴⁰, open Memê's grave and mine with a javelin¹⁴¹. If we are lying back to back, you are innocent of any wrongdoing¹⁴²." (330) A week later, Zîn expired. They took her and buried her beside Memê's grave, may they attain [44] in the next world what they couldn't have in this one.

This book was written by Jafer the Agha's son Seydî Efendî, in the vilayet of Aleppo, in the district of Kilis, in the county of Mobat. They call him the son of Jafer Seydo Efendî and it was published by its writer Yusuf Efendi on the first of April, 318.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰Game played on horseback, similar to polo. '*Djireed*' is Arabic, meaning stick; it is a Turkish game and shows that the Turks are superior in horsemanship to the other inhabitants of the country. The game is very interesting and is played by several men on their horses. They fling up their *djireeds* in the air to a prodigious height, and as soon as they strike the ground the players are on the spot, hanging over in their saddles till their hands reach the earth, when they grasp the *djireeds* firmly, lift them up, whirl them over their heads and ride on.' from K.H. Basmajian. *Social and Religious Life in the Orient* (New York: American Tract Society, 1890), p. 218. At the time the author was writing, the term 'Turk' was often applied to all Muslims.

¹⁴¹-lit. "Stick a jireed stick into Memê's and my grave."

¹⁴²-lit. "The world will remain for you." This is the inverse of a curse, *Dinê te'fa namîne* = lit. "The world won't remain for you," i.e. "You'll pay for your actions." In most versions, Mem and Zîn are buried in the same grave, back to back, and when the grave is opened a few days later, they are found lying face to face, a sign of their love for each other.

¹⁴³The date is quoted in Turkish, using the Ottoman Muslim Calendar: 318 = 1900-1901 A.D.

Mann, Oskar. "Mäm û Zîn"/"Mem und Zin," in Die Mundart der Mukri-Kurden. Kurdisch-Persische Forschungen, 4 (Berlin, 1906), Bd. 1, pp. 24-81; Bd. 2, pp. 40-135. [Sorani (Mukri) in Latin phonetic transcription (Bd. 1) + German translation (Bd. 2); see also Eyyubiyân] (OM)

Ayyübiyân, 'Ubayd Allâh. Çinkey Mem û Zîn : Kurdi - Farsi [چریکی م م و زین] (Tabriz : Châpkhānah-i Shafaq, [1962]), 277 p. [Sorani (Mukri) in Arabic script + Persian translation; basically O. Mann's version]

OM. Collected by Oskar Mann in the summer of 1903 in Soujbulag (now Mehabad), Kurdistan of Iran, from Raĥman-î Bekir (or Raĥmān [ibn-î-]Bakir), an illiterate professional bard (shâ'ir), a member of the Dêbokri tribe, from the village of Hâjji Husain in the plain of Miândûâb. From Mann's notes it is clear that Raĥman-î Bekir was "ungebildet" (unlettered, uncultured). This is the only version in the Sorani dialect that has been collected.

Mäm û Zîn (OM)

[24] Brahim Pasha had no sons. Together with his vizier they got up and went to the House of God (=Mecca). They went 12 stages¹. God took pity on them, and sent Veysel Karanî of Mahîdesht² to them. He sent them two apples³ from Paradise. They were asleep, he put them⁴ behind their heads. They should go back, they should not come to the House of God. Those who have come for sons, should go back to their homes; on the eve of Friday (=Thursday evening) they should perform the ritual ablutions, split those apples⁵ in two, eat half themselves, and [give] half to their wives, then they should copulate with⁶ their wives. Their wives' stomachs will get full, and God willing they'll each have a son.

¹ **Menzil** - the distance travelled in one day

² Uways al-Qaranî or Wesûlqaranî, a local saint: who was a contemporary of the Prophet Muhammad. See M. M. van Bruinessen "Other saints of Kurdistan," in Agha Shaikh and State : on the Social and Political Organization of Kurdistan. Thesis (Utrecht: Rijksuniversiteit, 1978), p. 275-6

³ Ayyübiyân or.e apple

⁴ Ayyübiyân it.

⁵ Ayyübiyân that apple

⁶ Ayyübiyân tease

[If] Brahim Pasha has a son, his name should be Kakeh Mem; [as for] the vizier's son, his name should be Bengineh⁷. They should put them to reading, that they should learn/study. They gave them names, lord and servant, Kakeh Mem and Bengineh. They gave wet nurses, for two years they were with the wet nurses; then they gave them to the pedagogues⁸, they were with them for three years; then they mounted them [on horses], for two years they road⁹. At that time they took them, brought them to school, they studied under a teacher. For seven years they remained in the cellar, night and day were forbidden them; they didn't know what day and night were. One day they cooked kelle and pacha soup¹⁰, they brought them their lunch. Mem and Bengineh ate their meal, and played with a bone from their soup. They threw it, and it hit against the window, broke the glass, and flew outside. [A ray of] sunlight came in. "God forgive us," they said, "It is God!" Their teacher was not there, and no matter how much they tried to embrace it, they couldn't catch hold of it.

The teacher came back. Mem and Bengineh said, "Teacher, God has come to our midst." The teacher said, "Children, that is not God, those are the sun and the moon, God is their owner/master; one of them is night, one is day; if it's daytime, it's light; if the moon rises, it becomes dark, it becomes night." They say, "Teacher, if [25] the world is so pleasant, why have you kept it from us?" He says, "Children, it's not my fault, it's Brahim Pasha's command. Brahim Pasha is the owner of Yemen, he is master of the four great kings." Mem said, "I'm going out." The teacher said, "Children! Pnnce Mem! Be patient! Don't make my efforts go to waste: for a long time I have been toiling over (=investing effort in) you. Let me go tell Brahim Pasha and see what he has to say." He (=Mem) says, "Teacher, get up and go, bring back news for me!" The teacher got up, and went into the presence of Brahim Pasha. He greeted Brahim Pasha [saying], "Brahim Pasha, I have something to say¹¹. Today

⁷Ayyübiyân Bengir.

⁸Lala.

⁹-lit. "Learned the art of horseback riding."

¹⁰Soup made from the skull and trotters of sheep

¹¹i e to discuss with you/to tell you

Mem's mother sent him kelle and pacha soup, he threw a bone (of the meat) at the window pane, it broke the glass and went outside: A ray of sunlight came into their midst, they laid eyes on the bright world. They were complaining to me, saying, "Why have you kept us away from this pleasant world? If day and night exist, why are we in this cellar? We insist on coming out." I asked them to wait a bit¹², and I came to you. He's your son, the choice is yours. Don't let my efforts go to waste."

The pasha at once wrote a letter to Prince Mem: "My child, my son, be patient with me, [wait] till I have a palace built for you." The teacher took the letter back to Mem. Mem ran out to receive his father's letter, he took it, and kissed and touched it to his head¹³. He was very happy, and said, "Teacher, how long are you going to keep me here?" He (=teacher) replied, "My child, your father has written you a letter, I don't know: read it yourself, see what he's written." He read his father's letter, but he wasn't satisfied with it[s message]. He said, "Teacher, go back to the pasha, tell him I won't wait until the building is finished, but I will wait another seven days for his sake." The teacher went back to the pasha (king), and said, "Prince Mem sends you his regards and says, "For his (i.e. the king's) sake, I'll stay here another week, [I swear] by the blessed head of his majesty, I won't stay here any more; if it please you¹⁴, I'll come be a stable hand." He (=the king) immediately responded: "Oh my son, thank God that you have been born, I want the bright world for you, but bear with me just another seven months, so that I can build a palace for you." He sent the teacher back. [Mem] took the letter from him (=the teacher), kissed it and touched it to his forehead. He (=Mem) sent a letter to his mother: "Mother, I've been in this cellar for seven years, and even now is the bright world kept from me." His mother said, "My child, you must heed him: he has proclaimed seven months more: stay three months for me, and four [26] months for your father." So Mem sat there for seven months. Brahim Pasha sent for a freemason, sent for a builder, hired workers, had the building constructed, with alternating gold- and silver-coated mud bricks: in seven months he finished it. Then he sent for his son: "My child, I have made preparations for you, on Friday you must move into your

¹²=lit. "for some time."

¹³A sign of high respect. e.g. shown to the Kuran.

¹⁴=lit. "If you permit me"

palace, with a terrace¹⁵." Friday came around, he went to his building. He sent a message to his father, asking: "Father, what is the name of my palace?" The king responded, "Burji Belek¹⁶". Mem sat in it, and nothing was heard from him for a year.

O creator! You alone are above everyone!
 Three fairies as falcons¹⁷ come down to earth
 Above the palace of Kakeh Mem, the son of Brahim, King of Yemen, they fly
 about.

O creator! You are the one and only!
 Three fairies come down to the world
 They fly about above the palace of Kakeh Mem, the son of Brahim, King of Yemen.

O creator! You are above us
 Three fairies from the seventh heaven drop their anchor,
 At the palace of Kakeh Mem they alight on this side and that.

The eldest sister says to the youngest one:
 "By God, Sister, are Kakeh Mem's cheeks more radiant, or are lamps and
 lighthouses?"

The eldest sister asks her sisters.
 The middle sister speaks thus:
 "From [God's] throne to the chairs [of men],
 From bulls down to fish
 I have searched the whole world
 I have not seen anyone with beauty like Kakeh Mem[s]."

¹⁵or, penthouse

¹⁶belek = black and white, as the ideal for beautiful eyes, the iris very black, the whites very white; cf. Arabic ḥawar حور. In other versions, it is Zīn's palace that is call Bīrca Belek.

¹⁷tertan

The eldest sister again says to [her] sisters:

"Sister, let me be a sacrifice for you!

Once I went hunting with the fairies 40 nights and 40 days¹⁸

I got separated¹⁹ from the fairies, it rained and sleeted down on me,

[27] I couldn't find my way, I came upon the city of Jezirah in Bohtan,

I was a guest at the palace of Yaya²⁰ Zîn,

I became a blue dove, at the window opening I perched, on the window sill

When I lifted my eyes to [behold] Yaya Zîn, This lady whom I saw was as beautiful
as Kakeh Mem."

The youngest sister said to her sisters:

"Sisters, let me be a sacrifice for you!

Let's lift up Kakeh Mem and take him to Jezirah and Bohtan,

To see if Kakeh Mem is more delicate, or Yaya Zîn is more beautiful."

The middle sister said to her sisters:

"Sisters, it is not according to rules and regulations,

Who ever heard of the men going after the women?

It's always been that women come to [live with] the men.

Suppose that we take Kakeh Mem and carry him off to Jezirah and Bohtan:

Perhaps God would disapprove, if we couldn't bring Kakeh Mem back here.

Kakeh Mem's honor would be besmirched and he would become unworthy of
respect.

They would say he's a shepherd or a cowherd²¹.

Because Kakeh Mem came into existence by an apple of Paradise, Brahim Pasha
must see them [=Kakeh Mem and Bengineh] at his right and left shoulders the
first thing in the morning²²

¹⁸-lit. "A hunt of 40 nights and 40 days"

¹⁹-lit. "Cut off"

²⁰ 'Yaya' is a title for a woman. It is equivalent to *xatûn* (khatûn) and *sitt* found in other versions of Mem û Zîn. See C. J. Rich. Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan (London : J. Duncan, 1836), v 1, p. 144

²¹ i.e., a nobody Cf ZK-2, p 73.

²² According to Muslim prayer ritual.

Because he came into existence by an apple of Paradise, whoever sees them, Mem
 and Bengineh, at the end of his prayer ritual,
 Even if he were an infidel, he would, God willing, become a believer.
 If we could not bring Mem back to Yemen the great and powerful,
 If his father doesn't see him at the end of his prayer ritual every morning,
 If he can't find him with his mother, if he didn't pass the night at Burj-i Belek,
 He would wipe out half of Yemen, then destroy the other part²³
 He would tear open the bellies of 70 ministers [viziers] and deputies, with a hide
 on his shoulders²⁴,
 He would kill many a servant and ever-present pipe-bearer.
 God won't like it if we become the cause of killing all these Muslims:
 Therefore, let us go pick up Yaya Zîn and bring her here,
 Let us see whether Kakeh Mem is more delicate, or if Yaya Zîn is [more] beautiful."

The middle sister is very respected.
 She says, "Sister[s], fly with your wings, stand guard for me at the balcony and
 window²⁵ whose top has a framework²⁶
 [28] Let's see whether Kakeh Mem's cheeks are more radiant or lamps and
 lighthouses [are]
 Who is this?^{26a} Fairies [dressed] as falcons"
 They were flapping their wings, they were flying up to the seventh layer of
 heaven,
 Nowhere did they rest, until they reached the city of Jizir, they were guests at the
 palace of Yaya Zîn.
 They became blue doves, they entered at the window [openings], they perched on
 the windowsill.

²³i e. He would tear everything apart in search of Mem.

²⁴This is obscure

²⁵i e. all openings

²⁶=pointed ornaments

^{26a} **ka bû** This construction signals a change in the rhyme, which will be adhered to the subsequent verses. See Rhyme Signaling Device in the section of Chapter Five entitled "Kurdish Folk Poetics"

The eldest sister says, "Jemîn, Sefîn²⁷, may I be a sacrifice for you.
 Let us see whether Kakeh Mem is [more] delicate, or Yaya Zîn is [more] beautiful."
 The middle sister says, "Sister[s], God wouldn't like it²⁸ if I lost my faith.
 Kakeh Mem's soul has come from there, he's standing there, wandering about.
 If we say Yaya Zîn is [more] beautiful, Kakeh Mem's soul will get mad, he'll
 complain about us to the master of the earth and heavens:
 If we say Kakeh Mem is [more] beautiful, Yaya Zîn's soul will get mad, she'll
 become a plaintiff against us to the Prophet of the end of time."
 The youngest sister says to her sisters:
 "May I be a sacrifice for you!
 Let's pick up Yaya Zîn and take her to Yemen the great and powerful,
 Let us see [whether] Kakeh Mem is [more] delicate, or Yaya Zîn is [more] beautiful."
 The youngest sister put Yaya Zîn into a deep sleep.
 The middle sister made her stand straight up, put a splendid outfit (garment) on
 her,
 Put makeup on her cheeks
 Adorned her hair²⁹
 Dyed her eyebrows black, made her very clean and lovely.
 They wrapped her tightly in her comforter and pillow, took her consciousness³⁰,
 They took her out through the window,
 They put her on their wings, prayed to God, they started moving, they went to the
 seventh layer of heaven,
 Nowhere did they rest³¹ until they reached the city of Yemen, they were guests at
 Burj-i Belek.

²⁷These are the names of her sisters

²⁸i.e. It wouldn't be fair (My informant's note).

²⁹'bisk' = girl's front hair. left unbraided and hanging down in front of ears, covering cheeks hair behind the bisk /is/ braided. In some regions, wearing one's hair like this is a sign of being married. (My informant's note)

³⁰=lit. "the spirit of her soul."

³¹or. 'stop.'

They went in through the window opening, they stretched out Yaya Zîn next to mir Mem³² shoulder to shoulder.

They flew to the window sill.

The eldest sister said to her sisters:

"Sister[s], let me be a sacrifice to you.

[29] Let us see [whether] Yaya Zîn is [more] delicate, or Mir Mem is [more] beautiful."

The middle sister says, "To me of wretched ancestry!

You are ambitious that I lose my faith,

We should wake them up to see which of them is beautiful, which of them speaks well."

Who was it? The youngest sister [it was] who put Yaya Zîn's spirit back in her³³.

The eldest sister said, "Why didn't you wake Kakeh Mem up?" [The younger sister] said, "She is a woman and a stranger: let's wake her up first, so that later she'll have nothing to be ashamed of³⁴." She woke up, looked around, and saw a man was lying beside her. Then she opened her eyes [and] said, "My God! I haven't been *rendez-vous*-ing with anyone, nobody's messenger has come to me; he must have given money to³⁵ the gatekeepers to get in." Kakeh Mem was undressed, [and] he was not aware of anything, he had fallen asleep flat on his back. Yaya Zîn said, "My God! Is he stupid or crazy? Has a man ever come to a *rendez-vous* in this manner! ³⁶"

Yaya Zîn calls out, "Boy, o boy!

³²- Prince Mem

³³ e. Woke her up

³⁴Theoretically, if they had woken Mem up first, he could have made love to Zîn in her sleep, thereby compromising her honor. By waking Zîn up first, this problem is avoided.

³⁵ e. bribed

³⁶or, "Never has a man come to a *rendez-vous* in this manner!"

Are you stupid, are you crazy, are you off your rocker?³⁷
 If you were coming to my bed, why didn't you tell me?"
 Kakeh Mem says, "Lady with the sleepy eyes!³⁸
 By the right of the God who is without partner, has no partner at all!
 I haven't come to your bed secretly,
 This is my house, I have no idea who you are."
 When Yaya Zîn heard Kakeh Mem out,
 At first, she struck his mouth with her fist, blood was flowing from Kakeh Mem's
 mouth like sea water³⁹.
 Kakeh Mem calls out, "Bengineh, o Bengineh!
 O knowledgeable servant with the golden cane!
 Take your head out of the goatskin coat⁴⁰
 Bring me my water pitcher⁴¹
 Bengineh took his head out of the goatskin and felt coat⁴²
 He brought the pitcher and the basin for his master,
 With both palms he hit his head⁴³
 He says, "O my house laid waste! My God! What has happened to my master?"
 Kakeh Mem says, "Take the water pitcher back, [and] go away!
 Nothing has occurred, nothing has happened to me.
 I have pinched my nose,

³⁷-lit: "Is your sense not whole?"

³⁸ Çawbergiâ' of Persian: khumâr خُمَلر , Arabic 'uyûn nâ'isah نَاعِمَة عِيُون , a good quality for a woman to have (My informant's note)

³⁹-lit: "A stream or a sea or water"

⁴⁰Ayyûbiyân "Out of the ruined house and guardpost": Oscar Mann has **kawit** = goatskin where Ayyûbiyân has **kawil** = ruined house

⁴¹For ritual ablutions

⁴²Ayyûbiyân "Out of the ruined house and tower."

⁴³As a sign of grief, at seeing Kakeh Mem's bloody nose

[30] A drop of blood has fallen⁴⁴ there."

Yaya Zîn says, "Young man, this gift from you is not acceptable,
I wonder what Turk this is that you brought with you?⁴⁵

Kakeh Mem says, "Young lady!

By the eternal God!

If you believe me, this is my guard and my head servant.

Lady! To me your eyes are more beautiful than the eyes of falcons!

Your teeth are very much more beautiful than pieces of jewelry.

If you don't accept my head servants, you call on [your] servants male and female.

Yaya Zîn calls out, "O maidservant named Melik Reyhan,

Bring me a veil, lamps and lights!

Tonight more than any other night I've seen something surprising to me, Zîn
with neck in black tentcloth⁴⁶, of wretched ancestry."

Yaya Zîn calls out, "Maidservant, o maidservant whose name is Esmer!

Bring me the lamp [and] veil at once,

Tonight I have been really bewildered at my situation, Zîn with neck in black
tentcloth and lowly."

Yaya Zîn calls out, "Maidservant, o maidservant whose name is Gulindam,

Bring me the lamp, light and a full veil,

Tonight of all nights a big [sense of] bewilderment as befallen me, wretched me."

Who had more beautiful eyes than Yaya Zîn?⁴⁷

No matter how much she called her young servants

There was no one, no one answered her.

Yaya Zîn says, "Young man, from the race of Jinns!

By the love of God above us,

⁴⁴cr. 'dripped'

⁴⁵Ayyübiyân "What black locust this is . . ." Oscar Mann understands by qarakullafêke, qara kulAh (çara = 'black' in Turkish; kulAh = 'hat' in Persian) the name of the Azeri Turkish tribe Karapapak or Karakalpak, lit 'Black [sheepskin] hat,' while Ayyübiyân understands qara kulle = black locust. Both agree that qara is from the Turkish word for 'black.' In either case, Yaya Zîn is referring negatively to Berçin.eh.

⁴⁶A sign of mourning

⁴⁷i.e., Nobody [responded].

If you won't tell me who your father is, at least tell me what your name is!"
 Kakeh Mem says, "Lady whose throat is [smooth] like a [marble] tombstone!
 I myself am mir Mem, the only son of Brahim Padishah⁴⁸ of Yemen.
 On the day of war, twelve kings rode out after my father, each one of them master
 of regiments, hosts and armies."

Kakeh Mem says, "Lady with the sleepy eyes,
 By the love of God above our heads,
 Would you please tell me who your father is, what your name is."

Yaya Zîn says, "Mîr Mem, soul of my soul,
 I was a Yaya Zîn with long hair
 [31] Sister of mir Zêndîn, daughter of mir Awdalan⁴⁹,
 I think God has sent me for you as a gift and a sign⁵⁰."

Yaya Zîn says, "Sleepy-eyed Kakeh Mem,
 By the love of God above our heads,
 Please tell me the address⁵¹ of your palace and window in the city of Yemen, how
 can I recognize it?"

Kakeh Mem says, "Khatun, my palace is very high, its tip reaches the seventh layer
 of heaven,

One brick is gold, one is silver, the master made it in his factory⁵²,
 The sound of angels reaches it from the seventh layer of heaven,
 My palace is a very great and powerful palace.

The diwan of Brahim Pasha of Yemen is very powerful, he is the master of the
 diwan.

In the diwan of Brahim Pasha wakils and wazirs⁵³ sit, with goatskins on their
 shoulders.

⁴⁸ e. King

⁴⁹ Awdal = abdal, someone who wants something very badly, etc.

⁵⁰ Nişan = 1) sign, token; 2) betrothal, engagement.

⁵¹ Nêw nişan = name and sign, i.e. way to recognize something.

⁵² 'Kaxxare,' a word which can also mean 'Brothel.'

⁵³ = Representatives /attorneys and ministers/viziers

For dinner and lunch forty trays full of dishes come to the diwan of Brahim Pasha,
in the front room, [yet] the servants, stablemaster and stablehands secretly say,
"He is stingy."

There is a scribe sitting writing out laws⁵⁴, and judges are sent to rule in cities,
On the one hand he gives out rewards⁵⁵, on the other he gives away gold,
On the other hand he has set up a rope⁵⁶ with the executioner there waiting,
On one side soldiers leave, on the other riders⁵⁷ have been set up in parade,
On one side, horse stables, on the other, gelding stables⁵⁸,
On another side are hung the weapons of men.

Mir Mem says, "Yaya Zin, my life, I don't know more than this, I won't tell you
false things."

Mir Mem says, "Lady, Lady with the sleepy eyes,
By the love of God above our heads,

Please tell me what the address of your palace and window is in the city of Jizir."

Yaya Zin says, "Mir Mem, my palace is high, its tip is as high as a mountain,
Clear water in the pond of Kawthar, it pours over marble stone, scatters into four
gardens⁵⁹.

Falcons, shalurs⁶⁰ and shimqars⁶¹, have become brigands there."

Yaya Zin says, "Mir Mem, my palace is high, its tip reaches the seventh layer of
heaven,

⁵⁴or, "Orders"

⁵⁵ *Xelat*, from Arabic *khil'ah* خِلعة, a robe of honor given as a reward.

⁵⁶i.e. a noose

⁵⁷i.e. knights

⁵⁸Stables specifically for castrated horses

⁵⁹or, "a garden called *Çwarbazî*" = lit. "Four Gardens"

⁶⁰Either 1) birds with stilt-like legs, e.g. storks, or 2) type of bird used in hunting, according to OM, Germ. tr., p. 55, note 43.

⁶¹Falcon-like bird used in India on elephant hunts, according to OM, Germ. tr., p. 55, note 43.

[32] The masterbuilder has come from India, the architect from Bukhara, the
 plaster from Tarikistan⁶²,
 The bricks of my palace, (alternately) one is of gold, one the jewels of factories,
 Whatever valuable stone the divers have taken out of the sea of the Nile and
 Oman,
 Whatever Indian fabrics [you can find], I have put there a merchant, who does not
 have 500,000⁶³, he would not know their value⁶⁴,
 Mir Mem, my dear, let's get to know our surroundings, let's count our blessings."
 Who was it? This couple of young lovers.
 They picked up three kinds of lamps⁶⁵,
 They searched all the windows there were:
 It was Kakeh Mem's palace: the Lady had no sign⁶⁶,
 The lady was amazed by God's deed, she was sorry for what she had said,
 Kakeh Mem says, "Yaya Zîn, why did you accuse me wrongly?"
 Yaya Zîn says, "Mîr Mem, don't be angry with me too much,
 I was a cloud among the clouds of the sky⁶⁷,
 I have descended with the raindrops for you
 So that we may make merry and enjoy life."
 Yaya Zîn says, "For God's sake! Mir Mem, don't be angry with me, don't turn your
 back on me.
 I was a cloud among the clouds⁶⁸ of Paradise.
 The Lord of the plains has thrown me for you onto the plains."

⁶² li: "Land of darkness"

⁶³ i e, Is ror: rîd:

⁶⁴ i e He cannot ever deal with them, because he does not understand their value.

⁶⁵ Ferer, fanos, & qira

⁶⁶ i e, She saw nothing familiar

⁶⁷ OM = houri: Should we understand by *haurîg* ... *le haurîkani* 'a cloud among the clouds,' as Ayyûbiyân and my informant did, or 'a houri among the houris,' as Oscar Mann did? In Sorani Kurdish, *hewr* = cloud, and *horya* = houri, so its really up in the air (! could not resist the pun!).

⁶⁸ or, 'Houri among the houris' as in note 67 above

Who were these two lovers in the shape of falcons?
 They exchanged handkerchiefs and rings as a sign⁶⁹
 They put their arms⁷⁰ around each other's necks,
 They came back over the carpets, prayer-mats and rugs,
 They sat together, counting their blessings.
 Yaya Zin says, "My God, Mir Mem, when you get up tomorrow morning, you may
 remember this dream,
 If you don't become a messenger to me, or come after me to the forsaken city of
 Jizir,
 O Lord, you will be responsible for me on the day that God holds court⁷¹, when
 court is held.
 Kakeh Mem says, "Yaya Zîn, soul of my soul,
 [33] When I get up tomorrow morning, God forbid that you won't be here
 anymore.
 If I don't pick up a dervish's keshkul⁷², and a wooden cane [from a young tree],
 If I don't follow you like a beggar, and find food bit by bit⁷³.
 O Lord, may I die an infidel, let a woman's headdress be wrapped about my head⁷⁴.
 Yaya Zin, my life, whatever females God has created, whether Jewess, European,
 Yezidi, Russian, or Christian,
 May everyone else have them but me, other than you they are all as mothers and
 sisters to me⁷⁵."

⁶⁹Of betrothal?

⁷⁰-lit "hands"

⁷¹Presumably this means "On the Day of Judgment."

⁷²-Container carried by beggars

⁷³-lit "Bread by bread"

⁷⁴We can infer from this that according to this value system, being an infidel is as shameful as treating a man as a woman.

⁷⁵Halal (ritually pure, kosher) vs 'haram' (ritually unclean, unkosher, 'treif'): in this context, **halal** is used for all members of the opposite sex with whom sexual contact and marriage would be considered licit, and **haram**, for all those with whom the same would be considered incest, i.e. parents, siblings, siblings of one's parents.

Yaya Zîn says, "Woe is me, pitiful and irreligious me,
 Whatever males God has created in the world,
 Whether Jew or Armenian ⁷⁶, may everyone but you who would normally be
helal (allowed), may he be *heram* (forbidden),
 All of them for me are like fathers and brothers!"
 Who are these two lovers in the shape of falcons?
 They put their arms ⁷⁷ around each other, they kissed ⁷⁸.

The fairies said, "If we don't return her, we will be disgraced before God, but if we
 do take her back, we will be blamed by her.
 The eldest sister said, "One is forgiven by God, but not forgiven by other people ⁷⁹."
 Who was it? The youngest sister, the loveliest.
 She begged God and his chosen prophet,
 "O Lord, may it rain sleep for the lovers of God's court."
 They suddenly fell unconscious.
 Who was it? Those fairies as falcons.
 The three sisters took counsel together,
 "Let's not be disgraced by the court of the provider of sight ⁸⁰,
 But rather let us wrap Yaya Zîn in the five fingers of our hands,
 From here let's take her to her bed,
 Bring her back to the city of Jizîr, tomorrow she won't be ashamed, the helpless ⁸¹
 one.
 Now what should we do with Kakeh Mem, will he stay in his place ^{82?}"

⁷⁶i e. Christian.

⁷⁷See note 70 above

⁷⁸-lit. "Put their mouths on each other's mouth."

⁷⁹This is a proverb, according to my informant.

⁸⁰i e. by God.

⁸¹-lit. "Tongue-tied"

⁸²or, 'bed'

She says, "The provider of sight will provide a remedy."
 So who was this fairy with the beautiful figure?
 They quickly wrapped Yaya Zîn in their hands,
 They put her on their wings,
 Until they took her up to the seventh heaven.
 They did not stop until they brought her to the city of Jizir, and placed her in her
 bed.

[34] In the morning when Kakeh Mem wakes up
 He calls out, "O beautiful-eyed Bengîneh!
 Yaya Zîn was with me, why don't I see her, isn't she still with me?"
 Bengîneh says, "Mîr Mem, by God, who is above our heads,
 I don't know about anyone, I've seen no one."
 Kakeh Mem calls out to him, "Bengîneh, I'm sad, and very thoughtful.
 Bring the water pitcher and basin so that I may perform my ritual ablutions."
 Who was it? Bengîneh of the beautiful figure,
 Who brought the pitcher and basin for his master.
 When he had washed, he took his handkerchief out of his breastpocket,
 When he looked at his finger, Yaya Zîn's seal and ring had been left behind with
 him.

At once he fainted, he became speechless⁸³,
 His eyes would not open, he wasn't aware of the people around him.
 Bengîneh brought smelling salts⁸⁴,
 And placed them before Kakeh Mem's mouth.
 At once Kakeh Mem's eyes opened, he regained speech.
 Kakeh Mem calls out, "Bengîneh, fix me a bed, for I'm done for."
 Kakeh Mem calls out, "Bengîneh, I'm boiling inside,
 Tell my father that Kakeh Mem's trouble is serious, he's very ill!"
 Who was it? Bengîneh of the beautiful figure,
 He called out again and again,
 Went to Brahim Pasha's diwan, and stood.

⁸³-lit: "His tongue broke"

⁸⁴-lit: "Medicine for fainting"

Brahim Pasha says, "Sleepy-eyed Bengineh,
But where is your master, I don't see him."

He [=Bengineh] says, "May I be a sacrifice to you, my heart is troubled, it won't
calm down.

Kakeh Mem's trouble is grave, he has fainted."

When Brahim Pasha learns this, he gets up, an uproar comes about in this diwan.

Who was it? Brahim Pasha of the beautiful figure.

His tears flowed like a river.

Who was it? The respected Brahim Pasha,

Who was climbing up stairs (and windows)

Who was it? Brahim Pasha of the beautiful figure.

He opened the door, and drew the curtain

[35] Who was it? Dapper Brahim Pasha.

He held Kakeh Mem's head, put it in his lap.

He says, "My child, let me be a sacrifice to you,

Where does it hurt, what is giving you pain?

My child, it's good that your father know what your pain is,

So that I can send for Aristotle and Loqman⁸⁵,

Perhaps there is someone who would know (for me) of a cure for your sickness."

No matter how much his father spoke and pleaded,

Kakeh Mem would not speak or give answer.

Brahim Pasha says, "My child, where is your pain, may my house be destroyed.

My child, for you I give my life and my faith!⁸⁶

My child, my heart is on fire, mir Mem, my whole body is on fire⁸⁷

My child, for you I give my eyes and the whole city of Yemen⁸⁸

⁸⁵Loqman hakim, celebrated philosopher, fabulist, and doctor.

⁸⁶=lit. "I'll cause my soul to circle around you, and my faith from head to foot = my entire faith."

⁸⁷i.e. I'm devastated. (My informant's note).

⁸⁸=lit. "I'll cause my eyes and the whole city of Yemen to circle around you."

My child, cane for my hand⁸⁹, light of my two eyes,
 My child, strength of my liver, hymn of my tongue⁹⁰,
 My child, If anything happens to you, I won't consider myself master of Yemen.
 My child, my offspring, my sweet sight,
 My child, open your eyes, so that I may see you once again."
 Mir Mem says, "Father, I was a child, I became a student.
 I went beyond being a student, and became a mullah⁹¹,
 I went beyond being a mullah, and became a judge.
 My dear father, immediately and without hesitation, I want you to ask for a wife
 for me."
 Brahim Pasha says,
 "My child, may this care and this worry fall on your's father's soul⁹².
 My child, for your sake I'll throw into the sea a raft with a bridge,
 My child, may your blessed honoring come, I'll go ask for the hand of the daughter
 of the king of Egypt.
 My child, may your care and complaints befall me,
 My child, for your sake I'll throw into the sea rafts and ships,
 My child, may your blessed honoring come, I'll go ask for the hand of the daughter
 of the king of India.
 My child, may your cares and struggles befall me,
 My child, may your blessed honoring come, I'll go ask for the hand of the daughter
 of the king of the East."

⁸⁹Perhaps a reference to the expression *gocani pîrî* = 'cane of old age', a way of referring to the youngest child (French 'le benjamin'), who is someone for the parents to lean on in their old age. (My informant's note)

⁹⁰Both my informant and Ayyûbiyânconcur on *wêrd* meaning 'religious hymn,' (Cf. Persian *vird* ورد) in contrast to O Mann's interpretation. 'du dessen Namen ich immerfort im Munde führe' lit. "Du tagliche Arbeit meiner Zunge" = "You whose name is always on my lips (lit. "in my mouth"), lit. "You daily work of my tongue."

⁹¹Type of Muslim religious leader

⁹²i.e. May your father suffer in your place. My informant feels that this is the sort of thing one would only say to an only child (*taçane* تاقانه), which Kakeh Mem is

He says, "Dear father, I want neither Egypt nor Sham⁹³,
I swear by the Ka'bah⁹⁴, the house of God⁹⁵
My heart has encamped at Yaya Zîn's⁹⁶.

[36] Except for Yaya Zîn, all the hîjal (allowed) of the world are hîeram (forbidden)
to me⁹⁷,

Father, if it's true that you are going to get me a bride,
I want Yaya Zîn, the one with the [beautiful] hair,
Sister of mir Zêndîn and daughter of mir Awdalan,
If you want to know where they are from, it's the city of Jizîrî Botan."

Brahim Pasha said, "Jizîr is not part of God's realm." His wakils and wazirs⁹⁸ said, "No, it's not." He said, "Well, for me it isn't fitting, me being a king, to marry my son to the daughter of a servant of mine." They said, "There's an old wazir, fetch him to find out whether Jizîr exists or not." They brought the wazir, he was in a cage, they brought him and set him down in the diwan of Brahim Pasha.

Brahim Pasha said, "Wazir, I say the city of Jizîr is not in God's realm. Is it or isn't it?" The wazir said, "Well, the city of Jizîr is here in the west: for seven years your father the king gave the city of Jizîr to me instead of paying me a salary. It could not provide for my expenses⁹⁹." When Brahim Pasha learned that, he got angry and annoyed, and left. Kakeh Mem got up from his place¹⁰⁰, then sat down.

⁹³ - Syria

⁹⁴ Holiest place in Islamdom, center of the rituals performed during the pilgrimage to Mecca (hadj).

⁹⁵ House of God' is rendered twice, once in Kurdish (ma'îxurîa) and once in Arabic (bêt Allâh بيت الله)

⁹⁶ i.e. "I want only her."

⁹⁷ See note 75 above.

⁹⁸ See note 53 above.

⁹⁹ i.e. It's a poor town.

¹⁰⁰ i.e. He rose out of respect for his father.

The wazir told him all the roads and landmarks of Jizir. Kakeh Mem gave him 1000 liras out of gratitude. Brahim Pasha sent the executioner to wait for the wazir, [saying], "When he comes down from Kakeh Mem's chambers, cut off his head and bring it to me."

When they brought him down, he saw that the executioners were standing in the alley. The wazir recognized them, [and] said, "Call those executioners." He gave them some money as a reward¹⁰¹ and said, "Will you allow me to go to the diwan, or are you going to cut my head off?" They said, "Yes, you can go to the diwan." They picked him up and took him to Brahim Pasha's diwan. He said to Brahim Pasha, "Padishah, I suppose that death is good for me. For what reason did you order that I be beheaded?" He said, "I have only that one son. I said, 'Jizir does not exist': why did you say it does?" He said, "Your honor, I did not know that he had dreamt about it. Command him to go hunting. The city of Yemen has forty gates, and forty quarters; choose forty beautiful girls and women from each quarter, bring them and hold a party for him. When he returns from the hunt, bring out minstrels and dancers for him, place lions and monkeys in his path, place servants and musicians¹⁰² on his path. If he comes back safely from hunting, the one he saw at night in his dream, out of these women and girls, one of them is bound to look like her. Kakeh Mem will take a liking to her, if she's a girl (i.e. unmarried), then there's no difficulty, her father will like it if Kakeh Mem, son of Brahim Pasha, asks for her hand; if she's a woman (i.e. married), call her husband, make him a wazir, give him much gold, make him divorce his wife, then with good omens marry her off to Kakeh Mem. [37] God willing, he'll settle down." Brahim Pasha said, "Good for you, wazir! Give the wazir a reward." He received plenty of money.

Kakeh Mem was hunting until midday. Brahim Pasha planned a party for him with provisions. Everyone who had a daughter said, "God willing, he'll want my daughter." Whoever had a wife, was crying, saying, "The king will take away my wife. Where should I take mud from to put on my head¹⁰³? I'll lose my wife."

¹⁰¹انعام *an'ām* See also note 55 above.

¹⁰²or, 'Singers.'

¹⁰³This is a custom practiced at funerals.

Bengneħ said, "Kakeħ Mem, what is that uproar all around the city of Yemen?" Kakeħ Mem said, "The city of Yemen has 1000 tricks." Bengneħ said, "Let's go home." They cut short¹⁰⁴ the hunting expedition, and headed for home. When they reached the outskirts of the city, they saw a feast, with minstrels and dancers, lions and bears. Bengneħ said, "Mtr Mem, see how much your father loves you, see how many amusements he's created for you." Brahim Pasha dispatched young boys to welcome him; then he sent the mayor out to greet him; then he sent out religious leaders¹⁰⁵ to welcome him. Kakeħ Mem reached the young boys, said hello to them, reached the mayor and greeted him, reached the religious leaders and got off his horse in their midst, and promised a reward for them. There he mounted his horse [again]. Minstrels and dancers came out to welcome him, and he rewarded them. He arrived at the feast. He put his head on the front of his saddle, and didn't look at anyone. He went toward the door of his diwan, where he dismounted. The feast was cancelled. Everyone who had a daughter said, "What should I do? I'm more in debt. He didn't ask for my daughter[*'s hand*], so what am I to do?" The ones who had wives said, "O God, many thanks. I did not lose my wife." News was given to Brahim Pasha, [as follows], "Your Highness, Kakeħ Mem came back; he didn't want anyone." Brahim Pasha said, "Go bring the wazir, I will strangle him [for sure]." Later he sent someone and said, "Cut off his head, I don't want to lay eyes on him again." They said, "Your Highness, don't cut off his head, let him come here, so that we see what his solution is." They sent after him, and brought him. He arrived at the diwan of the king of Yemen and said, "Your Highness, I deserve to lose my head¹⁰⁶." He [=Brahim Pasha] said, "Why did you tell¹⁰⁷ about Jizir? I only have one son." He [=the wazir] said, "Your Highness, it's no big deal. Draw up an army for him of 12,000 men, and appoint someone to be in charge. Provide him with an arsenal and send it with him. Let him go for twelve stages¹⁰⁸: at every

¹⁰⁴or. "Cancelled"

¹⁰⁵Sayyids and melas (=mullahs)

¹⁰⁶=lit. "I am good for having my head cut off."

¹⁰⁷=lit. "Bear witness"

¹⁰⁸See note 1 above

stage¹⁰⁹ 1,000 men should leave him. Then he'll be alone. Where will he go? He too will come back. Marry him to whichever padishah's daughter you like." Kakeh Mem sent to his father and said, "If you allow me, I'll go now." Brahim Pasha said, "If he gives me a week, I'll make preparations [for his departure]."

Let's talk about Yaya Zîn now. [38]

The fairies picked up Yaya Zîn and took her back to the city of Jizîr. In the morning Yaya Zîn woke up and cursed Melik Reyhan (one of her servants), "Why didn't you wake me up? I've missed my prayer time." Melik Reyhan said, "What was I to do, you went out walking about all night¹¹⁰, you woke up too late." She said, "In that case just bring me some water to wash my face¹¹¹ with. She washed her face, and took out her handkerchief to wipe her eyes: it was Kakeh Mem's handkerchief¹¹². She looked, [and saw that] she had his ring and seal on her finger. She said, "Bring me a veil, I am going to Qaratajdin's house, to my sister Lady Astî." She went to Qaratajdin's house, [and] Lady Astî came out to greet her, taking her by the arm and accompanying her up the stairs. They sat down together. Lady Astî was her elder sister, the wife of Qaratajdin. She said, "Sister, why have you become to pale and thin?" She [=Zîn] said, "Sister, here, take these!" She put the handkerchief and ring in front of Lady Astî. Lady Astî looked at it [and saw that] it was the signet ring of Kakeh Mem, the only son of Brahim Pasha of Yemen. She said, "Sister, where did you get these from?" She said, "By God, I don't know. They took me to Yemen last night."

"I didn't understand anything, o wretched me with neck in black.

There they had me swear by the thirty parts of the Koran."

Then aside from this, Lady Astî is old (=wise), she herself knows.

Lady Astî says, "Woe is me, o wretched me with neck in black,

It was Mir Mem from Yemen who put the thirty parts of the Koran in front of you.

¹⁰⁹ e. Every night

¹¹⁰ *Şewgerdî*: cf. Persian: *shabgardî* شبگردی

¹¹¹ =lit. "Eyes"

¹¹² In PS, Mem and Zîn exchange both rings and handkerchiefs. In this version, this is the first mention of exchanging handkerchiefs.

He won't give it up, he'll come here, he won't lose his faith."

Lady Astî says, "Yaya Zin, my dear,

That Mîr Mem who swore on the Koran with you,

He's destined¹¹³ not to give up, he'll bless us with his coming.

Then Yaya Zin says, "What should I do, poor and wretched me, shameful me, how will I pass the time?"

Lady Astî said, "I should build you a *seko*¹¹⁴ by the river of Jizîr. I'll send [someone] to buy you 200 rolls of *jâw*¹¹⁵. You have forty maidservants, together with them, bleach some of it, make sweatcaps¹¹⁶ out of some of it, [so that] your sorrow will be dispersed by the riverside. God willing I'll send someone to my older brother¹¹⁷ to give me two plows and two men. I'll plow for myself, my allowance is small, I cannot get by with what I have. We'll send them [=the two men] (to wait) by the road, when Kakeh Mem and Bengneh come, the plowmen will bring us the good news.

They had sent Melik Reyhan out, they called her in. Melik Reyhan had an armband on, she put it before Yaya Zin and said, "I won't be your servant [39] anymore." Yaya Zin said, "Why not?" She said, "Yaya Zin, you go for night walks, and don't take me along." Khatûn Zin said, "Where did I go?" She said, "Every night you've gone out walking: why don't you take me with you?" She said, "Why are you getting mad at me? When they come, let's make a deal: the agha (master) is for me, the servant is for you." They made a pact, and went back home. They sent for [someone] to buy *jâw*, and set things up. They went to the river of Jizîr.

113. lit. 'His fate is dear.'

114 *Seko* is a raised, square platform, elevated about a meter above the ground, with a smooth surface, serving as a place to sit. See O. Mann's note in the German translation, p. 67-8, note 83.

115 - Cheap cotton material.

116 - 'Araqîn.'

117 Ayyûbiyânhad 'Kakeh Mem' instead of 'older brother,' which must be an error.

"Now let's say two words about Kakeh Mem in the style *nadir*¹¹⁸
 This is the order of Rahman Bakir¹¹⁹
 Who is both Kurmanj and Dêbokir¹²⁰
 For the sake of Dr. Mann, the eternal one¹²¹
 There was no news or message,
 Kakeh Mem's preparations were going along bit by bit.
 In the city of Yemen there came out 12,000 horsemen according to the register.
 Kakeh Mem says, "Bengîneh!
 Go see the army that my father has prepared for me.
 Who was it? Bengîneh the rosy and fresh¹²².
 He went and got his horse out of the stable.
 When he was about to ride off, he uttered God's name.
 From one end to the other he inspected the army, and came back (to his starting
 place).
 He started calling one after the other,
 Until he got to the stable door and dismounted.
 Who was it? Respected Bengîneh,
 Around whom gathered stable hands and servants.
 He says, "We have a long [and far] journey ahead of us.
 Who was it? Bengîneh the rosy and fresh.
 He climbed up the stairs, and drew open the curtain of the door,
 Until he came and greeted his master Mîr Mem.

118 Possibly a style of singing. O Mann himself was not sure what was meant by this. I believe that the choice of the word *nadir* was determined by the fact that it sets the rhyme scheme for the next couple of verses, which end as follows: *nâdirî; bâkîrî; dêbökîrî; nâmîrî*.

119 Name of the singer of this tale.

120 Name of a Kurdish Mukri tribe north of Mehabad in Kurdistan of Iran.

121 These last three lines, as also the final lines of the story, constitute an interesting digression on the part of the singer of this tale. See İhan Başgöz, "Digression in Oral Narrative: A Case Study of Individual Remarks by Turkish Romance Tellers," *JAF* 99 (1986), pp. 5-23.

122 *guþbaw*

He said, "Bengîneh, this army that our father has prepared for us¹²³, I wonder how it is? Is it complete?

Bengîneh says, "My master, many of them are no good¹²⁴.

O master, I'll seek refuge with you, in their good horsemanship there is no fault.

That army which father made for us, in my opinion, serves no purpose for you and me."

Kakeh Mem said, "Go away, are you crazy, wretched one, would my father deceive me?"

Who was that? Respected Kakeh Mem.

[40] He insisted, and said, "Bring out the gray horse¹²⁵ for me.

Who was it? The stablehands rosy and fresh.

They saddled up the gray horse, decked him out with two reins.

Along with Bengîneh they were calling out one after the other:

"The gray horse has come out, is standing by the door of the diwan."

However many people there are in Yemen, they all were looking out their windows.

Mîr Mem behaved disrespectfully¹²⁶, and did not say goodbye to his parents.

Who was that? Respected Kakeh Mem.

As he was coming down the steps, people grabbed him by the arms on both sides.

He put his foot in the grey horse's stirrup, and climbed up onto his bejewelled saddle.

Some people were saying, "It is the sun!", others were saying, "It is the moon!"

"O Lord, may those with evil glances not see him!"

About 2,000 people were standing on either side.

Servants and wakils were saying, "go, don't stay around, take the news to Brahim Pasha."

¹²³Using the first person plural here ('Our father,' 'us') suggests that on some level, Mem and Bengîneh are perceived by the tale-teller to be brothers.

¹²⁴Ayyübiyân "They are so many that I cannot see their end."

¹²⁵Esp1 bor' Although Mem's horse is not specifically named 'Bor' in this version, the word 'bor' with the meaning of 'gray' is still used to describe him. The word 'bor' can also mean "Horse."

¹²⁶bäxiref'

Who was it? The loyal wakils and wazirs.

"Take the news to Mem's mother and Bengineh's mother, they should not long
for their sons, perhaps they'll come, they'll set their sons' necks free¹²⁷."

Who was it? The perfect wazir.

They send a message to Bengineh's mother.

Bengineh's mother, when she learns of this,
says, "I put my head in a dyer's jar.

I send up a great cry, the city of Yemen has become a desert, Jizir will become a
grave and graveyard, barren.

Bengineh's mother was walking, with bitter mourning and crying.

She called out one after the other,

She brought the news to Mir Mem's mother.

She says, "Mir Mem's mother, don't you know what has happened?

They say that Burj-i Belek has been left in Yemen without a master."

Mem's mother when she learns this,

Tears started rolling down from both eyes,

Mem's mother when she learned this,

She throws herself down from the castle, until she reaches the balcony,

Bareheaded and barefoot she comes to the alley,

She comes to the street and starts to cry.

[41] Till she reaches Burj-i Belek, "Wakils and wazirs, where is my only son?"¹²⁸

The wakils and wazirs say, "[Woe to us] for we are prisoners¹²⁹,

Must you remember your son now?

Burj-i Belek has become deserted and desolate, he has left on a journey to the city
of Jizir."

¹²⁷i.e. Absolve them of their debts, cf. Turkish *hakkını helal et* said to someone leaving by his friends staying behind. According to O. Mann, when someone is unhappy about another's departure, there is a belief (or superstition - my note) that a curse is resting on the neck of the one departing, which curse must be removed if the journey is to be successful (German translation, p. 70, note 91).

¹²⁸Everything before this point was translated with the help of my informant, a native speaker of Sorani from Kirkuk, Iraq. Everything from this point on was translated by the author.

¹²⁹i.e. in trouble.

When Mem's mother learns this,
 She says, "People of Yemen, come put on my head dirt and dust from the
 streets!¹³⁰"
 Then she calls out, "[My] son! Mir Mem, Soul of my soul!
 May my suffering be blessed to you, together with the milk of my breasts.
 Don't go to the city of Jizîr, it's an unlucky city, and comfort is hard to find
 there!¹³¹."

Bengîneh's mother says, "My son, [woe] to wretched me!
 Remember the hard work of your poor mother!
 My lamentations have gone up [to God] over Mem and Bengîneh!¹³², graves and
 cemeteries are the fate of the city of Jizîr!¹³³."

Mir Mem's mother says, "Woe is me, pitiful and ruined of ancestors,
 My son, Mir Mem, I carried you inside me for nine months, nine days, nine hours,
 and nine minutes, despite the pain!¹³⁴.
 You were freed from my belly!¹³⁵, and came into the hands of the midwife,
 You were freed from the midwife, and came into the hands of the nurses.
 My son, Mir Mem, you were freed from the nurses, and came into the hands of the
 pedagogue(s), who brought you to the diwan.

¹³⁰Putting dirt on one's head is a sign of mourning

¹³¹-lit: "and its comfort [wisrâ'ati < Arabic *istirâḥah* استراحة --> Persian *istirâḥat* استراحت
 & Turkish *istirahat*] is very heavy." Ayyübiyân has wis'e: *ويصعب* for *wisrâ'at*.

¹³²plural in the original, as if a *Mem & Bengîn* were one entity, and she were lamenting two such
 entities

¹³³Ayyübiyân *gor û gorxanyan* - "their graves and cemeteries." He translates as "Their graves and
 burial places will be in the city of Jizîr"

¹³⁴*birk* برك - 'lumbago' according to Wahby and Edmonds' dictionary.

¹³⁵*xezêr*.e=lit "treasure"; "water tank"

My son, they sent you to school¹³⁶, for seven years you did not see the light of day¹³⁷ in the cellar.

People of Yemen, come put a black tent cloth on me, because of a youth like Mir Mem; the city of Yemen will become a desert, and desolate Jizir will flourish."

Bengineh's mother says, "My son, why are you such a thoughtless child?"
Son, the journey before you is a rare one¹³⁸,
Son, you¹³⁹ may be free of your mother's milk, [but] don't abandon¹⁴⁰ your master!"

Mem's mother says, "O Yemen, Help! Succor!
My son, Mir Mem, stop beside your mother, speak two words with me!
I will take treasures and arsenals for you out of the city of Yemen,
My son, I will become your messenger, and go myself to the city of Jizir of Bohtan,
I will bring Yaya Zīn for you, the city of Jizir also will I buy with earth and wind; O little father¹⁴¹, with all its accoutrements I will fetch it here."

Kakeh Mem says, "Mother, woe is me!"
[42] I have sworn that I must go after her to Jizir."

Mem's mother says, "My cry of help is to God, the one and only!
A fire has broken out in me, I have no cure for it,
The city of Yemen is deserted and desolate; What can I do? It is without master!"

136=lit. "They put you before books"

137=lit. "the world's light:"

138=be nadīr. 'A rare one' is a guess, since *nadīr* |< Arabic *nādir* نادر | means 'rare.' Possibly chosen for its rhyme. See note 118 above

139=lit. "your neck"

140=lit. "don't take your hand from"

141=lit. "father of the mother"

Bengneh's mother says, "My child, woe is to thoughtless me!
 My child, you must never abandon¹⁴² Mir Mem, the son of Brahim Pasha."
 "Alas and alack!
 My maternal pains have been in vain in the world;
 God gave me an only son, ?I was appointed over him, but have lost him.?"

Mem's mother says, "My child, Mir Mem, God has not permitted me to sit
 confidently.
 My child, now in old age, I¹⁴³ has encountered an empty house¹⁴⁴."
 "People of Yemen, sayyids and mullahs, young men!
 Let me be a sacrifice to your pairs of eyes!
 Lock the gates of Yemen for me, so that I can say two words to my only son."
 "Sayyids and mullahs, beloved of God!
 In all of your breasts are the chapters of the word of God;
 Come with me, let's go to Mir Mem, you ask for me, perhaps he will come back
 with me."

Bengin's mother says, "A fire has broken out in me, my liver has been destroyed.
 The lord and servants are headed for desolate Jizir."
 "What am I to do? Woe to irreligious¹⁴⁵ me!
 What am I to do? Why doesn't Brahim Pasha respond to Mem and Bengin's call
 for help?"

Mem's mother says, "What am I to do? Woe to imprisoned me!
 I have no one to give me advice or help,
 No matter what I do, I cannot let go of my son."

142)it: "lift [your] hand from"

143)=lit: "my neck"

144) i.e., the lack of offspring, or sterility

145) bē seLa =lit: "without prayer", i.e. someone whose prayer is not heard or answered, because he fails to pray properly

I should take up a keshkūl¹⁴⁶ and a walking stick, become a dervish, and wander behind Mir Mem, until I reach the city of Jizir."

Bengīneh's mother says, "What am I to do, my child, my soul?
I renounce Yemen, even if it is great and important;
I will become a wanderer¹⁴⁷ and find bread [by going] from door [to door],
I will pass through every city, until I come to the city of Jizra Bohtan.
The people of Jizir will say, 'This pair of young men have their maidservant with them.' "

Kakeh Mem says, "Woe to estranged, irreligious me!
Tell my mother, '[I swear] to God, I won't be coming back,
For I have sworn by the word of God."

[43] Mem's mother says, "My child, my sweet sight¹⁴⁸!
Stand still, let me embrace you and have a good look at you."

Kakeh Mem says, "Don't even think about it,
It's no use [trying to] embrace me.
It's no use, I'm not coming back.
My mind is made up¹⁴⁹, I must go to Jizra Bohtan.
Let go of me, o Muslims!"

Bengīneh's mother says, "Woe is me, pitiful and ruined of ancestors!
By God, allow Mem and Bengīneh to go to Jizra Bohtan.
Come, entrust them to God as guarantor, as a surety to the prophet for all eternity."

Mem's mother says, "My child, woe to irreligious me!

¹⁴⁶See note 72 above

¹⁴⁷āq = lit. 'messenger' See also note 288 below

¹⁴⁸āde = lit. 'eye' [literary word]

¹⁴⁹seferim le ber e = lit. 'I am intent upon this trip'

A fire has broken out in me, in my heart the light has been extinguished;
The city of Jizir will prosper, the city of Yemen is without its master's son."

Kakeh Mem says, "What am I to do, my fate¹⁵⁰ has changed.
People of Yemen, sayyids and mullahs all together!
I am leaving, may your luck¹⁵¹ increase, may your houses prosper!¹⁵²"

The people of Yemen, the sayyids and mullahs, say, "We are blind;
We give you to God as guarantor, we entrust you to the prophet!"
Who was it? Respected Bengineh,
He let out a shout, called up the troops,
The troops set out¹⁵³, waving their banner.
In the course of one hour all the preparations were made,
They waved their banner, left Yemen behind them, and headed for the desolate
city of Jizir.

Then they brought news to Brahim, king of Yemen:
"In Yemen, a fire has broken out which no one can extinguish;
Brahim Padishah should send [a messenger] to Burj-i Belek, to find out why Kakeh
Mem did not remain there."
Brahim Padishah says, "You foolish people!
Go bring Kakeh Mem here to me!"
The wakils and wazirs says, "Brahim Padishah, woe to wretched you!
Didn't you know that Kakeh Mem has gathered an army and gone to the city of
Jizir?"
When Brahim Padishah has learned this, he begins to weep and lament,
He says, "Now that I have no son, what am I to do in desolate Yemen?"

¹⁵⁰-lit. "day"

¹⁵¹or , wealth

¹⁵²According to OM, *Dewlet ziyad û maltawa* is a general parting formula

¹⁵³Where OM has *bâr dâkirt* [*bar dekird*] = "they loaded up", hence "they departed", *Ayyübiyân* has *berf dekird* = "to make something be forward?"

"Respected wakils and wazirs!
I implore you, take treasures and trinkets to my son."

[44] The wakils and wazirs stood up [then and] there,
They say, "Let me be a sacrifice to you, Brahim Padishah, the perfect one,
Kakeh Mem is an intelligent man, he has taken his own travelling allowance."

Brahim Padishah says, "What am I to do? Fire has taken hold of me, my heart is
not at rest,
My child, I will make the city of Yemen a sacrifice to you, may my death come
before yours."

Who was it? Kakeh Mem the rare one,
Until evening he rides on, in the evening he camps for the night,
[And] says, "Bengineh, you must go look in on the army, regiments and troops for
me,
Then come back: you must prepare supper for me."

When their day's march was over for the night,
One commander turned back with one thousand men.
When the sun shone the next morning,
The bugle was sounded, the banner was raised,
They loaded up and headed for the city of Jizir,
By the time evening arrived, their day's journey was over.

Kakeh Mem says, "Beautiful-eyed Bengineh!
Take a walk among the troops, find out if anyone is out of sorts."
Bengineh circulated among the troops, and brought news for Mir Mem,
Saying, "My dear master [agha], no one is out of sorts, no one is suffering
discomfort,
But last night one commander turned back with one thousand men."

Mir Mem says, "Bengineh, young lad!
Thank you, by the grace of God!

Undoubtedly, Brahim Padishah, my father, has doublecrossed me."
 "Bengîneh, why are you so lost in thought?
 Your master would gladly die for you.¹⁵⁴
 For tonight, make [only] light preparations.
 By God, I will die rather than return home."

That evening all they did was rest.
 In the morning, when the sun rose,
 [The troops] were called up, the flag was hoisted,
 They head for the city of Jizîr, Yemen has been left behind.
 They march until evening,
 [When] once again they stop, the troops set up camp.

Mir Mem says, "Bengîneh, walk among the troops, find out if the army is
 complete¹⁵⁵.
 [45] Tears came pouring down from Bengîneh's eyes, you might say, a sea [of tears].
 Mir Mem says, "Bengîneh, what is wrong? What has happened?
 If you miss your parents, you too should turn back!"

Bengîneh says, "Woe is to estranged me, whose house is ruined!
 [I swear] by God himself, by the prophet for all eternity!
 I won't leave you until God's guest¹⁵⁶ comes to take my soul away."

Who was it? Respected Bengîneh.
 He sat together with Mir Mem, and they entertained each other
 Until morning, when the sun raised its head from the east,
 Then they raised their banner, [and] got the troops ready,
 Little by little they marched toward the city of Jizîr.
 At the time of the noon prayer, news was brought to Mir Mem:

¹⁵⁴=lit. "Your master will die for your two eyes"

¹⁵⁵i.e. if everyone is there and accounted for.

¹⁵⁶i.e. Azrael, the angel of death

"Greetings to our beautiful-eyed master!
 Did you know that three commanders and their troops have not stayed with us?
 Kakeh Mem says, "What can I do? It is God's will!
 What am I to do? My father has doublecrossed me."

Kakeh Mem says, "Bengineh, woe to irreligious me!
 It is not good that we torture people, neither does it please God.
 Come, for my sake become a commander, and take the army back for me."

Bengineh says, "Mīr Mem, I thought I was respected by you.
 I did not come to amass wealth, or to carry away hords of treasure.
 My master [agha], may I be a sacrifice to you, I am one of the estranged and poor;
 Until my dying day, I will be your gray horse's groom."

Mīr Mem says, "Bengineh, what am I to do? Imperfect and foolish me!
 May I be a sacrifice to you, may all of desolate Yemen be your sacrifice also!¹⁵⁷
 May my eyes be a sacrifice to you, together with my entire belief!¹⁵⁸
 Come, for my sake take the army back to Yemen, I cannot get along with these
 people.
 Perhaps God and the prophet will find out about my abandonment and solitude.
 My mind is made up, God willing, I won't return until I go to desolate Jizīr.
 Then my father will say, 'I had an only son, his name was Mīr Mem, he was the
 owner of Burj-i Belek, where is he [now]?'¹⁵⁹
 Then my mother will say, "My child, for nine months and nine days I carried you
 inside me, now where is my only son?"
 [46] Then Bengineh says, "Mīr Mem, both of us are thoughtless,
 Evening has descended, let us set up camp for ourselves
 The people have their eyes on us, because we are the great commanders of the
 army."

¹⁵⁷-lit. "I will make desolate Yemen circle about your head."

¹⁵⁸-lit. "my belief from head to foot"

¹⁵⁹This line has been omitted from Ayyūbiyāris edition.

When they finish speaking with each other there,
They call up their troops, plant their banner[’s pole] in the ground.

Mir Mem says, "Bengineh, go around and see who is without provisions, and who has provisions left."

Bengineh says, "Mir Mem, you come with me to settle accounts,
As long as Brahim Padishah[’s head] is pleased, the troops’ provisions won’t be scanty¹⁶⁰."

Mir Mem says, "By God, Bengineh, with these words you have made me agitated,
I have a long way to go¹⁶¹, it is a long and arduous road.
My father’s army is numerous, but it is not a source of confidence¹⁶².
My father has done this so that I won’t go to Jizir, so that I will turn back."

Bengineh says, "Mir Mem, no matter what I advise you to do, what I say is not carried out.

By God, when a man gives his word as a pledge, he must not renege on it,
Or else God, the great master, will be angry with him."

Mir Mem says, "Bengineh, you are not bringing rest to my heart¹⁶³,
I would not renounce Yaya Zin for all the world,
Even if I were to lose my head, by God, I would not renounce her for all the world."

¹⁶⁰According to Oskar Mann, this means "the money will last until we have returned to Brahim Padishah, until he rejoices at our return."

¹⁶¹-lit. "My road or way is far"

¹⁶²Oskar Mann’s translation of the second half of this line is questionable, because it does not fit the context: "let there be confidence." I have preferred Ayyübiyân’s interpretation here. Ayyübiyân omits the word *bela*.

¹⁶³-lit. "You are not making it so, that there be well-being in my heart"

Bengîneh says, "Mir Mem, Yaya Zîn is now waiting for you, she is renouncing everyone else."

Mir Mem says, "Bengîneh, don't shoot any more arrows at me, or cast me into anxiety.

I won't renounce Yaya Zîn, until it is judged in God's court whether I am right or wrong,

Now let us rest, so that the army troops recover [their strength]."

Who was it? Respectable Bengîneh.

He says, "Tomorrow we will carry out this plan,

God knows how many more days of travel we have until [we reach] Jizîr."

The next morning, the bugles are sounded, the banners are hoisted.

That night four commanders, each commander with one thousand men, had turned back.

Mir Mem says, "Bengîneh, what should I do? I have no teacher's paper, pen or seal left with me,

Bengîneh, what should I do? All of my lessons have been exchanged for longing for Yaya Zîn."

Bengîneh says, "Won't you listen to reason?^{163a} The army troops have gotten dispersed in the wilderness."

[47] Kakeh Mem says, "Woe to you, sad of heart and wretched one!

[I don't want] Brahim Padishah's army to be with me at all, [I don't want] them to help or advise me,

[I swear] to God, [even] if there's not another living soul with me, I won't come back until I've reach the city of Jizîr."

^{163a} *Carê lêy gerê* rendered by O. Mann as 'Nun nimm einmal an,' and by Ayyûbiyân as *حال بجز*

Bengîneh says, "For me whatever the service (and preparation) may be, may the journey you are setting out on be blessed, by God!
 Why do you sadly say, 'My liver is burning,
 It is a long, hard trip, full of hot trouble'¹⁶⁴?
 [I swear] to God who is without equal, as long as my soul is in my body, I will be your stablehand, I won't turn back!"

Mir Mem says, "Bengîneh, what should I do? What is the solution for me?
 [I swear] to God, I know that my journey to Jizir is one time only'¹⁶⁵."

Bengîneh says, "What can I do? Your hand is powerless, there is no solution for you,
 Because they have sworn by the Koran and the word of God,
 God! May your heart not be troubled, everyone's hope is in God."
 That day, they rode two by two until sundown,
 The army did not reach an inhabited place, it camped in the deserted wilderness.
 That night three commanders, each commander with one thousand men, turned back
 In the morning when they woke up, no one was left.
 Then Bengîneh came, sat beside Mir Mem, and cried and cried.
 When Mir Mem lifted his eyes, he saw Bengîneh crying, you might say his tears were a sea, a river, a stream.

Mir Mem says, "Bengîneh, why are you crying, what has happened?"

Bengîneh says, "O beautiful-eyed Mir Mem!
 Of that army, which our father had fitted out for us, not even a single muleteer is left."

Kakeh Mem shouts out, "Esteemed Bengîneh!

¹⁶⁴germ kuŭawa Ayyûbiyāndoes not know what this means

¹⁶⁵I understand this to mean that he knows he won't ever return home but according to Oskar Mann it means that his journey to Jizir must be made 'mit einem Male' = at once

Bring me my gray horse, hold him by both reins,
You too absolutely must go back; I will make the journey to the city of Jizīr alone.

Bengīneh says, "What can I do? If only I would go blind in both eyes!
I told you back there that the army was of no use;
Now, even if you chop off my head from behind, I won't turn back."

Mīr Mem became furious, and beat Bengīneh on his head and behind his ears with
this gold stick.
[48] He says, "I will go alone, you must turn back."

Then Bengīneh says, "By God! By your beating [me], I don't stop being your
servant,
Until I reach the city of Jizīr, I will follow you, bareheaded and barefoot."

Then Mem says, "Clever servant, we have been left behind in the desert,
Come, let us relinquish servanthood and masterhood¹⁶⁶,
Come, let us become brothers of the same mother and father until this world of
ours is destroyed."

Then Mem and Bengīneh reach an agreement.

This pair of lonely horsemen have come down from Yemen,
They don't know the way to Jizīr, there is no one for them to ask.
From the morning they ride until eventide,
They reach the nighttime quarters, then settle in there.
That evening they make a plan together:

"We have no mother or father, there is no one to come to our call for help;
By God, we have no white-bearded elder [to advise us], our only hope is God and
his prophet."

Then when it is [again] morning, this pair of horsemen mounts [their horses],
And they set out, asking the way to the city of Jizīr,

¹⁶⁶Ayyūbiyānhas *ḫulameti*: instead of [āghāyāfi-], thus changing the meaning slightly, viz. "Come, let us relinquish servanthood and slavery." In either case Mem is suggesting that they treat each other as equals, going away with the distinctions of master and servant.

Then they go down, calling on God's help¹⁶⁷,
 That day that pair of lonely horsemen went on, having renounced the world:
 "God! We are going out in search of our desire, who will come to our call for help?
 We have no one else but God and Ghaws of Baghdad¹⁶⁸."
 That night they don't reach an inhabited place, they stay in the deserted wilderness.
 They content themselves with one another; there was no one to say two words to
 them, for entertainment.
 Then they give thanks, and pray to the prophet.
 That night [while] they are sleeping, the great Ghaws of Baghdad comes to them
 When they awake on the following morning, there is an old, white-bearded¹⁶⁹
 man with [them], for the delight of the world.
 They ask him, "Where are you going? Where are you coming from? Do you know
 anything about the city of Jizir, which way [leads] there?"
 The white-bearded man says, "You are guests, welcome, on my eyes (=very much
 welcome),
 [49] By God, I know my way around, I know [the way] to the city of Jizir."
 Then, when this pair of horsemen sets out in the morning,

¹⁶⁷=lit: "They made a cry for help. 'O Powerful one!'"

¹⁶⁸Perhaps this name was chosen because of the rhyme dinyāya hānāya ghausi baghdāya. According to Oskar Mann, Ghaws-i Baghdādī is 'Abd al-Qādir Gilānī. In the new edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam, W. Braune has written an article on 'Abd al-Kādir al-Djilānī (1077-1166), which describes him as a "Hanbalite theologian, preacher and Ṣūfī, who gave his name to the order of the [Qādiriyah]." and is considered by some to be the greatest saint of Islam. There is a collection of legends about him by al-Shaṭṭanawfī, called *Bahjat al-Asrār*. The saying "My foot is on the neck of every saint of God" is closely associated with him. The nickname Ghaws-i Baghdad is derived from the term Ghawth شوث (helper), the head of a spiritual hierarchy of saints, according to an

Islamic theosophic system of belief. See "'Abd al-Kādir al-Djilānī," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Series vol 1, pp 69-70; and M. M. van Bruinessen, "Ghawth/quth" in *Agha Shaikh and State: on the Social and Political Organization of Kurdistan* Thesis (Utrecht: Rijksuniversiteit, 1978), p 251-2. According to B. Nikitine his tomb in Bagdad is an important pilgrimage site. See his "Essai de classification de folklore à l'aide d'un inventaire social-économique," in: *XVle Congrès international d'anthropologie et d'archéologie préhistorique: VIe assemblée générale de l'Institut international d'anthropologie* Bruxelles 1-8 septembre 1935 (Bruxelles: l'Imprimerie médicale et scientifique, 1936), v 2, p 1009

¹⁶⁹Note that the Persian form rīsh safīd سفید ریش is used here, whereas elsewhere in this version the Sorani form rīdēnsīp is used.

Veysel Karani of Mahidesht¹⁷⁰ rescues them,
They go down to the city of Jizir.

Who was it? The young men Mem and Bengineh.
The earth folded itself over for them¹⁷¹, by the grace of God¹⁷²,
Until they reached Yaya Zin's plowman: there they stopped¹⁷³.
Then those horsemen shout out, "Hey plowman, what place does this plow belong
to?"

The plowman says, "O pair of horsemen, this plow belongs to the city of Jizir,
[If] you ask me 'Whose plow is it?',
[I] will say, 'If you didn't know, this is Yaya Zin's man!'
Welcome, lonely horsemen who have come here,
Come, get down off your horses, have something to eat¹⁷⁴ with me,
Let me bring the good news to young Yaya Zin,
As a sacrifice for your heads, she will begin to hand out gifts¹⁷⁵."

Then Mem and Bengineh says, "O great God, a thousand thanks!"

Who was it? Beautiful-eyed Mem and Bengineh,
They dismounted at the source of a well.

Who was it? The handsome plowman,
He let go of the plow, [and] brought the good news to Yaya Zin.

Who was it? The beautiful young son of the plowman,

¹⁷⁰First mentioned at the very beginning of this version.

¹⁷¹i.e. their journey was shortened, cf. ZK-3.

¹⁷²=lit. by the grace of the sight of the eyes, a euphemism for 'God'.

¹⁷³=lit. "were [his] guests"

¹⁷⁴=lit. "a piece of bread"

¹⁷⁵or, garments of honor.

He ran and brought bread for Mem and Bengneh.
 They ate the bread and gave thanks,
 Then they gave the plowman a reward.

Who was it? Beautiful-eyed Mem and Bengneh,
 They went together to the source of the well,
 [Saying], "Praise be to God, this is the well of treasures!¹⁷⁶"

Who was it? Delicate Mem and Bengneh,
 They shouted out, "O mighty God!
 Here we have entered the city of Jizir; May God free us from suffering."

Who was it? Graceful Mīr Mem,
 He grasped the cup, and brought it overflowing from the source of the well,
 And turned it over above Bengneh's head, making him pretty!¹⁷⁷.

Who was it? Perfect Bengneh,
 Mashallah!¹⁷⁸, you might say he is a spring flower on whom the sun has shone.

These esteemed master and servant
 [50] Mashallah! You would say one of them is the sun, the other you'd say is the
 moon.

Then they sat down at the source of the well, one on either side,
 Until an answer and news came from Yaya Zīn.
 The plowman went away shouting, [and] came back galloping,
 Bringing good news for Mem and Bengneh,
 They stuck their hands in their pockets several times, they gave several pieces of
 gold to the plowman.

¹⁷⁶According to Oskar Mann, this is because they received good news beside it.

¹⁷⁷or, 'colorful'

¹⁷⁸Ar. expression of admiration

Kakeh Mem says, "Plowman, where should we stay?
 The plowman says, "Let me be a sacrifice for you,
 The messenger is on the way, to speak with [you about this]."
 They sat down there, shoulder to shoulder
 They performed four prostrations¹⁷⁹ and implored God [saying]:
 "God! We are lonely and foreign,
 Who will take us in¹⁸⁰, that we may be his guests?
 O lord God, may our desire be achieved, may our heads be saved here!"

Who was it? The pair of delicate youths,
 They put their feet in the stirrups, [and] mounted [their horses].
 "O Light of the eyes (=God), we are going down to the city of Jizir."
 They came down, the pair of poor horsemen;
 They came and reached the river of desolate Jizir.
 When they glanced upward,
 They saw that all the washerwomen¹⁸¹ had stood up.
 Then Mir Mem said, "Beautiful-eyed Bengîneh!
 The one there who you see standing there
 She is the Yaya Zin who has brought me here."

Kakeh Bengîneh says, "Kakeh Mem, it isn't so,
 It is surely her servant."

Kakeh Mem says, "Bengîneh, what do you say, shall I say something to her¹⁸²?
 "O washerwoman, doing your bleaching by hand,
 We are lonely and foreign,

¹⁷⁹From Arabic rak'at: رَكْعَةٌ, defined in Hans Wehr's Arabic-English Dictionary as "a bending of the torso from an upright position, followed by two prostrations (in Muslim prayer ritual)."

¹⁸⁰-lit. "be our hos:"

¹⁸¹or bleachers. They were doing laundry on the banks of the river.

¹⁸²-lit. "Shall I know a word from her?"

For your sake we have come from the city of Yemen to Jizrê Botan.”

Melik Reyhan says, “O pair of horsemen from a far off land!
Welcome to this place! Your shoes on my eyes¹⁸³!

That Yaya Zîn who has brought you has forty maidservants like me attending to her.”

Kakeh Mem says, “Beware of women! Now she is snubbing me¹⁸⁴!

What are you saying out of fear of God? [Have you forgotten what you swore to me] on the Koran?!

[51] You have left Yemen plundered and spoiled¹⁸⁵, and now you are snubbing me!?”

Melik Reyhan says, “O pair of strange horsemen, soul of my soul!

I have never seen Yemen, [I swear] to God, [who is] peerless and eternal.

The lady who brought you here

-- Fear God and trust what I say! --

From time immemorial has had forty maidservants attending to her.”

Kakeh Mem says, “Beautiful-eyed Bengîneh!

This one is snubbing me, what is the reason?”

Bengîneh says, “She is not snubbing [you], [I swear] to God, it isn't her:

The garment which that one (=Yaya Zîn) brought to Yemen,

This one is wearing, it is a gift to her [from Yaya Zîn];

The coat that this one here is wearing is Yaya Zîn's, which she has given to this one.”

183 A variant of the standard Kurdish formula for welcoming *Ser seran û ser çavan* [in Kurmanji] = [You have come] on heads and eyes. *Be ser çawan* [in Sorani] = [You have come] on eyes.

184 He thinks that he is addressing Zîn herself, when in fact he is talking to her maidservant.

185 i.e. you left it without me to carry on my father's name

Bengîneh says, "This one is hardly the one who swore with you, my master, by your head!"

Kakeh Mem says, "Bengîneh, because we have encountered her, let's ask her at whose house we should stay¹⁸⁶,

He calls out, "Lady, my dear Lady!

Who is generous and hospitable¹⁸⁷, that we can go be his guest?

Lady, for the love of God, we are strangers, don't try to trick us!"

Melik Reyhan says, "Woe is to wretched and orphaned me!

May whoever tries to trick you go blind, may he be deprived of [God's] grace!

Boy, may God make whoever tries to trick you into an infidel!

Boy, if you have come with a purpose, take the true words from me:

Boy, may I be responsible for you! Don't go anywhere but to the house of Ka Bekîr.

He is a good and generous man, who knows the value of a guest.

Boy, my dear, you are a boy without peer,

May whoever tries to trick you go blind, may he be deprived of religion!

If you've come to find bread (=food) -- may your sins be on my neck -- go to the house of mir Zêndîn.

Boy, you are a very sweet boy,

May whoever tries to trick you, my God, not see the goodness of youth¹⁸⁸.

¹⁸⁶-lit: "We should become guest at whose house"

¹⁸⁷لوطی According to O. Mann, this means something like 'guest: loving' [gastliebend]. The word لوطی is an adjective derived from the Biblical name Lot, which is لُوط لوط in Arabic. Lot was Abraham's nephew, who was visited by the three disguised angels in the city of Sodom, which angels -- guests in his home -- he protects from being sexually abused by his fellow Sodomites. Whereas in English we have taken the term *sodomy* from this story, the Muslim world has taken the term لوطی لوطی,

literally 'of Lot'), which means 'homosexual'; 'homosexuality' is لواطه لواطه. This is a modification [some would say a garbling] of the original story, since it is supposedly Lot who protects his visitors from potential harm, whereas the Islamic term لوطی suggests that Lot was the one committing the offense. Interestingly enough, the use of the term in the present context restores Lot's original role, implying that he be remembered as the archetypal hospitable and protective host -- what Qeretajdin is in the story of Mem û Zîn.

¹⁸⁸According to Oskar Mann, this means "May he die young"

[52] If you've come in search of manliness -- may your sins be on my neck -- go to the house of Qeretajdīn.
No one may hinder you¹⁸⁹, [or] say anything bad about you."

Kakeh Mem says, "Bengīneh, you are a very wise man,
I have left behind me the [opportunity to] be padishah of Yemen, shall I now go act as someone's servant in exchange for bread?"

He continues, "Bengīneh, you are a very special Bengīneh,
Mīr Mem has not come from the city of Yemen in order to clear away cup after cup of coffee with obsequious phrases¹⁹⁰.

I have come with a specific purpose: it is better that we go to Ka Bekir's house."

He says further, "Bengīneh, my soul! O soul of my soul!

It has taken me twelve months and twenty four days to come here,

I have left behind the city of Yemen, what a great and mighty city it is!

I won't go to the house of Qeretajdīn, to be given morsels of bread out of charity.

Don't say 'May your heart not be troubled': it is the advice of women.¹⁹¹

[If] I go anywhere, I'll go stay at Ka Bekir's house."

Then Yaya Zin asks God for help: "God! You are a thoughtless God¹⁹²,

Both magnanimous and powerful,

That pair of horsemen has come from Yemen, having undertaken a journey of twelve months and 24 days,

O Lord, make it with you godly power so that they go to Qeretajdīn's house, rather than to Ka Bekir's!"

She says, "[This is] my plea before God!

¹⁸⁹-lit: 'put a log on your load'

¹⁹⁰be seḍeḍeserf. According to Oskar Mann, Mīrza Jewad's explanation was: When a servant is serving his master and guests, he murmurs such phrases as *tesedduqit bim* or *tesedduqi serit bim* [Wahby & Edmonds attest be seḍeḍe-t bim = 'may I be your sacrifice (formula of devotion)'. A simpler translation, again according to Oskar Mann, would be: 'for the sake of a few alms'.

¹⁹¹Oskar Mann's translation of this line is: 'May your heart not be troubled: Don't say it is the advice of women.'

¹⁹²According to Oskar Mann: 'a God without doubt'; according to Ayyūbiyān thoughtless = you are not thinking of me.

Since he is without equal, unique and solitary,
 Eternal!
 That pair of horsemen has come here at my wretched bidding,
 O Lord, may they not stay at the house of my older brother the mîr.
 O God! You are without equal, without peer!
 That pair of horsemen has come at my bidding, o wretched me.
 They have left behind them [the chance of] being padishah of Yemen,
 O God! Let them not go to Ka Bekir's house, let them go to my sister's house;
 Qeretajdîn is a righteous man, he is generous, hospitable, he will treat them
 very well."

Who was it? Esteemed Kakeh Mem and Bengîneh,
 [53] The people of Jizîr were standing on either side.

Who was it? Respected Kakeh Mem and Bengîneh,
 They greeted the crowd [by waving] with both hands,
 [The people of] Jizîr responded on both sides.
 Then Melik Reyhan pulled a veil over her head,
 And hastily followed Mem and Bengîneh.
 Mem and Bengîneh urged on their horses.

Who was it? Precious Mem and Bengîneh.
 They stopped nowhere until they reached Ka Bekir's gate,
 The people of Jizîr were watching them from both sides.
 There was no one at Ka Bekir's door¹⁹³
 To come take the reins of the two horsemen[^s horses]¹⁹⁴.

¹⁹³or, house For a very fine discussion of the use of words for *door* or *gate* to refer to a royal court, see Hans Wehr, "Das 'tor des Königs' im Buche Esther und verwandte Ausdrücke", *Der Islam* 39 (1964), pp. 247-260 See also FK-2, footnote #114!

¹⁹⁴According to Ayyûbiyân it is customary that there always be a servant and a groom posted at the gate of every great Kurdish family, so that when a guest arrives, they can welcome him, take his horse by the reins and take it to the stable, leading the guest to the guest quarters, until the head of the family comes to sit with him. If we apply this logic to the present situation, then not finding anyone to greet him at the gate, Mem has reason to feel insulted.

Who was it? Respected Kâkeh Mem,
 Who shouted out, "Beautiful-eyed Bengîneh!
 It is not my fault, the advice of the two of you has been followed,
 A foreigner is like a blind-folded falcon.
 Many people have suffered from the words of women.
 In my opinion, Ka Bekir's household has not [yet] received any guests, nor does it
 (do they) give bread to (=feed) anyone."
 He continues, "Bengîneh, sweet Bengîneh!
 It is best that we go to Qeretajdîn's house;
 He is a fun-loving man, who does not skimp on hospitality."

Who was it? Delicate Mir Mem,
 Who said, "O people of Jizîr, [white]bearded elders!
 Which street is Qeretajdîn's house on, so that we can go there?"

Who was it? An outstanding man,
 Everyone followed behind him,
 As he showed Qeretajdîn's house to Mem and Bengîneh.

Who was it? People of faith,
 Who brought the good news to lovely Lady Astî:
 "A pair of handsome foreigners has just come here."
 When Lady Astî heard this, she stood up in the diwan [and said], "Let me go bring
 greetings to these guests."
 Lady Astî shouts:
 "Let the unschooled¹⁹⁵ and learned come: mullahs, sayyids and village elders."
 She sent them one by one down the road [to greet Mem].

Who was it? Falcon-eyed Lady Astî

¹⁹⁵or, young, naive

[54] She sent for her servants and white-haired elderly women¹⁹⁶,
They took a bottle of rosewater [and] sprinkled the room and upper storeys with it.

Who was it? Lady Astî full of hot trouble¹⁹⁷.
She sent for a sacrificial ram,
The sacrificial perambulations were done in front of Mem and Bengîneh¹⁹⁸.
When Mem and Bengîneh reached the street [where Qeretajdîn lives],
Young people came out to greet them, as they began passing out gifts.
They passed by there pleasantly,
On the road there were white-bearded elders¹⁹⁹,
When they passed by, sayyids and mullahs stood up.

Who was it? Beautiful-eyed Mîr Mem,
He greeted them and dismounted in their midst.
Then Bengîneh, the very precious,
Took arms and equipment from Mîr Mem,
Kakeh Mem stood there, [while] Bengîneh went to the harem²⁰⁰.
When Lady Astî learned of this matter,
She descended from the [high] windows,

¹⁹⁶ser-sipi = 'wise old lady,' 'lady companion'. According to Ayyübiyân such elderly women were respected for their wisdom and experience, and were often taken as companions by women of the upper classes.

¹⁹⁷See note 164 above.

¹⁹⁸According to Oskar Mann, "When an official or the like came to a village, before he got down off his horse, the peasants led a ram in a circle around him three times, then slaughtered it. In older times a bull was used, whence the name *gav-gerdûn* = 'circling of a bull' for the ritual. The sacrificial animal was slaughtered at the feet of the official, who would then step on it or have his horse tread on it. The words *gav* and *gerdûn* are the Persian, rather than the Kurdish, forms, and the custom is practiced throughout Persia, e.g. in Fars and among the Guran" (OM, German translation, note 161, pp. 93-94). See also Nikitine's "Essai de classification de folklore à l'aide d'un inventaire social-économique," pp. 1009-1010 [full reference in note 168 above].

¹⁹⁹Note the Persian form again, as in note 169 above.

²⁰⁰According to Oskar Mann, in order to put down Mem's equipment Ayyübiyârîs translation, however is different: "Bengîneh, who is a confidant: (*mahram* محرم), goes forward."

And said, "Brother, my dear!
Why have you come here so late?
Come, sit down, let's speak a few²⁰¹ words together.

Bengneh says, "Lady, beauty-eyed!
I cannot sit down, my master is standing outside [waiting]."
Then Lady Astî sent for the sayyids, mullahs, and elders,
[saying], "Release Kakeh Mem for me right away."
When the messenger came from that side,
He spoke to the sayyids and mullahs.
They let Kakeh mem go, saying, "May your wealth increase, your household
prosper."
When Kakeh mem was released, everyone knew of it.
[When] he headed for Qeretajdin's harem quarters, Lady Astî learned of it.
She came out to welcome them, she embraced him, saying, "Dear brother, why are
you so late in coming to desolate Jizir?
My bright world became dark, because of you my life thread was cut.
Dear brother, come, let's go to the upper storey room."

Who was it? Esteemed Mir Mem,
He climbed up the stairs,
Windows were opened for them on both sides,
[55] They sat down with Lady Astî [as] sister and brothers, the esteemed ones.
Bengneh stood before them respectfully with hands folded²⁰².

Who was it? Beautiful-eyed Lady Astî
And Mir Mem, they held a conversation with one another,
Bengneh was given permission to sit down.

²⁰¹lit. "two"

²⁰²Oskar Mann describes *destewnezer* as follows: "The [servant] holds his hands (*dest*) in front of his belly, so that the one wrist covers the other, fixing his gaze (*nezer*) on the master's mouth; while speaking with the master, the servant must neither gesticulate nor let his eyes wander" (OM, German translation, note 164, p. 95). Wahby and Edmond's dictionary attests the expression *destjewkemer* (*dest*[*ew* *nezer*] *westan* = 'to stand with hands folded as sign of respect, stand respectfully')

Mem and Bengîneh and Lady Astî sit down shoulder to shoulder,
 Lady Astî says, "My guest is the son of the padishah of Iran²⁰³."
 She says, "Woe is to wretched and homeless me!
 What should I do? My guest is the only son of Brahim, padishah of Yemen."
 She goes on to say, "What should I do, orphan that I am!
 Qeretajdîn is at Mir Zêndîn's diwan, he does not know that this guest has come."
 She says, "Master gatekeeper! Come [stand] before the window of the upper
 chamber²⁰⁴,
 Go faithfully [and] give the news to Qeretajdîn, but don't let my older brother
 know."

Who was it? The beautiful-eyed gatekeeper,
 He reached the doorway of the mîr's diwan, raised the curtain,
 He picked up [Qeretajdîn's] shoes and showed them to Qeretajdîn,
 Mir Zêndîn looked around,
 He said, "Master gatekeeper, why have you come after Qeretajdîn? What is for
 lunch?"
 The gatekeeper says, "Mîr, may I be a sacrifice to you!
 Anything you [want to] eat is there, but two guests have just arrived."
 As Qeretajdîn got up from [his place in] the diwan,
 He went down the stairs, and took a (sidewards) glance at the gatekeeper,
 Asking, "What's the news? What has happened?"
 [The gatekeeper] said, "God be praised, nothing has happened.
 Two guests have come to us, in the center of town.
 They are very noble guests: Lady Astî sent for you in haste."
 Qeretajdîn says, "I am quite sure²⁰⁵,
 These guests are very welcome, I know them very well."

²⁰³According to Ayyûbiyân in order to glorify Mem even more, the teller exaggerates and says that Mem's father is the padishah of Iran, rather than the padishah of Yemen.

²⁰⁴=lit. "the window *and* the upper chamber, an example of hendiadys. According to Oskar Mann, Lady Astî calls down from the upper chamber to the gatekeeper who is below in the courtyard, to tell him to stand opposite the window where she is seated, to hear her command (OM, German translation, note 163, p. 96).

²⁰⁵=lit: "I am a diver", i.e. "I know the profound points of the matter"

Who was it? Qeretajdîn full of hot trouble²⁰⁶,
 When he reached his own door, he didn't stop anywhere,
 Until he climbed the stairs, raised the curtain, he didn't stop anywhere,
 Until he reached Mr Mem and greeted him,
 Saying, "And on you be peace and God's grace, you are very welcome²⁰⁷, fine lad!"

[56] Who was it? Melik Reyhan the beauty-eyed,
 She threw a shawl over her head,
 [And] came striding up the street.
 When she reached the door of Ka Bekir's house²⁰⁸,
 She saw that that guest had come, [but] there was no one left at her father's house.
 Melik Reyhan says, "Woe is to dark-headed and orphaned me!
 Have you seen how the door of my father's house has been cut off from the way of
 livelihood?"
 She says, "Father, you are an infidel!
 Eighty people a day used to find shelter in your house,
 [Now] news has reached all four lands: they say 'Bekir Agha²⁰⁹ doesn't take in
 guests'.
 Bekir Agha, what shall I do? You are a precious Bekir Agha,
 Bekir Agha, you are my protection²¹⁰,
 How did it happen that a guest, finding no place in your house, went to
 Qeretajdîn's house?"

²⁰⁶See note 164 above

²⁰⁷-li: "On my eyes"

²⁰⁸Ka Bekir is her father in this version

²⁰⁹Ka Bekir is henceforth called Bekir Agha or just plain Bekir.

²¹⁰-lit. "You are a hedge or fence for me." According to Oskar Mann, Mirza Jewad explains this verse as follows "You are a hedge or hindrance to me", i.e. "You prevent anything good from happening to me" (OM, German translation, note 171, p. 97); Ayyübiyân explains it as meaning that "just as a fence surrounds a garden, so you enclose me and guard my honor" (Ayyübiyân note 2, p. 163).

Bekir Agha says, "By the one who is the master of goodness!
The reason why they have come (in all the world),
I won't let them achieve any of their goals, by God!"

Melik Reyhan says, "Alas! 1,000 times alas! See how my father's house has sunk
down!
Enemies will say, 'At Bekir Agha's house there is no straw or barley for guests'²¹¹."

Mîr Zêndîn sent [a messenger] to Qeretajdîn, [asking him] who has withheld his salary, who has said something [bad] to him, why he doesn't come to the diwan. Qeretajdîn replies, "Thanks to him²¹², no one can say anything to me; but a few years ago, I had a brother, who went away. Thanks to him (=Mîr Zêndîn), he has come back. His name is Kakeh Mem: it is because of him that I have not come." The mîr ordered him, "Arise, bring Kakeh Mem and come here." [Qeretajdîn] said, "Please, let it pass today; tomorrow I will come to see the mîr together with Kakeh Mem."

There was another prince, named 'Irfo²¹³, who had also come to Qeretajdîn's house, also because of Yaya Zîn. There was [yet] another prince, named Cheko who had also come to Qeretajdîn's house, [and] also because of Yaya Zîn. Qeretajdîn did not know the name of 'Irfo or Cheko's father, [57] but he knew that Kakeh Mem was the son of Brahim, padishah of the city of Yemen. And the city of Jizîr was always ruled by Yemen.

So on the following morning, Qeretajdîn, 'Irfo, Cheko, Kakeh Mem and Bengîneh, all five of them got up and went to the mîr's diwan. Bekir had placed a

²¹¹or their horses From this point on, the story is told mainly in prose

²¹²-lit. "In the shadow of his (i.e. Mîr Zêndîn's) forehead" For "in the shadow of" meaning "thanks to", cf. Turkish: *sayesinde*

²¹³According to Oskar Mann, Raf-mân pronounced this name in two ways 'irfô or 'arfô

messenger in their midst: when they went to the diwan, Bekir also left his house and came. He also reached the mîr's diwan.²¹⁴

Now he²¹⁵ tells of the princes, the fine ones,
 They reach the mîr's diwan, greeting him abundantly,
 Mîr Zêndîn says, "And upon you peace and the grace of God, you are most
 welcome!"
 They showed Kakeh Mem where to sit.

'Irfo came first, he was the big brother; Cheko came after him, he was the middle²¹⁶ brother; Kakeh Mem came after them, he was the youngest brother. When they went to Mîr Zêndîn's diwan, the mîr ordered [Mem] to sit at the head of all of them, and he himself sat down beside him. Over and above the expenses [of being host], Qeretajdîn [was in the habit of] putting 50 tumans²¹⁷ behind the heads²¹⁸ [of his guests] every Thursday night²¹⁹, saying, "They must not pay any

²¹⁴The next four lines are in rhymed verse, after which, according to Oskar Mann the prose narrative is resumed. Ayyübiyân considers the three sentences that follow the next four lines to be in rhyming verse also and arranges them accordingly on the page.

²¹⁵i.e. the poet, according to Oskar Mann.

²¹⁶The word for 'middle' used as an ordinal, as in *first, middle, and last*, is *nêwînd* <nêwînd> in OM: *نێویندی* <nêwîndî> in Ayyübiyân and *نێوینجی* <nîwîncî> in Kurdoev's Sorani dictionary; it does not appear in Wahby and Edmond's dictionary. The word is interesting because it consists of a Kurdish word (Naw/Nêw = 'inside, interior, center, middle': cf. also Niw = 'half') plus the Turkish ordinal number suffix -lînd. This suffix is also added onto cardinal numbers to make ordinals in Neo-Aramaic dialects spoken in the same region as this Sorani Mukri Kurdish dialect: see Irene Garbell, *The Jewish Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Persian Azerbaijan: Linguistic Analysis and Folkloristic Texts* (London et al. Mouton & Co, 1965), p. 36, §2.21.22 and "The Impact of Kurdish and Turkish on the Jewish Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Persian Azerbaijan and the Adjoining Regions," *JAOIS* 85 (1965), p. 166, §1.22.3.

²¹⁷Persian monetary unit.

²¹⁸According to Oskar Mann, this means "behind their pillows".

²¹⁹i.e. eve of the Muslim sabbath.

travel expenses with it, [or] my honor would be damaged²²⁰; bread is not enough of a gift: it is shameful for me to even mention the bread of cowards²²¹."

Day and night they sat there, the mîr would not let them go. Lady Astî sent a man [saying], "Ask my older brother why he hasn't allowed Kakeh Mem to come back!" The mîr spoke: "I'll let him go, but he must come back to me for supper. Why does my sister give something to Qeretajdîn, but does not give me anything? Here I've let Kakeh Mem go, he has come back [to you]; for supper he must return to me." Kakeh Mem got up and went. 'Irfo, Cheko, and Qeretajdîn all went away. [Only] the mîr and Bekir Agha were left. [The mîr] said, "Bekir Agha, let's make a plan: Kakeh Mem is so noble, that no matter what I do, the city of Jizîr is not worthy enough for me to give him it." Bekir said, "Who is he, that the city of Jizîr is not worthy enough for you to give him it?" The mîr spoke: "[I swear] to God, I don't know whose son he is; but he's very noble." Bekir Agha said, "You know best²²², do as you wish." The mîr spoke: "I don't have anything else. Perhaps I should give him Yaya Zîn and her palace." Bekir Agha said, "Amen²²³." The servants brought the good news to Yaya Zîn, [saying], "Tonight your older brother is giving you to Kakeh Mem." Yaya Zîn said deliberately, "That Kakeh Mem, where is he from?" Yaya Zîn was given the good news, that night Yaya Zîn was happy and gay: she sent the good news to Lady Astî²²⁴, [saying], "Such a thing has taken place in our²²⁵ older brother's house "

[58] Lady Astî says, "Lord God, many thanks!
May those [two] young men reach their goal.
Then Bekir Agha and the mîr began plotting.

220=lit. 'would go' I.e. they must be taken in as guests

221 or. 'of beggars', according to Oskar Mann.

222 This is reminiscent of the Turkish expression 'sen bilirsin' I have come across this expression both in Neo-Aramaic (Turoyo) [HR-1] and in Kurmanji [MC-1]

223=lit. 'May it be blessed'

224 Her older sister.

225=lit. 'my'.

The mir says, "Let's give her to him this evening!" [Bekir Agha] says, "If you please, my lord, don't give her [to him] this evening; [first] go home, ask Yaya Zîn, saying to her, 'Sister, I have given you to Kakeh Mem. Don't tell him that I have not spoken to you about it'²²⁶; If you are not willing, I won't give you to him."

She said²²⁷, "My dear brother, burn me up, if you wish, I won't disobey you."

Bekir said, "It has fallen through for this evening, let it wait until tomorrow night."

Bekir got up and went home, going along the street that leads from Qeretajdîn's house to mir Zêndîn's house. Bekir put gold pieces in his breast pocket, [and] went down the street. He gave a dirhem to every slut²²⁸ and whore [he encountered]; for some he had coats made, others he gave sugar, he completely filled up the street [with them]. He said to them:

"When I tell you tomorrow morning,
Each one of you should come out of her house,
With mud on her head, with her collar rent,
Crying, 'Alas and alack! Yaya Zîn has been stricken with leprosy, and has been removed from the city of Jizîr!

So that Kakeh Mem thinks that Yaya Zîn has been stricken with leprosy, and has been removed from the city of Jizîr."

In the morning the women came out to the street and started to weep and wail.

Kakeh Mem came out and said, "What is this?" The women said,

"Woe is to miserable us!

Our livelihood has been suddenly cut off!

For three days now Yaya Zîn has been stricken with leprosy: they have given her a donkey and a saddlebag and sent her out of the city²²⁹."

²²⁶-lit "Don't say. 'He hasn't said to me about it'

²²⁷Here the story jumps ahead, as if the preceding command had already occurred

²²⁸lit =lit 'catamite' 'pederast'; 'coward'

²²⁹According to Oskar Marz, "When someone gets leprosy, he is given a donkey and a saddlebag by his fellow villagers; the leper must leave the village and must beg for a living. Big cities have

Kakeh Mem says, "Now what should I do? I have taken an oath with her, and have travelled twelve months and twenty four days to get here. Now what am I to do with a leper?!"

He says, "Woe is to worry-worn and orphaned me!"

Heartbroken, he got up and went to the diwan

They showed Kakeh mem to his seat; he took this as a [sign of] respect.

The mir turned to Bekir [and] said, "Let's give Yaya Zîn to Kakeh Mem." [Bekir] said, "If you please, let's have supper, then we can speak of it." Their supper was brought in, they ate, [and] were finished. The mir said, "Qeretajdîn, why don't you speak?" [Qeretajdîn] said, "If you please, the floor is yours; whatever you [59] say, I will obey."

[The mir] said, "Qeretajdîn, I hereby give Yaya Zîn, with her palace and estate, to Kakeh Mem."

Kakeh Mem said, "My God! If I accept her, they will say, 'What a fool! He has accepted a leper'. If I reject her²³⁰, I will be breaking my oath²³¹."

The mir said, "Qeretajdîn, I hereby give Yaya Zîn together with her palace and estate to Kakeh Mem²³²." Kakeh Mem said, "My mir, I hereby accept, and give her back to you "

The mir said, "Qeretajdîn, this time I'll say it to Kakeh Mem himself; Kakeh Mem, I hereby give Yaya Zîn to you together with her palace and estate." Kakeh Mem said, "My mir, I hereby accept, and give her back to you." He said further, "Mir, however I would gladly accept [the office of] leader of the hunt from you."

'Irfo [and] Cheko were delighted, because Kakeh Mem did not want Yaya Zîn.

Qeretajdîn was deeply concerned, [and] got up to go out of indignation at Kakeh Mem for not wanting Yaya Zîn. The mir spoke: "Qeretajdîn, sit back down! Kakeh

special leper colonies at a safe distance; alms and provisions for the unlucky ones are left daily at a specific spot, from where they are regularly picked up, unless stray dogs have gotten there first." (OM, German translation, note 178, p. 101)

230=lit. "If I don't want her"

231=lit. "I am an oath-taker with her"

232According to Oskar Mann, the practice of the mir's addressing himself to Qeretajdîn, even though Mem is himself present, is typically Kurcish and Persian.

Mem has not accepted Yaya Zîn from me; I will ask him for something, so that he will give it to me."

Kakeh Mem said, "Yes, if you please, whatever you say, [I will] gladly [do]." [The mîr] said, "Give me that servant of yours, Bengîneh." [Mem] said, "If you please, may he be yours!"

Who was it? Respected Bengîneh²³³
 He let out one shriek after another,
 He put down Mîr Mem's felt cloak and staff
 He let out one shriek after another,²³⁴
 Saying, "O God! What has happened to me in strange lands!"
 "Mîr Mem has brought me [to use me] as a bill of exchange."
 He went [and] picked up [Mîr Zêndîn's] felt cloak and staff, and stood behind
 Mîr Zêndîn.

Kakeh Mem stood up and headed all alone for Qeretajdîn's house.

When he lifted up his hears, Lady Astî said, "God! What should I do? What has befallen me?"

If Kakeh Mem did not want my sister, why did he swear to here by the word of God?"

As Mîr Mem left, he looked over and saw 'Irfo and Cheko playing the saz²³⁵ and snapping their fingers [out of joy].

Qeretajdîn was deeply concerned.

When Bekir heard the whole story,

He got up lightheartedly and left the mîr's diwan

He went to [see] Yaya Zîn; his steps were very joyous.

He gently lifted Yaya Zîn's [chamber] curtain,

Then deliberately stepped back out.

²³³A: at this point, the story resumes in verse form for a while

²³⁴Ayyûbiyân omits this verse the second time.

²³⁵a stringed instrument with a long neck

[60] Yaya Zîn says, "Ka Bekir, please come in, tell me²³⁶ what happened this evening in the diwan."

When Bekir heard this,

He went to Yaya Zîn [and] sat down in [her] room.

Yaya Zîn says, "Ka Bekir, tell me, so that I may know what happened, what was discussed."

Bekir says, "What should I do? Your brother is crazy and degenerate.

I don't know what to do, your brother doesn't know the ways of the world²³⁷.

A whoreson, a tramp has come; no one knows anything about his family.

This evening your older brother presented you to him three times, [but] he did not accept you (in the diwan)."

Yaya Zîn says, "Tell me, what does this talk mean?

Bekir Agha, I can't accept (=believe) this, it is pointless chatter.

What is the name of the one they gave me to?"

[Bekir] says, "I don't know; they call him Kakeh Mem; he's a yellow-bellied tramp!"

Yaya Zîn says, "O wretched²³⁸, miserable me!

Bekir, this is your fault, I'll have all 32 of your teeth pulled with a tongs."

Bekir says, "What shall I do? What is my sin?

That Mir Mem is a very foolish tramp.

Your brother does not know people, you are not important to him."

When Bekir finished speaking,

He got up lightheartedly, lifted up the curtain, and made his retreat.

As for Yaya Zîn, she was crying and greatly distressed.

She said, "God! If this man did not want me, why did he swear to me by the word of God [when we were] in Yemen?

Miserable, orphaned me!

Tomorrow I must see Kakeh Mem, to find out why he left behind the [chance to become] padishah of Yemen if he didn't want me, [and why] he travelled twelve months and 24 days to desolate Jizir."

²³⁶-lit "that I may know"

²³⁷-lit "the ways of supporting oneself"

²³⁸-lit "idle-headed"

Early one morning,
Four lions²³⁹ held a meeting on Qeretajdîn's roof.

Yaya Zîn said, "Why don't they (=the servants) wash the trays and plates every day [instead of] sending them dirty to the diwan, [so that] my older brother is always fighting [about it]?" She said to her maidservants, "Bring them! I'll take them to the water basin at my older brother's house; I'll wash them today [so that] every supper and lunch they will go thus to the diwan. She put a shawl over her head and set out. [Her servant] carried the plates and trays, following behind.

[61] Cheko says, " 'Irfo, Qeretajdîn, Mir Mem, soul of my souls!
Who is the tall, beautiful-eyed one going down to the spring²⁴⁰?"
'Irfo says, "Cheko, Mir Mem, Qeretajdîn, upon my life,
That lady is the lady that the three lions are lusting after."

Yaya Zîn is Qeretajdîn's sister-in-law²⁴¹. They were ashamed to call to her in Qeretajdîn's presence. Qeretajdîn said, "Bring me the Koran." He swore [an oath] on the Koran for 'Irfo, Cheko, and Kakeh Mem, saying, "As long as I am alive, Yaya Zîn belongs to the three of you; whichever one of you God gives her to, she shall be his."

Qeretajdîn says, "Let Kakeh Mem go stand in her path, lest he say to her, 'I am the youngest brother, they don't consider me a man.'"

Cheko says:

"Whoever Yaya Zîn accepts will be our eldest brother.
We are three brothers with horses grey,
All three have maces, lassoes and fine equipment.

²³⁹Ayyübiyân explains the 'four lions' as meaning Zîn's three suitors ('Irfo, Cheko and Kakeh Mem), plus Bengîneh. Since Bengîneh has just been handed over to mir Zêdîn,

he is no longer Mem's companion. As will become clear below, the fourth lion is Qeretajdîn himself.

²⁴⁰or, well.

²⁴¹i.e. the sister of his wife, Lady Asî.

Get up [and] go, by God! May your beloved be blessed, my congratulations!"

'Irfō says:

"We are three brothers with horses chestnut,
All three have maces, lassoes, sword and shield,
Mir Mem, my boy, get up [and] go! May your beloved be blessed, my best wishes!"

Kakeh Mem just stood ther, poking the floor with a stick, saying nothing.

Qeretajdīn says:

"Mir Mem, may your [misfortune] fall on me together with these word and these burdens,
May the lord God not take these brothers from you until Judgement Day²⁺²
Get up [and] go: perhaps the man will learn something from his beloved."

They all said to Kakeh Mem, "Get up [and] go!" He said, "Boys, may you be well²⁺³. May it be time for the noon time prayer, may it be in the center of town, with three lions like you standing here, how can I turn my back on you and go to the noon time prayers? How can I go stand in the mir's sister's path? By God, even if my heart bursts, I cannot go"

'Irfō, Cheko and Qeretajdīn stood up and descended from the roof; they brought out their horses, and swore by the Koran, "When Yaya Zin speaks with Kakeh Mem alone, if anyone in the streets and alleys [of the city] speaks of it or meddles in their affairs, we will cut off [that person's] head."

Who was it? Respected Kakeh Mem,
He put his ermine cape over his shoulder,
His steps were very spritely.

²⁴²-lit "until God holds court."

²⁴³-lit "May your houses not be destroyed"

[62] 'Irfo prayed and recited Ayat al-kursi²⁴⁴ to the end,
 Then [Kakeh Mem] went to the spring and greeted Yaya Zîn.
 Yaya Zin did not return poor Mir Mem's greeting,
 But rather said, "Don't be young and disgraced!
 The people of Jizîr are assembled on the rooftops,
 If you need some water²⁴⁵, make your ablutions and go!"
 Mir Mem says, "God! What a mess I'm in²⁴⁶!
 1,000 curses on my father, then on the fathers of all men!
 [First she said,] "Go on a trip of twelve months and 24 days, leave the kingship of
 Yemen in the lurch, base yourself on the talk of women, [and] come here."
 Now she says, "If you need some water, make your ablutions and go, the people are
 wicked²⁴⁷ and demonic." "

Who was it? Respected Mir Mem.

He threw his cape over his arm, and turned back disappointed.

Yaya Zin said, "God! He came, said what he had to, and I broke his heart; it is not he who has broken his oath, it is I. I shall die young, I shall die an infidel. Let me call to him, so that he comes back; maybe I can have a few words with him."

²⁴⁴The Throne Verse: an Islamic prayer. It is verse (Ayah) 256 of s'ûrat: al-baqarah, the second chapter of the Koran

²⁴⁵OM: ägär hâjâti âwêt hâifa [eger haceti awet heyel; Ayyübiyân [eger awit dewé heyel]

²⁴⁶=It: "How my house has been ruined"

²⁴⁷Shimr According to Steingass, Shimr شمر is the "name of one of Yazid's generals, who slew Husain [the son of Ali] in the plains of Karbalâ; hence vile, merciless, wicked." See: F. Steingass, Persian-English Dictionary (London et al.: Routledge & Kegan Paul, c1892), p. 759. Nicholson refers to him as Shamir ibn Dhî al-Jawshân, "a name for ever infamous and accursed." See: R.A. Nicholson, A Literary History of the Arabs (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, c1907), pp. 196-8. According to Hava Lazarus Yafeh, "It is considered a duty of all Shiites to curse all those who participated in the massacre at Karbala, starting with the Caliph Yazid, who was responsible for the campaign against Husayn, and ending with the murderer Shamir, who personally killed Husayn. The Sunnites also tend to observe this duty, because of the blow to the family of the prophet and his descendants" [my translation] See Hava Lazarus Yafeh, פרקים בתולדות הערבים והאסלאם [Studies in the History of the Arabs and Islam] (Tel-Aviv: Reshafim, 1972), p. 181, note 13.

Yaya Zîn called to him, "Boy! O boy!

(?) Just as the Angel Gabriel is beloved, he has called to his beloved (=God or Muhammad)!

Boy, [I swear] by the God who created Moses out of light, so that at dawn he could speak 1,001 words at the throne of God.

Boy, for the love of God who created 'Isa (=Jesus), the soul of God, out of light, so that the dead would revive in their graves.

Boy, whatever believers and angels I ask to intercede,
For my sake, this time come back!"

This time Kakeh Mem turned over his right shoulder,
Prostrated himself before God (and) prayed to the prophet,
Then he went to the spring and greeted Yaya Zîn.

Yaya Zîn answered, "And upon you be peace and the grace of God, you are most welcome²⁴⁸, Mir Mem, fine lad!

Last night when that disturbance occurred in the diwan, why didn't you mention pitiful me?

Upon you be peace and the grace of God, you are welcomed by wretched me,
Last night why did you reject my brother's offer²⁴⁹ in the diwan?"

[63] If you don't consider yourself a man, why did you place me before the 30 parts of the Koran?"

Kakeh Mem says, "Yaya Zîn, you are most virtuous,

Kakeh Mem did not come to clear away cup after cup of coffee with obsequious phrases²⁵⁰,

May God rain down the wrath of the seven layers of heaven on Ka Bekir's head²⁵¹!

Yaya Zîn! The sun shone on me, and reached its station at breakfast time,
Yaya Zîn's cheeks are lovelier to me than a flask of rosewater.

²⁴⁸-lit: "on both my eyes"

²⁴⁹-lit: "Why did you not accept me from my brother"

²⁵⁰See note 190 above.

²⁵¹-lit "shoulder"

If only I were that goblet in her hand, so that Yaya Zîn could cast me on the surface
of the water.

The sun shone on me, and reached its station at the noon time prayer,
Yaya Zîn's cheeks are lovelier to me than a lemon blossom.
If only I were that goblet in her hand, so that Yaya Zîn could cast me with blessed
hand on the surface of the water.

The sun shone on me, and reached the evening watch,
Yaya Zîn's cheeks are lovelier to me than a pomegranate seed.
If only I were the bowls and plates, so that Yaya Zîn could cast me with blessed
fingers on the washing slab.

The sun shone on me, and reached its station at the night time prayer,
Yaya Zîn's cheeks are lovelier than vine blossoms.
If only I were that goblet in her hand, so that Yaya Zîn could cast me with blessed
fingers on the edge of her lips.
O lord God! You are merciful; let nothing else come between Yaya Zîn and me.

The sun shone on me, and reached its station at the bedtime prayers,
Yaya Zîn's cheeks are lovelier than lily blossoms.

O Lord, may I be damned on the day that God holds court and passes judgement.
Yaya Zîn! [I swear] to God, I won't renounce you until my dying day.
Yaya Zîn! A fire has broken out in me, my liver is burnt,
I am a foreigner; Bengîneh has also been taken from me.
The city of Yemen has gone from my grasp, I have also sacrificed it for you.
Yaya Zîn, if you have no knowledge of me, something very bad has befallen me.
You and I will not see the fulfillment of our desire,
Your neck is lovelier than a flask of rosewater;
If you can, with your blessed hand -- my tongue is broken -- give me a drink of
water!"

[64] Yaya Zîn says, "Woe is me²⁵², my heart is in mourning;
 Mir Zêndin's wolfish glance is more unpleasant than a boar's bristles,
 In the middle of the city of Jizîr, at the noon time prayer, how can you ask me for a
 cup of water?"

Kakeh Mem says, "Yaya Zîn, strength of my heart²⁵³, light of my eyes!
 Now I am a stranger in every city (=wherever I go),
 (?) Even if I am without soldiers and troops, I still don't consider your brother the
 mir my groom or servant;
 I am a stranger, and homeless because of you.
 No one knows how beautiful Yaya Zîn is!
 I have abandoned my throne and my position for her.
 The steward of all women is the devil.
 She won't give me a drop of water now, yet calls others demonic!"

Who was it? Yaya Zîn the pretty-eyed,
 She grasped the water cup, took a bracelet off her wrist, pulled a ring off her finger,
 She removed the earrings from her ears, pulled out a needle from her chinstrap,
 She put them in the water cup,
 Dipped the cup into the fountainhead, and handed it to Kakeh Mem.
 He drank the water, and put the bracelet, ring and chinstrap²⁵⁴ in his breast pocket,
 [And] handed the cup back to Yaya Zîn. She says, "Now, Mir Mem, live and be
 well!"

Kakeh Mem says, "Woe is me, foreign and homeless!
 Now I am a stranger, no one knows my rank.
 Yaya Zîn, by God himself, by the Koran!
 I won't go from here until you make a rendez-vous with me."

Yaya Zîn says, "Wretched, orphaned me!"

²⁵²=lit "My neck is in black"

²⁵³=lit: "liver" See note 276 below

²⁵⁴Kirmek = "chinstrap for a woman's headdress" according to Wahby & Edmonds

I have forty maidservants, I cannot lay my hopes on any one of them;
I have no place that is safe from them;
This is why I am ashamed and reserved."

Mir Mem says, "Even though I'm a stranger [here], I know of a good place,
A fire has broken out in me, its crackling has fallen on me;
At the time of the sultan's breakfast, our rendez-vous will be in the niche²⁵⁵ of the mosque."

Yaya Zîn says, "God! How shamefaced I am!
On one side of my brother's mosque he holds his diwan; the wakils and wazirs²⁵⁶
sit there, their cloaks over their shoulders.
[65] On the other side sit the Sufis, their prayer sheets about their necks.
Ther in the niche of the mosque the mullah recites questions regarding this world
and the world to come.
In the front rooms, the servants and pipe-fillers (=hookah-bearers) are at hand.
Even when my brother's mosque seems empty and deserted, the twelve blind
Koran reciters remain in its corners;
On one side is a tekke, on the other, a khangah²⁵⁷.
This is good for the Muslims to fulfill their religious obligations there;
O Lord, thank you 1,000 times for your works!"

Who was it? Kakeh Mem and Yaya Zin the rosy-cheeked.
They had fixed their rendez-vous time.

²⁵⁵mi'rāj محراج = 'ascent: to heaven,' presumably an error for mihrāb محراب = 'niche pointing towards Mecca in mosques'

²⁵⁶See note 53 above

²⁵⁷Tekke is the Turkish, khāngāh (خوانگاه) the Persian, and zāwiyah (زوییه) the Arabic names for a type of establishment of Muslim religious orders or brotherhoods, with classrooms and a hospice, usually attached to the tomb of a Muslim saint. According to Oskar Mann, tekke (=tekke) refers to a tekke of the Qadiri order (See note 168 above), while xaneqa (=khāngāh) refers to one of the Naqshabandi order (OM, German translation, note 192, p 112) See also Nikitine's "Essai de classification de folklore à l'aide d'un inventaire social-économique," p 1008.

When the noon hour came,
 Mir Mem said, "Yaya Zîn, my life, live and be well!"

Yaya Zîn said, "By God, don't leave sad old me;
 Bengneh is no longer at your side, you have no one to comfort you;
 What should I do? Whom shall I send to you to be your servant?"

Kakeh Mem said, "Yaya Zîn of the beautiful eyes!
 May my soul be a sacrifice to you, together with my entire faith;
 We'll discuss these things tomorrow, God willing."

Who was it? Mir Mem the rosy-cheeked.
 He said, "Yaya Zîn, my life, live and be well!"

Yaya Zîn said, "What shall I do, poor me?
 Mir Mem, go, I entrust you to God, as a ransom to the prophet."

Who was it? Mir Mem the rosy-cheeked.
 He returned to 'Irfo, Cheko, and Qeretajdîn;
 He went and greeted the three brothers.

Cheko said, "See the work of God of the heavens;
 Mir Mem, welcome back from your pleasant errand;
 I know that Yaya Zîn, she is full of tricks; no one can get the best of her."

Mir Mem said, "Qeretajdîn²⁵⁸, don't strike me with swords, don't kill me with
 slander!
 A man is not one who leads astray the daughters of simple folk²⁵⁹,

²⁵⁸Presumably this is a slip: he meant to say 'Cheko'.

²⁵⁹**Kirmanj** (also Kurmanj, Kurdmanj) is the name by which the Kurds of the northern part of Kurdistan call themselves, and **Kurmanji** is their language. In addition, as M.M. van Bruinessen rightly says "a complication is that also some southern tribes [of which the reciter of this version is an example -- my note] call themselves Kurmanji and their language therefore Kurmanji, although it is very different from the northern dialects" (M.M. van Bruinessen *ibid.*, p. 30) Kurmanj | Kurmanc in

A man is one who can collect bracelets as tax²⁶⁰ from the daughters of princes."

'Irfo said, "Mir Mem, by God! Welcome back, lad!
That Yaya Zîn of the beautiful eyes,
[66] In my opinion, her word to anyone is not to be trusted."

Kakeh Mem said, "Irfo, don't kill me with swords!
A man is not one who leads astray the daughters of these poor people;
A man is one who can collect bracelets and earrings from the daughters of
princes."

Who was it? Mir Mem of the beautiful eyes,
He greeted 'Irfo, Cheko and Qeretajdîn,
Took the bracelet and earrings from his breast pocket and laid them out before
them,
Saying, "Kakeh Mem will stand by and be the servant of whoever receives these."

Qeretajdîn says, "By God! Mir Mem, more power to you²⁶¹
May God, the great ruler, prolong your life!
[She] is worthy only of you, you [alone] should receive [them];
You are the greatest of all; everyone of us should take your shoe on his eyes²⁶²."

'Irfo says, "Mir Mem, my soul!
I will be your servant, standing by you."
Cheko says, "Mir Mem, 100 times congratulations²⁶³ for you [new] status as eldest
brother!"

Kurdish orthography] also has the meaning of 'simple peasant': this is the meaning intended in the present context.

²⁶⁰-lit. "bracelets and taxes"

²⁶¹-lit. "May you not die"

²⁶²See note 183 above.

²⁶³-lit. "thanks"

Then mîr Zêndin said to his servants, "Go bring Kakeh Mem here."
 The mîr's servants came galloping,
 Saying, "Peace be upon you, Mir Mem; the mîr has requested your honorable
 presence."

When Mir Mem hears this,
 He takes 'Irfo, Cheko, and Qeretajdin, and goes to the diwan.

Who was it? Mir Mem the rosy-cheeked.
 He reaches the diwan and greets the mîr,
 Saying, "Upon you be peace and the grace of God; welcome, fine lad!"

The mîr says, "Let's not babble,
 Let's bring the backgammon board, and sit down to gamble."

They sat down together, the mîr and mîr Mem the youth,
 For a period of five hours they did battle, shoulder to shoulder.
 Kakeh Mem was beating the mîr, making minced meat out of him²⁶⁴

[The mîr]²⁶⁵ said, "Let's trade places." [Mem] said, "All right, if you wish."
 Bekir had advised that they trade places.

Kakeh Mem got up and sat in the mîr's spot; they picked the mîr up and put
 him in Kakeh Mem's seat. They continued playing, [but] the mîr could not defeat
 Kakeh Mem.

The mîr said, "Let's drink coffee."

Bekir said secretly to the mîr, "Let Yaya Zin come [67] serve the coffee."

Yaya Zin brought the coffee [and] said, "Hey Bengineh, give it to them."

²⁶⁴-lit. "reduce his head to ruins"

²⁶⁵Or possibly Bekir

The mîr said, "Yaya Zîn, you serve the coffee yourself." Bekir said to the mîr in secret, "Challenge Kakeh Mem to a verbal duel²⁶⁶."

The mîr says, "Kakeh Mem, by God, who is without equal, I swear,
There is no peer for him, He is a king without peer,
I think that since you were born, there's been no one you would call "dear"²⁶⁷."

Mîr Mem says, "Mîr, I am most grateful to you, you have been quite nice,
My beloved is one of a kind, a houri from paradise."

The mîr says, "Your beloved's ears are pointy, her ears are very mousy,
Your dear one cannot raise her head for all the nits -- she's lousy!"

Mîr Mem says, "Mîr, I am indebted to you, don't make me say it twice,
My beloved is one of a kind, a houri from paradise.
It is she who is our cup-bearer, pouring coffee in cups clear as ice."

The mîr says, "What you say is false, the words of a queer one,
Since you were born, you've never had a dear one!"

Mîr Mem says, "Woe is to me, a foreigner, homeless today,
Because I am a guest here, no one believes what I say.
I do have a beloved -- believe what I tell you, okay?
As Qeretajdin and his friends know, my beloved just served you *café!*"

²⁶⁶According to Ayyübiyân "It is a centuries-old custom among the Kurds that young men, warriors and even dignitaries on the battlefield and in verbal disputes begin reciting poetry (with musical accompaniment: of course!) and songs expressing their feelings and intentions in verse creating epic poems. Skill in this art is greatly valued. This is most practiced among ardent youths and renowned warriors, to better demonstrate their worth and valor, and so that the young generation might take an example of bravery in an enlightened, warm and exciting atmosphere from their mentors" [my translation] (Ayyübiyân p. 211, note 1) See also Alan Dundes, Jerry W. Leach, and Bora Özkök "The Strategy of Turkish Boys' Verbal Dueling Rhymes," *Journal of American Folklore* 83 (1970), pp. 325-349, reprinted in: Alan Dundes *Parsing Through Customs: Essays by a Freudian Folklorist* (Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), pp. 82-117

²⁶⁷In this and the following, I have tried to make the lines rhyme, to convey the feeling of the poetic aspect of the duel

Qeretajdîn said to the mîr, "Is she a whore, that you've made her serve coffee in the diwan^{265?}"

He grabs Kakeh Mem by the arm and takes him home. Yaya Zîn writes Kakeh Mem a letter²⁶⁹:

"Come, let us pray before God, master of the earth and the heavens,
 -- My brother loves to go hunting -- for God to send the North wind, let it pour
 down rain,
 Tomorrow my brother will go gazelle²⁷⁰ hunting in the plain of Germian,
 Kakeh Mem should [pretend to] be sick, so that no one knows how bad the pain is,
 Tomorrow morning at the time of the sultan's breakfast let us rendez-vous in the
 diwan."

Then they bowed down [and prayed] to God. While the whole household slept,
 [God] sent the North wind [and] let it pour down rain. The mîr sent for Kakeh Mem,
 saying, "No king has ever hunted gazelles as we will tomorrow."

Kakeh Mem replies, "Tell the mîr for me without delay,
 I am so ill that -- [I swear] to God -- I could barely make it to my saddle."
 [68] They brought this news to the mîr,
 Saying, "Mîr, if you please, Kakeh Mem is quite ill."
 Bengîneh says, "Good heavens²⁷¹! Now that my master is all alone, what has
 happened to him?"
 The mîr says, "Bengîneh, don't cry; without Kakeh Mem, my going hunting is [as
 good as] forbidden."

²⁶⁸This line could also mean, "Have you brought this whore to serve coffee in the diwan?" This is how Oskar Mann has understood it.

²⁶⁹According to Ayyûbiyân the following "letter" was recited in a special tone by Rahmân-i Bekîr, in verse (Ayyûbiyân p 215. note 1)

²⁷⁰Note the Persian form âhû. **آهو** rather than the Kurdish form **asîlk**.

²⁷¹-li: "My house has been destroyed"

Bengîneh, get up [and] go, don't delay,
 I beseech you, tomorrow's hunt will be fine: bring me word of Mîr Mem.
 When you go there [and] bring word from there,
 You must tell my sister, Lady Astî, to take good care of Mîr Mem.
 God willing, I will put Aristotle and Luqman²⁷² over him, I won't let Mîr Mem
 die of any ill."

Who was it? Rosy-cheeked Bengîneh,
 He rushed out crying.²⁷³
 When he reached Mîr Mem, he said, "May I be your sacrifice, where does it hurt?"
 [Mem] said, "Bengîneh, don't be alarmed; I've made a rendez-vous with Yaya Zîn.
 My heart is fiery like a master [blacksmith's] furnace.
 When you go back to Mîr Zêndîn, tell him that Mîr Mem's pain is great, that he is
 very ill."
 When Bengîneh left, he brought this news to his master in the diwan.

[Bengîneh] says, "Mîr Mem is sick, no one knows what his cure is."
 Mîr Zêndîn says, "What is to be done? [The hunt] is off; I won't go hunting
 tomorrow without Mîr Mem."
 He says, "My dear Bengîneh, sweet Bengîneh!
 Bring out the horses, let's mount them and go to Kakeh Mem at Qeretajdîn's
 house."
 Bekir Agha says. "Why are you such a tongue-tied mîr?"
 At this time of night don't wake up Qeretajdîn's whole household,
 We will mount in a little while, there's an hour left until morning."
 The mîr says, "Hey Bengîneh! Get ready, saddle up my horse!
 God willing, we'll go to Qeretajdîn's house for Kakeh Mem's recovery."

[69] Who was it? Esteemed Bengîneh.
 He saddled up Mîr Zêndîn's horse, and pulled the reins tight.

²⁷² e, the best doctors

²⁷³ This line is omitted in Ayyûbiyân's edition.

He called out the greyhounds and pups on this side and that.
The mir came and stepped into the stirrups, and climbed onto the inlaid saddle,
Saying, "Bengneh, by my head, go on ahead, bring me news of Kakeh Mem!"

Who was it? The rosy-cheeked mir.
He rode on, galloping and rushing,
He came and dismounted at Qeretajdin's house,
Saying, "Brother, don't make yourself sick, this summer hunt²⁷⁴ is not to any
king's liking."

Mir Mem says, "Mir, you are not very thoughtful,
No matter how much I try, Mir Mem cannot keep himself on his horse.
Mir, don't hold yourself up²⁷⁵; something bad has befallen me.
I would like to hunt even more than you,
But I am ill with no choice, my liver has been cut out²⁷⁶."

The mir says, "I won't achieve my desire,
I must take you hunting with me!"

Who was it? The esteemed mir.
He said, "Bengneh, go take Kakeh Mem's horse out,
Wake up 'Irîo and Cheko for me!"
Bengneh went and brought out Kakeh Mem's horse.

Lady Astî says, "Bengneh, keep the reins loose on this side and that!"
When Bengneh brings out Mir Mem's horse, he steps in the stirrups and mounts,

²⁷⁴: *Feşeraw*, lit. "black hunt": is the name for hunting done in the summer, because in the summer the ground is dark, as opposed to *spiraw*, lit. "white hunt", hunting done in winter across snow-covered fields" [my translation] (OM, German tr., p. 117, note 195). *Ayyûbiyân* adds that *feşeraw* is also a term for hunting under a bad omen, boding failure in the hunt (*Ayyûbiyân* p. 221, note 2).

²⁷⁵: e. Don't cancel the hunt

²⁷⁶: e. I have lost my courage (=es entîel mir der Mut. OM, p. 61, note 61). B. Nikitine states in his article "Essai de classification de folklore à l'aide d'un inventaire social-économique," p. 1004 that "it is a common Islamic belief that the liver is the seat of one's courage and vitality" [my translation]

No matter what he does, he had no strength, the poor [thing].

Lady Asti says, "Dear brother, don't make Kakeh Mem go on this journey."

Mîr Zêndîn says, "Sister, don't cause problems, or I won't achieve my desire;
If I have to carry him by the arm, I'm taking Kakeh Mem hunting."

Kakeh Mem was shivering as he came down from the upper floor,
Stepped into the stirrup, but unable to mount his horse's saddle, he fell under its
belly.

The mîr said, "Why are the horse's reins so loose?" He pulled them tight and
put Kakeh Mem on his horse. [But] no matter how much he tried, he could not keep
himself up.

The mîr said, "Let him get down, he is very sick. It is a shame that Kakeh Mem
will not be with me on the hunt. Go tell Bekir Agha to mount." Bekir said, "My
horse is lame; Tell the mîr to go on; I'll find a spare horse and catch up with him."
Bekir did not go hunting, [but] sent a spy²⁷⁷ to [observe] Kakeh Mem.

[70] Kakeh Mem sat until breakfast, then went very slowly to the mîr's diwan.
He reached the diwan and sat down. Yaya Zin got up and went over to Kakeh Mem.

Who was it? Beautiful-eyed Mem and Zîn.

Yaya Zin came and greeted Kakeh Mem,

He said, "And upon you be peace and the grace of God, welcome Lady, white-
necked²⁷⁸, beauty-eyed!"

They embraced and put their mouths together.

Bekir knew that Kakeh Mem had come to the diwan;

He had placed a spy over him to keep an eye on him.

He spied on them well;

²⁷⁷ =lit. "messenger"

²⁷⁸ *kêl gircîr*. *kêl* means 'tombstone,' hence =lit "with a neck as slender as a tombstone."

The two of them fell asleep, that pair of children,
 The mîr was hunting until the sun started to go down.
 He called out, "It's a pity, Cheko, that Kakeh Mem was not with [us], I didn't enjoy
 the hunt very much."

They headed for home, [and] Qeretajdîn said [to himself], "I know that Kakeh Mem and Yaya Zin have fallen asleep in the diwan; if you don't wake them up, he won't wake up." He shouted, "Bengîneh, Come here, I want to tell you something. You run on ahead; I'll come out after you; I'll throw a javelin at you from afar, [but] don't you turn around to look at it; just keep on going until [you reach] the house. Run in and wake up Mem and Zin."

When the mîr said, "He was frightened by the javelin, and that's why he hasn't come back!" Qeretajdîn said, "I'm telling [you], Mîr, he was not frightened. He's gone [on ahead] to go [and] dismount at the door of the diwan, to take his master's²⁷⁹ bridle himself." The mîr said, "That's a good plan."

When Bengîneh arrived [at the diwan], he saw that Mem and Zin had fallen asleep, they were dead to the world. He said, "It would be a shame to wake them up, [but] if I don't, the mîr will come in and find out and chop off our heads." Bengîneh looked and saw: here comes the mîr!

Bengîneh says, "O Mîr Mem, woe is to wretched me!
 A fire has broken out in my body, it has seized me all at once;
 Kakeh Mem, wake up from this sleep: an ox in the shape of the mîr has reached
 the edge of the city, he is approaching!
 Oh, woe is me, stranger and captive!
 Mîr Mem, wake up from this sleep, your foreignness is showing²⁸⁰,
 An ox in the shape of the mîr has reached the gates of Jizir, he is approaching!"

Kakeh Mem awoke [and] said, "Bengîneh, what is this?" [Bengîneh] said, "May your house not be ruined, the mîr is approaching. Why don't you get up and [71] get

²⁷⁹i.e. Mîr Zêr.cîr's

²⁸⁰-li: "is being remembered"

out of the diwan?" [Mem] said, "Bengîneh, look and see how far away he is²⁸¹." Bengîneh went out on the roof, he took a look [and saw that the mîr] had just about reached the edge of the city. When he went back in, he saw that Mem and Zîn had gone back to sleep.

Bengîneh said, "Woe is me, my liver is on fire!²⁸²

My master won't amount to anything²⁸³.

Hey boy! Mir Mem, wake up from that sweet sleep; an ox in the shape of the mîr has come back from the hunt!

Dress me in the black garments [of bereavement] once and for all²⁸⁴!

Mir Mem, wake up: an ox in the shape of the mîr has reached the gates of the city, he's approaching!

Mir Mem, woe is me, foreign and bereft!

An ox in the shape of the mîr has reached the door of the diwan."

The mîr pulled the reins tight, came to a stop, [and] said, "Bengîneh, by God! How is Kakeh Mem?" [Bengîneh] replied, "I don't know. [Ever since] I came back, I have been standing here." At this moment, Bekir Agha came up to the mîr [and] said, "Agha, welcome! I hope the hunt went well²⁸⁵." The mîr said, "come, let's look in on Kakeh Mem." Bengîneh knew that he was in the room with Yayeh Zîn. He said, "My Lord, dismount: I'll send a man to see how Kakeh Mem is." The mîr dismounted [and] they took his horse. He went into the house. Bengîneh came and called Kakeh Mem.

281=*lit.* "See if he is far or near"

282=*Cf.* note 276 above

283=*lit.* "won't see or find any wish or desire"

284=*lit.* "Put on me the cloth of black houses at one time." Oskar Mann understands by this the black goat-hair tents of nomads (OM, German tr., p 120). I think that Ayyûbiyân's interpretation, seeing the black houses as a sign that there has been a death in the family (Ayyûbiyân p 229), is more to the point. According to this if Mem and Zîn don't get up immediately, they are as good as dead, and Bengîneh will dress in black to mourn them.

285=*lit.* "May your hunt be blessed!"

He said, "Once there were two lovers,
Both of them giddy and drunk with sleep.
Master, I beg you! Wake up from that deep sleep, you've missed your last
chance^{256†}"

The mir came in [and] entered the diwan. Kakeh Mem had no choice: he hid Yaya Zin under his cloak [and] leaned against the corner of the room. 'Irfo, Cheko, Qeretajdin, Bekir Agha, everyone came in and sat down. The mir said, "Well, Kakeh Mem, how are you?" [Mem] said, "God willing, the hunt went well! I am fine." [The mir] said, "Kakeh Mem, no king has ever seen the likes of today's hunt; it's a pity you were not with [us]." Yaya Zin showed Qeretajdin a lock of her hair from the corner of [Mem's] cloak. When Qeretajdin saw it, he called his servant [and] said, "Go to my seven-gated [house], put dry grass on it, and set it on fire, so that my house burns down."

One fire broke out on this side of the world,
Another one broke out on the other side of the world,
Qeretajdin's house burned down completely.
[72] Bengineh says, "Mir, a fire has broken out in Qeretajdin's house; what a
merciless fire!
If you don't get up, the city of Jizir will burn down, will be destroyed.
You are a thoughtless mir!
The North Wind has come, it will carry the fire over to your palace,
If you don't get up, your palace and manor will catch fire."

Mir Zêndin says, "People of Jizir, wakils and wazirs, let's go, don't delay,
Hurry up, let's put out the fire at Qeretajdin's house!"

Bengineh says, "Woe is to irreligious me!
Mir, if you yourself don't get up, the fire is so mighty, there will be no remedy."

When the mir hears this,

²⁵⁶†li: "You have played and lost all prayer"

A panic breaks out in the diwan.
 The mir went out self assuredly,
 [And] headed for Qeretajdin's house.
 When the mir hurried off,
 Doors and windows were opened for him,
 Bekir Agha alone stayed behind.
 Kakeh Mem stood up immediately
 With Yaya Zin, the beauty-eyed.
 He said, "Yaya Zin! Because of Bekir the devil we have not achieved our desire."
 Mem and Zin entered the front room,
 [And] began to cry.
 It is the work of Bekir, to be sure²⁵⁷!

Mir Mem says, "Yaya Zin, how can I look Qeretajdin in the eye?
 I should send a messenger²⁵⁵
 To bring all the riches of Yemen for him."
 No sooner were these words spoken,
 [When] Yaya Zin said, "Kakeh Mem, something major has befallen us."
 He said, "Yaya Zin, let me put my arm around you, let me put two kisses on your
 cheek."
 When his mouth touched Yaya Zin's cheek,
 The handkerchief she had in her hand fell to the ground.
 Bekir rushed up, he did not hesitate,
 He snatched up Yaya Zin's handkerchief.

[73] Kakeh Mem says, "What shall I do before the Almighty?
 Shall I kill Bekir of Mergewer²⁵⁹ once and for all?"

267-lit. 'God knows'

268>yêd <yêd>, from Turkish *elçi* = "messenger", "ambassador" See also note #147 below.

269>Name of a well known Kurdish district to the north-northeast of Ushnu, in Kurdistan of Iran. **Bekir Mergewer** is the way that the proverbial villain of the story of Mem & Zin is known in this region. In Kurmarji, he is known as **Beko E'wan** (=Beko the Troublemaker). Mergewer, in addition to being a place name, sounds like Persian *marg-âvar* مرگ آوار = 'death-bringer.'

Yaya Zîn says, "Woe is to irreligious me!
What shall I do? Today things are bad, [but] killing Bekir is out of the question."

Mîr Mem went to Qeretajdîn's house, and Yaya Zîn went back to her house.
Kakeh Mem went and greeted the mîr and Qeretajdîn.
Qeretajdîn's house burned down, the people of Jizîr all flocked to it.
Qeretajdîn the Lur²⁹⁰ addressed his wife in the Arabic language²⁹¹,
[Saying,] "Wait, bring [our] son's cradle [out of the fire]!"

Lady Astî replied, "I don't like this house or this situation.
I don't want this child or this son,
So long as the yellow-necked and many-freckled one²⁹² remains safe and
unharmèd."

Then the mîr sat down. The fire was put out. Qeretajdîn's house had burnt to the ground. The mîr said, "Come on, let's take up a collection for Qeretajdîn's house." He said, "I hereby give Qeretajdîn one room with all its furnishings; Bekir Agha, what will you give him?" Bekir Agha said, "If you please, I won't give [him] anything" [The mîr] said, "Bekir Agha, why not?" [Bekir] said, "Why should I give something to someone who burns down his own house?" The mîr said, "I don't understand. What do you mean²⁹³?" [Bekir] handed him the handkerchief and said, "If you please, these [two] were in the diwan when you came back from hunting; Kakeh Mem put Yaya Zîn under his cloak; Qeretajdîn found out about it and sent [a servant] to his house, [to] set it on fire and burn it down, so that Yaya Zîn and Kakeh Mem could be saved. If you don't believe me, this handkerchief is Yaya Zîn and

²⁹⁰The Lurs inhabit Southern Kurdistan (currently in Iran), and speak a dialect that is distinct from both Kurdish and Persian.

²⁹¹Actually he speaks in a combination of Turkish and Kurdish. Dur [Turkish: Stop!] getir [Turkish: Bring] İmîkî [Kurdish: the cradle of] kûrî [Kurdish: the boy (oblique case)].

²⁹²i. e. Yaya Zîn.

²⁹³-lit. "What is this talk?"

Kakeh Mem's, I took it from them in the diwan, lest you say, 'Bekir is a devil, he is [trying to] steal the honor of my daughter! Why should I give my house to such a man? It has happened [before] that a servant has betrayed his master.'

The mir said, "Bekir Agha, you are right. What is the right thing [to do]? How can I get rid of Kakeh Mem without Qeretajdn, 'Irfo and Cheko's knowledge?" [Bekir] said, "If you please, let's do it [in such a way that] Bengineh doesn't know." They got up and went home.

Bekir said, "We have a province that never pays taxes. Let's dig a dungeon²⁹⁴ for Kakeh Mem, no one will know about it." In a month they had finished the dungeon.

Bekir said, "Send for 'Irfo, Cheko, Qeretajdn, Bengineh and Mir Mem to come here, let us deliberate " They sent for them, and they all came.

The mir said, "Boys, what should we do? We have a province that is disobedient, it won't pay its taxes." They said, "Whatever you command, we will do." The mir said, "It's best for you to go, [74] leave Kakeh Mem here with me; I'd be unhappy all alone." They said, "Make preparations for us, send out the troops for us. Either we'll lose our heads, or we'll bring you money and booty."

They called up the troops in the city of Jizir,

The cavalry mounted their horses, the army assembled in rows.

The mir came and sat in the diwan,

Saying, "Load up the beasts of burden (mules) from the treasury and bring them;

Go bring order to that province for me, I'll bring you joy and faith."

He began to award 'Irfo, Cheko and Bengineh with robes of honor.

Again he gave gifts to everyone.

They called Qeretajdn to the diwan,

They made [him] a large gift, so that everyone would know.

Then they were dismissed [and told], "You must go tomorrow."

They arose without thinking,

Each one went back, seeking out his home.

When that night was over,

²⁹⁴According to Ayyübiyân formerly in Kurdistân dungeons [prisons] were in the form of deep pits which had to be dug out. [Ayyübiyân p. 243, note 1]

[And] the next morning came,
 The trumpets were blown, the banners were raised;
 The mir himself got up and came out to them.
 They saw the troops off -- what a great, fine army!
 'Irfo, Cheko, Qeretajdîn and Bengineh warmly bade Mîr Mem farewell.
 The mîr, Kakeh Mem and Bekir Agha turned back.

The mir said secretly to Bekir, "If Yaya Zîn finds out, our plans are ruined. We must say that Kakeh Mem is in command of the troops [and] has marched off in that direction." Then Mîr Zêndîn and Bekir threw Kakeh Mem in the dungeon; Bekir and the mir went to the diwan together. Kakeh Mem had a greyhound. When he learned that they had imprisoned Kakeh Mem, he went to Yaya Zîn's door.

Yaya Zîn said, "My maidens and servants, you are very brave, Kakeh Mem has gone with the troops, this greyhound pup has come back, take good care of him."

Every day they gave the greyhound pup bread. He would scarcely nibble at it, pick it up and take it to Kakeh Mem, throw it into the dungeon. For forty nights it was so. One day they brought news that the troops had returned. Yaya Zîn said, "The troops have come back, why is the greyhound pup so weak (thin)? I don't know that to do out fo shame before Kakeh Mem."

[She] said, [75] "Bring him and give him bread in my presence so that I can see how you feed him [and] why he is so weak." They threw the bread before him, he took a nibble at it, picked it up and carried it off. Yaya Zîn followed him, saying, "Girl, where is he taking the bread?" They said, "Every day we give him bread [and] he takes it [and] goes off." The pup reached the dungeon, [and] threw down [the bread] before him. When Yaya Zîn went and looked, she realized that Kakeh Mem was in that dungeon. She cried, saying,

"I have been disgraced, I am an orphan!

I thought you were a commander of the troops, that you went to bring order to those tribes."

Mîr Mem said, "Yaya Zîn, my soul!

For forty nights my place has been in [this] dungeon because of what Bekir said,
My lunch and dinner have been a dog's morcel."

Yaya Zin says, "Woe is to disgrace and orphaned me!
The only son of Brahim Padishah of Yemen has come to the city of Jiztr at my
suggestion, on his own and without a master."

Mir Mem said, "God, thanks to you for your mercy!
I had no idea that there was such a demon as Bekir in the city of Jiztr.
Woe is to homeless me,
I have no other words but 'thank you!
Make your braids into a rope and see if you can't bring me out of this dungeon.
If you bring my head out, lay it on your lap;
Then I'll give thanks that God's angel[s] of death have come to take my soul."

Yaya Zin said, "When Brahim Padishah of Yemen finds out,
He will sack the city of Jiztr, because of his son he will cut off the life line from my
kith and kin."

Then Melik Reyhan came over there,
She was covered with dust from head to toe,
Saying, "Yaya Zin, may I be your sacrifice, what has happened?"

Yaya Zin said, "Melik Reyhan, have you come to cry false tears²⁹⁵?
Don't you know that you cannot be good because you are one of Bekir's children?"

Melik Reyhan says, "May I be your sacrifice, may my eyes go blind!
I thought Mir Mem was a commander of the troops, that he had gone to bring back
money and booty.
Now cries have gone up around me [saying] 'He is in prison, humiliated and
bewildered.' "
Then good news came, the army and troops were scattering about the city of Jizir.

²⁹⁵=lit: 'to cry in play'

Then they brought the news to Yaya Zin.

[76] When Yaya Zin finds this out,

She smears herself from head to toe with mud and [dark dye],

She comes down the streets of the city of Jizir, [and] begins to cry.

'Irfo, Cheko and Qeretajdin had brought a horse as a gift for Kakeh Mem; they rode it around the caravanserais and streets.

Yaya Zin says, "Qeretajdin, where is your master?

Because he is your master, you left him behind; for forty nights his meals have been a dog's food in the dungeon."

Bengineh says, "If I don't die, if I live and remain alive,

I will bring the troops and army of the city of Yemen,

[And] annihilate the descendants²⁹⁶ of the mir and Bekir."

'Irfo says, "I am 'Irfo,

A horned ram,

I will skin your brother from the shoulders down!"

Qeretajdin says, "I am Qeretajdin,

I am a bloody-clawed panther;

If I don't die, I will skin your brother from the shoulders down!"

And Cheko says, "I am Cheko by name,

Out of grief for Mir Mem, I have gone blind in both eyes.

Sister, Yaya Zin, don't complain about me, I have gone blind in both eyes²⁹⁷.

Now I must raze the city of Jizir to the ground, I must destroy it.

Sister, tell me whether Mir Mem is dead or alive!"

Yaya Zin says, "What can I do, pitiful and dispossessed me!

²⁹⁶=lit. "roots of the children"

²⁹⁷Ayyübiyān omits this phrase the second time

He is neither dead nor alive; he is rotting away in the dungeon."
 Then those four lions descended to the street, in tears,
 They all went over to the dungeon.
 They said, "Yaya Zin, shall we kill the mir [first] or let Kakeh Mem out of the
 dungeon?"

Yaya Zin says, "I beg you, don't delay,
 Do something to let Kakeh Mem out for me!"
 Then Yaya Zin wove her braids together²⁹⁶, and threw them into the dungeon,
 Kakeh Mem threw them around his neck and [under] his arms; they began to pull
 him up.

Yaya Zin says, "Give him to me." She picks up his head [and] puts it in her lap.

Kakeh Mem says, "O Lord, I offer thanks to God, the Merciful!
 [77] Yaya Zin, I cannot see²⁹⁹; where are 'Irfio, Cheko, Qeretajdin and Bengineh?"

Yaya Zin says, "My liver has been cut out, there is no one left for me!
 Don't you know that they have come back from the army and are all standing
 around you?"

Kakeh Mem says, "Yaya Zin, tell them to set my neck free, may you live and be
 well!
 My last look fell on you; because of my parents' cries of despair, my goal remains
 unachieved."

When Yaya Zin hears this, she begins to weep and cry³⁰⁰.

²⁹⁶-lit: "made her braids in rings - in rings"

²⁹⁹-lit: "My eye does not see"

³⁰⁰-lit: "She begins with hoops and crying" According to Oskar Mann, *çember* [çambar] means "To dance around crying out of grief" (OM, German translation, p. 129, note 211).

By the mercy of God, guests³⁰¹ are coming to Kakeh Mem to take his soul.

Who was it? Kakeh Mem the beautiful-eyed.

He let his eyes linger on Yaya Zin's face.

'Irfô, Cheko, Qeretajdîn and Bengîneh began to weep.

Mîr Zêndîn got up and went to them in the diwan,

He too, like them, began to weep.

He says, "Sister, Yaya Zîn, let's bring Kakeh Mem to the diwan."

Bengîneh says, "O Mîr, I beg you, don't lay a hand on him!

He was entrusted to me by Brahim Padishah, I must take him back to Yemen."

The mîr says, "Bengîneh, my soul!

I didn't know that [it was] the son of Brahim Padishah who came here.

I know that Jîzir will be destroyed over him³⁰².

It is advisable that his grave be here by me."

Qeretajdîn says, "It must be here, because he is Yaya Zîn's guest."

'Irfô and Cheko say, "We'll take him to the graveyard ourselves,

Because Mîr Mem was Yaya Zîn's beloved, until death Yaya Zîn [will remain] our sister³⁰³."

Bengîneh says, "We are without a master and without a country!

Because Mîr Mem is a foreigner, let's go dig his grave ourselves."

Mîr Zêndîn says, "By God, Bengîneh, turn back from your word!

I didn't know he was Brahim Padishah's son, may I go blind in both eyes!

I've already sent someone to dig his grave."

³⁰¹ See note 156 above

³⁰² i. e. to avenge his death.

³⁰³ i. e. no one else will marry her

They took Kakeh Mem and washed [his corpse] on a washing board,
 They lowered him into the grave, handed him over to the earth,
 They let out a shriek, [then] turned back [and went home].

[78] Then when night came, a heavy downpour of rain broke out,
 Yaya Zin began to cry over Kakeh Mem, [saying,]

"The only son of Brahim Padishah of Yemen died young because of orphaned me.
 May that which is permissible in the world be forbidden to me until Judgement
 Day;

What should I do, disgraced and wretched me!

They are sending the news to Yemen to Mir Mem's mother and father,

O God! What will become of the city of Jizir with Yemen's cannon and artillery!

What should I do? It is out my hands, miserable me!

They will destroy the city of Jizir for me, none of my clan will remain."

Who was it? Bengineh with heart burnt up.

He came to Yaya Zin [and] said, "Yaya Zin, my eyes are blind, my master is no
 longer alive³⁰⁴."

Yaya Zin said, "Bengineh, my ancestors have been uprooted, an arrow has pierced
 my liver!"

Bengineh said, "I must go back to the city of Yemen alone. Farewell to you!"

Yaya Zin said, "Go! What should I do, wretched me!

Go, may God be your guarantor, I entrust you to the prophet."

Who was it? Respected Bengineh.

He dyed his horse and hound black³⁰⁵ and returned to Yemen.

For twelve months and 24 days he rode, weeping and lamenting,

³⁰⁴-lit "has not remained"

³⁰⁵As a sign of mourning

Until he reached the gates of Brahim Padishah of Yemen, letting out shriek upon shriek.

Brahim Padishah came out [and] said, "Bengineh, what has happened to Kakeh Mem, what has befallen him?"

[Bengineh] said, "Brahim Padishah, may I be your sacrifice, a pain befell him, he carried out God's will."

Brahim Padishah said, "Bengineh, what have you done to poor, childless me?"

What should I do, how can I get to the city of Jizîr from Yemen?

When Mem's mother learns of it, she calls up the army and troops,

On that very night they hoisted banners and raised flags.

Bengineh let out shriek upon shriek [and] returned to the city of Jizîr.

He said, "I'll go to the city of Jizîr, to my fresh young master."

He marched downward for twelve months³⁰⁶ and 24 days,

He surrounded the city³⁰⁷, camped [and] set up cannons and artillery.

[79] Yaya Zîn sent [word] to Mir Zêndin: "Allow me to go to Kakeh Mem's grave." The mir consulted with Bekir [and] said, "Shall I allow her to go or not?" [Bekir] said, "If you please, allow her to go; I know that they will come because of the cries. Maybe they won't destroy us for the sake of Yaya Zîn." The mir spoke: "Let her go to his grave, she has [my] permission." Yaya Zîn went weeping to his grave. When she reached Kakeh Mem's grave, she called to him.

She said, "God, don't let me be haughty or sullen,

You yourself give life and take life away,

Kakeh Mem, my life, can't you lift your head even once?"

Kakeh Mem said, "Lady, why are you so crazy and foolish?

Your cheeks are much prettier than a rose covered handkerchief.

³⁰⁶Ayyûbiyân has "24 months"

³⁰⁷or. "He came into the vicinity of the city"

Until the world is destroyed, no man will ever lift his head from the muddy house³⁰⁵."

Yaya Zîn said, "By God, there is no one other than you who should remain alive. Don't keep me alive any longer because of the pain, Let me die beside Kakeh Mem's tombstone. God, you are generous [and] powerful! God's guest³⁰⁹ comes and takes Yaya Zîn's soul away.

They brought the news to Mîr Zêndîn: "Yaya Zîn is dead." The mîr spoke to Bekir: "Go dig her a grave." They said, "Dig the grave right there." No matter where they struck the pickaxe, the earth could not be dug up, except for beside Kakeh Mem. They finished the grave, they buried Yaya Zîn, covered her up, [and] said, "Come, let's go home." A rumble³¹⁰ came out of Kakeh Mem and Yaya Zîn's grave. Bekir said, "Aha! They don't ever stop! Even in the grave they are embracing."

He said, "Mîr, you are an honorable mîr!
You blame me for everything that happens.
Your sister the whore³¹¹ won't keep her hands to herself even on the Day of Judgement."

The mîr said, "He has done everything imaginable to me, kill him now!" Bekir threw himself between the graves of Kakeh Mem and Yaya Zîn, [and] his blood was split between their graves. It turned into a thornbush and started growing there.

Their work was done,
'Irfô covered himself with ash from head to foot,
Cheko dyed himself black,

³⁰⁵i. e. the grave

³⁰⁹See note 156 above

³¹⁰or, frightening sound

³¹¹This word is omitted in Ayyübiyân's edition: in its place are three dots (...).

They made a plaintive lament for Mem and Zîn,
In sadness everyone returned home.

[80] They gave Brahim Padishah the news that Yaya Zîn was also dead, [and] that they had buried her beside Kakeh Mem.

Who was it? Brahim Padishah the courageous³¹².
He said, "Let no one say to me 'Now [that] Mem and Zîn [are gone], spare the city of Jizîr!
of Jizîr!
Tomorrow I will raze it to the ground, I will throw it upside down into the river."

Then when the morning came,
Brahim Padishah awoke from sleep
[And] said, "What shall I do? Out of grief over Mir Mem I have gone blind in both eyes."

The cannons and soldiers were directed toward the city of Jizîr.
Bengineh's master was gone, he himself was the commander, his insides were burnt up.
He headed for Bekir's house; he cut off the head, he split open the breast of whoever he met [on the way],
He headed for Mir Zéndin's house, not one was saved, not one remained alive,
Until their traces were completely erased.
Lady Asti dressed in black cloth [and] went [and] stood before Brahim Padishah,
[And] said, "Padishah, Mem and Zîn are gone, all traces of my father's house have been erased."

Brahim Padishah embraced Lady Asti [and] said, "You are my daughter, I hereby put you in Kakeh Mem's place."
He embraced Lady Asti [and] went to Mem and Zîn's graves, to finish them up.
They reached the graves, together with the army and troops they mourned them.

³¹²or. "the fresh one". according to Oskar Mann.

Who was it? Fresh young Brahim Padishah.

Blindness beset both his eyes.

He said, "My lot in old age is childlessness and distress.

Child, Lady Asti, I won't return to the city of Jizir; it's an unlucky city, comfort is hard [to come by in it].

Child, the city of Yemen has no successor and is ruined."

Lady Asti said, "Out of grief for Mem and Zin, it is time that I turn away from religion.

I have neither father nor brother to sit beside for protection."

Brahim Padishah said, "Child, I hereby give the city of Jizir as a pledge to Qeretajdin as long as he lives³¹³;

Now that my Kakeh Mem is gone, my hope has fallen on Bengineh."

Qeretajdin said, "What shall I do, Brahim Padishah, I cannot act as master, my liver is burnt up.

[81] I did not do much for Mir Mem, my labor was for nothing.

God knows, he was your son; but none of my kin is left either."

On the next day he made preparations, for seven days good deeds and sacrifices were performed for Mem and Zin.

Then the banners were hoisted and the flags were raised.

Jizir was handed over to Qeretajdin, and they returned home.

Brahim Padishah, out of grief, blind in both eyes,

For twelve months and 24 days the army marched back,

Entered the city of Yemen, everyone put mud on;

He made Bengineh his son, and set him over the city of Yemen.

³¹³ah: 'until death'

O Lord! May Raḥmān Bākir never die! In four days he completed this poem for the German master³¹⁴.

Jesus, the spirit of God, stood at the head of the German master.

Lord Master, may you travel the seas in perfect health, and send greetings to your mother and sister!

³¹⁴i.e. Oskar Mann.

Haykuni, S. [հայկունի, Ս.], ed. "Mam ow Zin (Մամ ու Զին)," *Eminyan azgagrakan zhoghovadzow [էմինյան ազգագրական ժողովածու] = Emskiĭ Etnograficheskiĭ Sbornik* [= Эмьнск Ій Этнографическі І Сборникъ], 5 (1904), pp. 201-227. [Armenian translation of a Yezidi Kurdish version from the village of Shamaghi in the the region of Van] (SHa-1)

SHa-1 The teller is Oskan Ohanian, from the village of Şemsettin (Shamshatin) near Özalp in the province of Van. This tale is also spread among the Yezidi people in general; as a dedicated tradition they are required to learn it; each Yezidi insists that Mam and Zin were Yezidi and for that every religious person knows how to sing; in it the Kurdish listener finds the special customs [of the Yezidis?]. The sung poetry that appears throughout this text is given both in the original Kurdish [in Armenian characters] and in Armenian translation; for the rest of the text, only the Armenian translation is provided.

MAM AND ZIN (SHa-1)

English summary by Anne Avakian
Berkeley, California, June 1969

[201] Al Pasha had only one son, Mam, a fine looking boy. If out of sight one hour, the father worried. One day while Mam was lying down, three doves came and stood at his window. They admired Mam. Could there be one such as he anywhere? One dove says that there is one in Jezir, and that the two will attain their desire.

The doves went to Jezir, stopped at Zin's window, compared the beauty of Mam and Zin, and felt they were suited for each other. They appealed to God and got another dove garment for Zin and took her to Mam's window, then put her on Mam's mattress.

At midnight Mam wakes up, find a woman at his bosom and wants to know how she came. She declares he came to her, and they quarrel.

[202] Mam says that if he came, she should put on the light. She did not know where the light was, so Mam got up and put it on. They talk about how she will leave and she says those that brought her will take her. They were awake all night, so the doves could not take her. Zin told Mam that when she goes he will have to come after her, for she is a woman, and also the daughter of Mir Sevdin and the granddaughter of Gharatzhdin, and that her name is Zin. They exchanged rings. The doves arranged that God's bead of sleep fell into the ears of Mam and Zin, and they took Zin back.

Mam awoke; no woman there, and he became very sick. Al Pasha was told and he came, but could not help. Mam's mother brought two old women; the very old

one said that Mam was not sick; he had seen a woman. Al Pasha was told, and that Mam was to get married.

[203] Al Pasha says that he would gather all the women and girls and take them to Baghe Torgri, then let Mam throw an apple to the one that suits him. Mam views the women and girls, but does not toss the apple to any of them. One of the girls said she would sing to him to find out why she was not chosen. Mam says that the one he wants is not there, -- her name is Zin.

Word was taken to Al Pasha that Mam did not want any of the girls; the one he wanted was in Jezir Botan. Many were called to find out the location of Jezir and Al Pasha was informed that nobody knew.

[204] Mam decides to go after Zin, but he is sick for two weeks. Then he gets up, goes to the stable, selects a worthless looking horse, instructs the groom to feed the horse well.. This was the horse to take him to Jezir. Mam puts the horse in fetters [?], saddles the horse, then Mam gets some gold and rides off. His father sent some horsemen ahead of Mam to frighten him, and perhaps Mam would return, but Mam went by another route.

They went three days and nights, but found no way. They rode on and on, the fetters hurt the horse and God grants speech to the horse, who sings to Mam that enough is enough, he should get off and give some water. By God's will he will get him to Jezir Botan, but [205] Mam pays no heed. The horse complains some more. They come to a resting place. Mam eats, wants to go on, but the horse refuses. Mam tends to the horse's feet, and leaves him in the meadow while Mem sleeps for a few hours.

[206] Mam catches the horse, thanks God the horse is healed. With God's help the horse tells Mam to shut his eyes, he will take him to Jezir.

At Jezir Botan, Bekir Avan had a sister whose name was also Zin. She says that in forty days Mam will come. Every day she takes wool and goes to the fountain and spins it while she waits for him. Let that be.

Mam rides on, sees a rabbit and catches it. He rides off and sings about the desolation of the area. Mam asks a man about the location of Jezir. Bekir's sister finishes spinning in forty days and wonders why Mam has not yet come. In disgust, she throws away the *ram* [=remil] because it did not reveal when Mam was to come. [207] But soon Mam arrives and she is sorry she threw away the *ram*. She goes to the fountain and pretends to wash her hands. Mam appears and she greets him by name

and he is puzzled how she identified him. She pretends she is his Zin, and he doesn't believe her. God grants speech to the horse Bor, who tells Mam that this is not the true Zin. She leads travelers astray. She tries to hold back the horse, but lets go, and Mam goes on; the horse takes him to the door of [208] Arfo, Jako, and Gharatazhdin. Zin's elder sister Sutin, wife of Gharatazhdin, sends Jako to the door to see who is there. The servant is so bedazzled by the sight of Mam that he just stands there for an hour or two. Another servant is sent, and she too stops dead in her tracks. Finally Sutin goes and brings Mam in. Her husband and his brothers are not home. Mam asks why she does not sit with him. She says that she is a strange woman and he is a strange man; perhaps her husband might allow it, but her brothers-in-law might not. Mam comments that they have that custom too. Mam says he will go if his horse is brought out.

Sutin sits on one side, Mam on the other. They have tea. Gharatazhdin and his brothers are at Mir Sevdin's divan. Sutin sends her servant after them to come see the visitor.

[209] Gharatazhdin says that if the man is after money, let Sutin pay him and send him on his way. The servant reports to Sutin, and she wants to know why the men have not come. He tells her, and she hits him with a stick and orders him to go after the men. He goes, and they want to know what happened to his head. He tells them. Gharatazhdin and his brothers come, meet Mam, and are so captivated that they talk for three days and nights without eating. Finally they eat, then go to the roof of the palace and take the *kchik/kshig* [=chessboard] with them. Word gets to Zin and she [210] sees from a window that they are playing, but she is not sure if one of them is Mam. So she sings; Mam turns and recognizes her and loses his wits, and he too sings. The brothers wonder how Mam and Zin know each other.

Zin gathers up utensils, gives them to her servants, and loads up a caravan and goes to the fountain [to wash them]. Mam sings to the brothers that the prince's caravan is going by, is there no one to go and get a token [=collect a toll] from it. They say that it is the prince's caravan, so they cannot go after tokens. Mam asks what they will give him if he rides and gets a token from the caravan. They say they will give him whatever he wants. In their minds they think that he may as well go back where he came from, that Zin will surely disgrace him.

[211] Mam goes and gets Bor, mounts and heads for the spring [=fountain]. He greets Zin and she accepts with grace, and suggests that he dismount and visit with

her, but Mam says he just wants a token to take back to Gharatazhdin. She reaches into her pocket and takes out a magical gold piece. He takes it to the brothers and they are amazed that she gave him the gold piece. Gharatazhdin sings that the three brothers with the red horses will bring Mam the Alan what his heart desires. Arfo sings:

[212] "We have three black horses, and we will bring Mam the Alan a beauty." Jako, who was betrothed to Zin sings that they are three brothers with grey horses, "Let us say sincerely that Zin is for Mem."

Gharatazhdin proposes that they go to Mir Sevdin's divan. The three brothers leave Mam and go to Mir Sevdin, who wonders why the guest did not come along. Mir Sevdin wants to know why they were late in coming to tell about the unusual guest, and he wants to see him. A servant is sent to Sutin to send Mam to see Mir Sevdin. He makes the request and she whacks him on the head with a stick and tells him to go to Mir Sevdin and tell him that Mam is not his *layik* [=T halayik = servant]; Mem must be greeted by horsemen at the door if he is to go and see Mir Sevdin. The servant goes back and Gharatazhdin asks why his head is bloody.

[213]The servant tells him that Sutin did it. The brothers went and got musicians, then went to Mam and rode with him. Mam distributed gold coins along the way. For three days and nights they played *kshig* [=chess]. Then Mam asked Mir Sevdin if it was the custom of the country to be without food that long. Food was brought, and they ate. Mir Sevdin asked that Zin serve tea. When it was Mam's turn, she served the tea and they smiled.

Bako asked Mir Sevdin whether he had noticed how Mam and Zin had smiled at each other. Bako had hardly finished when Mam took out the rabbit he had made [out of a handkerchief], everyone laughed. Bako told Mir Sevdin that when Zin comes to fill Mam's cup that instead Mir Sevdin should take the cup and drink. He did so, and tears fell from his eyes, it was so *tek* [?]. "Was it not as I said?" asked Bako.

[214]Mir Sevdin realized that there was something in the tea. He said that they should all get up, sing songs and have fun. Mam's turn came, but he refused. Bako said to Mir Sevdin not to force Mam; he would sing in Mam's place. He sang that Mam's lover is an Arab, her lips are black, and that he had seen her with his own eyes in the Kunchu quarter.

When he said that, Mam sang that Bekir had lied through his moustache, that Mani's beloved is an angel from heaven; his beloved is Zin, sister of Mir Sevdin, daughter of Mir Tazhdin, and granddaughter of Mir Atlas; she is in the palace¹.

[215] Mir Sevdin is irritated by Mam's words, and Mam gets up and sings with a dagger in his hand, saying that he has only one God. Gharatazhdin sings that if anyone attempts to hurt Mani, he will be met by hundreds; Arfon and Jakon join in supporting Mam; they take him by the arm and go home.

[216] Gharatazhdin tells Mir Sevdin that they willingly gave Zin to Mam. But the Mir says that he has not given her and says they should go out gazelle hunting to test Mam's manhood.

The Mir says in the morning he will offer Mam a precious gift. Word reaches Zin. She goes to Mam and tells him that she knows that her father is going to offer him something but that he should not accept anything else but the job of chavush [=servant or doorkeeper].

In the morning Mir Sevdin calls Mam and says that he has no gift worthy of Mam, but would like to give him a principedom. Mam declines the offer, saying that he wants to be a chavush.

Gharatazhdin and his brothers get their things together in preparation for the hunt. Zin hears of this and tells Mam to feign illness, and not to go. On the following day Mir Sevdin wants him to go, but Mam says that he is sick.

[217] They depart. Mam is sick in bed; Zin comes, and they embrace. She says that the place is not isolated enough, so why don't they go to the Torgri Garden for seven days and make merry. So they go, lie down on a mat, and fall asleep.

Heavy rain and hail comes. Mir Sevdin tells his servant to go to Torgri Garden and start a fire so they can warm up, and then go home. The servant enters and sees a man and a girl, but is not sure if it is Mam and Zin. So he sings to Zin that she should get up, and she asks the servant not to reveal her and Mam's secret. He promises not to. But just as they are getting ready to flee, they see Mir Sevdin at the gate with his horsemen. What to do?

[218] Mam hides Zin under his cloak and sits at the hearth. Mir Sevdin comes in and greets Mam, who does not stand up. This disturbs Mir Sevdin. Gharatazhdin and his brothers come in and see Mam in front of the fire, and they tell Mir Sevdin that

¹This relationship does not match what is stated earlier (Miss Avakian's note)

Mam is sick. Mam takes Gharatazhdin's hand and has him sit beside him, and from behind puts Zin's hair in Gharatazhdin's hand. Bekir [=Bako] is aware that there is someone under the cloak, so he says to Mir Sevdin that they should all stand and pray to God. Mam remains seated, like a corpse. Gharatazhdin tells his brothers that he is going home, but that they should keep their eyes open, and he gives similar instructions to his servant. Gharatazhdin goes straight home and tells his wife:

[219] "Go pull out our horses and the boy's cradle." He plans to set fire to his palace. Sutin wants to know with whom he has quarreled. He tells her to get up, -- enough of her talking against him; Mam and Zin are in danger of death. From the distance the servant sees smoke rising. Mir Sevdin wants to know what is happening. Kourken [Gurgin] his grandson is burned up. When Mir Sevdin hears that, his heart and lungs catch fire [=he is very upset]. They get up and go to Gharatazhdin.

[220] When they are halfway there, Bekir tells Mir Sevdin to go on ahead. Then Bekir turns back and through the window he sees Zin get out from under Mam's cloak and sit down beside him. Zin sings to Mam, "Did you see what the milk brothers [=blood brothers] did?" Then they get up and go their separate ways.

Bekir tells Mir Sevdin everything, and the Mir says, "What can I do? They have slipped out of our hands." Gharatazhdin, Jakon and Arfon have burned up; there is nothing left but one, they took out only one boy and three horses.

Bekir said to Mir Sevdin that the house of Gharatazhdin and his brothers has burned down. What to do? They went from village to village and collected money, and gave it to Gharatazhdin to rebuild his house.

God knows how much later the Tatars came to Gharatazhdin with a message that the king wants him and his brothers for military service. Bekir tells Mir Sevdin that the Tatars have come to take Gharatazhdin and his brothers into the army. What to do? No strong men will be left at home; he proposes that one brother be allowed to stay home

[221] Gharatazhdin said that all three of them had been called up and would go, taking Mam too. Mir Sevdin and Bekir said that Mam should stay back and help them.. Gharatazhdin said, "He can stay, but if anything happens to him, you and your household will burn down."

They took Mam to Mir Sevdin's divan, and for ten to twelve days Bekir went travelling among the villages. When he came back, he said that wherever he went people were saying that Zin is Mam's lover. What to do?

Mir Sevdin says that he cannot do anything about it because of the agreement and vow he has made before God. Bekir says that the two of them could play chess. Mir Sevdin invites Mam to play chess; if Mam wins, Zin will be his; if the Mir wins, he figures that he will have Mam's head chopped off. Mam thinks that the worst that could happen would be for Mir Sevdin to take away his horse. So be it.

They play, and Mam wins two games. Bekir wonders what to do. He tells Zin that Mam is agitated. If he brings her before Mam, Mam may take one look at her and start losing. So Bekir suggests that the players switch places. When Mam sees Zin, he forgets how to play. He loses and is taken to prison. After he is in prison, [222] for twenty or thirty days, Zin hires men to dig a tunnel to Mam's cell. At night she goes to see him, and in the morning returns to her place.

Mir Sevdin calls Bako and tells him to go see how Mam is doing. When he sees him in good shape, he tells Mir Sevdin, who also goes to see him. Mam is taken to a stone prison, and Zin cannot get him out. Within three months his condition deteriorates.

[223] One day a dervish comes by, and Zin asks him where he is going. He says that he is just looking around. She asks if he might be seeing Arfon, Jakon or Gharatazhdin, and he answers that he might. She offers him gold, clothing, or whatever else he wants if he will only take a letter to them for her. The dervish looks her over and says that all he wants is a kiss. She tries to dissuade him, but he insists on the kiss. There is no way out, so she gives him a kiss and writes the letter. In it she tells Gharatazhdin that Mam is in prison, and that she had to give the dervish a kiss in order to get him to deliver the letter.

Gharatazhdin reads the letter and tells his brothers that Mam has been imprisoned and that Zin had to give the dervish a kiss before he would deliver the letter. They turn on the dervish, curse him, and cut his throat.² The three brothers come home and see Zin and Sutin dressed in black. Word reached Mir Sevdin that the three brothers had arrived. He called Bekir to go see how Mam was doing, then suggests that they go hide, lest the brothers harm them.

[224] Bekir goes to Mam and tells him that he has come to release him. Mam cannot lift his head. Bekir tells to Mir Sevdin. He suggests that Zin take her forty

²C: Motif K978 Uriah letter Man carries written order for his own execution. This famous motif appears in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

servants and go to release Mam. Mir Sevdin tells Zin that he hereby gives her to Mam and that she should go and release him. Zin and her forty servants gladly go to release Mem from prison. Bekir's sister is among them. She says, "Instead of our going, there is a passion flower vine³, send it down to get him out; if we go the evil eye will strike us, and he will die in prison." Zin says that the other Zin, Bako's sister, wants to leave Mam to die.

Zin goes to the opening of the dungeon and tells Mam that she has come to release him. He recognizes her voice, but he says that she has come to take his soul. Zin lets down a rope to tie around his waist. He tries to stand on his feet, but is very weak. They pull him up. He asks Zin to kneel so that he can lean against her. He leans against her and dies. Zin sings, "May my father be ruined for sending a woman to go release a man from prison."

Word reaches Mir Sevdin that Mam was released and that he died. Mam is buried. There is much rain that day, and Zin gathers dirt and puts it on Mam's grave.

[225] Bekir has his eye on Zin. He tells her that that is enough; that he will give her a horse so that she can go find herself a man. She replies, "Let Bekir and Mir Sevdin remain alive while Mam the Alan blackens in the tomb." She sings that Mam died at noon, she will die by evening. She gets very sick, dies in the evening, and is buried beside Mam.

The three brothers return. Sutin, Zin's sister, is dressed in black. Bekir tells Mir Sevdin that they should go out to meet the brothers before Sutin sees them. When Gharatazhdin approaches with his brothers, they see that the house is draped in black; either Mam or Kourken has died. Sutin goes and tells them what has happened. Mir Sevdin and Bekir go out to meet the brothers, but seeing Sutin, they flee and hide, fearing that they will be killed.

[226] Gharatazhdin tells his brothers to lift their swords [against the Mir and Bekir]. They search through the town, but do not find them, so they go home. Bekir tells Mir Sevdin that there is no way out; if they are found, they will be burned. He suggests that they go to the bazaar, get a bolt of cloth, and go to Gharatazhdin and stand before the cradle and say, "Here is our sword, our neck, and our shroud." This they

³ժարհիփալակ [ՃԱՐԻՖԻՖԱԼԱԿ] This is the Persian: charkh-i falak فلك چرخ, which was taken into Turkish as çarhifelek; although it literally means "circle of the celestial sphere," it is the name of a tropical plant with sturdy vines, the passion flower [botanical name Passiflora]

do. Arfon and Jakon get up to kill them, but Gharatazhdin restrains them; one does not kill a guest in one's house. So they happily leave the house, and Bekir says to Mir Sevdin, "Did you see how I managed things? They didn't do anything to us!"

[227] Bekir waits a few days, then goes to Mam and Zin's tomb, digs a hole in it and sees that Mam and Zin are embracing, having a merry old time. He comes back happy and tells Mir Sevdin. Mir Sevdin tells Bekir that they should go to the graveside, and if Mam and Zin are alive, they should bring them back with them. Mir Sevdin gets up, puts on his sword, and goes with Bekir to the tomb. "Where are they?" he asks. Bekir points them out, but Mir Sevdin is aware that Bekir is lying, and says that he cannot see them.

Bekir comes and looks. Mir Sevdin takes out his sword and strikes off Bekir's neck. His blood spurts skyward. Mir Sevdin tries to keep the blood from falling onto the grave, but a drop falls on it, and a meshi tree grows there. Each year they cut down this tree, but it grows again.

Haykuni, S. [հայկունի, Ս.], ed. "Mamazin [Մամազին],"
Eminyan azgagrakan zhoghovadzow [Էմինյան ազգագրական ժողովածու] = Eminskii
Etnotraficheskii Sbornik [Эминск И этнографический Сборник], 5
 (1904), pp. 227-264. [Armenian translation of a Yezidi Kurdish version from region
 of Van] [SHa-2]

SHa-2. Originally told in Kurdish by the Yezidi Onbashi Mehon, from the vicinity of Van. He was at one time a policeman in [Dogu]bayazid, after that a rifleman of the Pakrevant prelate, and for several years has been living in the Siniga Mountains (on the Soviet border) in the Yezidi village of Aslanlu. He knew Armenian well, and with his and Kisag Nalbandian's help, S. Haykuni translated Onbashi Mehon's version into Armenian, trying to preserve the poetic texture of the original. Some of S. Haykuni's notes indicate an awareness of more than one version of the story.

Mamazin (SHa-2)

English summary by Anne Avakian
 Berkeley, California, July 1989

[227] In olden times, Mam the Alan was sleeping in his room. Likewise the coy and beautiful Lady Zin was asleep [in her place].

Three sister doves came down from heaven, and sat at Zin's window. Said the youngest, "Have you seen such a one as Zin in the world?" "Yes," said the eldest, "brave Mam of the Aipasha clan, son of King Kachants, is more handsome." "Is there any way they can marry?" asked the youngest dove.

[228] The eldest said that if God wills, it will be easy, they would take Zin to Mukher Zamin, to be near Mam. The doves asked God to send down a dove skin. God heard their prayer. Lady Zin saw it, wore it, and became a dove, and they flew to Mam.

Mam, in deep sleep, awoke, saw Zin, and was surprised. Zin was not only as beautiful as the moon, but was also endowed with a combination of intelligence, humility and modesty¹. Mam was enchanted by her beauty. For three days and nights he thought he had seen a dream.

The three doves took Zin and flew off, returning [to Mam] on the fourth day. Mam wondered how he could keep Zin. He could hardly speak. "Beautiful *hourî*, once more you have come to my father's city." "Handome, brave youth, you have come to my father's city."

¹ In Kurdish, one word is used to express these three traits. [S. Haykuni's note]

[229] Mam says that if he is from her city, how many minarets are there? She says, "166." He says that in his father's city there are 366. So they count the minarets, and find that Mam was right. They exchange rings and introduce themselves. She says she is Zin, daughter of the king of Jezir-Botan, that her father is Mir Sevdin, her father's brother's name is Mir Tazhdin. She says that this is her last visit to his father's world. He will have to come find her.

Mam did not want to let her go, but when the time came for her to leave, Lady Zin put the bead of sleep in Mam's ear and flew away. Mam woke up and saw nothing. How had he been unable to hold her? Had it been a dream? She was more beautiful than the Hours.

[230] Perhaps she would come some day to console his burning heart. He waited ten to twenty days, but the beautiful, glorious maiden did not reappear.

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In his bitter condition, Mam is wasting away. His mother sorrowfully tells her husband that Mam is drawing his last breath, and [Mam's father] rushes to his son to find out what the trouble is, lest he lose his mind. Mam says that he is sick, and his father says that he will find a cure for his pain. If Mam wants to marry, his father will ask for the hand of the daughter of the King of Istanbul.

Mam feels helpless. His father, confused and sorrowful, returns home, where he finds the judge and lawyers, and Mam's mother lamenting over his son. He sings to his companions that Mam is very sick.

[231] When the companions hear this they stand up and decide to go see Mam. His mother precedes them to Mam's door, and finds it locked. She asks him to let her in, so that she can see his condition. She hangs on his neck and says, "My son, if you love God's man², you must tell me truthfully what your trouble is."

"Akh, mother I am sick. It is God's will, that's all I know."

²Several times in this tale the Yezidi expression 'God's man' is used. I became interested in finding out about whom it is said. Some Yezidis told me that they use it for Christ when they are with Armenians, and for Muhammad when they are in the presence of Muslims, but I think it is more likely that they say it to the Melik's tavuzir (satayel) [=devil], since they worship it [S Haykuri's note]. Apparently Haykuri subscribed to the commonly held misconception that the Yezidis are devil worshippers.

"Mam, may the milk of my breasts be *halal*³ to you."

Mam's mother realizes that Mam's pain and torment is from within, but she cannot identify the sickness by looking at his face.

Mam tells his mother that no matter what he says or does, she may not believe it, but he is very sick. From the crowd sitting around, one discreet man turns to Mam's mother and says, "Since you love God and respect God's man, let me talk to Mam privately."

[232] Mam and that man retire to talk quietly. The man urges Mam to tell him his problem, and Mam responds that since God has been mentioned, he is obliged to tell him. He tells the man that Lady Zin is his pain. The man asks Mam if he knows Zin's nationality, her family, her world, and whether her father is from the same class as Mam's father.

Mam tells what he knows about Zin, and the man reports to Mam's father, who thinks at length about it. He does not even know what direction Jezir Botan is in, or what kind of ruler Mir Sevdin is. Mam's father summons two men who have seen something of the world. One says that he has not seen or heard of Jezir Botan, that he has never heard about it from his forefathers.

[233] The other man says that he knows about Jezir, but that he is 130 years old and his legs are too weak to manage a horse. When Mam hears about this, he gets very excited. Finally he sends word to his mother to wish him *halal*⁴; his father also wishes him *halal*, but wonders why Mam is in such a hurry to go to a strange land. Mam says he has decided to go.

[234] Mam's parents realize that it is hopeless to try to detain Mam, so Mam's father has eight or ten horsemen ride with Mam⁵. They go on more or less, stopping at a meadow where there is a fountain. They sit under a tree there and drink water. Mam

³ The word *halal* signifies deep gratitude to someone. Since it is not an Armenian word, I have kept it! (S Haykuni's note) See EP 1 note # 38!

⁴ See note 3 above

⁵ There are several ways for Mam to depart: [according to different versions] the Mir [=Mam's father?] sends out an order to gather the beauties of the world; Mam is put in their midst to choose one of them; [Mam's father?] requests the daughters of the vezir [=vizier] and vakil [=minister of state] to attract Mam's heart with their sweet songs; from all sides songs are sung, but Mam does not look at any of them; this happens a total of three times; finally Mam mounts his horse Bor, and rides off. In one version, Mam's father has the doors of the fortress locked and places fetters on Bor's feet, but [Mam], riding on the horse with fettered feet, jumps over the fortress wall and rides off! (S Haykuni's note)

looks at his companions who are sad and longing for home. He releases them, telling them to go back to their families, but the men say that Mam's father may not believe them, and might think that Mam is lost.

[235] They request Mam to write a letter. He does so, and gives it to the horsemen, asking them to pray for him. They leave. Mam is confused about what he should do next. For three days and nights he rides Bor, who is lame. When the pain becomes unbearable to Bor, he sings, asking why Mam is so childish and why it never occurs to him that "his Bor's hands⁶ are in pain."

When Mam hears that Bor is so affected, he gets down and cuts the fetters with a stroke of his sword.

[236] Both Mam and Bor are tearful, and Mam asks the Lord to find a way for him. He has been insensitive, has gone astray, and is sorry that he hurt Bor. Mam falls to the ground, and ponders, trying to guess what direction Jezir lies in, to the right or the left?

Once more the three doves come down from heaven and roost on the tree branch above Mam. They feel sorry for his condition. They say that when they fly away one feather will fall. When Mam awakes and dips the feather in water and rubs it on Bor's feet, he will be cured in three hours. Mam awakens and does as they said. Bor sees Mam's suffering and encourages him, stating his intention in song.

[237] Bor tells Mam to tie his [=Bor's] two front feet with a handkerchief and that Bor will get Mam to Jezir Botan on the 41st day. They ride on for forty days, and on the 41st reach the land of Pem⁷.

On the way Mam meets a ploughman⁸. They greet each other, and Mam is welcomed. The man describes the beauty of Jezir.

⁶The horse's forefeet are called "hands" by Kurds. [S. Haykuni's note]

⁷There was a village near Kharpet [Harput or Elâzığ] that bore that name. [A. Avakian's note] This could mean "the land of the pens [=fairies]."

⁸Idzk'vor [Լճքուոր]. According to Kouyoumdjian's Armenian-English Dictionary, Լճէլ = 'to yoke', 'to couple'. Since in most other versions at this point in the story Mem meets up with a farmer or ploughman [Kurdish *cotkar*, from *cot* = 'pair', 'plough', cf. Persian *joft* جفت --> Turkish *çift*], and because the verb that Idzk'vor is derived from means something similar, I am guessing that Idzk'vor, which does not appear in the dictionaries that either Miss Avakian or I consulted, means 'ploughman' too. [M.L. Chyet's note]

[236] Mam rides on, and reaches the town. Nearby is a spring; a girl is sitting by it. She greets Mam, calling him Mamet Alanian. She identifies his father, tells of Mam's long journey and that he has come for Zin. She mentions the ring, saying that it accidentally fell into the stream. Mam is suspicious that this is not his Zin and that he has come in vain. His horse understands his dejection [239] and tells him that this girl is Bako's daughter, an expert in sorcery⁹ who often upsets people's plans. The horse urges that they go on before it gets dark.

Bor carries Mam onward, coming to a stop before Gharatazhdin's door. Lady Gül Pen comes out and is attracted to her guest. She takes him in. Gharatazhdin has two brothers, Jakan and Afan. All three are nephews of the Mir¹⁰ who sit in the Mir's court [diwan]. Khatun [=Lady] Gül Peri sends a man to summon them with the message that [240] a grand guest has come, and that they should come home quickly. They come and honor Mam for three days, and don't return to the Mir's court. Meanwhile, the Mir sends a man to find out why they have not come back. The Mir is told about the guest, and invites them to bring him along. Lady Gül Peri gives the messenger a terrible blow. He asks her why she hit him.

She tells him to get lost, to go to *khalam*, saying, "Go tell your Mir to get a band of seven musicians and to spread carpets from his door to mine, and to decorate the court if he wants her guest to come. The servant returns to the Mir, who wants to know why Gharatazhdin, his brothers, and their guest have not come. The servant tells the Mir what his own sister has demanded.

[241] Mam proceeds, scattering gold as he goes to the crowd which has gathered. Before Mam arrives, Tazhdin goes and talks to the Mir face to face. The Mir asks him why he has not appeared at court, and Tazhdin tells him that it is because his guest is very important. He tells him that when the guest comes, the Mir should stand. The Mir wants to know what kind of guest he is that he should have to stand up for him¹¹.

When Mam comes in, the Mir is amazed; in a hurry he stands up to greet him and to hold his hand. Just then Tazhdin drops a handkerchief under the Mir. The Mir is so

⁹ Some say that Bako's daughter, through sorcery, knew everything; others say that Bako was the sorcerer and that he revealed secrets to her.

¹⁰-ii: "sons of the Mir's brother."

¹¹ They say that Mam was very handsome. Whoever caught sight of him became enraptured, and spent three days and nights being hungry, thirsty, and sleepless [S. Haykuri's note].

enraptured by Mam that for three days and nights all he does is talk with him. Lady Gül Peri comes in, angry that her guest has been kept without food, and asks the Mir if he has imprisoned him. The Mir does not like what she says, so he turns to her [his sister] and says [242] that if his arm could reach his dagger, he would put an end to her.

It seemed to the Mir that he had only been talking for a day, but Gül Peri says that it has been three days, and the crowd agrees with her, but has not dared to say so to the Mir. The Mir recognizes his error, and orders his servants to bring bread and food. Mam sits and eats, takes leave of the Mir, and goes back to his quarters.

The Mir turns to Tazhdin and says, "Didn't you say that I would stand up in front of the guest?" "Yes," replies Tazhdin, "You stood up, and held his hand. If you don't believe me, stand up and see. You will find a handkerchief under you."¹²

The Mir says that he was unaware how the time passed. Tazhdin takes his leave, and does not make an appearance for three days.

The Mir calls Tazhdin back and questions him about Mam: where is he from, who are his parents. Tazhdin says that he does not know.

[243] The Mir has Mam brought in, and wants to know if he is the son of a king or a vizier. Mam says that he is just an ordinary person, and this angers the Mir. He turns to Tazhdin and says that the guest is not telling the truth¹³. He orders that Mam be taken away, and that information about him be brought in the morning. Mam and the three brothers return to Shahnashin, the grand palace¹⁴.

Shahnashin was a grand palace, surrounded on all sides by vineyards, villages, and dwellings. Tazhdin, his brothers, and Mam the Alan go to the rooftop and sit on carpets. They play chess for half a day. Let Mam and Tazhdin play there, and let us turn to Lady Zin.

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¹²Tazhdin dropped the handkerchief under the Mir so that if he denies that he stood up, Tazhdin will have the handkerchief as proof.

¹³From Mam's appearance they surmised that he was of nobility, and when he denied it, the Mir got angry [5 Haykuni's note]

¹⁴Shahnashin was the traditional palace of the dan. They say that when brothers and nephews separate, they divide the principedom into two, with the principedom on one side, and the palace on the other in this way. Tazhdin got the palace Shahnashin [5 Haykuni's note]

"Zin," says Lady Zin, "Gather up my servants, take 10-20 horses and mules, and load up all the pots and pans and go to the fountain." The servants load up quickly and, taking Lady Zin with them, they unload their things at the fountain.

[244] Mam looks down from high up on the rooftop and sees Zin leading the caravan. When he sees her, he falls over. The three brothers wonder what has happened. Mam says that he would give the whole world for the leader of that caravan.

Zin was already engaged to Jakan, and when he hears Mam say this, he gets very upset. When Gharatazhdin realizes this, he tries to calm his brother down with a song. He tells Mam that what he sees is not an ordinary caravan that he should stop it and demand a tax of it. The leader, Lady Zin, the daughter of Mir Sevdin, is betrothed to Jakan

The three brothers all go and collect a tax from the Kurdish caravan, but first there is one requirement: they must get permission from the Mir. "I will go get a permit!¹⁵"

The three brothers insist that it is impossible and impractical!¹⁶.

[245] Mam jumps up and thinks about neglected Bor. He finds him in poor condition, and cleans him up. The horse tells him that he has been neglected, but when Mam needs him, he comes. Mam tells Bor not to abandon him, and Bor says that he will take him wherever he desires to go. Mam leaps into the saddle and rides to the fountain.

[246] When Zin sees Mam, she takes the cup from her maidservant, fills it with water, and offers it to Mam. Mam says, "Lady Zin, Lady Zin, can you give me the *tlumsa zerin*!"¹⁷

¹⁵Presumably for Mam (A Avakian's note)

¹⁶Zin was betrothed to Tazhdin's brother Jakan. If another person so much as talked about Zin, murder might be the result. Tazhdin cautions Mam so that his brother Jakan does not get upset. However, Mam is their guest, and according to custom, if a guest were to ask for someone's wife (though it never happened), he would not be refused.

¹⁷Tlumsazerin means a magical gold piece which is the largest piece of gold in a necklace. When Zin gives it away, the magic (or enchantment) in it would be lifted, the work of Zin and Mam would be done, and Tazhdin and his brothers would have to give up all hope of Zin. [S. Haykuni's novel tlumsazeřin դլլմսազերին from Kurdish *tilimsa zerin* = 'golden talisman', from metathesis of *Tilism* = 'Talisman, charm, amulet' from Ar *tilasm* **طلمس** (cf. also Turkish *tilsim*), + *zerin* = 'golden.' (M.L. Chyet's note)]

When Zin heard this, she removed the gold piece from her necklace and dropped it in the cup and gave it to Mam. Mam drank the water,^{17a} then mounted his horse and went and laid the gold piece before Gharatazhdin.

Mam took the horse to the stable, then went upstairs to the house.

Tazhdin noticed Mam's condition and told his brothers about it, proclaiming that they were now four brothers, and suggesting that they go around Jezir and bring Mam to the desired of his heart [=Zin]. This upset Jakan, who sang to Tazhdin that what he had said hurt him very much.

[247] Jakan's heart is in pieces, to whom is he giving away his betrothed? Tazhdin says that Mam is their guest and a worthy brother. Afan sings that Tazhdin is like a father and has arranged it so. Jakan also finally joins in with the idea that Mam should have the one who is the beauty of the world¹⁵. The three brothers vow that Mam's desire is to be fulfilled

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The Mir sends word to Gharatazhdin to bring Mam. When they come, the Mir takes Tazhdin aside and asks whether Mam is really a king's son. Tazhdin assures the Mir that he is indeed a king's son. The Mir accepts him as one who has come to meet Tazhdin¹⁹ [248] and who one is obligated to be hospitable to. The Mir welcomes Mam to his court. Zin had heard the day before that her father was going to give Mam some important gift. Zin calls Avan Bako's daughter²⁰, tells her that the Mir has taken Mam to the court, and asks her to find out what he intends to do. Avan Bako's Zin says that she has learned that the Mir is planning on giving the town of Istanbul to Mam, so that he might rule there

17a This is reminiscent of the Iranian practice of taking an oath, *səgand khōrdan* NDRwā dnwš, in which a swearer whose honesty was seriously in doubt would drink water containing sulphur or gold. See Martin Schwartz "Pers. *Səgand Akrōdān* etc. 'To Take an Oath' (Not: 'To Drink Sulphur')." in *Études Iraniques offertes à Gilbert Lazard*, Studia Iranica, Cahier 7 (Paris: Association pour l'avancement des études iraniennes 1989), pp. 293-5.

18 Jakan reluctantly agrees, but he doesn't have the heart to mention Zin by name, instead mentioning her qualities. [S. Haykuni's note]

19 The Mir assumed that Mam had heard about Tazhdin's fame and had come only to see his glory and honor. [S. Haykuni's note]

20 Avan Bako's daughter is also called Zin, and she was a maidservant of Mam's Zin. She is the one who had seen Mam at the spring before he entered the town. [S. Haykuni's note]

and spend his life there. [Lady Zin] pleads with her maidservant Zin to find some work that Mam can do there, as a way of keeping him there at her father's palace.

Mam appears before the Mir and says that he cannot accept Istanbul. The Mir says that it is his desire to promote Mam, and he asks Mam what it is that he wants. Mam tells him that he wants to serve in his court. The Mir assigns him to be supervisor of the kitchen

A former worker in the kitchen asks Mam why he is depriving him [=the worker] of his living, and why he is killing his [=the worker's] children. Mam says that the circumstances of his situation are unusual. By God's mercy he will give the former worker his own salary, but he asks that the worker not reveal this to anyone.

[249] Mam takes Lady Zin and they talk secretly. For a year or two it is so with Mam; he is only attentive to Zin. He forgets about his own hunger and forgets the Mir's mealtimes.

Bako Avan is a slanderous gossip. He is a big official of the Mir's, and he is seeking an opportunity to get Mam away from the Zin he worships²¹. Bako Avan goes to the Mir and says that Mam is a careless man; his work shows that he is an ordinary man who wanders around the palace. The Mir says that Mam is his man and that he forgives him his faults. But Bako continues his slandering.

Zin notices all this and says to Mam that they will be disgraced if they continue. Mam goes to the Mir's court and asks to be released from his service. The Mir lets him go, but requires that Mam come to his court three times a day.

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One day the Mir summons Gharatazhdin [250] and says that it is a suitable day for horse *chrinti*²², and instructs him to get things ready. Mam is also to play, in order to show his skill. But Bor has again been neglected. The horse scolds Mam, and Mam feels

²¹Through sorcery he wanted to give his daughter Zin to Mam. When he did not succeed, he became an enemy [S Haykuni's note]

²²This must be jireed [Turkish *cirit*, Kurdish *cerid/cirid*], a game played on horseback, similar to polo. Both the game and the javelin used in the game are called jireed. See ZK-3, note #109a; and LC-1, note # 139; for a fuller account.

sorry and begs forgiveness. Bor tells him to put the golden saddle on him, and Mam does so, then mounts Bor and goes out to the square.

400 of the Mir's horsemen come and ride along with the brothers. The Mir calls one of the brave young men and tells him to go hit Mam's *chrint*, to find out how patient Mam is. The brave horseman wields the *chrint* in his hand, and rides back and forth on his horse, [251] watching the direction of the *chrint*, in order to knock Mam over with one blow. Bor instructs Mam to crawl under his [=Bor's] belly, and let the strike fall on Bor²³. Bor tells Mam to press the stirrups from both sides, so they will meet and drop a *chrint* from above, so that it will strike his right arm. Mam does as he is bid, and the Mir says that it is enough. Mam's fame spreads, and they go home happy.

Dayspass The Mir calls his nephew Tazhdin and asks when the next hunt will be. They want to see what a good hunter Mam is. Zin hears about this and sends her maidservant Zin to Mam, to tell him not to go, but rather to say that he is sick. In the morning they go hunting, and Mam says he is sick.

[252] The Mir asks where Mam is. Tazhdin says that he is sick. So they go without him. Lady Zin sends her maidservant Zin to go quickly and tell Mam that he should meet her in the enclosed vineyard. Zin goes alone, with Mam following cautiously. They meet and are happy.

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Let them be, and let us turn to the hunters. They enter the forest, but after a few hours have passed, a terrible hailstorm comes up. They get wet, and the Mir suggests that they go home. Meanwhile, Bako is thinking of something. He tells the Mir that they should go by way of the vineyard, because two hunters have gone there, "Let's see what they have got."

They all enter the vineyard of Surgri. Mam and Zin are there enjoying themselves, unaware of what is about to befall them.

²³ I have written: "vertically" in place of the Kurdish word that signifies neither higher than the head nor to pass lower, but: directly to the point (S Hayxuni's note)

The Mir calls his chavush [=servant] to build a fire in the farm house. The chavush finds Mam and Zin asleep, and does not want to awaken them. The more he thinks, the harder it is for him to find a way.

[253] How can he separate the lovers? He goes back and forth, trying not to make any noise, yet he cannot delay too long. Suddenly Mam and Zin wake up and see the fire and the chavush standing beside them. Mam asks why he is so confused. The chavush tells Mam to hurry, for the Mir will soon be there. Mam tells Zin that their situation is very precarious, and that she must hide under his cloak. Mam sits down and sings quietly.

The Mir enters happily and loudly greets Mam, who stands up sleepily and sluggishly and bows before the Mir. Bako is suspicious, and knows that Mam is confused. He takes the opportunity to point out to the Mir Mam's disorderly manner, that he was sluggish in his greeting.

When Bako sees that the Mir was upset, [254] he looks at Mam and the people stand silently by while the Mir and Mam look at each other. Mam sings sadly that he is sick and could scarcely make it to the vineyard, and asks the Mir to find a cure for his pain. Bako knows that Mam is in love with Lady Zin. He sings loudly to arouse Mam, and to get him to talk²⁴.

Bako sings to the Mir that the person Mam loves has lips that are freckled²⁵, and has the face of an Arab -- no need to give her name.

Mam is aroused, and sings that Bako is lying through his moustache. "If you want to know, her name is Zin, her father's name is Mir Sevdin, her brother's name is Mir Tazhdin." when Tazhdin and his brothers hear the song, they whisper to him, "What are you saying? Be careful lest something happen to you!" Mam sings the same words again, and is so excited that he calls on his men to unsheath their daggers.

[255] This they do, but Gharatazhdin and his brothers get very insensed and threaten to put anyone who moves to the sword. Tazhdin sees that Mam is in grave danger. Quickly he sends word to Lady Gül Peri that Mam and Zin are in danger²⁶, and that she

²⁴Bako knew that Mam had gone with Zin to Surgri vineyard, and he thought he would find them together, which would disgrace Mam. When he does not see Zin, he sings just to arouse Mam. [S Haykuri's note]

²⁵or perhaps cracked? [M.L. Chyet's note]

²⁶Some say that Gharatazhdin saw Zin's braids sticking out from under the cloak, and understood that there was great danger; others say that Mam himself revealed her braids to Gharatazhdin, forcing him to

must hurry to save the life of their honored guest. He directs her to take the cradle, Bor, and the Koran out of Shahnashin palace, and to set it on fire.

In an instant, Shahnashin is in flames, and people run to help from all sides. When Mir Sevdin hears about the fire, he runs out and forgets about everything else. Mam is free: he sends Zin home and he himself hurries towards the fire.

[256] Mam looks sadly upon the scene, shedding bitter tears over Gharatazhdin's loss. Not even a quilt is left.

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For three or four months, the Mir and Tazhdin are enemies over Mam. One day, an enemy comes and surrounds the Mir's lands. The Mir has no forces to meet the invading army. He curses Bako for causing the falling out between him and his relatives. The Mir is so worried that he goes to Gharatazhdin and says, "I did you harm, will you do me good? I need your help." Tazhdin says that he is ready to do the Mir's will. The Mir wants Tazhdin to be the general of the army that will drive out the enemy invaders. Tazhdin accepts.

[257] Tazhdin tells the Mir that he will leave Mam as a pledge with him until his return, and that he expects the Mir will return him in the same condition he was in when he left. 5,000 brave soldiers gather, with Tazhdin proudly at their head.

Once more Bako goes to the Mir and complains that something should be done to Mam for his sins. The Mir says that he is a pledge, and that he cannot touch him. Bako suggests that the Mir and Mam should play *satrij* [=chess], and whoever loses will be punished. The Mir tells Mam to play *satrij*, and if Mam wins, Zin will be his. If Mam loses, the Mir will put him in prison.

Bako runs to Lady Zin and tells her about the wager. At first she is a bit doubtful, but Bako insists that it is so. Lady Zin dresses up and puts on her gold, then goes to stand in front of the window.

[258] Mam is winning. Bako suggests that they trade places. When they do, Mam is captivated by the sight of Zin, and he gets confused, so that the Mir is the winner. The Mir orders his servants to tie Mam up and to drop him into the dungeon. Mam looks at

divert: the Mir and the crowd's attention by setting fire to his beloved palace. Tazhdin took this upon himself only to preserve the family tradition of hospitality. [5 Haykuni's note]

Zin and says that he has lost his soul. She tries to encourage him. Mam is thrown into a dark and narrow dungeon, and is cruelly tortured.

Zin engages three miners and asks them how well they can keep a secret.

[259] She gives them ten gold pieces to dig a tunnel from the prison to her room. The two lovers meet happily.

One day Bako asks his daughter what Lady Zin does with her time. His daughter answers that Lady Zin is always weeping, but at nightfall she always asks her maidservant to leave. Bako suspects something and goes to the Mir and asks why he is so lax and indifferent. Bako tells him about the tunnel. The Mir does not believe it, but Bako takes him, and they see Zin sitting on the bed. When she sees her father, she jumps up and stands.

[260] Bako tells the Mir to lift the quilt. The Mir scolds Zin; her heart trembles and she is tongue-tied. The Mir turns to Bako for advice. Four servants are summoned and told to drop Mam into the deep, dark well.

Mam is there for a year and a half, suffering a great deal. Tazhdin's soldiers fight for three years and return victorious. The Mir is confused: how can he face Tazhdin? The Mir tells Bako that he is going to behead him [=Bako]. Bako begs for forgiveness, then runs to Zin and says he has good news for her, [261] that she is going to wed Mam, and that she has permission to release him from the dungeon.

When she hears this, she says, "May my father's house be ruined, that Mam should be released from the dungeon by a woman."

Zin calls her 40 maidservants, and they go to the prison, where she sings to Mam that she has come to free him from his suffering. He replies that she has not come to save him, but rather to kill him. The 40 servants drop a rope down into the well and pull Mam out. He turns to Zin and sighs, and he sheds a drop of blood; with that drop of blood, his soul flies out of his mouth.

When Zin sees that Mam is dead, she pulls her hair out by the roots, and sings, "Mam died in the morning, may I not reach the evening time."

[262] The Mir sees the soldiers returning, and terrified of Tazhdin, he says to Bako, "May your house be ruined." They decide to flee and hide, locking the door behind them.

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Gharatazhdin learns of what has happened. Even though the Mir and Bako have fled, even if they were to get into a mousehole, they will not be saved. The Mir and Bako go to the fortress, disguised as women. The three brothers attack the fortress. The Mir sees danger approaching, death is threatening his clan. He begs the nobles to beg Tazhdin to forgive him. They approach Tazhdin and ask for the Mir to be forgiven. Tazhdin grants this, then tells them to take Mam and Zin and bury them together, then to cover the bride and groom with earth.

[263] Eight days pass, and Tazhdin says, "Let's go and see if Mam and Zin are lying back to back or face to face." Bako hears about this. By night he goes to the grave and sees that they are sleeping face to face. He rushes to Tazhdin and tells him that Mam and Zin are alive.

The next day they go to the graves, taking Bako with them. They open the graves and say, "Unjust Bako you liar, where are the Mam and Zin that you saw alive?"

Bako bends over the grave as if to feel it, and Tazhdin pulls out his sword and strikes Bako a fatal blow; his head falls to one side, his body to the other; he dies a dog's death.

A drop of blood spurts from Bako's neck and falls between the two lovers. The blood turns into a *chichkhan poush* [=thorny holly?]. The two souls turn into two roses, and grow on each side, but cannot meet because the *chichkhan* does not allow them to be joined!

[264] It grows long between the two of them, leaving the two lovers longing. The *chichkhan* does not allow them to meet, and forever they remain so.

Every year the roses grow, but the *chichkhan* is a hindrance.

The bride and groom have gone to heaven.

Bako burns in hell: his body in the grave does not rest.

- Nzhdehian, G. K. [ՆՅԴԵՏԵԱՆ, Գ. Բ.]. "Mamo yev Zinē : k'rdakan zhoghovrdakan vēp" [Մամօ եւ Ջինէ, քրդական ժողովրդական վէպ = Mamo and Zine, Kurdish folk romance], *Azgzagrakan Handes* [=Ազգագրական հանդես], 11 (1904), 197-240. [Armenian translation of Kurdish oral version from Eleşkirt, in what is now the province of Ağrı, Turkey; see also Macler] [GNa]
- Macler, Frédéric. "Une Forme Arménienne du thème des amants malheureux," *Revue des études Arméniennes*, 2 (1922), 91-116. [AP95.A7R4 v. 2-3; French summary of Nzhdehyan's Armenian literary version]

GNa. Armenian translation of a Kurdish oral version from Eleşkirt (Alashkerd), in what is now the province of Ağrı, Turkey. This version was collected and translated by the Armenian priest G. Nzhdehian, circa 1904. Several of Nzhdehian's explanatory notes are useful and interesting. This version has a moral tone that is atypical: I suspect that because he was a priest, he touched up a few points at the end, to make the story coincide with his religious world view. Frédéric Macler, translator of a great deal of Armenian literature into French, published a French summary of it in 1922. Anne Avakian made an English summary for me directly from the Armenian text, i.e. without referring to the French summary. Her summary includes several details germane to my analysis which Macler glossed over.

Mamo yev Zine (GNa)

English summary by Anne Avakian
Berkeley, California, March 1989

[197] Mir-Shamdin was from the generation of the kings of Mar [=Media], and one of the ancestors of Badir-Khan Beg. Mir-Shamdin lived in Jezira Bohtan¹, the sole head of his country. After the death of Mir-Shamdin², his son Mir-Zeydin sat in his place as free and sole lord of that country.

¹The town of Bohtan's Jezir, with Jezir as town and Bohtan as country, but according to the rules of the Kurdish language, they are used as a pair, the town coming before the country [Nzhdehian's note]

Հ[Միր-Շամդին] Some say Mir-Sanzir: [Միր-Սանտին]. [Nzhdehian's note]. Both of these are given in Eastern Armenian both because the text is in Eastern Armenian, and because the town of Eleşkirt (Alashkerd), where the text was collected, is the traditional dividing line between Eastern and Western Armenian, such that the Armenians living to the east of Eleşkirt generally spoke dialects of Eastern Armenian, and those to the west of it spoke dialects of Western Armenian [according to Professor James Russell of Columbia University]. The dialects exhibit phonological, lexical, and morphological differences. [M.L. Chyet's note]

Mir-Zeydin's sister, Khanum-Peri, was married to her paternal uncle's son whose name was Ghara-Tazhdin. They had children; one of them was Gurgin, who was also known as Ghavaz-Chavush. He will appear in our story³.

Ghara-Tazhdin's brothers were Kakan and Jakan. These last two were not yet married. They were very strong and courageous young men. No other mortal could lift their armaments up off the ground, let alone use them. Each dagger, lance, and shield weighed 300 pounds, and the youths were very skilled in their use. Their job was to [198] watch over the land like guardian angels, to collect taxes, look into complaints, suppress revolts, and the like. Although Mir-Zeydin was the ruler, his work was carried out by the three brothers. Mir-Zeydin feared his nephews. He was their slave: he loved and respected them, and in return they were always ready to sacrifice themselves to carry out his word.

Mir-Zeydin also had another sister, named Zine. She was very beautiful, and in all of Bohtan, none could surpass her. She was fourteen years old. Her brother wanted to bring girls to serve her, but she said, "Let my name serve me⁴." Nonetheless, he brought her forty girls, all of whom had the name Zine. He paid the parents of each girl the equivalent of their weight in gold. One was the daughter of a notable of Jezir, Bakir-Avan. She was dark, pock-marked, large-nosed, old, and a *samdar* [=fortune teller]: this Zine was secretly against Mir-Zeydin's younger sister Zine [Lady Zine].

According to Kurdish custom, Lady Zine was engaged to Kakan, Ghara-Tazhdin's brother, and their wedding was to take place several months after the events of this story.

Mir Zeydin's palace was surrounded by high ramparts with seven steel gates guarded by 24 men. Inside was a beautiful garden, a plane tree in the middle, [199] and a marble pool. Lady Zine and her attendants enjoyed the place.

One day near sunset, Zine ordered her attendants to leave. She put down her quilt and went to sleep. Three doves came and sat in the tree: one was the mother of the other two. They were fairies⁵ who had come from heaven. When they took off

³They have at least one other child in this version, an unnamed infant. [M.L. Chyet's note]

⁴*Êra navê min ji mifa xizme ke*. This is quoted in Kurdish, but in Armenian letters.

⁵or *houris*. Nzhdehian has 'fairies', followed by 'houris' in parentheses.

their feathers, they became beautiful girls. Ordinary mortals could not wear their feathers unless God found them worthy.

The mother dove told her daughters that Zine was the one sleeping by the pool, and that her fate was tied to Mame⁶, son of Al-Pasha of Mkhur-Zaman. She was engaged to Kakan. Unfortunately, there was no extra suit of feathers to dress her in, or they would take her to Mame. The two younger doves were sorry to hear their mother's words, so they sang to God, and God sent down a suit of feathers for Zine. By a miracle, Zine became the fourth dove.

[200] She flew with the other doves to a distant land, to an unfamiliar place where the prince Al-Pasha reigned. The land was called Mkhur-Zaman. The doves brought Zine to Mameh's window. He was asleep, and around his bed were four candles, two above and two below. The doves put Zine under the quilt and removed her feathers. She became her former self, still asleep and unaware of what had transpired.

Later she awoke and, seeing a young man beside her, was both astonished and angry. By what right had he come to her room? Mame was also surprised and angered to find a strange girl in his bed. Both demanded an explanation. Zine sang that her father⁷ has seven steel gates guarded by 24 men; how dare Mame come and kiss her breasts? Mame answered that his father also has similar protection; why had she come to cause loss of his life?; may her house be ruined. They argued. Zine disclosed that her native town, Jezira Bohtan, has 66 minarets. Mame said that his town of Mkhur-Zaman has 366 minarets.

[201] They went to the window, and by the light of the moon, they counted the 366 minarets. Zine apologized and ascribed her coming to God, but it remained a mystery. They yielded to God's will, and exchanged rings. Zine wanted to leave, but Mame objected. She insisted that if he were a real man, he would undergo any trouble necessary to find her, and that only then would he be able to marry her and know the value of a woman. After telling each other the names of their native countries, cities,

⁶Although in the title the form 'Mamo' appears through the narrative he is referred to as Mame (Uwst) (to be pronounced in two syllables Mah-meh.) [A Avakian's note]

⁷Although Mir-Zeydir is initially presented as Zine's older brother, later on Zine identifies him as her father [A Avakian's note]. This occurs in other versions as well: see HR-1 note #108; and EP-1 note # 109; Cf. note 12 below.

and relatives, they again fall asleep. The doves came and put a bead of sleep⁶ in Zine's ear so that she would sleep soundly, then dressed her in dove feathers and took her home, leaving her in her bed in the garden. When Zine awoke, she thought it had been a dream, and it was almost morning. She was angry that her attendants had let her sleep so long, and she threatened to cut their hair. She went into the house, and noticed the ring on her finger, engraved with the words "Mkhur-Zaman and Mame." She fainted. Her dream had been true!

Mkhur-Zaman, a distance of forty days from Jezira Bohtan, was a well-populated place where Al-Pasha was king.

[202] Al-Pasha had grown very old and had only Mame, age 16, who was the apple of his eye⁷, especially since Mame was the only son he had from his late wife. Mame was very intelligent, clever, strong, and handsome. His father called him Mammo or Mamek.

Every morning Mame, dressed in his golden threaded garments, helped his father dress, poured water on his hands, got his coffee and his pipe ready, and waited on him. Mame was, in a word, his father's life.

After the meeting between Mame and Zine, Mame did not come to his father's bedside to serve him. Al-Pasha thought that something must have happened, perhaps Mame was sick, so he sent a man to bring word. The man found Mame asleep, and woke him up. Mame's first word was "Zine". The man said that no Zine was there. Mame thought he was dreaming, said nothing, got up and went to wash. When he poured water on his hands, he noticed the ring with the words "Jezir Bohtan and Zine" engraved on it. He fell down in a faint, able only to say that he was very sick. He was put to bed.

Al-Pasha understood Mame's situation, so he sent an order throughout the country that whoever had a daughter should dress her up and bring her on the appointed day to his garden for a dance. [203] Perhaps his Mame would find his Zine. When the news got around, whoever had a cow sold it, and bought fine clothes and adornments for his daughter, then waited for the day to arrive, so that they could gather at the garden.

⁶Armenian villagers also believe that there is such a bead which, when dropped in the ear, will put one to sleep [Nzhdehian's note]

⁷Miss Avakian translates this literally, as "the light of his eyes"

At Al-Pasha's command, all the beautiful girls of the country came and danced. Each one hoped to be chosen as Mame's bride, later to be queen.

Mame came into the garden, but not one girl was like Zine. He turned back dejected and hopeless.

Mame told his father that Zine was the sister of Mir-Zeydin, and that if he didn't find her, he would die. His father questioned whether the place and people really exist. Mame requested four *kods*¹⁰ of gold. He took the gold, and gave one *kod* to the tailor for a [204] golden threaded suit, one *kod* to the saddler to make an elaborate saddle, and one *kod* to the swordsmith to make a fine sword. He asked to see 80 of his father's horses to find out if any were capable of making the journey. Not one was suitable. Just as he was leaving, he saw a scrawny horse and gave one *kod* to the horse's groom to put the horse in shape. The name of this horse was Por.

When 39 days had passed, Mame got ready to go; his new suit of clothes, saddle, and sword surpassed his expectations. Al-Pasha knew that Mame wanted to leave the next day, so he ordered the horse's groom to chain Por's feet so that he would not be able to move: perhaps that would put an end to the dangerous journey. By Al-Pasha's orders the doorkeepers locked the gates, but Mame did not know about it. He put on his new suit of clothes, tied the sword on his left side, and stood in the courtyard and sang [205] to his workers to get Por ready, and he called on God to make his wish come true. The mullah was reciting the morning *azan*¹¹ when Mame was setting his foot in the stirrup. Suddenly Al-Pasha came out of the house and Mame asked his father to wish him well. Al-Pasha was amazed at his son's appearance, wondering what the evil eye had in store for Mame and Zine. Once more Mame asked God for help, moved the stirrup, and Por jumped over the high ramparts, chained feet and all.

Mame bade his father farewell, and disappeared in a cloud of dust. His father fainted. When they revived him, he ordered forty youths to pursue Mame and bring him back, if that failed, they were to accompany him and protect him. Mame's

¹⁰Originally a wooden measuring container, also a unit of measurement, equal to 2 kilograms according to Izell's dictionary, and ranging between 8 and 12 pounds in different regions according to Bakaev's and Kurciov's dictionaries.

¹¹Islamic call to prayer, recited from the minaret of the mosque five times a day.

mother¹² and servants went after him also, and they [206] finally caught up with him and tried to dissuade him, but to no avail. His mother begged him not to sadden them in their old age, saying, "Don't knead our bread with tears! Why are you leaving your father's throne vacant?" Mame stopped his mother and told her that God was taking him, that it was his fate¹³, whatever the outcome. The horsemen followed him, but Mame ordered them to turn back.

Mame went three or four days without resting. Por's feet hurt, but Mame paid no attention. Finally Por asked God to give him the faculty of speech, to help free his feet. God granted his wish.

[207] Por complained to Mame, and finally Mame heeded Por, drew his sword, and with one blow freed Por from the chains. Por had been injured, so they had to stop for awhile to rest.

[208] Mame regretted being thoughtless, but the horse consoled him and told him that doves would come and leave three feathers which, when dipped in water and brushed over Por's wounds, would heal them. And so it happened.

[209] The newly healed Por could not be surpassed by a speeding bullet. At a wooded place, Mame noticed three horsemen who were after a deer. Mame sped and killed the deer so that they could not claim it. They were also taken aback by Mame's suit of clothing, appearance, horsemanship, and cleverness. Mame handed the deer over to them. The horsemen praised Mame's nobility and kissed his forehead.

[210] They said that they must become brothers, so they mixed their blood together, then drank, and became blood brothers. They bade each other farewell. The three horsemen were Ghara-Tazhdin and his brothers. Mame regretted that he had not asked them directions to Zine's country.

[211] Bor consoled Mame, and Mame felt relieved. He encountered a farmer, who told him how to get to Jezir. Mame gave him some gold, but the man was fearful of Mame because of his clothing and speedy horse. He thought Mame was a soul-taking angel. Mame tried to reassure him, but the man still seemed fearful. So Mame

¹²: was previously stated that Mame's mother was dead, but the storyteller inadvertently resurrects her from the dead for this occasion. Cf. note 7 above

¹³-lit: "it was written on his forehead." This is one way to say 'fate' or 'destiny' in the languages of the Middle East. Compare Kurdish *entivîs* and Turkish *alın yazısı*, lit. "that which is written on the forehead," with Persian *sarravash*: *سرنوشت*, lit. "that which is written on the head"

started off, then changed his mind; he started on the road that the farmer had pointed out to him, then turned around, thinking that perhaps he had been misled, but the man reassured him, and this time Mame believed him.

[212] Mame continued on his way, and soon saw the minarets of Jezir. South of the town was an old willow tree beside a spring so very cold that its water would snap a cucumber in two. A prince had built a marble arch and basins in which water collected. The spring was called Kaniyê Zampliyê, which means *marble fountain*. Beautiful girls and young brides came to fetch water there. Without this fountain, Jezir would be of no significance, just lifeless and sad. The day Mame came, a girl was standing by the fountain spinning wool with a spindle. This was one of Zine's servants, the daughter of Bakir, the ugly Zine mentioned earlier. Nobody like her, and she had never married. She knew the art of sorcery from a book she kept. She knew about Zine turning into a dove and going to Mkhur-Zaman, about her meeting Mame and their pledge, and about his coming in forty days. [213] For this reason she had collected the wool of forty sheep to wash and spin while she waited for Mame. Mame talked to her for a while. She said she had come to the fountain to wait for him, and had waited so long without eating that she claimed she had forgotten his ring at home¹⁴. Mame asked the girl for a cup of water, which she gave to him. Mame's horse cautioned him that this Zine was in the habit of misleading young men. She pretended that she was the sister of Mir-Zeydin¹⁵. Mame is suspicious, because the Zine he had met was beautiful. He asked to see the ring, and she said that she had forgotten it at home. But how did this Zine know all about him?

[214] Por wanted to leave, but she barred the horse's way, which angered Mame. He knocked her over, got on his horse, and rode off. Zine swore revenge.

[215] Mame wondered about the local customs; his horse reassured him that there would be no problem, and Mame let the horse direct him. Por brought him directly to the residence of Ghara-Tazhdin. Ghara-Tazhdin sent his wife, Khatun-Peri, to see if the visitor was friend or foe. Khatun-Peri was amazed to find such a

¹⁴There is disagreement among the storytellers about the ring that Mame had traded with Zine. Some tell this point with a tale, some with a song. The former say that Zine said, "I was keeping your ring in my mouth while washing at the fountain it fell in, and now I am looking for it, but have been unable to find it." [Nzhdehian's note]

¹⁵Once again, Lady Zine is referred to as Mir-Zeydin's sister, as at the beginning of the story. See note 7 above.

fine youth. She invited him in, and when Tazhdin and his brothers saw him, they recognized him as their new blood brother. They talked much, and waited on Mame. The many administrative duties of the three brothers are mentioned.

[216] Tazhdin was usually so busy that he had no time to wipe his nose. Sometimes he had to stay close to Mir-Zeydin. However, for three days he and his brothers spent all their time with Mame. Mir-Zeydin was enraged that Tazhdin had neglected him, he sent a man to see what was going on, and when the man came, he was so enraptured with gazing at Mame that he just stood there and listened. Then Mir-Zeydin sent another man, who came and told Tazhdin, "My Lord, the prince is calling you." Just then Khatun-Peri was serving food; with the ladle in her hand, she gave the servant a whack on the head, immediately cracking his skull. The blood and oil from the food mixed together and covered his face, and he went out and told the prince everything that had happened.

After the meal, Tazhdin sent word to Mir-Zeydin that he had such a fine guest that he could not leave his side. Then Mir-Zeydin ordered that the guest be brought before him, but Tazhdin demanded that the streets be decorated, carpets be spread out, that he be escorted by seven sets of fife and drum if he was going to invite him. Mir-Zeydin met the demand and so Mame went with honor to Mir-Zeydin's house. He entered the door boldly, and Mir-Zeydin stood up at once.

[217] Before Mame went in, Ghara-Tazhdin had told Mir-Zeydin about Mame. He (=Tazhdin) was waiting to see how Mame would be received. When Mir-Zeydin saw Mame come in, he was unable to keep his princely demeanor, and he stood up, like a lower official. That is what Tazhdin wanted: he immediately dropped his handkerchief on Mir-Zeydin's cushion. Mir-Zeydin did not notice, and sat on the handkerchief. Mir-Zeydin talked with Mame for a long while, treating him with respect.

Three days passed, yet Mir-Zeydin felt as though only an hour had passed. Tazhdin reminded Mir-Zeydin that he had not yet made arrangements for food to be served, also pointing out how in his excitement the Mir had stood up before Mame. The Mir denied this, but Tazhdin showed him the handkerchief on which Mir-Zeydin was sitting. Mir-Zeydin was convinced. Food was served, then coffee was brought in by Lady Zine.

To this dinner were invited, among others, Bakir-Avan, father of Zine the sorceress. She had told her father to look carefully at Lady Zine when she served

coffee, to see if Mame and Zine showed rings, and whether they smiled at each other or not. If they did, then he would know that the young man was Al-Pasha's son. Bakir observed them, and when he noticed, he went and told his daughter.

When Tazhdin and Mame returned home, they spread a carpet on the roof and sat on it for pleasure, to watch the town. [218] Soon they saw Lady Zine and her forty attendants with forty camels carrying utensils to be washed. Mame sang that he would capture the caravan.

The three brothers did not like this, for Lady Zine had been pledged to Kakan. Kakan got angry, but was restrained by Tazhdin's silence. Impatiently, Jakan said, "It is not a caravan, but rather a group of lovely girls going to wash pots and pans at the spring." Kakan pulled out his dagger to strike Mame, but Tazhdin held him back, saying that one does not kill one's blood brother. After all, they did not yet know the purpose of Mame's visit.

[219] Mame did not know about Kakan's engagement to Zine. He told all about meeting Zine and what happened. Tazhdin was unable to decide what he should do about Lady Zine, his uncle's daughter, who was engaged to his brother Kakan. To work against God and fate would be unfortunate for Lady Zine.

Tazhdin finally said that he would approve giving Lady Zine to Mame on condition that Mame go to the town of Sakhlan and bring back the grain stored there; he would settle for nothing else.

The road to Sakhlan was very dangerous, and there were many brigands there; many people had been killed on that road in the past. Tazhdin wanted to test Mame's courage. If he succeeded, it would be worth giving Lady Zine to Mame. Meanwhile, he gathered 200 mounted youths, and set up an ambush to attack Mame.

[220] Mame was naive; he did not suspect that Tazhdin would expose him to any danger. He had heard about the difficulty of the journey, but he went ahead on his horse. He looked around cautiously and went on to the next perilous part of the journey, a deep ravine with steep cliffs and an impenetrable forest. Only a thin line of sky could be seen overhead. This was where caravans would be robbed, so he watched closely. Suddenly 200 horsemen sprang out of the woods. But Mame did not lose his composure.

[221] Mame did not let their swords or pikes touch him. He slaughtered them as though he were harvesting grapes. Only three men were left, the rest had either been killed or wounded, or had fled. Mame was going to go after the three survivors, when

one of them begged to be spared -- he turned out to be Tazhdin himself, and Mame saved him and his brothers.

They reached home and recounted Mame's bravery with pride, having decided that he should have Lady Zine. There was one more test to put Mame through, however, but they did not want to mention it until Zine was informed about Mame. Zine was told that she should go to the fountain with her forty attendants; Mame had to go there and get a gift from her. Lady Zine was adorned with many gold coins on her breast and forehead; the central gold piece was worth the taxes of Jezira Bohtan for seven years. [222] Zine would give that gold piece to the one she loved. They sent Mame to get the gold as proof of her love.

Mame mounted Por and went. There was Lady Zine with her forty attendants. He asked for the gold piece. She placed it on his knee and told him to show it to Tazhdin. He gave the gold piece to Tazhdin, and he placed it before his brothers. Tazhdin said that all three of them would mount their white horses and tell the world "Congratulations to Mame and Zine." Kakan declared that they would mount their black horses and declare the same, and [223] Jakan said they would mount their red horses and declare the same for Mame and Zine¹⁶.

Then Ghara Tazhdin's eldest son, Ghavaz-Chavush, passed by Mir-Zeydin, who asked him what the boy's father and uncles were doing and why they had not come to his court. Ghavaz-Chavush said that they had promised Lady Zine to Mame. Mir-Zeydin did not believe it, and he wrote a note to Khatun-Peri summoning her. When she came, she verified it. Mir-Zeydin did not want to oppose Tazhdin's actions. Since Mame was a fine boy, he agreed that they should go through the formalities. Bakir had been sitting beside Mir-Zeydin, he went home and told his daughter everything. She went to Lady Zine and spoke to her like a sincere friend, saying, "Your brother does not want Mame to stay in this town; he will call Mame, offer him a horse or a sword, and send him on his way. Mame may have anything he desires -- except you. Go tell Mame not to ask for your hand. Go at once! Send a man to Mame telling him not to ask for your hand, lest he incur the prince's anger. I suggest you instruct Mame to ask for the job of cook, because then you will always be able to see each other."

¹⁶The three brothers had nine horses: three white, three black, and three red, which they rode only for hunting and fighting [Nzhdehian's note]

Lady Zine was innocent and kind hearted, she did not see anything behind the sorceress' words. Mame did not know of Tazhdin's promise, and Khatun-Peri forgot and said nothing.

[224] Later Mame was visiting Mir-Zeydin one day, when the Mir asked Mame why he had come from Mkhur-Zaman, a distance of forty days away; after all, he must have had a reason. The Mir went on to say that he wanted to give Mame a gift, but he could not match Mame's clothes, sword, or horse. What would he like? Mame hesitated, then said that while he was still at home he had had a dream in which an old man had told him to come work as a cook for Mir-Zeydin.

Mir-Zeydin was upset and disappointed, and he looked down on Mame for seeking such a low job. Mame put on the garments of a cook¹⁷. Zine the sorceress had other ideas of getting revenge.

When Mame entered the kitchen, Lady Zine cut off forty of the gold pieces hanging from her head, and paid forty workers to dig a tunnel from the kitchen to her bedroom. [225] In this way, the two of them were in communication for three months.

For the first three days, Mame served fine food, but after that he paid little attention to the food, serving it at irregular hours. This disturbed Mir-Zeydin. Zine the sorceress that Lady Zine and Mame had only spent one night apart since Mame had become cook. She revealed this to Bakir-Avan her father, and he wanted to tell Mir-Zeydin. Bakir-Avan came to the Mir with a worried look on his face. Mir-Zeydin wanted to know why Bakir looked worried, and Bakir replied, "Why shouldn't I worry? People have begun looking down on you, Mir-Zeydin. Every day Mame and Zine have been together -- that Arab [i.e., Mame] has a secret tunnel to Lady Zine's room, which explains the irregularity of the meal service around here."

Mir-Zeydin felt as though a dagger had pierced his heart, and did not know what to do, as he was not sure if Bakir was telling the truth. Finally he suggested that they go and see for themselves. The secret had been discovered. From then on, Mir-Zeydin looked upon Bakir as his faithful [226] servant, and decided to get his advice about everything. Bakir advised him to get rid of Mame in one way or another, to "salt his head" [=to kill him]. But Mir-Zeydin was afraid of Tazhdin and his brothers. Bakir suggested going on a hunt, and arranging for Mame to be shot while out hunting; then how would Tazhdin or anybody else know who did it?

¹⁷This may be a way of saying 'Mame assumed the office of cook' [M. L. Chyet's note]

Mir-Zeydin considered this very sensible advice, and had the hunt arranged. When the time came for the hunt, Mame pretended that he was sick. When Bakir heard this, he cut off the straps of his saddle and said that he had to sew them on. Instead, he hid in the garden and watched Mame and Zine there. The hunt was called off. Tazhdin felt that there was something behind Bakir's behavior. He told his son Ghavaz-Chavush to go to the garden. Ghavaz-Chavush went and found Mame and Zine asleep.

[227] Ghavaz-Chavush decided not to wake them up, but he sang, "O Lord, there is a cloud over us, Mame has his lips between Zine's breasts. The decisions of Mir-Zeydin cannot be revoked." Lady Zine awoke suddenly and urged Chavush to keep their secret; he said that even if he were threatened with 360 daggers he would not tell the secret. While Chavush was saying this, some men came into the garden. Zine recognized Kakan, Jakan, Bakir, and Mir-Zeydin surrounded by the garden hedge, and Lady Zine saw no way out. But Mame told her not to worry, but to get under his mantle and hide. When Mir-Zeydin came in, he gave a sweet greeting to Mame, who replied in the language of the Persians and Arabs. But Bakir said that when a prince enters, it is surprising that a servant should not rise to his feet. Mame said that he could not even move his hands and feet to pray, he was so sick.

[228] Bakir told Mir-Zeydin that Mame's pain was under the fur mantle, and Mir-Zeydin asked Mame why he had come to the garden. Mame said that he thought he had seen a deer, but it turned out to be another creature, and he described the unusually beautiful creature. Bakir said that he was ashamed to name what the Arab had in mind. Mame interrupted him to say that the person he had in mind was not there -- Zine was engaged to Kakan. Mir-Zeydin ordered the servants to stir up Lady Zine, and to make Mame stand up.

[229] Tazhdin tried to pacify Mir-Zeydin. His brothers said that they would fight to help Mame. Tazhdin sent his son home, with directions to tell his mother to take out six horses and the baby's cradle, and to set the house on fire. Perhaps in this way he might save Mame.

Tazhdin then turned to his brothers and scolded them for just standing there doing nothing. When Mame prepared coffee and put it on Tazhdin's knee, when Mame lifted his hand, Tazhdin noticed Lady Zine's braid of hair sticking out from behind the mantle. He recognized that a major disaster was upon them. Chavush ran to Khatun-Peri [230] and told her to free the child quickly and get the horses out, and to

set fire to all the buildings, for Mame was in great danger. Khatun-Pari said that she had vowed to set fire without taking the child and horses out: let them be sacrificed for Mame. Perhaps salvation would be found for their souls. So Chavush rushed back to the garden and carried this sad news, saying, "Father, why are you standing there? Our paiaçe is on fire, as are the horses and child." When he said this, a bitter pain went through Tazhdin and his brothers. The brave youths of Jezir hurried out. Mame held Lady Zine by the arm and said, "Get up, get ready to get out of this place, let God take revenge on the person responsible for this event."

When Mir-Zeydin, Tazhdin and his brothers, and the other men of Jezir who were present heard this news, they quickly ran out to extinguish the fires. No matter how hard they tried, they could not diminish the fire, nor could they save the child or the horses. Lady Zine told Mame that the fire had been set because of them, and that only Mame could put it out. That just by shaking the hem of his garment, the flames would immediately go out. Mame did so and said to the fire, "Blessed one, in me and you is God's judgement, however more you burn, you will not burn as much as the fire that is within my heart." The fire slackened, the horses were saved, and a piece of cloth left on the child's neck which was scorched and in flames turned into a golden ring and remained on the back of his neck. The child was still alive. Aside from those [231] nothing else was left from the fire: everything else had turned to ashes.

Bakir was not idle. When the horsemen left the garden, he hid under a tree to see why Mame would not stand up. Was Zine really under the fur mantle? When they got up, Bakir went and told Mir-Zeydin. The Mir asked Bakir's advice, and Bakir asked his daughter, and according to her advice Bakir told Mir-Zeydin to give the taxes of one year to Tazhdin to rebuild his house, and to send the three brothers together with Mame to collect the taxes. It would take them at least six months. Two things would be accomplished: firstly, the taxes would be collected and Tazhdin's house would be built, and secondly, Mame would miss Zine and would not be used to the weather, and consequently would die. Mir-Zeydin followed Bakir's suggestion, but again Mame feigned sickness and stayed home. Tazhdin had written a contract, with Mir Zeydin's seal on it, that if in his absence of seven months any harm came to Mame, then Tazhdin would destroy Mir-Zeydin's palace and his children. Thus Mir-Zeydin was restrained from harming Mame. Bakir, aware of this, did not want to give away the idea of killing Mame, but in some way he wanted to "salt his head". He was worried about the destruction of the house and the children. His daughter helped

him with a new idea: "A day after Tazhdin's departure, there was a great outcry about Mame's engagement to Lady Zin. The commotion would be lessened if Mame were given a slight punishment without harming him, before giving Lady Zine to him. Let the Mir and Mame play a game of chess: if Mame wins, give Zine to him; if the Mir wins, let him put Mame in a dungeon for six months. After repenting there for six months, he will come out; [232] in two weeks he will get cleaned up, eat, drink, gain weight, and two weeks later he will appear before Tazhdin and his brothers. Mame is noble, he will not tell the brothers. If he wins the game, you will marry Lady Zine to him, and when Tazhdin and his brothers return, they will be happy." Like a child, Mir-Zeydin was deceived by this advice. He called Mame and they played chess. This became the last blow in crushing Mame.

The game was set for seven rounds: whoever won the seventh round first would be the winner. Mame won the first three. Bakir looked on, a little worried. He went to Lady Zine and told her about the game, but turned the story around so that Mir-Zeydin was winning. He suggested she come and sit at the window, and Mame, upon seeing her there, would probably take heart and be more likely to win. Bakir had the players change sides. When Mame saw Zine at the window, he forgot how to play and got all confused.

[233] The game proceeded, and Mir-Zeydin won. Bakir took Mame and dropped him into a dungeon. That night Lady Zine cut off forty more of her gold pieces and hired forty workers, and overnight they made a tunnel from Zine's bedroom to the dungeon. Then for three months Zine and Mame were together; Mame consoled Zine. After three months had passed, Bakir asked his daughter about Mame's condition. From her book of sorcery she learned that the couple had been together every night. Bakir told Mir-Zeydin about that. Mame was transferred to a stone dungeon so that Zine could not find a way in. That new dungeon was a pit that was forty ropes¹⁸ deep, and hardly wide enough for one or two people; it was damp and cold, a well in which Mame had to spend the next three months. From the roof of the dungeon he received dry bread once or twice a day. The roof was both a skylight and a door. In those three months Mame lost his health. His skin turned yellow, he went

¹⁸A rope is 4-5 arshins long; although in the song below, the wording "come down a staircase of 40 steps" indicates that it was 40 kangur deep [Nzhdehian's note] Kangur. [կանգուրն] is an ell. but dls vary in length in different countries [A. Avakian's note]

blind. His body shriveled up; he was unable to move. Dirt, lice, and worms covered him. Mame was in this condition when the time came for his release. But he did not even think of getting out.

[234] He was dejected and disgusted with life, because of the destruction of his health and the depravity of men. He only thought of his death.

For the last time Bakir asked his daughter about getting Mame out. She said that he would live if another person came to take him out, but if Lady Zine took him out, he would surely die.

Bakir went to Mir-Zeydin, who was asking who should take Mame out. Bakir was silent, so the prince assumed that he wanted to do it. Bakir said that Mame would assume that he would be taken to a worse place, but if Lady Zine were to go, Mame would be happy and would come out unharmed. So Mir-Zeydin directed Zine and her forty attendants to go. Each one said, "I am Zine, I have come to take you out." But Mame said, "You are not my Zine, I will not come out." Then his Zine came and said she had come to free him.

Mame said that she had not come to save him, but rather to be the cause of the death of a homeless, miserable refugee. He told her to lower the staircase of forty steps and come to him to see his condition. She went down into the damp dungeon in a hurry and embrace Mame, at which point Mame died. She said, "May God ruin my father's house."

[235] The grieving Zine wept and told her attendants to tie their hair to the dungeon rope and bring Mame up.

When Mame had heard Zine's voice, he wanted to straighten up, but his spine broke, and from joy his heart had burst, and he died. Zine put his head on her knee and wept. News was sent to Mir-Zeydin, and he hurried to the place, had the body removed and buried according to custom. Then he consoled Lady Zine and told her not to worry, if not Mame, another would be found; if she did not like Kakan, another would be found. She made no reply, only covered her eyes and wept. At night, when all were asleep, Lady Zine sewed a garment out of black cloth, and covered her head with a black cloth in place of a wedding veil. She went out of the house, and sat on Mame's grave weeping until morning.

There were two stones on Mame's grave, and the tombstone was in between them. Lady Zine's braids, which were in 60 parts, 40 on either side, were cut and tied to the stones on either side. She had wept so much that the ground had turned to

mud. The next morning Mir-Zeydin had noticed something dark; he thought a wild animal had taken Mame's body out and eaten it.

[236] He went out to see what it was, and found Lady Zine weeping. He pleaded with her to go home and change her clothes, but she refused.

The Mir told her that he would find another man for her. Zine replied, "May my father's house be torn from its foundations. Who ever saw an imprisoned man being taking out by a woman instead of by men?" Zine continued to lament, declaring her father¹⁹ an enemy. She wanted to die and hoped that by evening she would be gone.

[237] She wanted her water heated in the same container as Mame's, and the fire burned in the same *ojakh* [=fireplace]. Then she wanted to be placed in the same grave as Mame, their bodies back to back. Let Tazhdin and his brothers, the mullahs and elders of Jezir be told the story; then let the grave be opened. If they find that the bodies are face to face, their love was from God. She blamed her father (!), saying that he would burn for his sins. She hoped he would never see a happy day, and so on. If they find the bodies are back to back, then their love was from hell. Tazhdin and his brothers should not kill anyone on their account.

At noon Lady Zine died. Her instructions were followed, and the grave was sealed. A few days later Tazhdin and his brothers returned with their soldiers.

[238] When Tazhdin's brothers approached the garden, Jakan said that if Mame were alive, he would not have waited a month; he would have set out to meet them on the way.

Quickly they came to Khatun-Peri's door and asked about Mame, and she said that Mame was sick in bed. But the wind blew her veil and all three saw the signs of mourning for Mame and Zine on her. "Are you dead, each of you leaning on your *lakhd*²⁰" roared Tazhdin, and ran to wildly attack Jezira Bohtan. "Brothers," said huge Kakan, "my anger is enflamed", and he raised his *lakhd* to wreak terrible slaughter in the town. But Jakan cried out with a terrible voice, "First find Bakir and

¹⁹See note 7 above

²⁰According to Miss Avakian, *lakhd* is a 'mace' or a 'dub'

give me that liar; I will not leave a building standing in Baghnis²¹." He went on to say that he dropped his *lakhd* at the corner of the fortress. After doing this he proposed that they move to Sham [=Damascus]. But a young child, an old man, a woman, a mullah, and a sheikh came weeping [239] and fell at the brothers' feet, and dropped a wrapped up Koran. The sheikh and mullah told Tazhdin to go and open the grave of Mame and Zine and to ask Mir-Zeydin about their will. "Don't shed the blood of innocent people." They should find out the cause of the mischief done and punish only that one. Mir-Zeydin and Bakir were brought and questioned. All the blame fell upon Bakir. Tazhdin asked Bakir whether the love of Mame and Zine was from heaven or hell. "Bakir, you sly, fraudulent schemer with the appearance of a pig, may God kill your child, just as you brought an end to their lives." He told Bakir to look closely at the grave, "Have they really turned face to face?" When Bakir looked down closely, a sword came down on his head, ending his life. His head rolled onto the other side of the grave. A drop of blood fell between Mame and Zine.

[240] A thorny *kmi*²² grew as a permanent testimony to the betrayal of two victims who in their lifetime were persecuted, tormented, tortured, and crushed. Although together, they lived apart; they could not enjoy each other's love and entered the earth *bémuraz*²³. But even there they did not remain free of terrible ghosts. The embodiment of Bakir in the form of a thorny shrub still separated them in their black grave.

And men, still holding him in contempt and always remaining vengeful for what he did, hung up a branch of Bakir's treacherous shrub so that every day whoever walked by, would cut it down, but the next day they found that it had sprouted again.

²¹Baghnis (Բաղ Նիս) is equivalent to the Kurdish word *hemam*, meaning 'bathhouse'. Here it is probably the name of a neighborhood in the city of Jezira Bohtar. [Nzhdehian's note]

²²Kmi (կմի), botanical name *Astragalus*, is a thorny plant like a wild pear, but fruitless, on which the villagers look with contempt. [Nzhdehian's note] One kind of *Astragalus* is known in the United States as *Locoweed* because when cattle eat it, they go crazy. [A. Avakian's note]

²³*Bémuraz* or *Bémiraz* is Kurdish for "without having attained their desire". In Nzhdehian's text, the Kurdish word appears in Armenian letters. [M.L. Chyet's note]

E'vdal, E. "Mem û Zîne = Mem û Zînê," in *Folkloro Kyrmança* (Erevan, 1936), pp. 293-301. [Kurmanji in outdated Latin script] {FK-2}

FK-2. Collected in 1926 by E. E'vdal from Fekoê Mraz, in the village of Gozelderê, neñiya (=county of) Axbaranê, Soviet Armenia. The text was published in 1936. Unfortunately, no other information is available about the informant or the conditions under which the text was collected.

Mem û Zîne = Mem û Zînê (FK-2)

[293] Mem was the son of Al pasha, from the city of Mughur-Zemîn, and Zîn was the daughter of mir Sêvdîn, from Jizîra Bota. She was the sister-in-law¹ of Qeretajdîn.

One day Zîn has a headache and she instructs her maidservants to spread out her bed in the garden, so that she can go sit there for a while and relax, and unburden her heart² among the roses and lilies.

The maidservants lay out Zîn's bed in the private garden. Zîn lay down in the garden. In the garden there was a marble pool.

Zîn was very beautiful, she shone like a candlestick, giving her light across the water of the marble pool.

All of a sudden there came the fluttering of three doves, setting down at the enclosed garden³ on Friday, [where] they undress in order to bathe in the marble pool. One said to the other, "This place smells of (black-haired) girls⁴ -- look! A girl is sleeping in the garden!" One tells the other that it is Lady Zîn, who is so beautiful that she wonders if there is anyone⁵ in the world more beautiful than Zîn. Another one of them says, "Yes. Memê Aia is more beautiful than Zîn."

One dove says, "Let us cast a divine spell, we are three, let lovely Lady Zîn be the fourth."

They sing:

¹baltiz = wife's sister. In other words, Qeretajdîn's wife was Zîn's sister in this -- and many other -- versions.

²bîna wê derê = lit. "let her breath come out"

³two names are used to refer to the garden in both Mem's and in Zîn's territory: Xasbağçe = 'private garden,' and To'kirî = 'enclosed garden.' See also FK-1 note # [115]

⁴serçe, lit. 'black of head,' means 'young girl,' according to Jaba and Jusî.

⁵lit. 'if there are people [or, men]'

"O Lord, you make a command,
 Make mir Sêvdîn's Zin the fourth one of us,"⁶
 A doveskin⁷ came down from above.

The three doves take Zin by the hand and lead her, setting down at Memê Ala's window.

"Mem was sound asleep,⁸
 Suddenly someone shakes him,
 He finds a tender bride at his side⁹.

Mem says, "Fine lass, who dared¹⁰ let you come into my palace, into my bed?"

Zin says, "Fine lad, what is your name?"¹¹

"My name is Mem, my father's name is Al pasha."

"Mem, I don't think I have come to you, for it is men who always covet women"

"Fine lass, tell me¹² how many minarets there are in your father's city."

[294] "In my father's city there are 66 minarets." They made a bet [regarding whose city they were in] and went up to the roof of the palace [and] counted: in the city there were 366 minarets. At that point, Zin admits that Mem was right.¹³ Mem and Zin return to Mem's room¹⁴, sit and very sweetly talk with each other.

⁶This verse has close analogues in ZK-1, EP-1, and FK-1

⁷Pos. = 'animal skin.' Motif: P82116 **Dress of feathers**

⁸-lit: "Mem in sweet slumber had gone to sleep"

⁹-lit: "at his head." Cf. Turkish: yanibaşında

¹⁰-lit: "The mouth of no one fell"

¹¹-lit: "Your name in goodness?" This is a polite way of inquiring.

¹²-lit: "Now you say/tell!"

¹³-lit: "Zin puts down [her] hand to Mem"

¹⁴The word I have translated as **room** is *qesr* in the original, from the Arabic word for castle (*qasr* قصر, whence also the Spanish *alcázar*). The use of the castle for a part of it, i.e. Mem's quarters is

Zin says, "My dear, fine Mem, those who have brought me will take me away. If Chekan, Efan, and Qeretajdin hear [of this], they will leave your ear [as] the biggest piece of you."

Mem said, "Let's exchange rings: no matter how many swords and shields your father has,¹⁵ they won't succeed in removing you from my influence."

Mem and Zin speak a great deal and rejoice in each other, then they lie down and go to sleep.¹⁶

The three doves come down from the tree(top), [and] insert slumber pearls in Mem and Zin's ears.¹⁷

They leave Mem sleeping, and take Zin back home.

[When] Mem awakes and does not see Zin in his bed, he is greatly disappointed¹⁸. He thinks for a moment and says, "My soul¹⁹, it must have been a dream²⁰, [but] no ... after all, she was speaking with me until midnight, and she said, 'You must come after me in another forty days, otherwise I will be lost to you, for they will marry me off.'"

Mem is impatient; he summons his father's servants and says, "O servants, tell me the truth:

Servants, [if] you have the locks on the gates opened,
Zin will be saved for me.

reminiscent of the widespread use of words for *door* or *gate* to refer to a royal court. For a very fine discussion of this phenomenon, see Hans Wehr "Das "Tor des Königs" im Buche Esther und verwandte Ausdrücke", *Gez. Dînan* 39 (1964), pp. 247-260. See also FK-1 note #.78).

¹⁵lit. "even if your father has many swords and shields"

¹⁶lit. "go to sleep, lie down"

¹⁷Moit: D1364 32 **Jewel causes magic sleep** Cf: D1071 **Magic jewel (jewels)**, D1071 1 **Magic beads**, D136: **Object causes magic sleep**

¹⁸lit. "he became very tearful, fell before himself"

¹⁹**Canim** is Turkish (or possibly Sorani Kurdish); the Kurmanji form would be **canê min**

²⁰**Xewa şewa**, which must be a misprint for **xewna şewa**, particularly since the word **xewn**, which means 'dream,' appears elsewhere in the text. **Xew** means 'sleep,' cognate to Persian خواب **خواب**.

One messenger says, "Mem either you have had a dream,²¹ or you have come across a deceitful woman, who has fooled many like you."²²

[Mem replies]

"The one I speak of is no daydream,
The one I speak of is Zîn, the daughter of mîr Sêvdîn,
The sister-in-law of Chekan and Qeretajdîn.

The one I speak of is a bride-like girl,
Her waist is [as thin as] a green leaf,²³
Her fingers are soft and tender,
She lives in Jizîra, she is the daughter of mîr Sêvdîn."

Mem falls onto his bed in a dead faint. The servant boys bring news of this to Al pasha.

[295] Mem's father comes forth and says, "O servant boys, get Mem up on his feet and take him to [my] private garden, let him rest a little, so that later I can learn what his heart desires, what he wants, [whether] love has carried him away, or what²⁴.

They took Mem, [and] Al pasha instructed the inexperienced youths²⁵ to go up to Mem and ask him what his heart desires -- for inexperienced youths get right to the point²⁶ -- then to come tell him²⁷.

²¹-lit: "saw a dream"

²²In this and other versions, Mem's horse Bor is given the gift of speech just long enough to warn Mem about the daughter of the villain Beko she is also called Zîn, and when Mem first arrives at Jizîra Eza, she tries to fool Mem into thinking that she is his beloved Zîn. Bor's warning regarded the evil Zîn is worded very much like this messenger's comment. See also note 78 below

²³*K'axêzekî hêjîne* is similar to an expression found in Khramoian's phraseological dictionary (M. U. Khramoian *Kurdsko-Russkii Frazologicheskii Slovar* (Erevan: Neşireta Akademya RESS Ulma 1979), 273 p.) *Belgê k'axêz*, lit: "a sheer [leaf] of paper," is used to mean "very thin." Thin waisted girls are also spoken of as ideal in Balkan folksongs (e.g. Bulgarian *tânko snozko* *тънка снажка*)

²⁴-lit: "how it was"

²⁵*Cahil*, from Arabic *âhil* جاهل = 'ignorant,' has the following meanings in Kurdish: "young"; "inexperienced," "naive"; "stupid"

²⁶-lit: "say things early/soon to each other"

Mem chatted with his friends, [and] told them that what had happened to him should not happen to anyone²⁵, he says, "The one I speak of is Lady Zîn, if you ask where she lives, [it is] Jizira Bota, she is the daughter of mir Sêvdîn [and] the sister-in-law of Qeretajdîn."

When Mem washes his face, he notices Zîn's ring with her face [engraved] on its stone. His sense of reason goes flying out of his head, and he falls [and almost] breaks his head.

The servant boys tie up his head, [and] he faints.

Later he comes to. [When] he goes to the diwan of the khans²⁹, they tell Al pasha, [who] listens to what Mem has to say³⁰, and has it announced in his city³¹ that whoever has a daughter should dress her up and send her to the enclosed garden; if someone's daughter has no clothes, [that person] should sell his sheep and cattle and buy clothes for his daughter; "whichever girl my Mem desires,³² I will betroth her to my Mem."

The girls come and stroll about the enclosed garden.

They also bring Mem in among the girls, but he doesn't show interest in³³ anyone [of them]

One girl says, "Mem, among birds you are a falcon,
Why have you been haughty to your mother and father?
Why don't you want a girl from your father's city?"³⁴

"The one I speak of is a tender bride,

27-li: "come tell me"

28-li: "to any slave or bondsman"

29-e princes

30-li: "senses Mem's words"

31-li: "gives news to his city"

32-li: "My Mem's heart falls to which girl"

33-li: "listen to"

34 There is a comparable passage in EP-1, in which the falcon (baz/be'z) and the rhyme scheme are the same as here. See EP-1, section .14j

Her waist [is as thin as] a green leaf,
Her name is lovely Lady Zîn.

She's the daughter of mir Sêvdîn,
The [future] sister-in-law³⁵ of Qeretajdîn,
She lives in Jizîra Botan.

If you don't believe me,
Look at the stone of her ring."

One girl throws an apple at Mem, and out of anger he throws it [with such force] against the wall of the enclosed garden that the apple bursts into a million pieces.³⁶

When the girls see Mem do this, they run out and go about their business, having lost hope.

[296] Mem goes³⁷ to a tailor in his father's city and says to him, "Tailor, you must make me a suit of clothes that people will marvel at.³⁵ Next, Mem goes to the stable. Twenty horses were lined up in the stable; Mem puts his hand on the back of each one, [and] their backs [a!] fall four fingers' breadth] under his hand.

But finally Mem puts his hand on the back of a thin horse [that is] different: it does not bother him.³⁹

Mem says, "I swear to God, if anything will bring me to my goal, it is this [horse]. I must have him well cared for so that he can do what my heart [dictates]."⁴⁰

Mem leaves the stable and says to two boys [who are] his servants, "You take such good care of this horse [that] people will marvel: when you water his rump, it

³⁵ *Bûk* = 'bride'; 'wife of one's brother'. Earlier she was referred to as *baltûz*, 'sister of one's wife'. See EP-1 note #.16).

³⁶-lit: 'the apple becomes scattered'

³⁷-lit: 'gets up, goes'

³⁸-lit: "You must sew for me a suit of clothes in such a way that people's *k'êf* will come with it." *K'êf* means approximately 'pleasure,' 'joyous feeling,' 'desire'; it occurs in many idioms.

³⁹ i.e. Mem's hand on his back does not bother him.

⁴⁰-lit: 'that of my heart'

should come out his mane; when you water his mane, it should come out his rump.⁴¹

Next, Mem goes to the silversmiths. He gives them a lot of money and tells them to make a very fine bejewelled saddle. One silversmith agrees [to do it].

When Mem's father finds out that Mem is making preparations to leave the city, he has the city well surrounded with walls, [and] posts a notice at the western gate and another at the eastern gate, announcing that no one has permission to leave the city until the end of the month.⁴²

One day, Mem calls his servant boys and tells them to bring out the horse [to see] how it has been cared for. Mem looks at the horse, and admires his agreeable appearance⁴³. At that point he names the horse Bor⁴⁴. Mem gives his servant boys a few gold coins and goes to the goldsmith⁴⁵ [and says]:

"Goldsmith, are my clothes ready?⁴⁶"

⁴¹Avê saxriya kin. bijiyara bavêje. avê bijirîya kin saxriyara bavêje. In this case we have the same word twice in the same sentence: different: where it should be identical. The form *bijirîya* rather than *bijiyara* (*biji* = 'horse's mane' + *-ya* = plural oblique case ending + *-ra* = suffix particle indicating motion to which) may simply be an error, either a typo or a slip of the tongue. In addition, another explanation is possible: we know that this verse is formulaic, as other versions of it exist (ZK-1, EP-1). Perhaps it was learned as a unit: the meaning of the individual words already of secondary importance. In such a case if a word were garbled by one transmitter in the chain of transmission, the garbled form could become frozen, becoming part of the tradition. In *Die Mundart der Mukri-Kurden*, Oskar Mann has an excursus on the content and form of Eastern Kurdish folk epic in which he states that: "ja sehr häufig die alte Textform mechanisch überliefert worden ist, die nur der Barde selber nicht mehr versteht und bisweilen nach seinem Verständnis umformt" = "very often the old form of the text is mechanically passed on, and the bard himself no longer understands it and sometimes reshapes it according to his understanding." The sentence in question may be an example of what Mann had in mind.

⁴²-lit: "At one time, Mem's father finds out that Mem is seeing [to] his preparations, he will go from the city outside; therefore he gives walls to be made around the city, he puts a paper [at] the gate of the west; another also [at] the gate of the east; information is given, that no one has the order to go out from the city, until the head of the month that comes." For 'the end of the month,' cf. Turkish *aybaşı*. lit: month head.

⁴³Fewasa merfa pêta tê =lit: "the interest of people comes to him."

⁴⁴Bor means 'horse'. In some versions Bor is known as Bozê rewal.

⁴⁵The story-teller switches from tailor [‘erzil] to goldsmith [zêkir] in midstream.

⁴⁶=lit: "Have you made my clothes ready?"

"Yes, my lord"⁴⁷."

Once again Mem puts his hand in his pocket, takes some gold out and gives it to the goldsmith. The goldsmith is delighted with the gold.

Then Mem sings a song:

"Ay! My hard working boys,
May your bread and salt be blessed,⁴⁸
Bring my Bor out of the stable."

Mem is all prepared, he mounts Bor and is about to leave the city, but when he sees that the city has been surrounded with [297] a wall, he is surprised, [wondering] how he will be able to leave his father's city.⁴⁹

Ay! when Mem spurs Bor on,
Bor pricks up his ears,⁵⁰
[And] flies Mem over the wall like a bird.

They give news to Al pasha that Bor has carried Mem away.

Al pasha doesn't believe it [and] says, "But I put my Mem's horse in shackles and chains, how could he go [anywhere]?"

Al pasha sounds the alarm,
[And] sends out his ministers and councillors after Mem.

Al pasha says, "Tell Mem that I cannot leave my throne and crown to the hopes of the people. He should return; he should not go, it is very bad for us."

At that point⁵¹ Mem takes his leave of everyone and heads for Jizira Bota. He travels for forty whole days

⁴⁷-li: "Yes, I [am your] servant" **liz xulam** or **liz beni** is a polite expression.

⁴⁸ Expressions about "bread and salt" are very common in the languages of the Middle East. To say that "we have eaten bread and salt together" is rather like saying "we have grown up together", or "we have sat on the pot together."

⁴⁹-li: "Mem sees [to] his preparation completely, mounts Bor and does to leave the city, but when he looks around the city entirely walled in, Mem remains astounded, how should he do"

⁵⁰Bor guhé xwe dicirpine =li: "Bor blinks his ears."

⁵¹-li: "there [at] that place"

Bor speaks to Mem, he says, "My dandy Mem, you keep lashing me with your whip, you never think how your Bor is doing.⁵²"

Bor says moreover, "Mem, get a hold of yourself.⁵³"

Mem dismounts and sees [that] Bor's right leg is still in shackles and chains. He says:

"Woe is me, my wretched, humiliated one,
The chains and shackles have cut my Bor's legs to the bone,"
Mem takes out his trusty sword⁵⁴,
Throwing it at Bor's legs, cutting the chains and shackles,
Getting rid of them once and for all.⁵⁵

Mem takes out a handkerchief: his heart is low and he cries. His Bor speaks to him, saying, "Wretched one, do not cry, take heart, [when] a lion dies, the hide remains, [when] a man dies, his name remains; perhaps you are afraid of the road, [or] that someone will strike you, [or] take me from you. What is wrong?"

Treat me gently with your handkerchief." Mem doesn't question what Bor says⁵⁶, with his handkerchief he wipes Bor's wounds] clean, then kisses Bor's eyes. Beside a well near a meadow, Mem throws his cloak over himself and goes to sleep. Later he gets up and goes to Bor, fondles him again, putting his saddle and gear on him again. [then] says, "Allahu akbar⁵⁷."

⁵²=li: "You never say what the condition of your Bor is, what it is not."

⁵³=li: "to you there is no awareness of yourself."

⁵⁴=Zilîçar from Arabic Dhū al-faḡār: **ذُو الْفَخَّارِ**, the name of Ali's trusty sword

⁵⁵: these lines have close analogues in ZK-1 and EP-1 #24

⁵⁶=li: "Mem doesn't fall [from] Bor's <xatir>", i.e. Mem doesn't undermine Bor's authority (a translation suggested by the Kurdish-Russian dictionaries), or Mem takes Bor at his word.

⁵⁷Arabic for God is great, an Islamic invocation.

[298] He rides off⁵⁸, passing through a barren plain; he sees a man, who is Qeretajdîn himself. Qeretajdîn is chasing after⁵⁹ a young gazelle⁶⁰ in order to catch it, [but] Mem sees that his⁶¹ horse is tired. Suddenly Mem sets out after the young gazelle, letting go of Bor's reins [so that] in the flash of an eye⁶² Bor is upon the gazelle. Mem catches the gazelle, brings it to Qeretajdîn and gives it to him, saying, "Here is your game, please take it."

Qeretajdîn says, "Cousin, our house is not the house of traitors, why did you take my game out of my hands?" Mem says, "Cousin, the game is for you, now just stay away from me."⁶³

Qeretajdîn picks up a stick to hit Mem over the head with. Mem takes the stick from Qeretajdîn's hand [and] commits an unmanly act, delivering Qeretajdîn a blow⁶⁴ [with it]. Qeretajdîn falls off his horse, breaks his head, his red blood comes spurting out, he is in great distress,⁶⁵ and loses consciousness⁶⁶. Mem puts Qeretajdîn's head in his lap⁶⁷ and weeps over him. Then he puts his belt⁶⁸ over Qeretajdîn's wound and bandages his head well.

Then Mem says to himself, "It's been forty days since I've seen another human being"

⁵⁸-lit: "rides away"

⁵⁹-lit: "gives on"

⁶⁰-lit: "kind of gazelles"

⁶¹i.e. Qeretajdîn's

⁶²concord: -lit: "hand/hand," an expression meaning 'at once,' 'straight away'

⁶³-lit: "go all far from me"

⁶⁴Apparently *comaxek* can mean 'a blow with a stick' as well as simply 'a stick'

⁶⁵-lit: "his heart becomes bad (or spoiled)"

⁶⁶-lit: "sense goes [from] Qeretajdîn's head"

⁶⁷-lit: "gives Qeretajdîn's head on his knee"

⁶⁸-lit: "the edge of his leather strap"

Suddenly Qeretajdîn comes to [and] opens his eyes, to find⁶⁹ Mem standing over him.

Qeretajdîn expresses gratitude that Mem had not ridden off and left him and his horse unattended⁷⁰. Qeretajdîn says, "Cousin, now you are my older brother, and I am your younger brother, May God not shame either of us for this goodness⁷¹." They part company; [and] Mem rides on. He encounters a farmer who shows him the way to jizira, [and] Mem gives the farmer much money.

Bekoê Ewana had a sister who was a fortune-teller; her name was Zin also. She knew that Mem was in love with Zin [and] that he had left his father's city because of her and come to strange lands.

Bekoê Ewana's sister takes wool and washes it at a river. [When] Mem comes passing by her, he heartily greets her, [and she] says, "You are most welcome,⁷² my sweet, fine dandy, son of Al pasha!"

Memê Al pasha was astonished, [and] said, "Fine lass, how⁷³ do you know that I am the son of Al pasha? Do you read fortunes⁷⁴?"

Zin [the fortune-teller] said. "I am your beloved."

[290] Mem said, "If that is so, tell [me], you came to my palace; if [it was] you [who] came, where is my signet ring?"

⁶⁹-li: 'he sees or watches'

⁷⁰-li: 'that Mem did not leave him and his horse without master and did not go'

⁷¹-li: 'May God on the face of goodness not give either of us shame' If there is a special expression here it does not appear in any of the dictionaries

⁷²-li: ser serî herdu çêva =li: 'You [have come] on [my] head, both eyes' typical Kurdish expression of welcome

⁷³-li: 'from where'

⁷⁴-li: 'could it be that you have *remil*?' Remil is from the Arabic word for sand. According to EP-1, 'Remil' is a way of telling fortunes that is widespread in the Middle East. It consists of specially marked cubes (or dice) which are thrown onto a board, and by checking in a special fortune-telling book the combination of markings on the cubes and on the board are interpreted to predict the future. See also Ibrahim Muhawi & Shafiq Kanaana *Speak Bird, Speak Again: Palestinian Arab Folktales* (Berkeley et al. University of California Press, 1989), p. 318, note #5

Zin said, "Yes, I went to your palace and came back. Your ring flew off my hand and fell into the river, the waves carried it away, before I knew what was happening⁷⁵."

Mem did not believe [her and] said, "No, that's not so."

Zin said, "Mem, when you came in,

I stood up to greet you,⁷⁶

Your signet ring fell from my back,⁷⁷ [and] fell into the marble pond "

Bor said:

"Mem, take my reins from the hands of this profligate,

She is the sister of Bekoê E'wana,

She has fooled many like you⁷⁸."

[When] Mem is about to ride off, Zin leaps⁷⁹ at Mem's reins [and] tells him the truth [and] that he should make her the maidservant of Sévdin's Zin when he marries her.

Beko's sister says, "If you seek generous hospitality, go to the house of mir Sévdin, if you wish to go to the house of real and brave men, go to the house of Qeretajdin, L'fan and Chekan; but if you want villains, go to the house of Bekoê E'wana who is my brother. Mem takes his leave of Beko's sister Zin and rides on, stopping before the castle of mir Sévdin, [and] dismounts.

Lady Gulperi was mir Sévdin's wife. She leads Mem's Bor to the stable. Mem goes to the [guest] chamber [where] they put down a mattress for him, [and] he sits.

Lady [Gulperi] sends a boy after mir Sévdin [with a message] that he should come straightaway to see his guest⁸⁰

⁷⁵-lit: "I don't know how it was"

⁷⁶-lit: "I stood up toward you"

⁷⁷-lit: "fell before my back or belt"

⁷⁸See note 22 above

⁷⁹-lit: "throws herself"

⁸⁰-lit: "that he not stop, come to his guest"

The boy goes and tells mîr Sêvdîn; Qeretajdîn is sitting [nearby]. He knows that it is [about] Mem, [but] he keeps his mouth shut⁸¹.

Qeretajdîn says to the mîr, "Your guest is such a guest that when he comes in you will stand up before [him]⁸², believe it or not⁸³."

The mîr says, "No," he says, "Yes." They bet on it [then and] there.

The mîr sends for his guest. When Lady Gulperî hears this from the boy⁸⁴, she hits him on the head with a cooking ladle⁸⁵, breaking his head. She says, "Go tell [him] that Gulperî's guest is not so frivolous as to fall behind a servant boy and go to their house. From my house [300] to their house let them spread out carpets [and] bring drums and reed flutes, and play them for me and my guest on the way, if they really want us to come to them⁸⁶."

The servant boy conveys⁸⁷ Lady Gulperî's words to the mîr, and the mîr arranges it⁸⁸ so that Mem may go to the mîr's diwan.

Mem has his Bor brought out. He mounts him [and] Bor dances on the carpets. Mem sticks his hand in his pocket and scatters gold coins [about], dismounting before the mîr's diwan, entering into the diwankhaneh. The mîr stands up, [and] Qeretajdîn throws a handkerchief under the mîr⁸⁹; everyone is seated, including the mîr.

A minute later they have a meal⁹⁰.

81-ii: "he bites his lips"

82: it is customary for everyone to stand up when a mîr or other ruler enters the room, as a sign of respect for him. Mem is apparently regarded so highly, that with regard to the mîr, the usual practice would be reversed, so that even the mîr would stand up out of respect for Mem when the latter entered the room.

83-i: "let there be your belief," i.e. "may you have belief"

84-i: "hears the boy's words"

85-ii: "rice ladle"

86-ii: "so that we may go to them"

87-ii: "does"

88-ii: "does thus"

89: i.e. under where the mîr was sitting

90-ii: "eat: bread-food"

After the meal⁹¹ Qeretajdin says, "Mir, I have won the bet." The mîr does not believe [him]:

Qeretajdin lifts up the mîr's knee,
Laughingly picks up the handkerchief,
The mîr is struck speechless.

Mem, Chekan, E'fan, and Qeretajdin go out onto the roof of the *zêrhel*⁹².

By now Zîn has heard that Mem has come. She takes up [her dirty] dishes [and] carries them to the spring, to have them rinsed by⁹³ her maidservants. Mem sees Zîn from afar, recognizes her and sings about [her]:

"A heavy caravan has come [and] passed,
One⁹⁴ should take from it bribes and taxes."

Chekan said, "That is no beggar's caravan, that is the caravan of heroes." Qeretajdin said, "We have seen each other's blows before each other's eyes: Mem and Zîn are secret!, in love with each other⁹⁵. Let us make an agreement [that] if Mem brings a token of truth⁹⁶, [we will] know⁹⁷ that they have long been secret lovers,

⁹¹-lit: 'break eating'

⁹²The word *zêrhel* appears only in Kurdoev's dictionary, and only with the meanings of "a golden ingot or bar" or "gilded." Judging from other versions, it seemed at first that some sort of palace (*K'lock û seral*) was intended. However, in the glossary of B. Nikitine's as yet unpublished *Shandîrani Kurdish* (made available to me by Professor MacKenzie, I have found the form *herzal*, meaning "a summer shelter of reeds erected on the roof"; moreover, in D. Izoll's Kurdish-Turkish Dictionary (*Herberg, Kurdi-Türski*) (Den Haag: Komeley Xwendikarani Kurd le Ewropa, 1987), p. 86), the form *herzalik* appears with the following meanings: 1) hut, shack; 2) throne-like structure on four poles on which one sits while watching over vineyards and the like; 3) inside the house, a raised platform in which beds and the like are placed. I think that *zêrhel* is a metathesized variant of the word *herzal* [i.k.], denoting some sort of raised platform in which people sit while on the roof or balcony.

⁹³-lit: "at the hands of"

⁹⁴-lit: "Man"

⁹⁵-lit: "Mem and Zîn as they exist, are the lovers of [i.e. in] secret"

⁹⁶Nişana fastiyê. *Nişan* means 'symbol,' 'sign,' 'token,' as well as 'engagement' or 'betrothal'; *Rastî* is the abstract noun of *rast*, which means 'right' (both direction and correct) and 'true'

[and] may their union be blessed⁹⁵; otherwise, we will brandish swords, and then that man will wish that he never left his home⁹⁹."

Mem gives fair Zin a sweet greeting [and] Zin says, "My dear Mem, are you out of your mind?¹⁰⁰ E'fan, Chekan and Qeretajdin are standing atop the roof: we will cause a scandal!¹⁰¹"

Mem said, "Zin, if you give me a token of truth, you will rescue me from disaster; otherwise, I am done for!¹⁰²" Zin gives Mem a token of truth. Mem takes it to the heroes¹⁰³, and they calm down considerably¹⁰⁴."

The three brothers make Mem their fourth brother.

* *

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One time the three brothers go hunting. Mem and Zin go take a stroll in a private garden.

[301] The mir says to Bekoê E'wana, "Beko, come, let's go hunting."

Beko says, "Mir, I swear to you, two young gazelles are roaming about in your private garden; [send] a manservant to watch them." When Beko and the mir come to the garden, Zin hides under¹⁰⁵ Mem's coat, and Mem sits down¹⁰⁶.

⁹⁷-ij: "know" (imperative mood)

⁹⁸-ij: "to each other blessed"

⁹⁹-ij: "other envy to that man, the one that did not leave his house", i.e. then Mem will envy those who stayed at home because he will be in dire straits

¹⁰⁰-ij: "Wretched Mem, you are not aware of yourself"

¹⁰¹-ij: "We will overturn the millstone of the mill of victories on your head" In Khamoian's phraseological dictionary this is explained as meaning 'to cause a scene or scandal'; 'to cause a war'; and 'to impose a penalty'

¹⁰²-ij: "I died"

¹⁰³-ij: e. the three brothers

¹⁰⁴-ij: "their hearts calm down by little pieces"

¹⁰⁵-ij: "gives herself before"

¹⁰⁶-ij: "has sat down"

Beko says, "You see, my mir, we come pass by here, Mem is so arrogant that he won't take the trouble to rise before us. If Mem won't rise before you today, before whom will he rise?"

Memo says, "Beko, I am ill."

Beko shows the mir Zin's braids beside Mem¹⁰⁷; the mir burns with anger; they turn and go back.

The mir and Beko go to the upper room [and] play chess. Then Mem comes and plays with the mir: Mem defeats the mir three times.

Beko advises Zin to come stand near Mem; Zin does so.

Mem lays eyes on Zin and loses his mind; the mir defeats him and throws Mem into prison according to their condition¹⁰⁵.

When they take Mem out, they bring his horse Bor to him. He kisses Bor's eyes over and over again¹⁰⁹, then they let Bor go, and at Mem's bidding, Bor heads for Mughur-Zemin, while Mem dies in Jizira.

Zin cries and wails over Mem, but what can she do? Mem is no more.

Sometime later, Zin also dies, of grief. They keep their corpses until Efan, Chokan, and Qeretajdin return from hunting.

When Bor reaches Mughur-Zemin, Al pasha immediately senses that something has happened to Mem¹¹⁰. He gets up, collects his army, and heads for Jizira: he reaches Jizira, [and comes] to the grave of his Mem.

They inform Al pasha that Beko was the cause of Mem and Zin's demise. They summon Beko and the mir and go to the grave, taking the two corpses and putting them into a pit together.

Al pasha sends Beko's head flying [and] a drop of Beko's blood falls between Mem and Zin: it grows in the middle [and] becomes a thornbush.

¹⁰⁷ i.e. Zin's hair is sticking out from under Mem's coat.

¹⁰⁸ ser çarax we Qilîrar has several meanings originally from the Arabic word qarâr قَرَار meaning 'decision,' in Kurdish it can mean, inter alia, 'condition,' 'stipulation.' This meaning is particularly likely, since in another version (ZK-2) this passage specifically starts with the setting of conditions, as follows: "If you beat me seven times you can have whatever you want, and if I beat you, I can have from you whatever I ask for."

¹⁰⁹ er = 'sated,' 'satisfied,' 'having eaten, or done something to fulfillment.'

¹¹⁰ lit: 'that a wonder or strange thing has come to Mem's head'

So also Qeretajdîn sends the mir's head flying.

One side of Jizîra flourishes, the other is in ruins.

E'vdal, E. "Mem û Zîne = Mem û Zîné," in *Folklorā Kyrmānça* (Erevan, 1936), pp. 261-292. [Kurmanji in outdated Latin script] (FK-1)

FK-1. Collected by E. E'vdal from Xudoê Qaşo, in the village of K'arvanserê, nehîya (=county of) Axbaranê, Soviet Armenia. The text was published in 1936. Unfortunately, no other information is available about the informant or the conditions under which the text was collected.

Mem y Zine = Mem û Zîné (FK-1)

[261] Mem was the son of Al pasha, the pasha of Mughur Zemîn.

Mem had the final say in his house.¹

One fine day, three beautiful doves went flying, [and] set down at Mem's window.

The three doves were talking together: the youngest one said to the eldest, "Is there anyone else as beautiful as Mem in the world? We must find him a mate."

The eldest said,

"I have found, I've found,

A lovely, pretty girl,

She lives in the city of Jizira Bota."

The three doves flew to Zîn's window and set down; they looked through the window, [and] what did they see? Forty maidens waiting on Lady Zîn hand and foot.² One by one the maidens left the lady's side [and] went home.

The eldest dove said, "This is the one I've found; Do you think she's fitting for Mem?" The youngest sister said, "Oh yes, she's fitting!" and she asked of God:

"God, you make a command,

Send down a dove's gown,

We are three, make Zîn our fourth."

¹According to Kurdcov. Ser t'ivdarekê xwe bûn = БЫТЬ при своем мнении, стоять на своем, i.e. to insist on one's opinion.

²=li: "Forty maidens with hand upon hand, waiting on Lady Zîn (Zîn-xatûn)."

A doveskin³ came down from above, the doves dropped a slumber pearl in Zin's ear⁴, dressed her in the doveskin and flew away with her.

You God of grace,
I'll tell this time,
What fate had in store for Zin and Mem.
When the doves picked up Lady Zin,
They passed from land to land,
Putting her down at Mem's window.
[262] When the doves brought Lady Zin down,
Mem was asleep, he didn't know
What had happened at all,⁵
They made Zin's wrists
Be Mem's pillow and cushion.

Then the doves went and put down at the window.

Sometime during the night Mem woke up and found a perfect woman sleeping in his arms. Mem didn't make a sound. Zin also woke up and realized that someone was in her bed.

Zin said, "Okay you smart aleck [pê hatol], who told you to come get in my bed without asking me?"

Tomorrow I'll have you drawn and quartered by Erîr, Chekin, and Qeretazhdîn⁶."

"Zin, do men go out after women, or do women [go out] after men?"

"Men go out," she said and stood up.

They both took lamps,
Counted all the minarets,

³lit. = 'animal skin.'

⁴This motif appears in FK-2, HR-1, HR-2 and ZK-2 also. See also HR-1, note #16; and HR-2, note #11. Motifs D1364.32 Jewel causes magic sleep; D1071 Magic jewel (jewels); D1071.1 Magic beads; D1364 Object causes magic sleep

⁵lit. 'What the pair is what the state is.'

⁶lit. 'I'll have Erîr, Chekin, and Qeretazhdîn rip open your stomach.'

Zîn was Mem's guest.⁷

Zîn roamed about Mem's house, and saw that her personal belongings were not here, that the building had a different character.

Mem took up candle and lamp,

The doves took up Zîn's curtain,

So that Mem would not die of love for Zîn.⁸

Mem said, "Did you come [to my house], or did I [come to yours]?" Zîn said, "I have come [to your house]"

"Very good, but [what is] your father's place of residence⁹, your country? Who are your parents? Whose daughter are you?"

"I'm Lady Zîn, daughter of Mir Zêvdin, sister of Mir Sêvdin, granddaughter of Mir Atlas, from Jizira Bîta, owner of a many-colored palace, [and] a green gown¹⁰; if you speak truthfully, I'm the sister-in-law-to-be¹¹ of Qeretazhdin.

Mem and Zîn picked up lanterns,

Climbed up the staircase,

Went to the tops of the towers.

They counted the lamps one by one,

Together there were 366 of them.

Mem said, "Now what?"

⁷As in a few other versions, Mem and Zîn figured out that Zîn was in Mem's room, rather than vice versa, by counting the city's minarets: according to EP-1, there were 66 minarets in Jezira Bîta, but 366 in Mûkharzemîn, and after trying to count them they knew they were in Mûkharzemîn.

⁸These last two lines are somewhat unclear to me.

⁹Çi war (or diwar). There are two possible etymologies for this word: either it is borrowed from Arabic *war*: *war* = neighborhood, or it is a combination of the two Kurdish words *Çi* = 'place,' bed, and *War* = encampment.

¹⁰K'ixbele appears in ZK-1 as K'ixbiele. Although this exact form does not appear in any of the dictionaries, Kurdeew has a form K'ixme = 'type of women's overgarment,' of which K'ixbe and K'ixbe may be variants. I think the 'green gown' is a reference to her wedding gown. Erich Brauer says "the dress of the Jewish bride is red, whereas the bridal gown of the Kurdish woman is green." [see his *Yehude Kurdistan*: (= The Jews of Kurdistan.) (Yerushalayim: ha-Makhon: ha-Bresyisre'eli le-Folklor ve-Etnologyah, 1946), p. 71]

¹¹Efik, besides meaning 'bride,' may also mean 'sister-in-law' or 'daughter-in-law,' 'wife of one's brother or son,' equivalent to Turkish *yenge*. See ZK-1, note # [34]. In other words, Zîn is already betrothed to one of Qeretazhdin's brothers.

[263] Zin said, "O slave of God:² it is only fitting that you should be in such a city."

Then the two of them came down, went to the castle, and got in bed, amid chatter and laughter.

Zin said, "Those who brought me will take me away."

"Memê delal, I know that you are fond of me:³ now we must exchange rings, [for] in forty days:⁴ they will marry me off. You must come to my wedding, or else I will be lost to you:⁵

Mem said, "Zin, know that 40 days from now I shall come to your land."

Let's get back to the doves. The eldest one said, "O sisters, we brought Zin for Mem but tomorrow Zin's father:⁶ will destroy both of them, unless we bring Zin back to her father's house."

"Yes, let's take her."

Mem and Zin slept; the doves dropped slumber pearls into their ears, dressed Zin in her doveskin, took her by the wings, conveyed her to her land, placed her in her bed, and went about their business.

The sister of Bekrê Ewana was a sorceress; her name was Zîn also. She read her *remil* ¹⁷ [and found out] that Zin had woken up late that day, and she said, "I'll bet Zin went to Mughur Zemin and slept in Mem's arms.

In forty days Mem will come to marry:⁸ Zin.

¹²A typical Islamic way of referring to human beings Cf. Arabic 'abd Allâh عبد الله

¹³-lit: "that your heart is very much in me"

¹⁴-lit: "rights"

¹⁵-lit: "I will go from your hand."

¹⁶-lit: "Zin's father's house"

¹⁷Remilil is explained in a footnote to EP-1 as a widespread method of telling fortunes, consisting of specially marked dice that are thrown onto a board with the help of a special fortune-telling book, the markings on the dice and the board are interpreted to predict the future, or as in this case to tell what has already happened. See my EP 1, note #49).

¹⁸-lit: "to take"

Zîn the sorceress was jealous. There was a spring on the road to Mughur Zemîn. She took some wool:¹⁹ and went to the spring.

It was noontime. Lady Zîn woke up and saw her maidens standing around her.

One maiden said, "My fine Zîn, why have you woken up so late today?" Zîn didn't answer, she sighed²⁰ and sank into a reverie.

At that same time Al pasha's diwan was full of people [who] had flocked around, waiting for Mem. The coffee and food was ready, they were looking around in anticipation²¹, wondering when Mem would come.²²

Al pasha summoned his manservants²³ and said to them, "My fine manservants, when is my delicate and naïve Mem coming?" One of his manservants replied:

"He tells us before the group,
We will act like God,²⁴
Mem is sleeping late²⁵."

îzîdîj) "O manservants, it cannot be so,
It's not his habit,
He's sick today, that's why he isn't here."

The manservants went to [see] Mem, and sat around his bed, rubbing his feet and kissing his forehead to wake him up. The head servant said, "Mem, get up, it's late, the assembly in your father's diwan is waiting for you, hurry up, let's go!"

Mem got up, got dressed, and went to the marble sink; the manservants came with him.

¹⁹to spin while waiting

²⁰Qirnek/Qirnek hatî: As this did not appear in any of the dictionaries I am guessing at the meaning

²¹lit: "their eyes were on the road"

²²From other versions we know that it was Mem's job to serve coffee in his father's diwan.

²³Çavîş like Turkish çavuş means a military sergeant, but it can also mean a servant.

²⁴The meaning of these two lines is unclear to me

²⁵lit: "Mem's eye comes to morning sleep"

Just as Mem was about to wash his face, he noticed Zin's ring on his finger, and fell into a swoon over the sink. The manservants sent word to Al pasha, saying, 'Long live the pasha, your Mem has fainted over his marble sink.'

The people of Al pasha's diwan, together with the viziers and attorneys (wekil), got up and went to [see] Mem.

Everyone²⁶ took a look at Mem and saw that he was gone.²⁷

When Al pasha saw that Mem appeared to be in bad shape, he lost control.²⁸ Everyone there tried to console him.

A moment later, Mem came to and the rosy color returned to his face²⁹. Everyone brought Mem to the diwan. Mem's mother encountered Al pasha and said:

"I beg you,³⁰

Teli me the truth,

What's wrong with my Mem?"

"O woman³¹, Mem is a little indisposed³², but he's not too bad, don't worry³³.

Mem's mother sobbed, she went to [see] Mem, then she bowed her head and informed Mem that she would make him well³⁴.

The maidservants told Mem's mother not to worry, that love had carried Mem away.

²⁶-lit: -lit: "The assembly."

²⁷-lit: "He was not there" i.e. he was unconscious

²⁸-lit: "He went out of hand," i.e. in colloquial English, "He lost it" or "He freaked out."

²⁹-lit: "The rose of his countenance was bright; a little color came to it."

³⁰-lit: "May you give the permission of God."

³¹-lit: "slave of God." See note 12 above

³²be k'ef =lit: "without *pleasure*." K'ef, from Arabic kayf كيف, is a Middle-Eastern concept that is not easy to translate. It comes close to our idea of 'fun,' but it can also mean 'hashish'.

³³-lit: "don't be afraid."

³⁴The second half of this sentence is not totally clear to me

News of what the maidservants had said reached Al pasha, that "love had carried Mem away".

Al pasha greatly rejoiced and said to those assembled around him, "Go sound the alarms! Call all the aghas and beys and have them send their daughters to the enclosed garden³⁵."

Al pasha sent messengers to Mem [telling him] to come sit in the enclosed garden, to have a look at the girls and choose one for himself. [265] The manservant went and conveyed this to Mem. Mem made no reply, [so] the manservant went back to the pasha.

Mem had to take an apple and go to the garden, as required by the customs of the people of Mughur Zemin, and throw the apple at the girl who stole his heart³⁶. Mem thought, and said to himself:

"Could *Zîna delîl* be among them? I'll go see what's what."

Memê Alan took his apple and headed for the enclosed garden. The girls were strolling through the garden two by two.

Mem went and sat down in the middle of the enclosed garden, and saw that the one he wanted³⁷ was not among those girls. For this reason Mem was very disappointed, he hung his head low in despair.

All the girls passed before him two by two [until] only three girls were left. The first one came and went. [but] Mem paid no attention, then the other two came and passed by. The girls were amazed that Mem paid no attention to anyone; many of them said, "Why did they have us gather here for nothing?"

The vizier's daughter said:

"Mem, among birds you are a falcon,
You were pampered by your parents,
Why don't you want the daughter of a bey?"

³⁵bakê : orkiri -li: "enclosed/fenced-in garden." In some other versions, the word *Turkîrî* is capitalized, making it a proper noun.

³⁶ali: "who had fallen to his heart." I witnessed the following at an Assyrian wedding in Turlock, California in August of 1990. The groom took an apple (rather than the bride's garter belt) and threw it over his shoulder, where it was caught by one of several eligible bachelors who had gathered. The belief is that the one who catches the apple is going to be married soon. Cf. Motif H315. Suitor test: apple thrown indicates princess's choice.

³⁷ali: "the one he said."

"The one I want³⁸ is Lady Zîn,
 The daughter of Mîr Zêvdîn,
 The sister of Mîr Sêvdîn,
 Who lives in Jizra.
 She lives in a palace,
 She isn't here,
 The sister-in-law of Efin and Qeretazhdin,
 The fiancée of Chekin,
 She wears a green gown."³⁹

When Mem told them this, they all stepped aside, and Mem got up and went about his business.

Word reached Al pasha that Mem had not liked any [of the girls]. He sounded the alarm, saying, "However many old and experienced men there are, viziers and attorneys of [noble] origin, have them all come to me, so they can tell me where Jizra Bota is."

Everybody gathered, but nobody [could] give any information. Mem got up and went to his father's stables, called the stablehands and said to them, "You must [266] choose a good horse for me." Then Mem walked around with them, saw a lean horse and said to the lads, "Fatten up this horse, take good care of him, and I'll give you gold."

Mem took some gold pieces out of his breastpocket and gave them to the lads and left. Next he went to a tailor and had fine clothes made. At the saddlemaker's he had a saddle with fine stone made for his horse; at the silversmith's he had a fine sword smelted of gold and silver, then went home.

Eight days later all of Memê Alan's clothes and equipment³⁹ were ready, and Mem prepared himself to go.

News reached Al pasha that his son intended to go away.

The pasha commanded the people of the city to lock the gates of the walled city and to chain and shackle the horses. Everyone did as he said.

³⁸-lit. "the one I say."

³⁹K'incû rîhet. *Rîhet* must be for *Raxt* = 'armor,' because *Rîhet* means 'calm,' 'comfortable' (from Arabic), and this makes no sense.

The next day Mem sent for his clothes and effects, saddled up his horse⁴⁰, picked up his armor and said to his servant boys:

"You bring out my Bor⁴¹,
Put on him the saddle of rubies and jewels,
I am making a journey to Jizra – to Zîn."

The boys brought Bor out, Mem kissed his forehead, saddled him up and mounted him, in order to depart for Jizra Bota.

Mem made his foot the basis of strength,
Took hold of the reins of health,
Got up on the saddle of power.

Mem rode away from home,
He was without boys or servants,
His parents were wretched and miserable.

Al pasha lifted up his eyes,
Cast down his face,
Crying a lake of tears,
Which came spilling down his face,
He said, "Mem has no goodness for me,
My Mem is an awful son,
He has no sense in his head,
Who can this city hope for?"⁴²

[267] Many people [tried to] advise Mem, but he would not listen⁴³, he called his horse Bor from the start. Mem rode Bor up to the city wall, the gatemen also begged him [to listen], but he would not.

⁴⁰-lit. "put on his horse the saddle that he had had made."

⁴¹Suddenly his horse has a name.

⁴²i.e. to rule it when I am gone.

⁴³-lit. "There was no submission in him," i.e. He would not give in.

Memê Ala spurred Bor on,
 Bor flew over the wall,
 He came to three roads.

All three roads sloped downward, Mem did not know which of the three roads led to Jizra Bota.

Mem said to Bor,
 "Bor, my lean Bor,
 I swear by the almighty,⁴⁴
 Take me on the road to Jizra.
 Bor, my white Bor,
 I swear by God,
 You know what has happened to me,
 Take me on one of these roads."
 Bor took the middle road, Mem said nothing.
 Mem continued on his journey,
 Bor said, "Mem, you've been riding me for three days
 now,
 Tomorrow it will be four full days.
 Don't you ever think⁴⁵ that Bor's legs are in chains and
 shackles,
 The shackles and chains have eaten into his legs?
 Enough riding me with spurs on thighs!
 Anyone else⁴⁶ would undo Bor's saddle
 Three or four times a day.

I hope that when I've rested,
 I'll walk better [when] I set out,

⁴⁴-lit. "You make it the right of the almighty."

⁴⁵-lit. "say"

⁴⁶-lit. "in your place"

I'll take you to Jizra on my back.

My Mem, you're a fine lad,
[But] you're treating me like an Arab or Persian,
Cut the chains and shackles from my legs already!

Dismount, give me fistfuls of water,
Undo Bor's chains and shackles with your own hands,
Tomorrow I'll take you, drunk, to Jizra.

[268] Dismount, give me handfuls of water,
Undo my chains with your fingers,
I'll take you to Jizra, to the beauties.

Mem, you're a light-headed boy,
You don't stay in one place,
The chains and shackles have cut through your Bor's
legs to the bone."

Mem reached a spring adomed with lilies, camomile, roses and basil. He dismounted.

Mem got down off Bor,
Pulled a handkerchief from his waist,
Mem saw that Bor was in bad shape,
Tears rolled down his cheeks.

Mem put hand on hand,
And stood facing south⁴⁷,
Bor took a step, he could barely move⁴⁸.

⁴⁷or Qiblah, the direction of Mecca; i.e., he prayed to God.

⁴⁸Although I could not find a meaning for *dibeste* other than 'to tie,' 'to bind,' the context strongly suggests a meaning more like 'to limp along,' 'to move'.

Mem went and alighted at another spring: he was beside himself, because he saw that the chains and shackles had eaten at his Bor's legs.

Mem put his hand in his pocket: he saw that he did not have the keys [to unlock] the chains and shackles. He thought:

Mem pulled out his trusty sword⁴⁹,
Swung at the chains and shackles, getting rid of them
once and for all,
Because of them, Bor had become weak and thin.

Mem was very troubled, and he cried,
Saying, "Woe is me, you're weak and thin, your neck is
broken,
The chains and shackles have reached the bones of
my Bor's legs,
Which way to Jizra Bota, what plain is it in?"

The Mem got up, took a handkerchief out of his pocket, folded it in two, washed Bor's leg and tied it up; then he let Bor out to pasture in the meadows.

Mem sat down by the spring and let out a sigh. He felt sad and on the verge of tears, then he cried.

He put his saddlebag behind his head, threw his cloak over himself, and fell fast asleep.

Mem slept for a moment, then got up. Bor's leg had gotten somewhat better. He stepped into the stirrup and mounted, then Bor said to Mem:

[269] "Give me spring water to drink,
Wrap me up with handkerchiefs,⁵⁰
And I'll take you quickly to Jizra Bota."

Mem put his foot in the stirrup of power,

⁴⁹Zilfeqar, named for the famous sword of the early Islamic personage Ali.

⁵⁰-jit. "Take care with handkerchiefs"

Took hold of the reins of health⁵¹,
And pulled himself onto the saddle of strength.

Bor galloped along.⁵² On the road, a rabbit leapt out in front of Bor⁵³. Mem rode Bor on, he pursued it, caught it and brought it up to his saddle; [then] he took a handkerchief out of his pocket, made the handkerchief into the shape of the rabbit, threw it in his saddlebag and let the rabbit go.⁵⁴

Mem and Bor came upon a barren plain, Bor suddenly was given the gift of speech and spoke to Mem like a human being, saying, "Drive me on."

Bor lightly picked up Mem,
Took the reins out of his hands,
Mem could not tell day from night.

"Oh, what a barren steppe,
Neither traveller, nor plow, nor plowman,
Of whom to enquire
Which way to Jizra!"

Mem tired Bor out, then took his reins in his hand and looked about in all directions, and spotten a plowman in the distance, who was the plowman of Jezra Bota.

⁵¹According to Kurdoev, there is an expression *şirika sehetê* = 'watchchain,' however, such an expression would make no sense in this context. *Şihet/sehet* has two meanings: 1) Clock or hour (<Arabic *sā'ah* ساعة); and 2) Health (<Arabic *şihhah* صحة). These two words are sometimes confused in Turkish as well, e.g. *Saatler olsun* for *Sihhatler olsun* = 'May there be health,' a blessing said to someone who has recently had a bath or a haircut. Moreover, a few lines above in this same version [p. 266 of the original text], a similar formula, using the same three words (*qewetê* = 'power,' *sehatê* = 'health,' *dewletê* = 'strength'), is used. Therefore, I think *şirika sehetê* means something like 'the chains/reins of health,' rather than 'watchchain'.

⁵²-lit. "was going quickly"

⁵³-lit. "in front of Bor's legs"

⁵⁴Motif: Handkerchief shaped like rabbit. See also note # (120) in my EP-1.

"What a dry plain,⁵⁵
 It seems to be a completely treeless wilderness,⁵⁶
 I don't know if that is a plowman,
 Or a beautiful bird of prey⁵⁷."

Bor said, "Let your fingers drop my reins⁵⁸
 Enough jabbing me with spurs,
 I'll quickly take you to Jezra Bota.

Mem approached the plowman; the plowman saw a horseman coming towards him, sparkling from head to toe. Mem approached the plowman.

Mem reached the plowman and greeted him,
 The plowman said, "And upon you be peace,⁵⁹
 My fine and gentle king."

[270] "O horseman, rider of the grey sided [horse],
 The mounted horse is roaming about,
 Go wherever he takes you."

"O plowman, to tell the truth,
 Answer me this question,
 I don't know what country or place this is."

O horseman, these are the plows of Jezra Bota,

⁵⁵Çi besteke xalf-p'ûşe = lit. "What an empty-dry grass plain. P'ûşe = 'dry grass' 'straw'.

⁵⁶Dixuêne deşteke her f'ûş = lit. "It seems a wilderness of every f'ûş: According to Kurdoev, T'ûş = 'Glade,' 'clearing' [DUXEBA]; 'Valley' [DUXEBA]; 'Hollow,' 'depression' (geog.) [DUXEBA]; Izoff has Çihê tûş = 'Place of danger' [tehlîke yerî].

⁵⁷Qerqas = snowy white; perhaps this is a typo for Qereqûş = 'bird of prey' which, unlike Qerqas would rhyme with Xalf-p'ûşe and T'ûşe in the preceding lines.

⁵⁸=lit. "Let go of my reins with fingers"

⁵⁹i.e., the plowman returned his greeting in Islamic fashion.

Home of aghas, begs and nobles,
Once evening comes, brothers can't count on brothers⁶⁰."

Mem thrust his hand into one pouch of his saddlebag
And said, "Plowman, take this gift,
It's a first-thing-in-the-morning reward."

Mem gave the plowman a handful of gold, took leave of him and headed for Jezira Bota.

He went on a bit, then regretted it, almost turning back towards the plowman, but did not turn back, going on [instead].

On the way, he came across a gazelle, and saw a horseman pursuing it, wanting to catch it; no matter what he did, he could not overtake it. Mem took off after the gazelle, and the horseman asked, "Who are you? Why have you come before me? How dare you⁶¹ take the prey of begs and nobles?" Mem got quite angry and said, "Who says so?" and punched him, knocking him off his horse, but come see! He himself did not let the rider dismount.⁶²

Mem gave him his prey, and they introduced themselves. Mem asked, "Where are you from?"

"I am Qeretajdn," Mem replied, "And I am Mem, Qeretajdn's guest." Qeretajdn said that he wanted to go hunting, and that Mem should head for Jizra and ask for Qeretajdn's house, and go there.

Qeretajdn took his leave of Mem, and Mem set out. There was a bridge on the way, which Mem now headed for.

On the bridge was Beko Ewan's sister, Zîn,
Her calling⁶³ was fortune telling.

⁶⁰This may refer to a stereotypical reputation of the inhabitants of Jezira Bota. It is a formulaic expression with a parallel in EP-1, #37, p. 193.

⁶¹-lit. "Whose soul is there?"

⁶²This is unclear to me. Perhaps it means that he punched the horseman hard enough to knock him off his steed, but made sure that he didn't in fact fall off.

⁶³Gencû qala wê -lit. "Her argument and quarrel"

When Mem was coming to the spring⁶⁴,

Zîn stretched out her neck and saw a horseman coming from afar; he drew near to her and gave her greeting:

[Zî] Mem greeted Beko's sister Zîn,
She grabbed the reins of Mem's horse and said,
"And upon you be peace!"⁶⁵

Mem looked at (this) Zîn, and sighed as he said to himself, "This must be Zîn, how else would she know my name? In my father's kingdom were there none like this⁶⁶ that I could have married?" Mem grew sad and cried, when suddenly he remembered Zîn's ring

What a dunderhead⁶⁷ Mem is,
He asked for a sign from Zîn,
If there is no sign,⁶⁸ let her surrender.

Zîn bowed her head and thought to herself, "Oh! Had I only stolen Mem's ring from Zîn, the mir's daughter, I could have gotten Mem today with it."

"Mem, when you came up this hill,
I got so excited⁶⁹ on the bridge
That the ring flew off, and the water⁷⁰ carried it off."

⁶⁴Which was apparently in the vicinity of the bridge

⁶⁵See note 59 above

⁶⁶i.e. ugly.

⁶⁷iawekî ser mest =lit. "boy with an inebriated head"

⁶⁸i.e. if she can't come up with proof that she is the Zîn with whom he exchanged rings.

⁶⁹=lit. "I gave soul to my hands and eyes"

⁷⁰=lit. "wave of water"

Mem was a little taken aback; he thought to himself, "I guess it must be so."

Bor said, "Mem, you are a crazy boy,
The one you see⁷¹ is not that Zîn,
She is the sister of Bekir Ewan,
You should never have anything to do with her."

Mem said, "Zîn, let me go, I want to go, let go of Bor's reins."

Zîn said, "If you grant me my wish, I'll let go."

Mem gave Zîn his word that he would carry out his promise. Zîn said to Mem, "It is true, I am not Lady Zîn⁷², but when you marry her, my wish is that you take me also with you, that I may be her maidservant, just as I am now." Mem assented, saying "On my eyes."⁷³

Zîn let go of Bor's reins, and Mem drove Bor on, while Zîn went about her business.

Bor said, "I am your fine, blue Bor,
Enough of hurting me with the spurs,
I'll take you [to where you will be] the guest of the noblemen
Chekîn, Erfîn, and Qeretajdîn.

[272] Mem and Bor wandered from street to street,
They saw every building in Jizîra,
And stopped at the gate of the house of those three.

Bor brought Mem to the gate of Qeretajdîn's house, and the earth was shaking beneath Bor's feet.

⁷¹-lit. "The one [which] you say"

⁷²Zîn khatûn.

⁷³i.e. Gladly.

Lady Perf⁷⁴ instructed the servants, saying, "Go outside and see what that rumbling is." A servant went outside, took one look at Mem, and fainted dead away.⁷⁵

Another servant went: he also fainted. Then a group of servants went out together, and Lady Perf went with them. The [previous] servants came to.

Mem said, "Whose house is this?" Lady Perf said, "It's the house of Qeretajdîn."

Mem dismounted, Lady Perf put her arm around him⁷⁶, and brought him to the palace; they tied Bor up in the stable.

Mem took a walk about the palace, admiring its beauty.⁷⁷ Lady Perf stood at the lower end of the hall,⁷⁸ with clasped hands. Mem did not accept this custom, and said, "Please come closer up!"

"Brother, I cannot," [she replied] "I have masters who will be coming in. For all I know, one might accept it, but the others won't."

"In that case, I will get up and go. Bring my shoes!⁷⁹" But Lady Perf would not let Mem go.

They became [like] brother and sister. Mem sat on one side of the room, and Lady Perf on the other side.

⁷⁴Perf Xanim, Qeretajdîn's wife.

⁷⁵-lit. "from Mem's imposing aspect he fell fainted."

⁷⁶-lit. "fell under Mem's arm"

⁷⁷-lit. "Mem went and came in the palace, the palace was beautiful."

⁷⁸In Persian and Kurdish, a room – particularly the hall of a ruler – has a lower part, which is the part nearest the door, and an upper part, which is the other end of the room. The lower in rank one is, the closer to the door one must situate oneself. The word I have translated as *hall*, is *qesr* in the original, from the Arabic word for castle (*qasr* قصر), whence also the Spanish *alcázar*. The use of the castle for a part of it, i.e. the *diwan*, is reminiscent of the widespread use of words for *door* or *gate* to refer to a royal court. For a very fine discussion of this phenomenon, see Hans Wehr. "Das 'Tor des Königs' im Buche Esther und verwandte Ausdrücke," *der Islam* 39 (1964), pp. 247-260.

⁷⁹In the Middle East, it is customary to remove one's shoes upon entering someone's house. A hospitable host has pairs of slippers to offer to any and every guest, to be put on as soon as the guest's own shoes are removed.

Lady Perf called the servants. They came and stood before her. She instructed one of the servants,⁸⁰ saying, "Go tell mîr Sêvdîn that a very dear guest of his has come, and to come immediately!⁸¹"

The servant went to the diwan, and took off his shoes. When Bekir Ewan saw Badîn over his right shoulder, he frowned.

Badîn said, "Please [come], a very dear guest of yours has come."

Bekir Ewan angrily said, "Go see what he wants. Have him go away. What does he want with the diwan!"

The servant immediately turned around and went back to Lady Perf.

She said, "Boy, where of the men of the diwan?"

"My Lady, they didn't come."

There was a cooking ladle in the Lady's hand, she beat the servant over the head with it, [almost] breaking his skull, and said, "This time go call them so that they come. A very dear guest of theirs has come."

[273] The servant Badîn went back to the diwan. Those assembled saw blood dripping from his head.

Beko Ewan said, "Boy, what do you want?"

"What do I want? Lady Perf is summoning the three brothers."

Qeretajdîn, Chekîn and Erfîn got up and went home. When they went inside, they were awestruck by Mem's appearance. Chekîn and Erfîn put down a mattress for Qeretajdîn [to sit on], and then went and stood at the lower end of the room.

Qeretajdîn sat down on the mattress. Mem was a very pleasant guest.

They spoke together for three days and three night, [wrapped in] pleasant [discussion].

The next day food was prepared and brought in on a tray⁸², and Qeretajdîn said, "Help yourself Mem, there's plenty more!"

⁸⁰We soon learn that his name is Badîn.

⁸¹-lit. "don't stand/stop, come!"

⁸²safr. This is a pan-Mid Eastern concept: a laid table, anyplace where food is laid out, rather than the physical table. According to E.W. Lane: "The food of the traveller; ... the food that is prepared for the traveller, ... or for a journey ... This is the primary signification ["because it comes from a root س-ف-ر meaning 'to travel' - my note] ... Hence, the receptacle thereof; the piece of skin in which it is put ... [This is commonly of a round form, with a running string; so that it is converted into a bag to contain the food, at one time; and at another time is spread flat upon the ground, when persons want to

"I refuse to eat," said Mem⁸³

"Why Mem?"

"How?"

"Why how?"⁸⁴

"You only find fault with sitting down to eat. Would you believe?"

"Mem, don't find fault with sitting down to eat. Would you believe that we were so taken with your looks, that we forgot?"

When Qeretajdn said that, Mem sat down and ate.⁸⁵

When they had finished eating, the food was taken away.

Mem excused himself and retired to his room.

When Zîn heard that Mem had come, she rose a span off the ground⁸⁶, and instructed her servant to go see who Qeretajdn's guest was, and to ask where he came from.

The servant went to Lady Perf and asked her about Mem.

Lady Perf said, "My guest's name is Mem, the son of Al pasha, who is the king of Mughur Zemîn."

The servant went back to Zîn and reported the news about Mem piece by piece.

eat upon it.] And hence, The thing [whatever it be] upon which one eats ... [in the desert, it is generally a round piece of skin ... : in the towns, in the houses of the middle classes, *a round tray of tinned copper*, [italics mine] which is usually placed on a low stool; and in the dwellings of some of the highest classes, and the lowest respectively, of silver and wood]. In accordance with the italicized section above, which is identical with what I have seen both in Turkey and Palestine, I have translated *sifre* as 'tray.' See: E.W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (London : Williams and Norgate, 1872; reprinted: Beirut : Librairie du Liban, 1960), vol. 4, p. 1371, column 2. Cf. *Ar sufrah سفره*, *P saofreh سفره*, *T sofra*.

⁸³A line must be missing, because the next thing Qeretajdn says is obviously in response to a comment of Mem's. Judging from what follows, I assume that Mem's missing comment is something like "I refuse to eat," because later Qeretajdn says something that convinces him to eat.

⁸⁴I think this is meant to be slightly humorous.

⁸⁵Hat ser *sifre* =lit. "He came over the *sifre*."

⁸⁶This calls to mind such English expressions as "She jumped for joy," and "She was in seventh heaven."

Once Zîn went outside and saw four men playing chess on the balcony of the palace⁸⁷ She recognized the three brothers [and thought to herself] "I'll bet the other one playing with them is Mem; I'll sing a song⁸⁸; if it's Mem, he'll look at me."

"Cheko, Erfin, Qeretajdîn are brothers,
They have made their place on the roof of the palace,
I know the one among them is my Memê Alan."

[274] After the son, Mem, turned around and beheld Zîn.

"Hey brothers! Zîn the beauty is at the window,
With black⁸⁹ eyes and the breast of a quail,
I have one eye on the ground, the other in the air."

When the three brothers saw how overcome Mem was with love for Zîn, they did not respond. The next morning, Zîn got up and adorned herself, took food and maidservants from her father's house, and off they went to the spring of Zemalê. Zîn, like a dove, led the girls and ladies past the gate of Qeretajdîn's house.

Mem turned and looked over his right shoulder and saw a caravan of girls and ladies passing by. He saw Zîn among them and said:

"Lady Zîn is passing with her fine cousins,
From her black eyes, blessed eyeshadow rains,
I have one eye left, the other has gone dark."

⁸⁷-lit. "on the palace"

⁸⁸-lit. "throw a song"

⁸⁹belek = the ideal quality of eyes: very white whites and very black pupils. This is the equivalent of the Arabic adjective (and concept) *ahwar* أحوار, with its corresponding abstract noun *hawar* حوار, which according to Arberry signifies "intense blackness of the pupils and whiteness of the surrounding parts of the eyes." See: A.J. Arberry, *Arabic Poetry: A Primer for Students* (Cambridge: at the University Press, c1965), p. 41, note 8. There is also an Arabic adjective *ablaq* أبلق meaning 'piebald' (of horses and the like), i.e. "spotted or blotched with black and white," in which those two colors are again juxtaposed.

"Mem, I am Qeretajdîn,
 Master of the blue swords,
 Whenever a caravan passes by,
 We collect a tax from it,
 But we cannot collect from this caravan."

Erfin: "The caravan you speak of belongs to the mîr,
 No one may dare cross its path,
 Except for us three brothers."

Chekin: (Hoye), 104 (hoye)
 You are the very pretty tablet
 On the eyebrows (t'elbî goyl)
 Why do you say these thing (tt noyl)⁹⁰

Mem said, "Brother, bring out my horse Bor,
 Saddle him up with jewels and stones,
 My trip is to the bridge, to Zîn."

Qeretajdîn said, "Brothers, Mem's horse is a big nothing, it's not worth a kopeck,
 let's give Mem leave to go see Zîn."

The two brothers accepted Qeretajdîn's word. They had Mem's horse brought
 out, and one held the reins while the other saddled her up, and mounted Mem on
 her.

Memê Alan said, "Brothers, I shall go to Zîn. If I succeed in collecting a tax from
 her, know that I am your brother; if I fail, I won't stay here, but will return whence I
 came."

[275] Mem took leave of the three brothers and rode off in pursuit of Zîn.

Mem greeted Zîn,
 Zîn said, "And upon you peace."⁹¹

⁹⁰What Chekin says is unclear to me.

⁹¹See note 59 above.

Welcome, Mem⁹²,
 My sweet, delightful dandy,
 Come, dismount."

"No, I won't dismount, my lovely Zîn, I have given my word, and must keep it:
 I have told the three brothers
 That I would not touch the ground near you today,
 That I would ask for a good tax from you.⁹³

Zîn said to her servants, "See how perfect my Mem is?"

Zîn took out a golden talisman,
 [Worth] the taxes of Egypt for seven years,
 She held it up for her sweet dandy,
 And gave it to Memê Alan.

When Mem took the talisman from Zîn's hand, he immediately went back⁹⁴
 The three brothers saw Mem coming back,

Qeretajdîn said, "Mem has most certainly brought something from Zîn."
 When Mem brought the golden talisman,
 And put it down lovingly before the three brothers,
 They were awestruck.

When Qeretajdîn took one look at the talisman, he recognized it and knew that
 Zîn had indeed given it to him. He said:

"We were three brothers, now we are four, our horses black,
 Let's roam calmly around Jizra,

⁹²-lit. "You have come on my eyes."

⁹³This line is somewhat obscure, but the meaning is suggested by the context. Dîbêye = Dîvêye? (Min divêt = 'I want' or 'I need,' in Southern Kurmanji dialects).

⁹⁴This is my guess for the sentence <Dest bi dest vegert>.

Let's roam around and bring a brigand."

Erfin: "The four of us with bay horses,
Let's roam around Jizra proudly,
Let's bring the one whom Mem wants."

Chekdn: "Brothers, why don't you tell the truth? A household of [real] men
[must stick] with the truth:

"Our four horses are gray,
Let's roam around Jizra looking for a fight,
Lady Zîn was mine, may Mem be happy with her.⁹⁵"

[276] When they finished speaking, they went to Qeretajdn's house.

Qeretajdn said to Mem, "Mem, this is your house, you sit here, we will go to mîr
Sêvdn's palace⁹⁶."

The three brothers left Mem and went to mîr Sêvdn's house.

Mîr Sêvdn said, "Well, my lions, what sort of guest was he, that you stayed with
him so long?" Qeretajdn answered the mîr [as follows]:

"My mîr, my guest is such a guest,
A very dear boy, the son of royalty,
A sweet young man, very fine and dandy.
When he comes in,
You will rise before him.⁹⁷
The mîr said, "Please sit down, it's none of your business,
When he comes in,
I won't rise before him."

⁹⁵i.e. although Lady Zîn was betrothed to Chekdn, with this sentence he renounces his claim to her.

⁹⁶Perhaps the diwan is intended rather than the whole palace. See note 78 above and FK-2 note 14.

⁹⁷This is the opposite of what would normally be the case.

With a groan Beko Ewan lifted up his head and said, "Have the servant Badîn go invite Qeretajdîn's guest to come here." The servant went to invite Mem.

When the servant came in, Perf said, "What do you want?"

"Qeretajdîn said for Mem to please come."

Perf screamed at the boy, "Get out of here, you hypocrite!"

Badîn turned around and went back to the diwan.

The mîr said, "Where's the guest?"

"He didn't come."

"Why didn't he come?"

"Perf yelled at me and said, 'Get out of here, hypocrite!'"

Qeretajdîn thought for a minute and said, "We'll have to go after Mem on our horses."

Many men got up and mounted [their horses]. They [went and] put Mem on his horse and brought him to mîr Sêvdîn's palace.

When Mem came in, those assembled rose before him -- even the mîr got up, then they all sat down. Qeretajdîn laughed.

The mîr said, "Qeretajdîn, why are you laughing?"

"My mîr, something struck my fancy, and I just laughed."

The mîr said, "No, tell me the reason⁹⁸ why you laughed."

"What shall I say? You rose to your feet, and I put a handkerchief beneath you. The mîr said that he had not risen before Mem. First he⁹⁹, then Qeretajdîn, then the whole assembly requested that the mîr stand up so that they could see whether or not the handkerchief was under the mîr.

[277] When the mîr got up, they looked and saw the handkerchief under him. Everyone laughed, including the mîr.

Those assembled got up and dispersed.

Food was brought and they ate. Then Mem and the mîr had a long talk.

⁹⁸-lit. "meaning"

⁹⁹It is unclear who this refers to.

The mîr realized how serious Mem was about Zîn,¹⁰⁰ and said, "Mem what you ask is not within my power, but I will give you my mîrtî,¹⁰¹ and let you rule over the people!¹⁰² You are my superior.¹⁰³

"No, keep your mîrtî, I will be your subject."

Qeretajdîn said, "No, let Mem serve as the chief of all the servants."

In order to see Zîn, Mem put on the clothes of a servant and ran to and fro about the diwan.

Mem was familiar with coffeehouses,¹⁰⁴ and Zîn would come there in order to see him.

The first time Mem went to the coffeehouse, he suddenly saw Zîn, and they fell into each other's arms. Just at that moment Beko Ewan walked by. Beko reported to the mîr that Mem was kissing Zîn. The mîr made no reply.

It was two hours past midnight.

The assembly had dispersed. [Only] the three brothers, Qeretajdîn, Chekîn and Erfîn remained with the mîr.

Qeretajdîn openly said to the mîr, "Mîr, forgive us, we have given Zîn to Mem.¹⁰⁵"

"Are you serious?"

"I swear to you, we have done so."

The mîr thought a little, then said, "Boy, am I a traitor, or you? In that case, tomorrow I will sound the alarm, so that the *jindîs*¹⁰⁶ of Jizra come and gather. I will

¹⁰⁰-lit. "The mîr saw that Mem's desire/intention for Zîn was bad."

¹⁰¹i.e. office or rank of mîr. 'Emirship' or 'emirhood'?

¹⁰²mezniya #ê = "leadership of the people/tribal confederation." Meznayî or Mezinîlî is the abstract noun for Mezin, which means 'old' or 'big' as well as 'person in position of authority'.

¹⁰³or perhaps, "You are greater than me."

¹⁰⁴In many versions, before Mem left Mukhurzanîn, he had been in charge of serving coffee in his father's diwan.

¹⁰⁵i.e. in marriage

¹⁰⁶According to Kurdoev, *cindî* means 'well-built,' 'of fine physique,' 'stately,' 'well-proportioned,' in speaking of young men; in speaking of a young woman, it can also mean 'beautiful,' 'shapely'. Rather than translate it as fine fellows or some such tiresome cliché, I have left it untranslated.

send them all out hunting. Let Mem come also: if Mem can hunt with the men, we will give Zîn to him, otherwise it is too bad.¹⁰⁷

Qeretajdîn informed his brothers of what the mîr had said. The three brothers got up to take leave of mîr Sévdîn, and left.

Just at that time Mem's horse Bor had fallen into a well, his belly had swollen up, and Mem sat in the stable at Bor's head and wept.

Moreover, Beko had also given Bor swamp water [to drink], and Bor kept on getting progressively worse.¹⁰⁸

[278] Mem lifted up his head and said to Bor,

"O servants, you hypocrites,
I've come from a northern land,
Why have you forgotten this creature?"

Then Mem wanted to talk to Bor, but it was no use, Bor had gotten angry and would not speak to him anymore. Mem wept again.

When Qeretajdîn saw that Mem had not come, he went to the stable and asked Mem, "Mem, who are you late?"

"What can I do? Don't you see what state my Bor is in?" Qeretajdîn took Mem to the palace, and they went to sleep.

The next day the alarm was sounded for the horsemen to go out hunting.

Qeretajdîn said to Mem, "Mem, get up! The horsemen have gone, let's go with them." Mem woke up and said:

"Here I am, unwell, in bed,
I cannot lift my head off the pillow,
I am homesick for my country.¹⁰⁹"

News reached the fellows that Mem was ill. They all came to see him, but no matter what they did Mem did not get up from his bed, and said, "O fellows, there is a

¹⁰⁷-lit. "It is tough/difficult."

¹⁰⁸-lit. "How(ever) much Bor went, he became that much bad."

¹⁰⁹-lit. "My eyes have remained on the road of the homeland."

pain in my brow. I shall die in your country, in a foreign land,¹¹⁰ with no one to care for me."

Qeretajdîn said, "Mîr Sêvdîn, give leave to these jindîs and me, come away from Mem, let's go out hunting once again."

The mîr made no response.

The jindîs followed each other out, leaving two by two.

Just then Zîn became pensive, thinking to herself, "Did Mem go [out hunting with them]? My strange Mem, when will he return from hunting?"

Then she got up and went to the diwan¹¹¹ to put away Mem's bedding; she opened the door of the room, and found Mem still in bed. Zîn was startled, but then she [started to] go, and Mem called to her, saying, "My dear, sweet natured¹¹² Zîn, what frightened you? Come closer."

Then Zîn came toward Mem, threw her arms¹¹³ around Mem, touching his neck for an instant, and said,

"My dandy Mem what a crazy boy you are,
Have you no sense in your head?
Why have you stayed [behind] today from the mîr's hunt?"

"My poor Zîn, they do this to every brave lad who comes,
Your red cheeks are like a sheet of paper.¹¹⁴"

[279] Zîn said, "My poor Mem, since you did not go hunting, get up and get dressed, come to the Khas Bakhcheh¹¹⁵. The three brothers have gone hunting with

¹¹⁰This is similar to part of one version of the Judeo-Spanish folk song, "Arvoles yoran por luvias": "En tierras ajenas yo me vo morir" = "I shall die in foreign lands."

¹¹¹See note 78 above.

¹¹²xûn şîrin =lit. "sweet blooded"

¹¹³=lit. "herself"

¹¹⁴Perhaps the smoothness of the paper is intended here.

¹¹⁵=lit. "Private garden." The term *Hasbahçe* occurs in Turkish folk stories of the same genre as Mem û Zîn, e.g. Tahir and Zühre, Karam and Asî.

the jindis, they won't be back for another six days, let's pass the time in the garden until they come [back]."

Mem got dressed and headed for the garden, but he took a wrong turn and went to the nightingale's garden [by mistake], while Zîn went to the Khas Bakhcheh.

In the garden Mem encountered a nightingale and said:

"Nightingale, why do you weep so?
Your neck bent over that rose,
There are hundreds of thousands of roses here.

Rose, why are so delicate and naïve¹¹⁶?
You pass your days in one color,
But still you are not [up to] Zîn's facial color and complexion.

Nightingale, you [?] of the whole earth,
You are not a salve for one's troubles,
You are a friend of the mice under the earth."

Just then Zîn went looking for Mem, and finding him in the nightingale's garden, she said, "My poor Mem, today you did not go hunting, but you come to converse with nightingales that cannot speak."

Zîn took Mem by the arm and led him to the Khas Bakhcheh, where they indulged in the pleasures of the world.

A moment later they embraced and fell fast asleep.

On that same day clouds suddenly gathered, and hail and rain¹¹⁷ came down together.

The hunters of Jizra gathered and headed for Jizra. Mîr Sêvdîn said to his servant Badîn, "Badîn, go and open the gate of Khas Bakhcheh by the time we get there."

¹¹⁶At the beginning of this version, Mem's father uses this same expression, nazik-nazan, in speaking of Mem himself.

¹¹⁷This is reminiscent of şitope = mixed snow and rain. The word is used in Agra and Van at least.

Badîn went on ahead. A moment after he opened the gate of the garden, the hunters reached the garden and dismounted. They led their horses to the stable and went into the Khas Bakhcheh, [after] Badîn said, "Please come in, o jirdîs."

They entered, passing by a corner¹¹⁸ of the garden.

The servant Merdîn happened on the place where Mem and Zîn were sleeping.

[280] When Servant Merdîn went there,
He saw Mem and Zîn in a bad state,
Fear took hold [of him], and he froze in his tracks.

When the servant came in,
Mem was sleeping, with Zîn beside him.
He only nodded at Servant Merdîn.¹¹⁹

Servant Merdîn said to himself, "Up till now I have been her father's servant, this could not be Zîn's doing; why did she do this today?" Then he thought a little and said:

"Mem you rascal!¹²⁰ get up quickly,
Take your mouth away from Zîn's cheeks,
The mîr is coming, get up and find a way out."

Mem awoke to find the servant standing at his head, and said to him:

"I won't take my mouth away from Zîn's cheek,
Until there are 100 daggers [pointed] at my breast."

¹¹⁸The word k'osek- is ambiguous. It could come from: a) k'osek (same derivation as English kiosk and Turkish köşk), meaning a pavilion, or gazebo-like structure, or b) k'ose = goşe, meaning a corner. Other interpretations are also possible.

¹¹⁹Or perhaps Servant Merdîn nodded at him.

¹²⁰mal şewit -lit. "one whose house has burnt down"

Mem would not let himself be indebted to anyone, he pulled his head back under his cloak and went back to sleep. The servant said to Zîn:

"In the south¹²¹ a black cloud has appeared,
Bursting with rain and hail,
[Meñbut t'erk'eşe] were dispersed

In the south a piece of white cloud appeared,
It rained and hailed all over,
It dispersed Jizra's jind's."

Lady Zîn lifted up her eyes,
Shed tears on her her red cheeks,
No color was left in her face.

"O my hardworking servant,
May the food of my hands be blessed for you,
Don't ever reveal my secret."

"[Just as] God is great,
Even if the mîr takes off my head,
Those words will not pass my lips."

[281] Now there was the sound of loud voices¹²²,
The servant recognized the mîr's voice,
Zîn got under Mem's cloak.¹²³

The mîr went up to Mem and greeted him,

¹²¹ See note 47 above.

¹²²-lit. "yelling and screaming"

¹²³-lit. "Zîn fell inside the fur-coat and dress"

Mem said, "And upon you be peace,¹²⁴
It is truly a pleasure to see you.¹²⁵"

[But] when the mîr entered,
Mem did not rise before him,
He only nodded to the mîr.

The mîr said, "<Werin min û vî zemanî>
In my whole life, I have never seen the likes of this khan!¹²⁶
No one has the right to do this here.¹²⁷"

Mem said, "Mîr, you went hunting, I stayed in bed,¹²⁸
All my sense left my head, all that remained was an [empty]
shell,
I opened my eyes [and found myself] in this place."

The mîr said to Mem,
"Tell me truthfully,
What were you doing in my garden?"

"In you garden I saw a gazelle,
Not [merely] a gazelle, a ravishing beauty,
With black!¹²⁹ eyes, my idea of perfection."

¹²⁴See note #159) above.

¹²⁵-lit. "You [come] on [my] head, [and on] both my eyes," a common Kurdish formulaic greeting.

¹²⁶i.e., ruler.

¹²⁷-lit. "It is above anyone's mouth to come to this place"

¹²⁸or, "in my place"

¹²⁹See note 89 above.

The servant advised him, saying, "Say 'I don't know if it was a houri or an angel.'" Mem said, "My dandy mîr, the truth is, I don't know if it was a houri or an angel."

A moment later the three brothers as well as Beko came to where Mem was.

Beko said, "O assembly, we are cold, we should light a fire here." The mîr agreed with Beko. Beko lit a great fire right beside Mem; when the fire became bright, Mem's sides were burning from the heat. Under his cloak, Zîn kept silent.

Mem said, "Tajdîn,¹³⁰ you left in the morning, now it's midday,
The fire is roasting my ribs one by one,
Bekir and the mîr are tormenting me.¹³¹"

Mem raised his hands in Tajdîn's direction,
Tajdîn understood what was going on all in all,
He espied Zîn's braids one by one.

[282] Qeretajdîn thought and said,
"What a fire! What burning!
Mem is ill, he's not responsible for his actions,¹³²
[That's why] he tried to greet the mîr from the ground¹³³.

Beko, you know this, you are his mortal enemy,
You are lighting fires above and below him,
You should be sitting closer to the fire than him¹³⁴."

Beko: "Qeretajdîn, enough of your blunders,
It is now prayer time,

¹³⁰i.e., Qeretajdîn.

¹³¹min dîkin de'w û doze -lit. "trying to start a fight with me," or "bringing charges against me."

¹³²-lit. "he is not aware of himself"

¹³³i.e., without rising.

¹³⁴I am not sure about the meaning of this line.

We, together with Mem, must rise to our feet,
 Face toward the south¹³⁵,
 Pray to God,
 [And] prostrate ourselves on the ground."

Qeretajdn: "Yes, Beko, we will rise to our feet,
 But Mem is sick, he will stay [seated] on the ground,
 Don't you say anything unkind about it."

Qeretajdn said to the mîr, "My mîr, how many years has it been since someone came to see¹³⁶ us? Today this nobleman has come to visit us, [so] why, Beko, are you making trouble for this man? If Beko does not leave him alone, I will slice open his [=Beko's] stomach with my dagger. I've not done so already for the sake of the jindîs.

Qeretajdn pulled on the sheath of his dagger,
 The jindîs all headed out,
 He felt greatly troubled.

Qeretajdn went home,
 He had words with Lady Perf,
 He said, "Take out the young stallion.¹³⁷"

[Lady Perf said,] "Qeretajdn, what different disasters
 Will befall only me and you?
 Don't let people say "Why are you burning up this building?"

Resho¹³⁸, you heroic, dark-colored [horse],

¹³⁵See note 47 above.

¹³⁶-lit. "to conquer us"

¹³⁷Although not spelled out here, we know from other versions that Qeretajdn has decided to burn down his own castle, to create a diversion which will save Mem and Zîn's honor. Qeretajdn wants to take out the young stallion to ride off somewhere, but also possibly to save it from the burning castle.

¹³⁸-Black one.

You resemble the [storm]clouds of April;
I don't know who you have argued with."

After hearing this, Qeretajdn became mournful, then said to Lady Pert:

[283] "Enough piling words upon words,
Mem and Zîn may today be taken to task,
Bekir is a slanderer, he'll put Mem to the dagger."

"In that case,¹³⁹
Take the young stallion,
Make haste! Mount him [and ride off]"

Mîr Sêvdn, heading for Qeretajdn's castle, saw the servant [Merđn] pacing back and forth¹⁴⁰, and said, "Servant, what is wrong?"

"My mîr, the mendene tree¹⁴¹ is a black tree,
From it comes a bright green and red flame,
Inside, noble Gorgn¹⁴² has burnt up.

The mendene tree is a wet tree,
From it comes a green flame,
Inside, golden Gorgn has burnt up."

When Merđn said these words,

¹³⁹-lit. "If your word is such." Notice that Lady Pert's words in this verse are quite terse. She has indeed stopped 'piling words upon words'.

¹⁴⁰-lit. "coming and going"

¹⁴¹Such a tree name does not appear in any of the dictionaries or word lists I consulted. The closest I could find was Menendarmudu in the *Dardeme Sözlüğü*, vol. IX, p. 3161: in the Turkish of Gümüşhane (between Trabzon on the Black Sea coast and Erzurum, in what is today northeastern Turkey), this apparently refers to a type of green pear which, when it ripens in the summer, turns yellow.

¹⁴²From other versions we know that Gorgn was Qeretajdn's infant son. These verses have a parallel in ZK-1, p. 59.

The mîr was filled with sorrow¹⁴³,
The jindîs came behind him, two by two.

When Merdîn gave this report,
The mîr's heart fell to pieces,
The jindîs left the garden altogether.

Beko said: "Mîr, please come to this palace,
I'll go look into this case,
Who did it, set the fire.

Please come to the private palace,
Listen to my analysis,
I don't know if the horsecloth burned up, or the *palas*¹⁴⁴,

When the jindîs of Jizra left the garden, Beko hid himself in it. When Mem and Zîn got up, Beko was watching.

Mem and Zîn rejoiced, and spoke [animatedly]. Zîn said to Mem:

"Mem, you saw what the master did,
We have been saved from disgrace¹⁴⁵,
They blew up a landmine, and rid us of it.....

[284] The three brothers are men of their words,¹⁴⁶
No one can burn down the castle,
[Or] their goodness will be told.¹⁴⁷

143-lit. "The liver and upper chest organs of the mîr were burning"

144 *palas* means 'a coarse wooden pileless carpet'; 'sackcloth'; 'horsecloth'. *Gilik*, which appears in the same line, also means 'horsecloth'.

145-lit. "from before the swords." This could mean figuratively 'the putting to death [of offenders] to save oneself from disgrace'.

146-lit. 'boys of saying'

147 Perhaps this means 'or else they will carry out their threat'.

Mem put on his cloak; he and Zîn headed for Qeretajdîn's castle. The castle was burning. Beko suddenly got up from behind the cover¹⁴⁸ of the trees and left: Mem was just too greedy¹⁴⁹.

Beko went, it was all over. By the time Mem and Zîn reached the castle, the fire had been put out.¹⁵⁰

Four or five days later, Beko went to the mîr and said, "My mîr, we must collect some gold, and give about 100 gold pieces to Qeretajdîn¹⁵¹: [if we do this,] it is possible that he will no longer be at odds with us.

Then they sent for Mem. The three brothers, Zîn and the jindîs went to the mîr. Zîn made coffee for the assembly, and gave it to them.

Beko asked, "How is it?" The mîr said, "It's cold water." Zîn gave the mîr another cup, and the mîr this one a lot; he cried.

Beko said, "My mîr, why are you crying?"

The mîr said, "You died, that's why I'm crying!" and the mîr gave Beko a slap on the cheek.

It was Beko's turn for coffee, and Qeretajdîn kne that when Zîn gave Beko coffee, Mem would laugh.

On the way [to Jizra], Mem had made a rabbit from a handkerchief. Qeretajdîn took it out of his pocket and threw it to the crowd.¹⁵²

Everyone laughed, and Mem and Zîn laughed with them. Beko incited the mîr. The mîr was informed that they were laughing at the rabbit.

148-lit. "the castle [of the tree]"

149**bû** qjîna Memê - lit. "Mem's screaming happened." Cf. the following expression in Khamoian: **Qîrîn ji *filankesê* tê** -lit. "Screaming comes from *someone* which means that someone is too greedy. [Qjîn = Qîrîn] If this idiom sheds light on the sentence at hand, it would mean something like "Mem was just too greedy." But if so, then what sort of greed is intended? Perhaps this means that Beko found Mem and Zîn's secret tryst an example of greed, or of some other negative quality.

150-lit. "the group had extinguished the fire."

151to help him rebuild his castle.

152A Kurdish friend of mine, a twenty-eight year old woman (in 1988) from Kirkûk, Iraqi Kurdistan, told me that as a child she remembers seeing 'rabbits' made out of handkerchiefs for entertaining children. This must be a traditional Kurdish game. This motif occurs also in EP-1. See EP-1, note #120).

When the crowd dispersed, Beko took the gold that had been collected and placed it before Qeretajdîn, who made no reply.

Later on, the crowd returned to the castle and sat down. The gold had stayed with Beko; once again he placed it before Qeretajdîn, and the group said, "Qeretajdîn, for our sake you must accept the gold."

Qeretajdîn, not wanting to offend the crowd, picked up the gold and sent it home.

Beko groaned [and] said, "Mîr, why don't you speak, and show how generous you are?"

[285] Mem said, "Beko, today you must recite a song about me!¹⁵³"

Beko said, "Mem's beloved, I have seen you,
A black, mangy Arab,
I saw her selling yoghurt!¹⁵⁴"

Mem: "Beko, you are lying through your teeth!¹⁵⁵,
Fibbing from head to toe,
Mine is a houri among houris."

Beko: "The one my Mem is in love with,
Is a black Arab with cracked lips,
I saw her collecting yoghurt!¹⁵⁶ in a bucket."

Mem: "Beko, that one isn't my beloved,
My beloved is Lady Zîn,
The daughter of mîr Zêvdîn,
The sister of mîr Sêvdîn,

¹⁵³-lit. "in my stead"

¹⁵⁴Dew (Sorant dâ Persian dâgh دآد), is a drink made of yoghurt and water. The Turks call this ayran, the Armenians - t'an. It is not clear to me what *selling dew* refers to: perhaps it has a sexual connotation?

¹⁵⁵-lit. "you are lying in our faces"

¹⁵⁶See note 154 above.

Owner of a green gown¹⁵⁷,
I'll say it again, it's Lady Zîn."

The mîr said: "Boys, reprimand this nobody,
Grab hold of him, stick daggers in him."

Qeretajdîn: "If you harm Mem,
I'll cut off your heads one at a time."

Efan: "Before you cause our brother Mem to perish,
I'll harm 100 of you and kill 500 of you."

Cheko: "Before you do away with Mem,
I'll do you all in."

Forty pairs of strongmen blocked the doors of the diwan,
Mem stood behind the door, a dagger in hand,
For fear, no one stirred from his place!¹⁵⁸.

Qeretajdîn said angrily, "Mir, may your house also be ruined, may your honor put you in your grave. You do as Beko bids, but Beko is a villain, he is deceiving you."

Qeretajdîn and his brothers¹⁵⁹ got up and went back to their castle. The next day they gave the mir a note, declaring war!¹⁶⁰

Beko and the mîr went to see the four brothers. The mîr said, "Qeretajdîn, [foreign] nations have come at us, they will destroy us, we must go to war.

The three brothers told the mîr that they would go to war, but that Mem [286] would not go with them. Then they instructed the mîr to take good care of Mem.

As soon as the decree went out, all [ablebodied men] headed for war.

¹⁵⁷See note 10 above.

¹⁵⁸-lit. "no one changed his seat"

¹⁵⁹-lit. "with all three brothers" including Mem.

¹⁶⁰wekf şere

A few days later, Beko went to a shepherd, giving him some gold, and said [to him], "You must soil Mem and Zîn's names, saying that they are profligates." The next day it was announced around town that Zîn had committed adultery.

When the mîr heard this, he was even more ready to explode. Then Beko got up and went to the mîr, saying to him, "Mîr, now that the three brothers are gone, let's get even with Mem!¹⁶¹"

The mîr said, "How can we do that?"

Beko and the mîr agreed on a way to get Mem [thrown] into jail.

They summoned Mem, [and] the mîr said to him, "Memê delal, let's you and I play chess. If you beat me, Zîn is your with our blessings, but if I beat you, I'll throw you in prison."

Mem agreed to the mîr's conditions.

They began to play. Mem beat the mîr two times. When Beko saw that things were going badly [for the mîr], he whispered in the mîr's ear, saying, "Summon Zîn to come to the window: let Mem see her and lose his concentration, so that you can win."

Beko went to Zîn and said, "My poor Zîn, Mem has beaten the mîr two times at chess, there's only the third round before Mem is totally yours!¹⁶² because they are playing over you. Go to the window now, so that Mem can see you, and get so happy that he wins more quickly."

Zîn obeyed Beko and stood by the window. [Meanwhile] Beko went to the players,

And said: "Come on, mîr, you are both boys,
You are beating each other's queen!¹⁶³
Why don't you switch places for a little while?"

The mîr and Mem switched places,
Their castles and queens chipped away at each other!¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹Were em sêrekê serê Memê çêkin.

¹⁶²-lit. "before you attain Mem"

¹⁶³or, knight.

¹⁶⁴hev birastin. Birastin does not appear in any of the Kurmanji dictionaries. The closest that I could find is biraz, which in Sorani can mean 'roughening by chipping (especially a mill-stone),' and by

The mîr said, "Beko, you were right!"

Mem said, "At the window my Zîn is like a slap in the face!¹⁶⁵
Her golden locks fall down in curls
My eyes have gone dark, I'm taking a castle instead of a pawn.

[287] The mîr said, "Mem, I've beaten you, yes beaten you,
I've chased you into ruin,
I'll throw you into the stone prison!¹⁶⁶"

Mem said, "Mr, you've won one game, I've won two.
Zîn is neither alive nor dead,¹⁶⁷
Why are you arresting me without cause?"

When the mîr won the game from Mem, Beko tied Mem's hands behind his back and said, "Mem, you are a prisoner of the mîr." Then Beko took Mem and threw him into the earthen¹⁶⁸ prison.

Zîn was very troubled, and went home.

The next day, Zîn summoned workers and secretly told them to dig from under her house to Mem's prison [cell], to make a large underground tunnel!¹⁶⁹, so that Mem could secretly come to Zîn's house.

extension 'scolding' or 'censuring'; it can also mean 'stone lining of a grave, of an underground water channel, etc.'

¹⁶⁵şaka şemaqa. According to Kurdoev, şemaqa is a variant of şelmaq, which means 'slap in the face,' 'box on the ears'.

¹⁶⁶These three lines are almost identical in this version and ZK-1 (for the original Kurdish text, see Dzhaliil & Ordikhan Dzhaliilov. *Zargotina K'urda*, vol. 1, p. 60).

¹⁶⁷i.e., see what a state Zîn is in.

¹⁶⁸or 'ashen'

¹⁶⁹herqeke mezin. Herq- does not appear in any of the dictionaries, but the Arabic word kharq خرق , which means 'hole,' 'opening,' seems to fit.

Beko went once or twice to the prison, and noticed that Mem was in fine condition.¹⁷⁰ He locked the prison gates, went to the mîr and said, "My mîr, do prisoners grow thin or plump?"

"They grow thin."

"Then why is Mem in such fine condition?"

The mîr and Beko went to the prison, had the door of Mem's cell opened, and took him out of his cell. Beko was right, Mem had not grown thin.

Consequently, they took Mem and threw him in the stone prison.

When they had locked the gate of the stone prison on Mem, they went back and stood before the door of the earthen prison.

Before the mîr's eyes, Beko jumped into the cell, and kept on going until he came out at Zîn's house. The talk about Zîn, that she continually took Mem to her house, proved correct.

A few months later, it was rumored that Qeretajdîn was returning from war with his army, and that they would soon reach home.

Beko thought [and] said, "If Qeretajdîn comes and finds Mem in prison, he will lay waste to the whole city. Beko went to Zîn.

Zîn only ate once every two days, she cried constantly, great tears came flowing down her red cheeks.

Beko said, "Zîn, enough of these tricks,
Enough causing tears to flow¹⁷¹ down your cheeks.
Go release Memê Alan [from prison]."
Zîn made herself ready,

[288] She quickly came down from her room,¹⁷²
And went to her thin Mem.

On the way, a dervish crossed her path, and Zîn said, "*Dewrêş baba*, where are you going?"

"I'm going travelling."

¹⁷⁰-lit. "that the rose of Mem's cheeks was bright."

¹⁷¹-lit. "to rain"

¹⁷²See note 78 above.

"I'll give you a letter; take it to Efn, Chekn and Qeretajdn."

"I won't take it."

"Why won't you take it?"

"If you give me a kiss, I'll take it." Zîn held up her cheeks for the dervish (to kiss), and he showered them with kisses. The dervish was a sheikh.¹⁷³

Zîn wrote Qeretajdn what was necessary, then added that in exchange for delivering the letter, the dervish kissed her and that he had asked for the kiss.

The dervish set out.

Three days later, the letter reached Qeretajdn. Qeretajdn read the whole letter and said, "Dervish, why did you ask for a kiss from Zîn?"

The dervish said, "No!"

Qeretajdn killed the dervish.^{173a}



Zîn went and stood before the stone dungeon.

Her tears did not stop coming down. Even the stones themselves wept at Zîn's state.

Zîn said, "Mem, look up at once,
My stature is tall, my forehead is sparkling,
It's time to rejoice, lay aside grief."¹⁷⁴

Mem said, "Zîn, you have not come to set me free,
You know not, o heart of mine,¹⁷⁵ what you are saying,

¹⁷³ Apparently, sheikhs had the right to receive things that others would be refused. For example, according to Kurdoev, *şêxê biskê* is 1) "a sheikh with the right to receive a portion of wool when sheep are shorn," and 2) among the Yezidis, a sheikh who performs a religious ritual on a (male) child on the day of his birth or later."

^{173a} Motif K978. Uriah letter. Man carries written order for his own execution. This famous motif appears in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

¹⁷⁴ -lit. "Rejoicing has come, change grief."

¹⁷⁵ i.e., Zîn.

You have come to lose me totally.¹⁷⁶

Zîn: "My poor Mem, my mind is crazy,
My stature is tall, my cheeks are dripping,¹⁷⁷
It's time to rejoice, leave aside all grief."

Zîn lowered a white rope into the dungeon,
She threw it to Memê Alan,
Mem was slow to move.

[289] All his joints were twisted and torn,¹⁷⁸
The blood came out on his fingernails.

She threw into the dungeon a yellow rope,
Mem wrapped it around his waist, brought himself up,
And expired on the spot.

May God lay waste to the land of the *jindîs*,
May it be ruined and razed to the ground,
It is evil the way they keep apart the hands of those in love.

Zîn's servant went to the dungeon, [and] Zîn said to him:
"Servant, wretched one,
Do me a favor, God bless you,
[Go] see who that is,¹⁷⁹ my heart has gone to pieces."

¹⁷⁶As in note 166 above, these three lines are almost identical to their counterpart in ZK-1 (see Dzhaliil & Ordikhan Dzhaliilov. *Zargotina K'urda* vol. 1, p. 62).

¹⁷⁷Gulgul could mean "dripping [with tears]," or perhaps "rosy," which might be a more appropriate parallel with the sparkling forehead a few lines above.

¹⁷⁸-lit. "His finger-joints and joints were twisted/torn"

¹⁷⁹Apparently she sees someone approaching from a distance.

The servant went to call the Lady¹⁸⁰ to come to Zīn.
 Perf hurried to her,
 Bringing face and hair together.¹⁸¹

When she saw the corpse of unlucky Mem, she was dumbstruck. The mīr and Beko also came to [view] Mem's corpse. Zīn lamented her situation, saying:

"My mīr, won't you tell me,
 Beko was your witness,
 Mem and Zīn are going to hell."

Lady Perf: "May it be so,
 May the heads of your three lions be lost,
 Mem's condition may certainly be so."

Beko: "I took an oath by Yasīn,¹⁸²
 That today Mem would be won over,
 I would give away the property of Medina¹⁸³
 For the sake of Lady Zīn.

So enough of these tricks,
 Enough of shedding tears on these rosy cheeks,
 As we have come, so shall we also die."

Lady Perf: "O Zīn, who would have thought!¹⁸⁴
 When Mem headed for Jizra,

¹⁸⁰Stīya, from colloquial Arabic stīī (<sayyīdatī) 'my lady'. This apparently is a reference to Lady Perf, Zīn's sister (and Qeretajīn's wife). In some versions, Perf is known as Stīya throughout.

¹⁸¹I am not sure what this idiom means.

¹⁸²The name of a surah or chapter of the Quran.

¹⁸³The second holiest city of Islam.

¹⁸⁴=lit. "by the grief of Mem's heart"

These disasters would befall Mem and Zîn."

[290] "Zîn, I swear by Mem, over whom you weep,
At the sight of him no one acted supportively¹⁸⁵
At his death, Mem's eyes were without mother or father."

They took Mem's corpse,
Placed it on a black stretcher,
The two sisters mourned him deeply.

Zîn's heart was melting, her tears were coming down like raindrops on her red cheeks, with aching heart she said:

"Sister, the clouds of April are thick,
Snow and rain come down together,
In the grave, Mem's sides will ache.

Tonight will be a wet night,
Snow and rain will rise together,
Around Mem's shroud it will be wet."

Beko scowled sharply at the two sisters, then stepped forward and said:

"Enough of these tricks,
I'll swing a ball at the polo¹⁸⁶ field,
Pick one up from Jizra Bota,¹⁸⁷
Memê Alan is no more."

Zîn said, "Beko, that is out of the question,
For me the earth's surface has been lost,

¹⁸⁵-lit. "no one was cushion and arm rest"

¹⁸⁶Kazo is a game played on horseback, similar to polo.

¹⁸⁷Apparently this means "choose a suitor from Jizra Bota [rather than a foreigner]"

You would be happy to have Zîn for yourself."

Lady Perf said, "Beko, cause of Mem and Zîn's ruin,¹⁸⁸
May you find no goodness on the face of the earth,
Zîn has been laid low to the point of death."

Zîn said, "Zîn's cry for help reaches as far as Shems¹⁸⁹ of the
sunlight,
Dust has quietly fallen on [her] string of buttons,
Mem is dead, Zîn won't live to see the noon.

Zîn's cry reaches the saint of the cliffs,¹⁹⁰
Dust has fallen on [her] string of earrings,
Zîn won't live to see the evening."

When the maidens took Zîn home,
How sick and indisposed [she was],
The maidens were her pillows and armrests.¹⁹¹

When they brought Zîn home, mîr Sêvdîn and the jindîs of Jizra [291] came and gathered around Zîn. She was in bad shape, she had grown pale,¹⁹² the dust of death was all over her face.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁸-lit. "culprit of Mem and Zîn"

¹⁸⁹According to Bakaez, Şems is the name of a Yezidi deity, often employed in blessings and curses. The name derives from the Arabic word for sun, şams شمس. This passage has analogues in ZK-1 (see there, note # (86)), and in EP-1 (see there, note #(152)).

¹⁹⁰In EP-1, şexs is translated as 'saint.' The corresponding passage there and in ZK-1 has şexsê êvara - 'the saint of the evening' instead of şexsê zinara.

¹⁹¹i.e., they physically supported her.

¹⁹²-lit. "the color had gone from her"

¹⁹³-lit. "mouth and lips"

When she opened her eyes and saw the jindîs of her father's city gathered around her, she lifted up her head, saw the mîr, and said:

"Mîr Sêvdîn, I am dying, you will be left,
Place my grave together with Mem's,
Position!¹⁹⁴ us back to back."

On that same day, Zîn too passed away. They made her a funeral, buried her, then returned home.

. . .
.

Qeretajdîn was nearing the city with his troops.

He said, "Brothers, see how ill-mannered Mem is, he has not come out to greet us." Efn said, "Brother, I fear that all is not well with Mem, otherwise he would have come."

The city came into view. From afar they could see that the city was in mourning. ¹⁹⁵The brothers rode on toward Lady Perf's quarters, and came to the gate. Lady Perf came out and gave news of Mem and Zîn.

She said, "You left, year has overtaken year,
Have you forgotten what pain is, what grief?¹⁹⁶
Mem and Zîn have entered their graves.

May mîr Sêvdîn be every mîr,
May Beko be law and order,

¹⁹⁴ *Osêwrtnîn*, from an unattested verb *Sêw[i]randîn. I am guessing that it means "to position," "to line up."

¹⁹⁵ -lit. "that in the city is mourning"

¹⁹⁶ -lit. "Don't you know what pain is, what <fiwâl> is?" *fiwâl*, from Arabic *ahwâl* **أحوال**, the broken plural of *ḥāl* **حال**, means "situation," "condition."

May Mem be in the *pir's* heaven.¹⁹⁷

May mîr Sevçîn be joyous,
May Beko be arrows and quiver,
May Mem be black <ber ferake>”

Qeretajdîn made no reply, but slowly turned and said,
“Brothers, these people have had it,¹⁹⁸ go around
Cutting off heads, leaving children alone
Spill blood immeasurable.

Brothers, make haste,
Draw your swords from their sheathes,
Avenge the deaths of Mem and Zîn.”

Everyone¹⁹⁹ heard that the three brothers had come and that they were about to wreak havoc on the city and its people. They sent their notables to the three brothers.

[292] Their elders²⁰⁰ threw themselves at the feet of Qeretajdîn and his brothers, who made no reply.

The elders caused them to dismount, gave them a royal reception, and tried to negotiate with them. [Meanwhile], three months passed.

Beko and the mîr moved to a house whose walls were guarded²⁰¹.

¹⁹⁷ber felekê pîr. Pîr, literally 'old man,' is a term used both by Islamic Sufis and by Yezidis. It refers to a spiritual leader in both. In addition, in Yezidi mythology, this is the name given to guardian-gods, e.g. the guardian-god of cattle, of sheep, etc. According to Steingass' Persian-English dictionary, pîr-i falak فلک پیر refers to the planet Saturn.

¹⁹⁸e'cel hatîye -lit. 'the end (of life) has come'

¹⁹⁹cimae't -lit. 'the group'

²⁰⁰rişaf -lit. 'white-beards'

²⁰¹pêla. The meaning 'guarded' or 'protected' did not appear in the dictionaries, but it makes more sense in the context than the following meanings found in the dictionaries for p'êl: "wave (of the sea)"; "time," "period"; "blowing (of the wind)"; "horn (of an animal)"; "cleverness."

Beko said, "Mîr, this is not right. Come, let's go throw ourselves [on the mercy of] the three brothers, maybe they will find a solution for us. The next day they went to the three brothers dressed as dervishes.

Qeretajdîn recognized them [when] the two of them threw themselves at the feet of the three brothers.

Qeretajdîn said, "I pardon you." Beko and the mîr rejoiced and returned home.

The following day, Beko went to Mem and Zîn's tomb, to recite a dirge²⁰².

When Beko opened the door of the tomb, it seemed to him that Mem and Zîn had sweated hailstones. He reported to the mîr that Mem and Zîn were still alive.

The people of Jizra went to the tomb of the two of them. Qeretajdîn, Chekîn and Efin remembered Mem and Zîn. The three brothers thought that the couple had fooled them,²⁰³ that they were not dead. They too went to the tomb, [and] saw that Mem and Zîn were in fact dead, their faces turned to face each other.²⁰⁴

Beko was standing at another grave.

Qeretajdîn drew his sword and aimed it at Beko's neck, then swung it.

Good are the three months of summer,
 Very fine are the summer pastures of Fereshin,
 Nowhere on earth can be found Memê Alan and Zîn.²⁰⁵

²⁰²dewrkê Although the form Dewrijik does not appear in the dictionaries, Izoff has a form Dûrikê miriya meaning "dirge," "lament," "funeral song."

²⁰³-ijt. 'us'

²⁰⁴It will be remembered that Zîn instructed mîr Sêvdîn to bury her beside Mem, positioning them back to back (see above, note 194). In other versions, it is explicitly stated that they were buried back to back, and when the grave was opened a few days later, they were lying face to face.

²⁰⁵This three-line verse ending is almost identical with that of ZK-1.

Jndi, Hajie, ed. "Mam i Zin," in *Kurdskie Epicheskie Pesni-Skazy*. (Moskva : Izdatel'stvo Vostochnoi Literatury, 1962), pp. 98-111. [Russian translation only; original was lost during the blockade of Leningrad] (EP-2)

EP-2. Collected and translated into Russian by O.L. Vil'chevskii. Reprinted from *Skazki Narodov Vostoka* [= Tales of the Peoples of the East] (Moscow & Leningrad, 1938). The original Kurdish text was burnt during the blockade of Leningrad (during World War II), and consequently we have only the Russian translation.

Mam i Zin (EP-2)

(98) Lo-lo, fellow, fellow among fellows!
 This is the story of Mem the sufferer,
 Mem, son of Al-pasha.
 The story of two unlucky lovers,
 This is the song of Zin of the black eyes
 And her fortune, ordained by fate.
 This is the song of Zin of the golden locks,
 The story of Mem's brave and wise
 Friend Karatadjin,
 Of the cruel Mir-Sevdin,
 The story of the villain Bekir Awan,
 Of matters which happened in Bakhtan¹...

Here is the story of Mem and Zin:

Two doves were flying in the sky,
 Two doves were cooing and singing,
 Two doves alit on a tree,
 Two doves looked in the window...

Near the window Mem, son of Al-pasha, was sleeping. Mem was handsome, Mem was a hero. Mem was the son of the master of the land of Mukhurzem. And where is this land of Mukhurzem, how does one walk or ride there? Neither you know nor I – no one knows.

¹-Bohtan, the province in which the city of Jezir (Cizir), or Jezira Bohtan, is located.

The doves sit on a tree and look in the window, admiring Mem. The younger dove says to the older one, "Sister, there isn't another Adonis² like Mem in the world, nor a youth more beautiful than Mem. Can there be a girl (99) worthy of Mem, son of Al-pasha, master of the land of Mukhurzemīn?"

The older dove answered her, "Truly, Sister, there isn't another Adonis like Mem in the world, nor a youth more beautiful than Mem. You are still young, you don't know a lot yet, but I have flown over the whole world, and have seen many wondrous things. I know of a girl worthy of Mem, I know a beauty more lovely than Mem: she is the daughter of Mir-Sevdin, the master of Jezira Bota. Zīn alone is worthy of Mem, Zīn alone is more beautiful than Mem."

Two doves flew out of the tree,
Two doves flew around the world,
Two doves sank into the sky,
Two doves set down at Zīn's bedside...

The younger dove says, "Sister, there is no other girl as beautiful as Zīn in the world, nor a beauty as lovely as Zīn. Only Mem, son of Al-pasha, is worthy of her. How shall we bring them together?"

The older dove says:
"Sister, we will obtain a doveskin³ [for her]."
Two doves were flying in the sky,
Two doves were cooing and singing,
They obtained a doveskin⁴
And brought it to the girl's bedside...

The world is full of wonders! What do we know about these doves? The doves dressed Zīn in the doveskin, Zīn became a dove, and off they flew.

²красавец = lit. "Handsome man."

³перуны голубиные i.e. set of dove feathers/wings. Motifs R621.1.6. Dress of feathers D1069.2. Magic feather dress D1520.35. Magic transportation by feather-dress.

⁴From God, according to ZK-1 and EP-1.

Three doves were flying in the sky,
 Three doves were cooing and singing,
 Three doves flew around the world,
 Three doves set down at Mem's bedside.

The doves removed Zin's doveskin, put Zin in Mem's bed, then flew away. During the night Zin accidentally brushed against Mem's leg. Mem woke up, and Zin did too. Zin said to Mem, "You so-and-so, how dare you come and lie down in my bed? Don't you know where you've lain down? You're lying in the bed of Zin. I am Zin, daughter of Mir-Sevdim, niece of Karatadjin, sister of Arfin⁵, fiancée of Chekiné. I am Zin, mistress⁷ of the Green Castle, daughter of the master of Jezira Bota."

Zin thought she was in her own bed! Mem said to her, "What are you talking about, you so-and-so, how dare you come and lie down in *my* bed? Don't you know where you've (100) lain down? You're lying in Mem's bed. I am Mem, son of Al-pasha, master of the land of Mukhurzemin."

Mem didn't know doves had placed Zin in his bed. Poor Mem had been sleeping and didn't see them.

Mem and Zin starting quarreling. He said, "This is *my* bed!", and she said, "This is *my* bed!" Then Zin said to Mem, "Okay, since you say that this is your bed, tell me what side the hearth is on: when I'm lying in my bed, the hearth is on the left side."

Mem said, "Okay, when I lie in my bed, the hearth is on the right side."

They looked and saw that the hearth was on the right side of the bed -- so the bed was Mem's! Mem won the bet, while poor Zin lost. She didn't know that doves had dressed her in a doveskin and brought her to Mukhurzemin, where they placed her in Mem's bed.

⁵Or possibly "Arfan" / "B'rfan."

⁶Or possibly "Chekan." In this version, it doesn't seem to matter that Zin is already betrothed to someone else, as no further mention is made of it.

⁷Or "owner."

They fell into each other's arms, and slept that way until dawn. Early in the morning Zin gave Mem her ring, saying, "Let this ring be a token of our night together." Mem took the ring, and the two of them fell asleep.

The doves came back in the morning, dressed Zin in her doveskin, and flew with her to Jezira Bota, where they placed her in her own bed, then flew away.

Mem woke up sad. He had no memory of what had happened during the night. Mem was sad and bored. The time came for Mem to go to Al-pasha's diwan, but Mem didn't go. Al-pasha sent a servant after Mem, to call him to the diwan. The servant saw that Mem was sitting around [looking] sad and bored. Mem told the servant, "I hear and obey, I'll be there soon" Mem began to get ready to go to the diwan of Al-pasha. He took a pitcher and a basin to wash his hands. When he looked at his hands, he saw a ring on his finger. He remembered Zin and what she had said. Then he set out for the diwan of Al-pasha.

Mem came to the diwan. Ministers⁸, deputies⁹, and the people of the diwan were seated there. Al-pasha was seated on cushions in the middle, drinking coffee, smoking a pipe, in short enjoying himself. Mem didn't have his own place, but generally sat beside Al-pasha, pouring his coffee and stuffing his pipe. [On this day] Mem sat in the corner examining his ring.

Al-pasha said to Mem, "Mem, why are you sitting in the corner? Why are you sad and bored? You haven't fallen in love, have you?"

Mem said, "I'm in love with Zin, daughter of Mir-Sevdim, niece of Karatadjin, sister of Arfin, fiancée of Chekin. I'm in love with Zin, mistress of the Green Castle, daughter of the master of Jezira Bota."

(101) Al-pasha said, "Where is Jezira Bota?" (We don't know where Mukhurzemin is, how should they know where Jezira Bota is?)¹⁰ Mem said, "I know where Jezira Bota is. I am in love with Zin, daughter of Mir-Sevdim, master of Jezira Bota. I will go to Jezira Bota. Here is the ring she gave me last night."

⁸Wazdr.

⁹Wakfl.

¹⁰It is ironic that no one has ever heard of Jezira Bota, since in fact it is Mukhurzemin that is an imaginary place. Jezira Bohtan really exists. It should be noted, however, that in Southern Kurmanji [and Mann's Mukri (OM)] version, Mukhurzemin is replaced by Yemen, which is, like Jezira Bohtan, a real place.

Al-pasha assembled scholars, wisemen, dervishes, mullahs, ministers, deputies, he gathered all the men, to see if anyone knew anything about Jezira Bota.

They said, "There is no such place as Jezira Bota. Nobody knows anything about such a place. Mem is crazy! Where is this Jezira Bota?"

Mem said, "You don't know where Jezira Bota is and neither do I, but here is the ring that Zin, daughter of Mir-Sevdin, master of Jezira Bota, gave me last night. I'm going to Jezira Bota. I'm not crazy."

The whole diwan said, "We never heard of Jezira Bota: where is it? There is no such place! Mem is crazy."

Mem left the diwan. He went to the Turkish garden. (Al-pasha had a large garden in which nightingales sang, flowers bloomed, and brooks babbled. It was a good garden). Mem went to the Turkish garden and grew sad.

Al-pasha said, "Send the daughters of the ministers and deputies to him in the garden; let them cheer him up."

The minister's daughter and the deputy's daughter went to the Turkish garden. When Mem saw them, he said, "Minister's daughter, Deputy's daughter, what do you want from me? I am sad over Zin, daughter of Mir-Sevdin, master of Jezira Bota. I don't need you. I have given my word, and I will keep it. This ring is a token of what I promised last night."

The minister's daughter and the deputy's daughter left Mem alone in the garden. Mem got up and returned to the city of Mukhurzemin. He went to the bazaar, and headed for a weapon-maker's shop.

"Peace be upon you, weapon-maker! Hammer me out a sword, a fine sword. Take as much money, gold, and jewels as you need."

The weapon-maker replied, "All right. In three days I will make you a sword."

Next Mem went to a blacksmith.

"Peace be upon you blacksmith! Prepare for me a horse harness. Take as much money, gold, and jewels as you need."

The blacksmith replied, "All right. In three days I will make you a horse harness."

Mem went out to look for a horse. He went to the fields, to the plains, to the mountains. Mem saw many horses, many fine (102) horses, but he couldn't find one right for him. Finally Mem came upon a mare.

"Peace be upon you, mare!" said Mem, "Get me a horse!"

The mare replied, "All right, I'll get you a horse. Go to the such-and-such mountains, to such-and-such a ravine, where a herd of Arabian horses grazes. Those are my sons, choose whichever one you want."

Mem went to the such-and-such mountains, to such-and-such a ravine. He saw a herd of grazing horses. There were Arabian horses, Turkmen horses, Karabagh horses.

Off to the side, by a brook, Mem saw a foal grazing. He went up to the foal and said, "Here is my horse." Mem took the horse and returned to town, where he put the foal in the stable. Mem said to the stable-man, "Peace be upon you, stable-man, take good care of this foal, he's my horse."

Two days had passed since Mem left Al-pasha's diwan. Mem returned home, lay down on his bed and fell asleep.

Al-pasha followed Mem around¹¹. He was afraid that Mem would leave and go to Jezira Bota. The weapon-maker came to Al-pasha and said, "Mem has ordered a sword." The blacksmith came to Al-pasha and said, "Mem has ordered a horse harness." The stable-man came to Al-pasha and said, "Mem has gotten a horse."

Al-pasha went and threw the horse in shackles. The following day Mem went to the weapon-maker and took his sword; he went to the blacksmith and took the horse harness; he went to the stable, and saw that his horse was in shackles.

The horse said to Mem, "Don't be afraid, Mem. If you want to reach Zin, I will take you to Jezira Bota. I will smash these chains. Saddle me up!"

Mem saddled up the horse, led it out of the stable, then put on his sword, mounted his horse, and looked at the ring.

Al-pasha and the whole diwan looked at Mem, thinking, "How will Mem go while the horse is shackled up?"

Mem mounted his horse and said to him, "Horse, if you are my horse, take me to Jezira Bota. I have a rendez-vous with Zin, daughter of Mir-Sevдин, master of Jezira Bota."

The horse snorted, neighed, moved his head, kicked with his feet, and the shackles fell off. He jumped up, and in three leaps Mem had vanished from view. Al-pasha and his diwan were awestruck. But let us return to Mem.

¹¹i.e., Al-pasha kept tabs on Mem.

Mem rode for one, two, three days. He passed by unknown places and strange lands. As he passed through a field, he saw a farmer plowing. Mem went up to the farmer. "Peace be upon you," said Mem, "What is the name of this land, (103) who is its ruler, and what is he called?"

The farmer answered, "Peace be upon you, horseman, do you really not know this country? This is Jezira Bota; its ruler is Mir-Sevdim, and he has a daughter Zin."

Mem exclaimed, "May you be well, o farmer, what you have told me is good news. I will make it to Zin, I will keep my word!"

Mem took his leave of the farmer and went on to Jezira Bota. Let's leave Mem and betake ourselves to Jezira Bota.

There were two Zins in Jezira Bota: one was the daughter of Mir-Sevdim, the other one, who was the sister of Bekir-Awan, was a sorceress and enchantress. By looking in books and by other methods, she found out that Mem was coming to Jezira Bota. She got up, covered her face¹², and went to a well on the edge of the city. Mem came to the well to water his horse. This Zin gave the horse some water and said, "Peace be upon you, Mem, son of Al-pasha, master of the nighttime pact!¹³"

"Peace be upon you, Zin, I have carried out our agreement," answered Mem, thinking that the real Zin had come to the well.

Mem got down off his horse and asked Zin to uncover her face. Zin the sorceress, delighted, uncovered her face. Mem took one look at her and was horrified. "Why," he said, "have I undergone so much suffering, why have I come so far from my native land, to see an ogress like this!" Zin the sister of Bekir-Awan was ugly: [she was] swarthy and had a long nose. "Zin resembles a black Arab. In my father's kingdom there are lots of these!", thought Mem to himself.

Once again Zin said, "Peace be upon you, Mem, son of Al-pasha, master of the nighttime pact!"

Mem's horse understood the trick. Mem's horse grasped how sly Zin, the sister of Bekir-Awan, was, and said to Mem, "Mem, this is not the real Zin. This is the sister of Bekir-Awan. She is a sorceress and an enchantress. By looking in books and by other methods, she found out about your secret. Let's go on into the city."

¹²It is common for Muslim women to cover their heads with kerchiefs, and their faces with veils. In fact, in traditional Muslim society it is unacceptable for women to go around uncovered.

¹³This is apparently a reference to Mem and Zin's nighttime introduction.

Then Mem grasped how sly Zin, the sister of Bekir-Awan, was and caught on to her trick. He turned the horse around and left the well.

Zin, the sister of Bekir-Awan, was left alone at the well. Mem went on into the city, having avoided trouble. Mem entered the city, and approached the river. Zin, the daughter of Mir-Sevdim, was sitting by the river with her girl friends. As soon as Mem saw Zin the beauty, he recognized her black eyes, and his heart started pounding. He urged his horse on and leapt over to the other side of the river with a single bound. Mem's horse stopped beside Zin.

Mem bent down and kissed Zin. Zin accepted Mem's (104) kiss, removed her golden amulet (which was worth the entire taxes of Egypt for seven years) and handed it over to Mem.

Mem took the amulet from Zin's hand and wore it on his chest. He took one [more] look at Zin, then with one bound crossed back to the other side of the river on his horse.

Zin's girl friends stood admiringly by, watching Mem and Zin's encounter, exclaiming, "Praised be Mem, praised be Mem, son of Al-pasha!" Let's leave Zin with her girl friends and see what Mem is up to.

After riding around the city, Mem came to Karatadjin's house. Karatadjin was Zin's uncle¹⁴, Mir-Sevdim's general. Mem dismounted, took his horse by the reins, and came up to the house. Setiya, Karatadjin's wife, came out to greet Mem, took the horse, and escorted Mem into the house, where she seated him on the carpet, on cushions. Mem became Karatadjin's guest.

Mem stretched out on the cushions and took a nap. After all, to reach Jezira Bota he had ridden for three days without dismounting.

Setiya put Mem's horse in the stable, feeding him hay and barley, then went out to the yard and called Karatadjin, saying, "Come here, we have a very honored guest."

Karatadjin went into the chamber, greeted Mem, and sat down beside him. They began talking, and they talked until lunch, they talked until dinner, they talked until midnight, they talked until morning. Setiya entered the room and said, "Karatadjin,

¹⁴Russian, like English, does not distinguish between maternal and paternal uncles, whereas Kurdish does, like most other Middle Eastern languages. Although the original Kurdish text certainly made it clear whether Karatadjin was Zin's *Ap* or *Mam* (=Paternal uncle) or her *Xw/a'* (=Maternal uncle), the Russian translation uses the word *дядя* (*dyadya*), which could be either. This is a small example of how important details can be lost in translation.

let me feed our guest; you've already been talking for three days, and our guest has not yet eaten or rested from his journey."

Karatadjin said, "Oh, I thought we had only been talking for an hour, the conversation was so interesting"

Setiya brought a tray with food into the chamber, and set it down before Mem. They started eating. Let's leave them, and go see what Mir-Sevdin is doing.

In the morning Mir-Sevdin came to his diwan. He saw that Karatadjin was not there, and sent a servant after him. The mir's servant went to Karatadjin's house and said to Setiya, "My mother, where is Karatadjin? The mir is summoning him to the diwan."

Setiya replied, "My son, tell the mir that Karatadjin has a guest, and that Karatadjin can't come to the diwan. How can one leave a guest?"

The servant returned to the mir and gave him Setiya's answer. After hearing her answer, he said to the servant, "Go tell him to come, and to bring his guest with him."

The servant set out for Karatadjin's house, went in and said to Setiya, "My mother, Mir-Sevdin says, 'Karatadjin should come and bring his guest with him'".

Setiya said to the servant, "My son, tell the mir that our guest (105) is a very special guest. If the mir must, let him come here. Karatadjin cannot go to him."

The servant returned to the mir and gave him Setiya's answer. The mir flew into a rage and shouted, "Hey, servants, give me a sharp dagger; I will slice Karatadjin's body into tiny pieces!"

Karatadjin heard the mir shouting, as his house was next door to the mir's house. He got up and went to the mir. "My mir," said Karatadjin, "I have come; why have you summoned me?"

Mir-Sevdin said, "Why haven't you been coming to my diwan? I haven't seen you here for two days already."

Karatadjin replied, "My mir, I have a guest¹⁵; it is not good for a host to leave the house when there is a guest there."

Mir-Sevdin said, "Come to me with your guest."

¹⁵-lit. "A guest has come to me."

Karatadjin replied, "My mir, my guest is a very special guest. Order carpets and palases¹⁶ to be spread out between my house and yours, have zurna and drum!¹⁷ players placed on the path, then will I permit my guest to come to your house. [Only] such a welcome would be fitting for my guest."

The mir said, "Okay, I will order carpets and palases to be spread out between your house and mine, I will have zurna and drum players placed on the path, I will give your guest such a welcome; but if he turns out to be unworthy of such a welcome, I will have your heads cut off."

Karatadjin replied, "I agree. You will have my head and my guest's head cut off if he turns out to be unworthy of such a welcome. Let your throne be witness to this."

The mir said, "Okay, let my throne be witness to this."

Carpets and palases were spread out from Karatadjin's house to the house of the mir, zurna and drum players were placed on the path, and Karatadjin and Mem went to see the mir.

The mir stood with his servants at the threshold of the palace, saw Karatadjin and Mem coming, and shouted in an angry voice, "Karatadjin, I will have your head and your guest's head cut off!"

Karatadjin replied, "My mir, I agree, but your throne must bear witness. Enter the palace and sit on your throne."

The entire diwan agreed, [saying,] "Karatadjin is right."

Mir-Sevdim entered his palace, sat on his throne, and started talking with Mem. He talked for an hour, he talked for another hour, he talked for a third hour. Karatadjin approached the throne and said, "My mir, our guest must be fed. He will think, 'What sort of customs do they have, they talk for three hours without even giving so much as a morsel of food!'"

The mir said, "Oh, Karatadjin, I thought we were only talking for a minute. (106) Your guest is a good guest, he is worthy of the welcome I gave him."

Karatadjin replied, "My mir, your throne be witness to our agreement!"

¹⁶Palas = Coarse woolen napless carpet.

¹⁷Def û zırne = Drum and zurna. The *Def* (or *Dehd*) is a drum made of a large, wide wooden hoop covered on both sides with hide and beaten with a thin stick on one side and with a wooden mallet on the other. It usually accompanies the *Zırne* (Turkish *Zurna*, South Slavic *Zurna/Zurla*, < Persian *sumay*), an oboe-like reed instrument made of wood and producing a shrill sound.

The mir said, "Karatadjin, you have won the bet!"

Karatadjin replied, "My mir, my stakes were my guest's head!¹⁸."

Mem remained in Mir-Sevdin's palace and became his beloved guest. Every day Mem attended the mir's diwan.

Once Mem met Zin. She said to him, "Tomorrow my father will say to you, 'I want to give my beloved guest a gift. Choose whatever you want: do you want an Arabian horse, do you want an Egyptian sabre, do you want a Gurani¹⁹ club, do you want an Iranian shield? Choose whatever you want! Don't take anything, but instead ask for a felt cloak.'"

The next day Mir-Sevdin sent for Mem. Mem came to the mir's diwan and sat in his place. They drank coffee, smoked pipes, and amused themselves.

The mir said to Mem, "I want to give you a gift. Choose whatever you want: do you want an Arabian horse, do you want an Egyptian sabre, do you want a Gurani club, do you want an Iranian shield?"

Mem replied, "My mir, I have no need of an Arabian horse, or of an Egyptian sabre, or of a Gurani club, or of an Iranian shield. Give me a felt cloak."

"As you wish," said the mir.

They brought a felt cloak and gave it to Mem. It just so happened that Mem again met Zin. Zin said to him, "Tomorrow my father will go out hunting. He will invite you too. Pretend you're sick, and when everyone has gone, we will go to the Turkish garden."

Mir-Sevdin had a Turkish garden too. Every ruler has a Turkish garden.

The next day the mir sent word to Mem, saying, "I am going hunting today, make yourself ready!"

¹⁸-lit. "I played by means of the head of the guest."

¹⁹The Gurans live in southern Kurdistan, in and around Kermanshah, Iran, and speak a group of dialects (called 'Gurani') related to Kurdish. They consider themselves Kurds, and therefore so must we. There is a small literature on their language, including the following:

•Benedictson, Age Meyer. Les dialectes d'Awromân et de Pâwâ, revus et publiés avec des notes et une esquisse de grammaire par Arthur Christensen (København : Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 1921), 128 p.

•Mann, Oskar. Mundarten der Gûrân, besonders des Kändölâf, Auramânî und Bâdschânî, bearbeitet von Karl Hadank, Kurdisch-Persische Forschungen (Berlin, 1930).

•MacKenzie, D.N. The Dialect of Awroman (Hawrâmânî Luhôn) : Grammatical sketch, texts and vocabulary (København : Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 1966), 140 p.

•Minorsky, V. "The Gûrân," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 11 (1943), pp. 75-103.

"Pardon me, my mir," replied Mem, "I am not well."

Everyone went. Mem alone remained. Mem and Zin went to the Turkish garden.

Bekir-Awan, brother of Zin the sorceress, understood Mem's intention. While they were hunting, Bekir-Awan went to the mir and said, "My mir, may we ourselves and our names be erased!"

Mir-Sevdim said, "What are you saying, what sort of talk is this?"

Bekir-Awan replied, "My mir, Mem has tricked you, he has gone with Zin to the Turkish garden. Both your name and ours have fallen. Who knows who this Mem is? Where is this land (107) Mukhurzemî? Neither you nor I know. For all we know, Mem could be the son of a calfherd or the son of a lambherd. What do we know?"

The mir flew into a rage and shouted, "Hey, servants, give me a sharp dagger, I want to slice Mem's body into tiny pieces!"

Everyone went back. When they approached the Turkish garden, Mem noticed the hunters and hid Zin under his felt cloak. He sat down as if he were sick.

The mir approached, and saw that Mem was sitting alone in the Turkish garden, looking unwell, wrapped in his cloak.

"Bekir-Awan," shouted the mir, "it is you who has tricked me!"

Bekir-Awan saw that Zin was not there; Mem was sitting alone, wrapped in his cloak.

Karatadjin saw Mem sitting wrapped up in his cloak, with tresses of Zin's hair sticking out from under the cloak. Poor Zin was small enough not to be seen under the cloak, but her hair was so long that it stuck out from under the cloak and touched the ground.

Karatadjin immediately guessed [the situation] and sent off his servant, saying, "Fellow, run, set my house on fire."

The servant ran swiftly, set Karatadjin's house on fire, and everyone rushed off to see the blaze.

Mem alone remained. Zin came out from under the cloak and ran home. From that time on, Mem spent every night with Zin. Bekir-Awan saw, but could do nothing; his sister Zin saw, but could do nothing. Mir-Sevdim believed Karatadjin, not Bekir-Awan.

Zin, the sister of Bekir-Awan, was a sorceress and enchantress. By looking in books and by other methods she launched a hostile army against Mir-Sevdin. Enemy troops came to Jezira Bota and surrounded the fortress.

The enemy troops went around with swords and shields, with lances and daggers, with cannons and rifles, saying, "Victory is ours²⁰"

Mir-Sevdin gathered his servants and armed forces, his detachments of horsemen, his brave army. Mir-Sevdin's warriors came with swords and shields, with lances and daggers, with cannons and rifles; they came to the service of their mir.

Karatadjin, Mir-Sevdin's general, stood at the head of all of his troops. Karatadjin prepared to march. He saddled up his Arabian horse, took his sword and shield, his lance and dagger, his rifle and cartridges.

When Karatadjin had equipped himself, he made ready to march and set out for the mir's diwan.

(108) Karatadjin came to the mir's diwan, politely greeted the mir and concluded a new agreement with him. "My mir," said Karatadjin, "I am ready to serve the mir, I will lead your troops to battle, I will mow down these infidels, I will scatter their regiments, I will feed their flesh to the dogs and the crows. Victory is mine! But while I am fighting, you must promise not to touch Mem. Mem is my guest, I am answerable for his head."

"All right," said Mir-Sevdin, "I give you my word that I won't touch Mem until you return."

Karatadjin took leave of the mir and went out to wage war. Mem remained in Jezira Bota. Every morning Mem spent in Mir-Sevdin's diwan, every evening he spent with Zin in the Turkish garden.

One day Bekir-Awan came to the mir and said, "My mir, may we ourselves and our names be erased!"

Mir-Sevdin said, "What are you saying, what sort of talk is this?"

Bekir-Awan replied, "My mir, Mem spends every evening in the Turkish garden with Zin; both your name and ours have fallen. Who knows who this Mem is? Where is this land Mukhuzemin? Nobody ever heard of such a land. Mem says that he is the son of Al-pasha, but who really knows his father and mother? For all

²⁰-lit. "The war is ours!"

we know, Mem could be the son of a calfherd or the son of a lambherd. What do we know?"

Mir-Sevdin said to Bekir-Awan, "I gave my word to Karatadjin that I wouldn't touch Mem until he came back"

Bekir-Awan replied, "My mir, I know what to do. Call Mem to the diwan tomorrow and say, 'Let's have an arrow shooting contest. If your arrow lands further away, you can ask me for whatever you want; if my arrow lands further away, I will do with you as I please.' If your arrow lands further away, you say, 'Mem, I will throw you in the stone dungeon.' If Mem's arrow lands further away, he will ask for Zin, and we will lock him up in the stone dungeon. You won't break your word to Karatadjin."

The mir said, "All right, tomorrow I'll do just as you said."

That evening Mem went to the Turkish garden with Zin. Zin said to Mem, "Tomorrow my father will invite you to an arrow shooting contest. He will say, 'If your arrow lands further away, you can ask me for whatever you want'. If you win the contest, ask for me."

The next day Mem went to the mir's diwan. Mir-Sevdin said to him, "Let's have an arrow shooting contest. If your arrow lands further away, you can ask me for whatever you want; if my arrow lands further away, I will do with you as I please."

Mem said, "All right."

(109) The mir shot, and his arrow fell nearby. Mem shot, and his arrow flew across the field, falling by the river. The mir shot a second time, and the arrow fell only a little further away; Mem shot again, and the arrow vanished from view, falling on the other bank of the river.

Bekir-Awan saw that Mem was winning, so he hurried off to Zin and said to her, "Zin, come out of the house and watch Mem; he keeps shooting and losing. The mir's arrows lie further afield. They're about to shoot for the third time."

Poor Zin, unaware of Bekir-Awan's intentions, left the guest hall and stood opposite Mem. Zin stood before Mem's eyes as the sun would, blinding his eyes, so that he could see nothing. The mir shot, and this time his arrow fell far afield, near Mem's first arrow. Mem was looking not at the arrow, but at Zin. Mem shot, and the arrow landed on his own foot. Mir-Sevdin shouted, "Mem, you've lost! I can do with you as I please. I want to throw you into the stone dungeon!" And they threw Mem into the stone dungeon.

Let us see what Karatadjin is doing. Karatadjin led the mir's troops to battle, defeated the enemy troops, scattered the regiments of the infidels, fed their flesh to the dogs and the crows. Karatadjin captured three provinces of the enemy, collecting countless taxes and tribute. He loaded up blackbreasted camels with gold and jewels and came back with the troops to Jezira Bota.

Mir-Sevdin, hearing that Karatadjin had crushed the enemy and was approaching Jezira Bota with his troops, was frightened and called Bekir-Awan. Bekir-Awan came to the diwan and stood before the mir, as is fitting.

"Bekir-Awan," said the mir, "Karatadjin is coming with the troops. What should we do? I promised Karatadjin that I wouldn't touch Mem, and here we've thrown him into the stone dungeon!"

Bekir-Awan replied, "My mir, Karatadjin won't be back for another three days. Tell Zin to release Mem from the dungeon."

The mir consented. They called Zin and told her to release Mem from the stone dungeon.

Poor Zin's heart was all aflutter. She ran straight to the dungeon, and when she got close, said to Mem, "Mem, beloved Mem, sun of my eyes, Mem, my father has ordered me to release you from the dungeon."

Mem replied from the dungeon:

"O Zin, o my Zin of the black eyes,
O Zin, o my Zin of the golden locks.
Leave Mem in the dungeon, forget it,
In the dungeon Mem's bones have rotted."

(110) "I can't leave the dungeon," said Mem.

Zin thought of a way to rescue Mem; she would try everything for her beloved. She let down her braids into the dungeon. Mem grabbed hold of them, and she tried to pull him out. Poor Mem had completely exhausted his strength while in the dungeon. His hands and legs grew weak, his bones rotted. When Zin had pulled him half way up, Mem's strength failed; he let go of Zin's hair and fell to the bottom, where he expired.

Seeing that Mem was dead, poor Zin began loudly to sob:

"O Mem, o my beloved Mem,

O Mem, o my handsome Mem,
 O Mem, light of my eyes, Mem,
 O Mem, joy of my heart, Mem,
 They've separated me from you, o Mem,
 They've left you in the dungeon, o Mem,
 You expired this morning."

They buried Mem on the very same day. Mir-Sevdin said, to console Zin:

"Don't cry, Zin, don't cry, Zin of the black eyes,
 Don't cry, Zin, don't cry, Zin of the golden locks.

What do we know about Mem? Where did Mem come from, who were his father and mother? Where is this land Mukhurzemin? We know nothing about it. For all we know, Mem could be the son of a calfherd or the son of a lambherd. What do we know? Don't cry, Zin, don't sob, Zin. I will find you another husband, I will marry you to the king of the Turks, to the shah of Iran, I will find you a good husband!"

Zin replied, "I won't marry the king of the Turks, I won't marry the shah of Iran, I don't need another husband.

Mem died this morning,
 Zin has one day left to live."

Zin died that evening, and they buried her beside Mem.

Karatadjin arrived on the following day with the troops, bringing much gold and jewels. Karatadjin rid Jezira Bota of its enemies, fed the infidel troops to the dogs and the crows, and conquered three hostile provinces.

Karatadjin came to his house. Setiya greeted him with the words, (111) "Karatadjin, Mem is dead, Zin is dead, and they were buried yesterday. Bekir-Awan killed Mem and Zin."

Karatadjin replied, "If she's dead, she's dead; what can I do about it?"

The next day Karatadjin got up and went to the mir's diwan. Mir-Sevdin was sitting, drinking coffee, smoking his pipe, giving himself to pleasure. The ministers and deputies were seated at the sides, with Bekir-Awan. Karatadjin came into the diwan, and bowed before the mir as is fitting. He placed gold and jewels before the

mir, he placed heads of the enemy before the mir, and said, "My mir, I have done my part, I have rid Jezira Bota of its enemies."

Mir-Sevdin said, "Praise be to you, Karatadjin, request from me whatever you wish, you deserve a reward from me."

Karatadjin replied, "My mir, let us go for a walk."

The mir consented. They got up and went. Bekir-Awan wanted to go home unnoticed. Karatadjin said to Bekir-Awan, "Bekir-Awan, let's go for a walk."

What could Bekir-Awan do? He replied, "All right."

They walked until they came to the tomb of Mem and Zin.

Karatadjin went up to their tomb and said, "My mir, who killed them? Who killed Mem? Didn't you give me your word that you wouldn't touch Mem?"

Mir-Sevdin said, "Bekir-Awan advised me; Mem lost fair and square, I didn't touch him."

Karatadjin made no answer to the mir, drew his sword, and with one blow sliced off Bekir-Awan's head. Bekir-Awan's blood watered Mem and Zin's grave. Some drops of Bekir-Awan's blood fell on a bush growing over the grave. The drops of Bekir-Awan's blood blossomed as scarlet flowers.

Two doves were flying in the sky,
 Two doves were cooing and singing,
 Two doves alit on the bush of scarlet flowers,
 Two doves sang the story of Mem and Zin:
 "Where is our Mem, son of Al-pasha,
 Where is Zin, our beauty?"

You are still alive, while they have long since become dust under the earth.

The story of Mem and Zin has reached an end. May favor befall the parents of those present and those listening.

- Jndi, Hajie, ed. *Kurdskie Epicheskie Pesni-Skazy*. (Moskva : Izdatel'stvo Vostochnoi Literatury, 1962), pp. 66-197; 183-209. [Russian translation + Kurmanji in Cyrillic script; includes bibliography of other versions] (EP-1)
- Ward, Alan, ed. *Mem û Zîn : Mam and Zin, Kurdish National Epic*. (Amsterdam : International Society Kurdistan [ISK], 1968), 49 l. [Edited version of EP-1 with English translation]

EP-1. Collected by Hajie Jndi in 1955 from E'tarê Şero [pronounced 'Shero'], age 55, of the Kurdish tribe Ortill, which inhabits the Ashtarak region of Soviet Armenia. E'tarê Şero, who was born in 1901 in the village of Soybilax [Soğukbulak] in the county (kaza) of Surmeli, Kurdistan of Turkey, was a literate peasant who lived in Nork, a suburb of Erivan, capital of Soviet Armenia, until his death in 1974. He was a jolly fellow who loved to talk, and knew, wrote, and collected most types of Kurdish folklore, including folktales, romances, and songs. Two versions of the story of Yusuf and Zulaykha (Osiv û Zeltxe) have been collected from him (1965) Ch.Kh. Bakaev. *Ro' IAzykoykh Kontaktov v Razvitií IAzyka Kurdiy SSSR* (Moskva : Nauka, 1977), p. 189-211 and [pre 1976?] M.B. Rudenko. *Literaturnaja i Fol'klomye Versii Kurdskoí Poemy "IUsuf i Zelikha"* (Moskva : Nauka, 1986), pp. 300-310; 336-247), as well as two written versions of Zembilfiroş ([1933] Ordikhane Dzhail & Dzhailie Dzhail. *Zargotina K'urda = Kurdskií Fol'klor* (Moskva : Nauka, 1978), #10, pp. 189-194 and [1933] Zh.S. Musaelian. *Zambil'frosh : Kurdskaia poema i ee fol'klomye versii* (Moskva : Nauka, 1983), pp. 110-116). It should be noted that the translator became aware of Alan Ward's work only after translating it himself, and comparative notes were subsequently added.

Mem û Zîn (EP-1)

(1) There was a shrine by the name of Ardawid(ê), beside the city Mikhurzemtn. At this shrine there lived a maiden. The maiden had lived there for seven years. One day she saw three riders coming across the water, their horses gray. These riders were coming towards her. The maiden was very confused and flustered, [and] said, "Who has ever seen horses riding on the sea without their feet touching the water?" The riders came and got down off their horses in front of the shrine. They said:

"Fair maiden, we have come after you. You must get ready, we will take you for a ride."

The maiden asked, "Why? Who are you?"

They said, "We are the guides of luck and fortune."

The maiden said, "Well in that case, mount your horses brothers, I am coming with you."

(2) The riders mounted their horses. One of them seated the maiden behind him ¹, and they started out over the sea. When they reached the middle of the sea, the maiden got very thirsty and asked for water. The rider took hold of the girl's arm, pulled her down towards the water, [and] said:

"Sister, drink some water."

The maiden filled her palms three times with water and drank. While she was drinking the water, she also took in some foam from the sea². From this very sea foam, the maiden got pregnant. After she drank the water, the riders took her back home to that pavilion³, and left.

After that the maiden felt that she was pregnant. "Oh my God" she said, "What has befallen me? I am a virgin living at this shrine; everyone passes by here, what will they say about me? How did this happen to me? I'll jump into the sea, to save myself from the pain of the world." But she didn't have the nerve to do it⁴. She waited until nine months, nine hours and nine minutes had passed. This maiden gave birth through her mouth, she brought forth a boy. The boy shined like a torchlight amid the maiden's hands and feet, like a golden lamp. He [184] was like a bright star that falls from the sky. She had no milk to suckle him with⁵. The maiden thought about killing the boy, but she didn't have the heart to do it, there was nothing she wouldn't do to keep from making a bad name for herself. The maiden gave a lot of thought to what she should do. Then she wrapped the dear child in a bunch of clean grass and took him to the seashore, where she left him. People always say these words:

(3) Mem appeared from his mother's lap⁶,

¹-lit. "threw the girl on his horse's back."

²-lit. "Foam of the sea also fell inside her heart."

³-the shrine.

⁴-lit. "But the sweet spirit did not allow/let."

⁵-lit. "There was no breast for him to suck."

⁶This contradicts the earlier statement that the maiden gave birth through her mouth.

Nobody knows whose lover he'll be.
 The city of Mikhurzemîn is black and dark,
 No human being⁷ can see it,
 Al pasha lives in it.
 One day out of love and mirth,
 Al pasha went to the seashore,
 And heard the voice of this child.
 "Hey" he said, "God, the creator⁸
 I have become old in strength⁹,
 Today you have given me this child."
 He took the child in his arms
 Took him joyously and quickly home
 "Here" he said [to his wife], "Slave of God¹⁰, a merciful gift."
 In the world there are limits and borders
 This boy became a son to Al pasha,
 He grew up to be as big as a city.
 What a world of chaos,
 How many people have come up in it,
 One is Mem, one is Zîn.
 One is Ferhad, one is Shirin¹¹,

⁷-lit: "No one of the sons of Adam"

⁸*Beyt'ilfar*, an obscure word, which looks like Arabic bay: al-fa'r **الفأر** بيت, meaning *House of the mouse*. This does not seem to make sense. In Jndi's Russian and Ward's English translations, it is rendered as *Creator*.

⁹*Li tayatê* is obscure. *Teyet* means 'strengthening,' but I am not sure that *tayat* is the same as *teyet*. The Russian translation omits it, saying only 'I have grown old (alone)'. I know of no connection between *tayat* and 'being alone'. I follow Ward's English translation in rendering it as 'old in strength'.

¹⁰Ar. Islamic way of referring to human beings. Kurdish: *e'vda xadê (xwedê)*, literal translation of Arabic 'abd Allāh **عبد الله**.

¹¹A reference to the well-known romance of Ferhat and Shirin, which has numerous Turkish and Persian versions.

One is Leylê, one is Mejrûm¹²,
 In the world they came up,
 Did not achieve their luck and fortune,
 There are many slanderers and traitors¹³,
 Now we come to the story of Zîn.

Zîn lived in the city of Jizra Bota. She was the daughter of Mîr Seydîn, niece of mîr Sêvdîn¹⁴. She was beautiful, she shined¹⁵ like the sun, she was like a virgin houri in paradise.

(4) She had forty maidservants at her beck and call. She was the sister-in-law-to-be¹⁶ of Qeretajdîn, the betrothed of Chekan. One day she led her maidservants to the garden of Torkîrî, and made a picnic for herself. She went for a stroll, then gave an order to her servants, saying:

"You go home and I'll go to my resting place to sleep for a while."

The servants went. Zîn too went and slept. There was a tree above her resting place. Three doves came and alighted on the tree. The doves were hours: two of them were the daughters, and one was their mother.

(5) [185] When the daughters laid eyes on Zîn, they lost all sense of reason. They said to their mother:

"Are there men in the world as beautiful as Zîn?"

¹²A reference to the well-known romance of Layla and Majnûn, which has numerous Arabic, Turkish, Urdu, Persian, and Kurdish versions.

¹³*Nemana*, presumably from Arabic *nammâm* نمام - 'Slanderer,' 'Calumniator.'

¹⁴*Brazî* means the child of one's brother, as opposed to *xwarzî*, the child of one's sister. From this it is clear that in this version, mîr Seydîn and mîr Sêvdîn are brothers.

¹⁵*Parîstaniyê*, from Turkish *parlamak*, past active participle of *parlamak* = 'to shine.' There are perfectly good native Kurdish words for 'to shine,' e.g. *birîn*. However, the style of this informant is marked by the use of several Turkish verbs.

¹⁶*Bak* means 1) Bride, 2) Girl marrying into the family; hence, for the groom's parents it means 'Daughter-in-law,' while for the groom's siblings it means 'Sister-in-law.' In Hebrew also, *kalah* אָתָּן means both 'bride' and 'daughter-in-law.'

Their mother said, "Children, Memê Alan lives in the city of Mikhurzemîn; Zîn is not half as beautiful as Mem."

The doves made a pact to take Zîn to Mem, and then to bring her back. They began by praying to God, in order to get a dove's plumage¹⁷ for Zîn:

- (6) "Oh Lord, make a command,
 Bring down a dove's garment,
 We ourselves are three,
 Make Zîn the fourth one of us."
 God made a command,
 Plumage¹⁸ came down from above,
 The three hours became four.
 Mem in his white tower
 Fell into a sweet slumber,
 Lest someone dare to go to his bed.
 It was getting on towards midnight,
 Memê Ala fell asleep,
 How should he know that Zîn was coming?
 These four darling hours
 Travelled a year's distance in one hour,
 Now things will begin to happen.
 The four doves flew to a treetop.
 They went through the heavens,
 And landed at Memê Ala's window.
 They take the plumage from Zîn's back¹⁹,
 Put out the candle and lamps at Mem's head.
 They placed Zîn beside Mem on the bed,
 Mem lifts his head [awaking] from sweet slumber,
 And sees a ravishing beauty in his arms,

¹⁷-lit. "skin/plumage of doves." Motif R821.1.6. Dress of feathers.

¹⁸-lit. "skin."

¹⁹-lit. "neck."

Not a beauty, but rather a houri,
A fairy among the hours.

Mem said:

"I swear, by God,
Not even a houri of heavenly provenance
May dare to look at my bed and pillow!"

Zin said:

"You should collect your senses,
My name is Tell Khatûn²⁰ and Zin,
No one may look at my bed and pillow."

[186] Mem said:

"I swear by the almighty,
I will tell you, and you will believe me,
Tell me how many minarets there are in your father's city!"

Zin said:

"I swear by God the great,
Who is considered above us all,
In my father's city there are sixty six minarets."

Mem said:

"I swear by God the great,
In my father's city there are
Three hundred sixty six minarets."
In the darkness in the house at night,
They used the occasion,
[To go] to the terrace on the roof.

(7) Mem and Zin went down together to Mem's pavilion and terrace. When they looked out on the city, they saw that one could count the beasts and birds of the wilderness and the stars in the heavens, but one could not count the minarets.

When they got down from the pavilion, Zin said:

²⁰cf. Tellî Nigar, Koroğlu's wife.

"Mem, you know that those who brought me will take me away, so let's exchange rings. From time immemorial men go after the women, women don't go after the men."

They exchanged rings there.

(8) The doves put Mem to sleep, put Zîn's plumage on her back²¹, and together lifted themselves and took her to the place from which they had taken her.

Let us return to Mem. Once around midnight Mem woke up, and wondered to himself, "Was that a dream, or wasn't it? If it was real, where is she?" Mem kept saying this over and over to himself, over and over like an ailing seventy²² year-old man. He remained in this condition until dawn.

(9) It became time for the mîr's²³ breakfast. Al pasha said:

"Boy, why don't you go see why Mem is late today? Why hasn't he come distribute coffee in the diwan?"

Two men went to look in on Mem. They saw that Mem was distressed. They went and told Al pasha,

"Mem is distressed."

Al pasha and his entourage went to see Mem. They asked him how he was. Mem said,

"Well, today I'm very ill."

The whole group returned to the diwan. Al pasha had advisers, who consulted together, then said to Al pasha,

"Mem is not sick, his problem is that he's heartsick, or that he wants to get married, but is ashamed to tell you."

(10) [187] On their advice Al pasha made a proclamation in the city of Mikhurzemîn, saying,

"All married women and unmarried girls, men and youths, all must come tomorrow to my garden Torkîf to play and amuse themselves with singing and

²¹See note 19 above.

²²The text says 'seven,' which must be a printing error. Ward's English translation reads "like a man seven years sick."

²³-Al pasha's

dancing. I will ask for the hand of whatever woman or girl my Mem takes a liking to²⁴."

Everyone who had a cow sold it, and outfitted his daughter with fine clothes, saying,

"Maybe Mem will choose my daughter."

The next day the garden was filled with people: girls, brides, men, youths, children.

(11) Al pasha sent two men to Mem, saying,

"Boys, go tell Mem to come enjoy himself in the garden."

The men went to Mem, and said,

"C'mon, Mem, let's go to the garden: that should cheer you up."

Mem got up. They brought water for him to wash his face with. He had taken a towel to dry his hands and eyes, when suddenly he saw Zîn's ring [on his finger]. When he saw the ring, he knew that she had really been there. He fainted on the spot. They sprinkled him with water here and there, put their hands on his heart; he came to and went with them to the garden. He went and sat down by the fountain pool. A little while later he threw his coat over his head and became silent. He sat like that for some time.

(12) The daughters of the noblemen came and encircled Mem, saying to him,

"This Mem will take one of *us*, he wouldn't take the daughter of a simple peasant²⁵."

They took turns singing songs for Mem. One of them was a blind musician, in the manner of an ashik²⁶ ["I] she said,

"If Mem takes anyone, he'll take me." She came up to Mem, and became a royal pair²⁷.

(13) The judge's daughter said:

²⁴-lit. "whichever woman or girl he puts a hand on."

²⁵kurmançê xam = 'a naive or simple Kurmanj or Kurd.'

²⁶-folk poet and singer.

²⁷bû belâ nisîfetê = 'was an unlucky disaster.'

"Come Mem, you soldier,
 Why have you hidden under your fur?
 Don't cry; marry the judge's daughter."

The mentor's daughter said:

"Come Mem, you're crazy,
 Why have you hidden under your green fur?
 Get up and marry the mentor's daughter."

The vizier's daughter said:

"Come Mem, you're haughty,
 You're hiding under your green fur on purpose!
 You've been wanting the vizier's daughter."²⁸

[14] [188] The blind one said:

"Come Mem my falcon,
 You've long been in love with me and my saz [!],
 You won't find another like me to ask for."
 Mem looked up and saw that even
 The blind one had come to sing to him.
 He lifted up his head and said,
 "You daughters of my father's noblemen,
 You are like mothers and sisters to me,
 Except the one Mem alone knows!"
 When Mem said these words,

²⁸With rhyme, the following more or less catches the mood of the original:

"Come Mem, you're so haughty,
 You're hiding under your green fur just to be naughty,
 What you really want is the vizier's daughter's body!"

The girls and women were disappointed²⁹,
They left the garden Tokirf two by two.

(15) Mem got up and left the garden. He went to his father's treasury, filled a saddlebag with gold coins, and went to the marketplace. He went to the saddler and said,

"What must I give you to have you make me a saddle the likes of which no man has yet ridden on, completely inlaid³⁰ with rubies, pearls, and jewels?"

The saddler wanted one hundred gold coins, Mem gave him two hundred, and gave him forty days to do it in. Next he went to the tailor, he bought clothes that were worth three hundred gold coins, then went to see his father's horses.

His father had forty horses: all were pedigreed. Whichever ones Mem touched on the back, their backs broke under [the pressure of] his hand. He wasn't crazy about any of the horses. When he was about to leave, he saw the horse used for carrying water coming towards him. Mem put his hand on the horse's back, and the latter raised his back four fingers' breadth under Mem's hand. Mem called the stableman and said,

"Boy, how much does my father pay you a month?"

"He gives me ten gold coins a month, my mfr."

(16) Mem said, "I'll give you fifteen gold coins a month. You take this horse and give him the treatment reserved for the finest steeds³¹, and for forty nights water him so well that when you water his croup, it will come out his mane, and when you water his mane, it will come out his croup.³²

The stableman said, "My mfr, even if you gave me nothing, I would be obligated to take care of him, because I'm your father's stableman."

²⁹-lit. "The hearts and livers of the girls and women were burning."

³⁰*quramış kt*, another compound from a Turkish verb.

³¹-lit. "Tie it up at the head of the finest horses."

³²Cf. ZK-1: "For two weeks you take care of this Bor so that if I water his mane from the front, it will come out his croup." Ward's translation has "... for forty days treat it so that when you wash its crupper the water splashes its mane and when you wash its mane the water splashes its crupper (i.e. thoroughly)."

News reached Al pasha that Mem was making preparations to depart. Al pasha went to the stables, and had steel chains put around the four legs of Mem's horse. Then he went and locked the city gates, and took the key and put it underneath his own mattress. "Now let's see if he goes anywhere," he thought to himself.

(17) Time passed, and Mem's forty days were up. He went to see the saddle and suit of clothes, and found them prepared as is proper. He brought his saddle and [189] clothes home³³. Then he went to Bor³⁴. He saw that Bor was as is fitting [for a fine horse to be]. Mem took Bor out, put his saddle and harness on him, and mounted him, but he was unaware that Bor's four legs were in chains.

Mem took Bor outside,
 Put on him the bejewelled saddle³⁵,
 With his foot in the stirrup, he said, "O God and Prophet!"
 Bor was blessed and leaped over the wall at once.

News reached Al pasha that Mem had gone.
 "But Bor was chained and the gate was locked; how did it happen?"
 Al pasha and his entourage went after Mem. They saw that Mem had started out and was riding. Al pasha said in a song:

(18) "Mem, my son, don't be disrespectful.
 Don't leave the city of Mikhurzemîn, O hope of my old age,
 I'll give you five hundred ladies and maidservants."

Mem said:

"Father, what would I do with this house, this land,

³³-lit. "He picked up his saddle and clothes and brought them to his house."

³⁴Suddenly the horse's name is Bor. In this version we are not told that Memê names him. 'Bor' is both a word for 'horse' (one of many) and the name of Memê's horse.

³⁵This line is hard to translate: Lê kir zînê Al bavî ceware. See note 83 below.

D.V.B. Qeretajdîn causes diversion; heroic rescue by Qeretajdîn; Items sacrificed:

1. house (burnt) (PN; PS; LC-1; OM; SHa-1; SHa-2; GNa; FK-1; EP-2; EP-1; ZK-3; HR-1; HR-2; ZK-1; ZK-2; MC-1)
2. a. Qeretajdîn's child (burnt) (PS; FK-1; ZK-1)
 - b. child's cradle (SHa-1; MC-1); 4 golden cradles [herçar bormotka zêfîn] (EP-1)
 - c. Qeretajdîn's child: unclear if he is actually sacrificed, but his mother is ready to sacrifice him (OM)
3. a. Hasso's wife (shot) (PN)
 - b. Qeretajdîn's wife (killed with sword) (HR-2)
 - c. Qeretajdîn's wife with child strapped to her breast: unclear if they are actually killed (ZK-3; HR-1; ZK-2)
 - d. Arfo's wife and child (HM)
4. a. horse (burnt) (HR-1; ZK-2)
 - b. horses in stable (killed with sword) (LC-1)
 - c. horse and tent of Mir Sêvdîn (HM)
5. ø (FK-2)

D.V.C. Items rescued:

1. a. Koran (PS; SHa-2; ZK-3; MC-1)
 - b. books (HR-1)
2. a. horse (FK-1; ZK-3)
 - b. Mem's horse Bor (SHa-2)
 - c. 3 horses (SHa-1)
 - d. 6 horses: Qeretajdîn orders their rescue, his wife leaves them to be burned (GNa)
3. a. child's cradle (SHa-2; ZK-3)
 - b. child's cradle: Qeretajdîn orders its rescue, his wife leaves it to be burned (PS; SHa-1; GNa); 4 golden cradles [herçar bormotka zêfîn]: Qeretajdîn orders their rescue, his wife

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leaves them to be burned (EP-1)

c. child: Qeretajdîn orders his rescue, his wife leaves him to be burned (ZK-1)

4. ø (PN; HM; LC-1; OM; FK-2; EP-2; HR-2; ZK-2)

D.V.D. Beko Awan interferes: tells Mir Sêvdîn "it's nothing", thereby forcing Qeretajdîn to sacrifice yet another precious item, in hopes of getting Mir Sêvdîn to leave the diwan and come see

1. a. Qeretajdîn has to cause a second diversion (HM; HR-2)

b. same as a., but Mir Sêvdîn strikes Beko Awan (ZK-3)

2. a. Qeretajdîn has to cause a second and third diversion (ZK-2)

b. same as a., but Mir Sêvdîn strikes Beko Awan (HR-1)

3. ø (PN; PS; LC-1; OM; SHa-1; SHa-2; GNa; FK-2; FK-1; EP-2; EP-1; ZK-1; MC-1)

D.V.E. Mem extinguishes flames of Qeretajdîn's manor

1. a. Mem extinguishes flames of Qeretajdîn's manor with the hem of his garment: the infant is saved (GNa)

b. Mem extinguishes flames of Qeretajdîn's manor with a handkerchief (ZK-1)

c. Mem sings to the fire, stating that if his and Zîn #1's love is divinely inspired, it will put the fire out, otherwise their love is a lie; he extinguishes flames of Qeretajdîn's manor with a handkerchief (EP-1)

2. ø (PN; PS; HM; LC-1; OM; SHa-1; SHa-2; FK-2; FK-1; EP-2; ZK-3; HR-1; HR-2; ZK-2; MC-1)

D.VI. Mem and Mir Sêvdîn's game; Mem's imprisonment

D.VI.A. Game between Mem and Mir:

1. boardgame

a. chess (PS; HM; SHa-1; SHa-2; GNa; FK-1; EP-1; ZK-1; MC-1)

b. same as a. [follows D.V.A] (FK-2)

c. checkers (ZK-2)

d. same as c. [follows D.VII.A] (LC-1)

- e. backgammon [follows D.II.D] (OM)
2. cards (ZK-3; HR-2)
3. arrow shooting contest (EP-2)
4. ø (PN; HR-1)

D.VI.B. Terms of game:

1. a. If Mem wins, he may marry Zîn #1: if he loses, he will be thrown into prison (HM; SHa-2; GN; FK-1)
b. If Mem wins, he may marry Zîn #1: if he loses, he will lose his head (SHa-1)
c. If Mem wins, he may marry Zîn #1: if he loses, he will either lose his head or be thrown into prison (HR-2)
d. If Mem wins, he may ask for whatever he wants: if he loses, he will be thrown into prison (ZK-1)
e. If Mem loses, he will be thrown into prison (FK-2)
2. a. Whoever wins may ask what he likes of the loser [şendibxwaz] (EP-2; ZK-3; ZK-2; MC-1)
b. If Mir Sêvdîn wins, he may ask whatever he likes of Mem [şendibxwaz]; if Mem wins, he may marry Zîn #1 (EP-1)
3. Whoever loses must tell the winner who his beloved is (PS)
4. Mir Sêvdîn asks Mem how he can be overpowered; Mem replies:
a. by chains: Mem breaks them; b. by the hair of horse's tail (LC-1)
5. ø (PN; OM; HR-1)

D.VI.C. Causal connection between Mem's losing game and his being thrown into prison

1. a. Mem in prison as direct result of losing game with Mir Sêvdîn (HM; SHa-1; SHa-2; GN; FK-2; FK-1; EP-2; ZK-3; HR-2; ZK-1)
b. Mir Sêvdîn was willing to let it pass, but Beko Awan insisted: Mem in prison after losing game (EP-1)
2. Mem and Mir Sêvdîn are tied at checkers; Mem in prison because he is caught alone with Zîn #1 [follows D.VII.A] (ZK-2)
3. Mem in prison because he is caught alone with Zîn #1 (HR-1)

4. Mem in prison as result of being overpowered by horsetail hair (LC-1)
5. a. no causal connection between Mem's losing game and his being thrown in prison (PN; PS; OM)
b. same as a. [follows D.VII.A] (MC-1)

D.VI.D. Zîn #1's tunnel and its discovery

1. a. Zîn #1 has a tunnel dug between Mem's prison cell and her bedroom (SHa-1; SHa-2; FK-1; EP-1; ZK-3; HR-1; ZK-1; MC-1)
b. 2 tunnel episodes: a. Zîn #1 has a tunnel dug between the kitchen where Mem is working and her bedroom; b. Zîn #1 has a tunnel dug between Mem's prison cell and her bedroom (GNa)
2. ø = no tunnel (PN; PS; HM; LC-1; OM; FK-2; EP-2; HR-2; ZK-2)

D.VI.E. After the tunnel is discovered, Mem is moved from first prison to second, worse prison [excluding D.VI.D.2]

1. a. Mem is moved from [non-specific] prison to stone prison (SHa-1; GN; MC-1)
b. Mem is moved from wooden prison to stone prison (EP-1; ZK-1)
c. Mem is moved from earthen prison to stone prison (FK-1)
2. a. Mem is moved from [non-specific] prison to deep, dark well (SHa-2)
b. Mem is moved from pit to well 40 fathoms deep (ZK-3)
3. Mem remains in original prison cell, and tunnel is plugged up with pitch (HR-1)

D.VII. Qeretajdîn's absence [often precedes VI.]

D.VII.A. Qeretajdîn and brothers leave town on mission

1. a. to fight battle (SHa-1; SHa-2; EP-2; EP-1)
b. same as a. [follows D.VI.] (FK-1)
2. a. to collect taxes (OM; ZK-3; HR-1)
b. same as a. [follows D.VI.] (MC-1)

- c. to collect taxes to rebuild Qeretajdîn's house (GNa; ZK-2; ZK-1)
3. to deliver Mîr Sêvdîn's gift to Mecca (PS)
 4. a. no mission: Qeretajdîn and brothers leave after having quarreled with Mîr Sêvdîn; they go to Sham [=Syria or Damascus] (PN)
 - b. same as a. [follows D.VI.] (HM)
 5. Qeretajdîn and brothers do not leave town (LC-1; FK-2; HR-2)
- D.VII.B. Zîn #1 sends message to Qeretajdîn with a man who demands a kiss from her as payment [with II.P of Dramatis Personae chart & D.VII.A]
 1. a. Zîn #1 sends letter to Qeretajdîn with a man who demands a kiss from her as payment; she writes in the letter that Qeretajdîn should kill the man after taking the letter from him. Motif K978. Uriah letter. Man carries written order for his own execution. (HM; SHa-1; FK-1; ZK-3; ZK-2)
 - b. Zîn #1 sends letter to Qeretajdîn with a man who demands a kiss from her as payment; the man is not killed (PN)
 - c. Zîn #1 sends letter to Ḥasan çäkö and Qeretajdîn [messenger not specified] (LC-1)
 2. ø = this episode is absent (PS; OM; SHa-2; GNa; FK-2; EP-2; EP-1; HR-1; HR-2; ZK-1; MC-1)
- D.VII.C. The man demands: [excluding D.VII.B.2]
 1. a. a kiss (PN; SHa-1; FK-1)
 - b. a kiss when he returns from delivering the letter (ZK-3; ZK-2)
 2. marriage (HM)
 3. ø (LC-1)
- D.VIII. Floating motifs
- D.VIII.A. Mem's unmanly behavior [nemerdt]
 1. Porter from Jezîra Bohtan gives Mem undesired answer; Mem frightens him; Mem falls from God's favor [C.II.A.4] (ZK-2)
 2. Mem commits unmanly act by hitting Qeretajdîn over the head with a stick; later redeems himself by staying with Qeretajdîn until he regains consciousness, rather than riding off and leaving him defenseless [C.II.B.1b] (FK-2)

3. After ignoring Bor's complaint, Mem finally stops and treats the horse's wounds [C.I.B.2] (SHa-1; GNa)

D.VIII.B. Poetry contest (verbal duel)

1. a. [follows D.II.] (ZK-3)
b. [order: D.II.D; D.I.; D.VIII.B.] (SHa-1)
2. a. [follows D.V.] (HM; SHa-2; FK-1)
b. [follows D.IV.E.] (EP-1)
3. a. [follows D.VI.A-B] (OM; ZK-2)
b. coterminous with D.VI.B.3. (PS)
4. ø (PN; LC-1; GNa; FK-2; EP-2; HR-1; HR-2; ZK-1; MC-1)

D.VIII.C. Result: Mir Sêvdîn orders his men to kill Mem [excluding D.VIII.B.7.]

1. Mir Sêvdîn orders his men to kill Mem; daggers are drawn, and Mem is saved by Qeretajdîn and his brothers (PS; HM; SHa-1; SHa-2; FK-1; ZK-3; ZK-2)
2. same as 1., but unrelated to the poetry contest / verbal duel (EP-1)
3. ø (OM)

D.VIII.D. Qeretajdîn's handkerchief in shape of rabbit as diversion to save Mem & Zîn #1

1. a. While Zîn #1 is serving coffee in the diwan, Beko says to Mir Sêvdîn that if she smiles when she serves Mem his coffee, this is proof of their love; Qeretajdîn fashions a rabbit out of his handkerchief and shows it to the assembly just as Zîn #1 serves Mem his coffee: his handkerchief is meant to account for Zîn #1's laughter and smiling [follows D.V.] (FK-1; EP-1)
b. same as a. [follows D.II.D; replaces D.I.] (SHa-1)
2. ø (PN; PS; HM; LC-1; OM; SHa-2; GNa; FK-2; EP-2; ZK-3; HR-1; HR-2; ZK-1; ZK-2; MC-1)

E. Final stage - Death of Mem and Zîn #1

E.I. Mem's death

E.I.A. Zîn #1 takes Mem out of prison:

1. a. Beko Awan tells Zīn #1 to release Mem (PS; FK-1; ZK-1)
 - b. Beko Awan tells Zīn #1 to take maidservants and release Mem (EP-1)
 - c. Beko Awan tells Zīn #1 to take 40 maidens and release Mem (SHa-2; ZK-3; HR-1)
 - d. Beko Awan tells Zīn #1 to take 40 maidens and musicians and release Mem (HM)
2. a. Mīr Sēvdīn tells Zīn #1 to take maidservants and release Mem (ZK-2)
 - b. Mīr Sēvdīn tells Zīn #1 to take 40 maidens and release Mem (SHa-1; GNa)
 - c. Mīr Sēvdīn tells Zīn #1 to bring drums and fifes [zurnas] and release Mem (MC-1)
 - d. Mīr Sēvdīn tells Qeretajdīn to release Mem (HR-2)
3. Mīr Sēvdīn and Beko Awan tell Zīn #1 to release Mem (EP-2)
4. Ḥasan čākō release Mem from prison (LC-1)
5. Zīn asks for permission to release Mem (OM)
6. ∅ (PN; FK-2)

E.I.B. Mem's death

1. a. Mem is pulled up from dungeon pit by rope; is dead when pulled up (ZK-3)
 - b. Mem is pulled up from dungeon pit by rope; at entrance to pit sheds drop of blood and dies (SHa-2; HR-1)
 - c. Mem is pulled up from dungeon pit by rope tied around his waist; at entrance to pit sheds 2 drops of blood and dies (ZK-2)
 - d. Mem is pulled up from dungeon pit by white rope tied around his waist; he is pulled up and dies (EP-1)
 - e. Mem is pulled up from dungeon pit by yellow rope; he falls dead at the entrance to the dungeon (ZK-1)
 - f. Mem is pulled up from dungeon pit first by white rope; then by yellow rope wrapped around his waist; he is pulled up and dies (FK-1)

- g. Mem is pulled up from dungeon pit by passion flower vine (charkhifalak); he dies once he is above ground (SHa-1)
2. a. Mem is pulled up from dungeon pit by Zîn #1's braids; he dies once he is above ground (OM)
 - b. Mem is pulled up from dungeon pit by Zîn #1's braids; he is pulled half way up, then lets go and falls back down and dies (EP-2)
 - c. Zîn #1 descends into dungeon; Mem dies; he is pulled up from dungeon pit by braids of 40 maidens tied to rope (GNa)
3. a. Beko Awan interferes: he tells Mem that Zîn #1 is marrying someone else; proof of this is Zîn #1's bridal gown; Mem is pulled up from dungeon pit by rope; when he sees Zîn #1 in bridal gown (which is meant for him), he dies (HR-2)
 - b. Beko Awan interferes: he tells Mem that Zîn #1 is marrying someone else; Mem dies when reaches mouth of pit (MC-1)
4. As soon as Mem emerges from dungeon and sees Zîn #1, he dies (LC-1)
5. As soon as Mem emerges from dungeon, 3 drops of blood drip from his nose, and he dies (HM)
6. Mem asks Zîn #1 to bring him a bowl of cold water; after he drinks it, he dies (PS)
7. Mem's death is stated, without any description (PN; FK-2)

E.I.C. Prediction regarding sex of person releasing Mem from prison

1. a. If a woman releases Mem, he will die; if a man releases him, he will live (EP-1)
 - b. If a Zîn #1 releases Mem, he will die; if a man releases him, he will live (GNa; ZK-2)
2. a. Zîn #1 says it is disgraceful that Mem should be released by a woman (SHa-2)
 - b. Zîn #1 says it is a shame that prisoners are brought in by men, then released by women (ZK-1)
3. ∅ (PN; PS; HM; LC-1; OM; SHa-1; FK-2; FK-1; EP-2; ZK-3; HR-1; HR-2; MC-1)

E.II. Zîn #1's death:

E.II.A. When Zîn #1 dies vis-à-vis Mem's death

1. She stabs herself to death just after Mem dies (HR-1; HR-2)
2. a. She dies the same day as Mem (SHa-1; SHa-2; FK-1; EP-1; ZK-3; ZK-1; ZK-2)
 - b. She dies the evening of the same day as Mem (EP-2)
3. She dies at noon of the next day (GNa)
4. She dies a week later (LC-1)
5. She dies 8 days later (PS; HM)
6. She dies 40 hours or 40 days later (MC-1)
7. Time of her death is not specified (PN; OM; FK-2)

E.II.B. Burial of Mem and Zîn #1

1. a. Although they are buried back to back, they have turned to face each other when graves are opened (PN; SHa-2)
 - b. same as a.; this is a sign that their love was divine (GNa)
 - c. Although they are buried back to back, they have turned to face each other and are sweating when graves are opened (FK-1)
 - d. Zîn #1 instructs Mîr Sêvdîn to bury them back to back; they are found facing each other and sweating; this is a sign that they are divine lovers [aşoqê suřê] (EP-1)
2. a. Although they are buried separately, Zîn #1 is in Mem's grave when it is opened (PS)
 - b. Although they are buried separately, Zîn #1 is in Mem's grave when it is opened; they are found with a curtain between them from the waist down, and embracing above the waist and their mouths touching (HR-1)
 - c. Although they are buried separately, they are found embracing when the graves are opened, because Beko Awan had gone at night and placed their arms around each other (ZK-3; HR-2)
 - d. Although they are buried separately, they are found embracing when the graves are opened, because Beko Awan had gone at night and placed their arms around each other; Zîn #1 comes back to life just long enough to ask Mîr Sêvdîn to kill Beko Awan (ZK-2)
 - e. Although they are buried separately; after their graves are opened, they are buried together in one pit (FK-2)

The boy went and saw that khatûn Perf was stirring the food with a ladle. He said, "Khatûn Perf, the mîr says for Qeretajdîn to come immediately, the plaintiffs are eating each other up".

(41) When he said that, khatûn Perf hit him in the forehead with the ladle. Red blood came out. The boy said, "Even if I die, I want to go have a look at Mem [first]." He went to the diwan and stood and looked at Mem. The mîr sent a second man, saying:

"Boy, tell Qeretajdîn to come. What sort of guest does he have? For three days he has neglected the door of the diwan⁶⁷."

This boy went to Qeretajdîn and valiantly requested [him to come]. Qeretajdîn got up and went alone to the mîr. The mîr said, "You've locked the door of the diwan now for three days and nights; the plaintiffs are eating each other up."

Qeretajdîn said to the mîr, "My mîr, I swear by God that I had no idea three days had passed: to me it seemed like a minute and an hour. My guest is such a person that if he came to your door, *you* would stand up before *him*."⁶⁸

(42) The mîr said, "Our family⁶⁹ has never stood up for anyone."

[195] Qeretajdîn went back home. When the mîr's meal⁷⁰ was ready, he sent a man to fetch Mem, Qeretajdîn and his brothers. Qeretajdîn filled Mem's pockets with small coins⁷¹, and said, "When you leave, scatter the coins in all directions, so that the people distribute them among themselves, to avert the evil eye⁷²."

⁶⁷-lit. "He has left the door and diwan without a master," or "without care" Apparently Qeretajdîn had the keys to the diwan.

⁶⁸It is customary for everyone to stand up when a mîr or other ruler enters the room, as a sign of respect for him. Memê is apparently regarded so highly, that with regard to the mîr, the usual practice would be reversed, so that even the mîr would stand up out of respect for Memê when the latter entered the room.

⁶⁹Mala me = lit. "household," "house."

⁷⁰Nan = lit. "bread."

⁷¹Guroş = Petty coin. Cf. German Groschen, Arabic qirsh قرش / ghirsh غرش (plural qurūsh قروش / ghurūsh غروش), Turkish kuruş.

⁷²See note 39 above.

(43) They got into the carriage and went.

When Mem went inside
 He greeted the mîr first,
 The mîr returned his greeting⁷³,
 Rising ever so slightly to his feet.

(44) While they ate their food, they spoke a little, [and] the mîr was in awe of Mem. When Mem came in and the mîr stood up before him, Qeretajdîn threw his handkerchief under [the mîr's] seat.

The spoke for a long time, then Qeretajdîn said to the mîr, "My mîr, Mem has already been here a few days, [but] has not yet seen our city. Please allow us to go to [the roof of] my palace⁷⁴, so that Mem can look [out over the city].

The mîr gave them leave. They took Mem, but Qeretajdîn came back to the mîr [and] said, "My mîr, didn't you say 'I won't stand up before Memé?'"

The mîr said, "My boy, I didn't get up."

(45) Qeretajdîn [reached down and] took his handkerchief out from under the mîr's seat and showed it to him. The mîr said, "Well, even if I did stand up, I wasn't aware of it."

Mem, Qeretajdîn and his two brothers went up to [the roof of] Qeretajdîn's palace, sat down and talked. Khatûn Zîn's residence was across from that of Qeretajdîn. She had heard that Qeretajdîn had a very honored guest, but she didn't know that it was Mem.

⁷³Muslims greet each other by saying "al-salâmu 'alaykum" عليكم السلام (Peace be upon you), to which the reply is "wa-'alaykum al-salâm" والسلام عليكم.

⁷⁴In the Russian translation, this is rendered as "the tower of my palace," but the original Kurdish has only 'sar k' oç'k û serê min' = "On top of my köşk and saray" (Turkish köşk = "Pavilion"; saray [from Persian serây/سرای = "Palace"). It would make sense to view the city from a high position, such as a terrace or a tower, but there is nothing in the text to suggest a tower per se.

Zin went onto her balcony, looked over at Qeretajdn's house, and saw Mem sitting there⁷⁵. She didn't restrain herself, but on the spot sang a song about Mem for all to hear:

- (46) O maidservants, you look,
On Qeretajdn's roof is an important delegation.
One is Qeretajdn,
One is Erfan, one is Chekan,
The fourth -- may my head and yours
Be a sacrifice⁷⁶ for Memé Alan.

[196] Mem heard Zin's voice, looked over and saw her perched at the front of the balcony, singing to him. Mem said, "By God, let them kill me, but I too will sing a song for Zin." Qeretajdn and his brothers heard Zin's song. [Then] Mem sang:

- (47) O brothers, you look,
Look at that headdress,
At that silken neck kerchief,
A voice has floated to my ears⁷⁷,

⁷⁵lit. "And saw that Memé was also on it." This, as well as the fact that Ziné specifically goes to her balcony across the way, suggests that the people at Qeretajdn's house are sitting on a balcony or terrace. See note 74 above.

⁷⁶This type of expression is common in the languages of the Middle East. Compare Arabic *fidāka abī* *أبي فداك* /*wa-fidan la-ka abī* *لك أبي فدى* = "May my father be thy ransom"; *ju'litu fidāka* *جعلت فداك* = lit. "May I be made your ransom," i.e. "Could I but sacrifice myself for you!"

(Wehr); Persian *qurbān-i to/shumā* *تو/ شما قربان* = "[May I be] your sacrifice," a common greeting; Turkish *'kurban olayım* = "May I be a sacrifice," a way of saying "Please!" "I beg you!," Christian Neo-Aramaic *ana xlapux* = "I [am] your replacement."

⁷⁷*Dengek li min 'e'esele bā*. This line is hard to translate, because the dictionaries don't the exact form 't'esele,' and I am not totally sure that 't'esel,' which does occur, is the same thing. Originally from Arabic *tasāllī* (*tasallim*) *تسلل*, meaning "entertainment," "diversion," originally "consoling oneself," or a garbling of *tasā'ul* *تسأل*, meaning "[self-directed] question" (this last thanks to Jaba

I don't know if it's a houri's voice, or an angel's.

At that point Qeretajdîn's two brothers wanted to strike Mem, but their big brother would not let them, saying, "Calm down brothers, what do Mem and Zîn's words mean?⁷⁸ Theirs is nothing but a nighttime dream."

(48) Zîn saw that songs were of no help, so she gathered her old copperware^{78a} and loaded up two or three camels, and went to the spring to wash and polish her copper. The spring was right next to Qeretajdîn's residence.

When Mem saw that Zîn had gotten dressed up and was leading a caravan to the spring, he said, "By God, let them kill me, but I will sing a song for Zîn and her caravan." He sang:

- (49) "Brothers, a great caravan has come,
My head, boys and imams, is in confusion,
It has been on people's lips,
How much there must be there to tax⁷⁹,
It is worthy of Memê Alan,
That someone should extract taxes and tolls from it⁸⁰."

& Justî), the Kurdish dictionaries have the following: 1) Kurdoev: Test, check, revision; Investigation, consideration; Visit; Paying attention [The Hebrew root BQR manifests a similar cluster of meanings]; 2) Jaba & Justî: Consolation; Consultation, conference, putting of many heads together; 3) Izolî: Consolation, solace; 4) Khamcîan: To visit; To look at. Perhaps the meaning of the verse is "A voice has diverted/consolated me." Alan Ward's translation is "I have heard a voice."

⁷⁸- lit. "What will come of Memê and Zîn's words?"

^{78a} sifrê xweyî kevn. Alan Ward translates this as "old dining tables." Sifrê- appears to come from Sifre, meaning 'the place where food is served' whether it be a tray, a table, or a tablecloth: see FK-1, note #82). However, it is possible that Sifrê- is from Sifir, which means 'copper' or 'copper vessel.' In either case, copper trays and the like are intended, as is born out by parallels to this passage in other versions.

⁷⁹Bac û bertil - lit. "Tribute and ransom," can mean 1) "Bribe" (بَرطِيل | bartîl) also means bribe in Colloquial Syro-Palestinian Arabic; 2) "Taxes and tolls."

⁸⁰Verses 2-6 are difficult to understand. In Jndî's Russian and Ward's English translations, 'K'ar-barê' is rendered as "Amber": "It is all loaded with amber." However, 'K'ar û bar' means "Preparations (as for a journey)": 'K'ar-bar' could easily be a variant of 'K'ar û bar.' Moreover, according to Kurdoev, 'Li ser hev bûn k'ar û bar' can mean "To be alarmed," "To be in confusion."

Erfan and Chekan had their hands on their swords,
 Qeretajdîn comes in between them,
 Saying: "Brothers, I swear by the one in whose hands we are,
 Theirs is nothing but a nighttime dream."

(50) Qeretajdîn said to Mem, "Mem, the one you are talking about is my sister-in-law to be⁸¹, the betrothed of Chekan. Get on your horse and go to the spring: if you succeed in collecting tribute from her, know that you will be our big brother, and we your little brothers. But if you can't collect tribute from her, we will banish you⁸², you can go straight home. If you ever show up around here again, [we will cut you up into so many pieces that] the largest part of you will be your ear."

Then Qeretajdîn said in song:

(51) "Mem, it is not your caravan,
 It's the sister-in-law of Qeretajdîn,
 [197] Betrothed to Chekan from birth,
 Her names are teli khatûn and Zîn,
 Nobody has dared
 To exact tribute from her."

Mem took his Bor [from the stable], saddled him, mounted him and rode to the spring:

(52) Mem brought Bor outside,

The full line runs 'Serê min, xulama, Imama, k'ar-bare,' = lit. 'My head, boys, imams is k'ar-bar' I find 'confused' a more likely meaning than either *amber* or *preparations*. Although the meaning of these lines is not totally clear, there is a comparable passage in ZK-1 which deals with collecting taxes and tolls from Zîné's caravan. Whatever the literal meaning, it is clear that the caravan is linked to Zîné, and that speaking amorously of Chekan's fiancée Zîné annoys Qeretajdîn's brothers to the point of wanting to run Memê through with their swords.

⁸¹ See note 16 above.

⁸² -lit. 'Put you out of our borders.'

Put on him the jewel-laden⁸³ saddle
 Rode him to the roadside spring,
 Mem rode to the spring,
 Greeted the maiden Zîn,
 Put Bor's muzzle in the spring water.
 Zîn returned his greeting⁸⁴,
 Saying, "Welcome, renowned agha!"
 He said, "While on the roof we said things,
 I put my trust in you,
 But I fear you won't do what I ask."
 Zîn said, "Mem, collect your wits,
 Keep Bor's mouth in the water⁸⁵,
 The woman you're talking about isn't here."
 (53) Then freely Zîn got up,
 Reached for her neck chain⁸⁶:

⁸³'Albavî' does not occur in any Kurdish dictionary; both Jndî and Ward translate it, wrongly in my opinion, as "belonging to Al-pasha." 'Bav' does mean father, but according to the story, Memê went and commissioned the making of the saddle himself, without the help – or approval – of his father. Sometimes Kurdish words creep into the colloquial Turkish of Eastern Anatolia, and can be found in the Turkish *Derleme Sözlüğü*, a dictionary of colloquial Turkish gathered (hence 'derleme' = gathering) from all over Anatolia. In the *Derleme Sözlüğü*, there is a word 'Ala baba,' equivalent in meaning with the Standard Turkish 'Akbaba,' meaning 'Vulture' or "Daisy." In some languages, the word for "Daisy" is the same as the word for "Pearl," e.g. Arabic *lu'tu' l-lu'lu'* = "Pearl," and *zahr al-lu'tu' l-lu'lu'* *زهرة اللؤلؤ*, lit. "Pearl flower," meaning "Daisy"; There is a widely distributed word which takes the form *margalit* מרגלית in Hebrew = "Pearl"; *morvârid* مروارید and *marjân* مرجان in Persian = "Pearl"; *marjân* مرجان in Arabic = "Small pearls," "Coral"; *Mercan* in Turkish = "Coral"; 'Margarita' in Spanish = "Pearl," "Ox-eye daisy"; 'Margherita' in Italian = "Pearl," "Ox-eye daisy." I therefore infer from all this that 'Albavî' can mean 'Pearl' as well as "Daisy," which would make perfect sense in the given context: 'Lê kir zînê albavî û cewarê' = "He put [kir] on him [lê] the saddle [zîn] of pearls [albavî] and jewels [cewarî]."

⁸⁴See note 73 above.

⁸⁵-lit. "Don't take Bor's mouth out of the water."

⁸⁶Tok û benî. According to Kurdoev, *t'oq* is a "Hoop" or a "Circle" [from Arabic *ṭawq* طوق]; According to Jaba & Justî, *benî* is a "Small gold or silver chain worn around the neck." In Jndî's

"My Lord," she said, "What does your heart desire?"
 Precious Zîn got up,
 Took her neck chain
 Broke off three gold coins,
 [And] said, "Here: one is for tribute, one for ransom,
 The third is for my betrothal to Chekan,
 It is worth Jizîr's expenses for seven years."
 Mem took the tribute and ransom in his fingers,
 Rode back to the three brothers,
 The three of them conceived great awe for Mem.

Mem took out two gold coins, and said, "Here, brothers, here's some tribute and ransom for you."

[54] They would not accept the two gold coins, so Mem gave them the betrothal coin. This they accepted.

Qeretajdîn said:

"We are three brothers, our horses are grey,
 We have clubs of fire⁸⁷ in our hands,
 We roam the world in search of fights,
 We will bring for our brother
 Black-browed and dark-eyed Zîn the blessed."

[198] Erfan said:

"We are three brothers, our horses are black,
 In the world of heroes we are very well-known⁸⁸,
 We will bring for our brother
 Black-browed and dark-eyed Zîn the charming."

Russian translation, *tok û bent* is translated as "Neck chain," and is explained as being a woman's adornment consisting of silver coins.

⁸⁷i.e. Torches.

⁸⁸K'ifî = lit. "Obvious," "Apparent."

Chekan said:

"We are three brothers, our horses are bay⁸⁹,
We roam the land with clubs of fire,
We will bring for our brother
The one his heart desires."

(55) That is how they spent that day, having all agreed to marry Zîn to Mem. They whole-heartedly regarded Mem as their older brother. Some days passed. Mîr had food prepared, [and] invited all four brothers, saying, "I will also reward Mem."

Before long Zîn heard that the mîr was inviting Mem to give him a gift. She sent a message to Mem not to accept any gift but the office of cook⁹⁰, so that they could be together everyday and have their fill of taking pleasure in each other.

(56) The mîr invited Mem, and after they finished eating, said to him, "Mem, even if you are not of noble birth, by God you are noble, even if you are the son of a cowherd, by God you are a prince! Tell me what I can give you as a reward!"

Mem said, "Well, my mîr, all I want is the position of cook, to be a part of your court⁹¹ for a few months."

The mîr said, "Give Mem the position of cook⁹²."

Mem became the mîr's coffee server⁹³. Now Mem and Zîn spent a great deal of time together⁹⁴. Laughing, joking, and chattering, they brought the morning coffee to the diwan at noon, and the noon coffee in the evening.

⁸⁹ *Kumêft*, from Arabic *kumayt* كميته , a word used in Classical Arabic poetry to describe a dark-bay colored, i.e. reddish-brown, horse.

⁹⁰ *K'arkê aspêjtê* - lit. "Fur coat of cookhood." I follow Jndi in rendering this as "The office/ position of cook." Ward has: "Accept no gift but the cook's dress." It is noteworthy that a different word for "fur coat" or "doak" is used in the scene where Zîn hides behind Mem's doak, namely *Qapût*.

⁹¹-lit. "To come and go for a few months in your diwan."

⁹²-lit. "Bring the fur coat of cookhood, put it on Memê."

⁹³According to Jndi, a position reserved for those closest to a prince or mîr, carrying with it the responsibility of serving coffee at governmental meetings and deliberations.

⁹⁴-lit. "Memê and Zîn now stood in a place beside each other."

Bekir said to the mîr, "My mîr, your diwan gets its morning coffee at noon, and its noon coffee in the evening. This brings shame upon your name; Mem is intent on shaming you."

The mîr said, "Bekir, where he comes from that's the way it's done⁹⁵; He'll learn, don't worry."

(57) After some time passed, the mîr made an announcement to the nobles of Jizîr, saying, "Tomorrow we must go hunting [and] take Memê Ala with us."

Zîn said to Mem, "Pretend you're sick⁹⁶. When they come to you tomorrow, tell them you're sick. Let them mount their horses. Once they have mounted, they will certainly not dismount. Once they have gone, they won't be back for six or seven days. Let's you and I go to the garden of Torkîf and take pleasure in one another."

(58) The next morning the mîr went with the nobles of Jizîr, Qeretajdîn, and his two brothers to wait for Mem. They sent word to Mem, saying, [199] "Brother, mount your horse".

Mem sent word back to the mîr: "Tell the mîr that I am not well today".

The mîr had no intention of dismounting; He led the nobles and they went off hunting. Mem and Zîn got dressed up and headed for the garden of Torkîf. Bekir Ewan had stayed at the rear of the horsemen. When he was leaving he saw Mem and Zîn going to the garden of Torkîf. He rode on ahead and caught up with the hunters. A black storm cloud came out [and] it started to rain. Bekir said to the mîr, "My mîr, it will rain a lot, let us ride to your garden of Torkîf and dismount. I just saw two young fawns⁹⁷ in your garden. We can capture them, and make a meal out of them, until the rain stops."

The mîr listened to Bekir, but Qeretajdîn doubted Bekir's words, saying:

(59) "From the south appeared a huge storm cloud,
Bringing forth thunder, lightening and rain,

⁹⁵-ijt. "Surely the custom of their country is thus."

⁹⁶-ijt. "Throw yourself sick."

⁹⁷ Du karê xezala' =ijt. "Two kids of deer." 'Kar' is a kid, the young of goats, but can also be used for the young of deer. This passage compares Memê and Zînê to two gazelles, which is reminiscent of Classical Arabic and Hebrew 'gazelle poetry,' in which the beauty of pre-pubescent boys and girls is likened to the delicate grace of gazelles. In addition, it implies that the hunters are after them.

I know the fate of Memê Alan."
 Qeretajdîn, crazy and mad,
 Called upon Badîn chawish⁹⁸
 [And] sent him to the garden of Torkîf.
 He said, "Go, make things ready for the mîr,
 Bear all laws and rules in mind,
 Chase out any beasts you may find."
 Badîn chawish entered [the garden],
 Greeted Mem first thing,
 Found him lying down, in Zîn's arms.

Mem said:

"Hey chawish, let this be a secret,
 Whoever guards this secret of mine,
 Will find favor with the All-powerful."
 [Chawish] said: "Mem, enough said,
 Even if above my head [I hear] the gnashing of daggers,
 I won't let a word out of my mouth."
 Mem said: "I swear by God the Almighty,
 Until my head falls off,
 666 pairs of daggers
 Won't pull my mouth from Zîn's breast."

(60) By the time they finished talking, the horsemen and hunters were pouring in through the gates of the garden. Zîn stayed under Mem's overcoat. Mem threw the coat over his knees, put Zîn underneath it, and pretended to be ill. Mem was in trouble.

(61) The household servants [made] a hue and cry,
 Zîn [heard] among them the familiar voice of the mîr,

⁹⁸-lit. "Sergeant," from Turkish *Çavuş*.

[200] She said, "Mem, find a way for me to escape."
 Zîn got under his overcoat.
 The mîr came in from outside,
 Greeted Mem first⁹⁹,
 Mem returned his greeting,
 But did not rise before him.
 Bekir said, "My mîr, who has ever seen [such a thing],
 [When] the mîr and viziers come inside,
 They greet the servants first,
 The servants do not [even] rise while greeting in return!"

(62) Mem said:

"Bekir, I am ill with many wounds,
 My head won't stay put on four pillows,
 [For me] to rise to my feet in greeting the mîr."

Bekir said:

"Mem, there is no exception for the sick,
 You rise to your feet at once,
 Perform a farz¹⁰⁰, two namazes¹⁰¹,

⁹⁹This is apparently contrary to the normal practice because of the mîr's superior rank, Memê should initiate the greeting. However, according to Islamic custom, it is the person entering upon someone already present who must greet first, by saying al-salâmu 'alaykum (= "Peace be upon you"), presumably to reassure those already in attendance that the newcomer has peaceful intentions. I infer from the present context that showing respect to a superior takes precedence over Islamic custom. See note 73 above.

¹⁰⁰Religious duty required of all Muslims, from Arabic farḍ فرض .

¹⁰¹Islamic prayer ritual, from Persian namâz نماز [and Turkish namaz] (Kurmanji nimêj); Sorani niwêj).

Or don't you worship God either¹⁰²?"

Mem said:

"Bekir, when the sick get well,
They will rise to their feet from the start,
This worshipping will be for God."

Bekir said:

"Mem, you are crazy and mad,
Collect your wits about you,
What have you put under your blue¹⁰³ coat?"

(63) Qeretajdin said:

— "My mîr, Bekir is a big liar,
The harness of Mem's horse is gold,
He brought it to the garden of Torkîr to console himself¹⁰⁴,
But [out of] shame before the mîr he hid it under his blue coat."

Bekir said:

"The one who Mem loves
Is a black Arab with tattooed lips.
You can believe father Bekir,
[That] she'll carry a kettle of yoghurt around Jizir,

¹⁰²I have taken a little liberty with the text by making this last line into a question. However, this captures the feeling of the original, if I understand it correctly. Ward's translation is "maybe this will be merit for God."

¹⁰³See note 59 above

¹⁰⁴-li: "To disperse/scatter his troubles"

Qeretajdîn will carry around cups and goblets,
He'll bring a cup to Mem."

[201] Mem rearranges Zîn's braids under the coat,
Qeretajdîn sees it with his own eyes.

- (64) Qeretajdîn knits his brows,
Summons Erfan and Chekan,
[And] says, "Badîn chawish, you pass out the cups!
"I will go set my colorful manor on fire.
May my golden cradle¹⁰⁶ burn up,
So that my brother gets out of this predicament."
Qeretajdîn goes to his house,
Says to khatûn Perf with grief and spite,
"Take out the four golden cradles,
I am setting the manor on fire,
Perhaps it will get Mem out of this predicament."

(65) Khatûn Perf said:

"Dark color is Arab color,
May it be so for me!¹⁰⁶
Let the four golden cradles stay in their places,

¹⁰⁵In the Russian translation and in Alan Ward's English translation, the word *bormotik* is rendered as "children," although it is grammatically in the singular (*Bra bişewitê bormotka zêfîne*). I have not found it in any of the Kurdish dictionaries. The motif of leaving an infant in its cradle in the burning house occurs in many versions of *Mem û Zîn*, which lends some credence to the alleged translation of 'Bormotik' as "Child[ren]." However, the word 'zêfîn' means "golden"; would one speak of 'golden infants,' or is some other item of value intended, such as the baby's cradle? At the same point in the story, ZK-1 has the following: "Dara minarê dareke sorê,

Jê diçû alava k'eske û morê,
Navda şewitîn bêşîka kuffîn, hespa Bore."
"The tree of the minaret is a red tree,
Out of it came green and purple flames,
In it were burned the baby's cradle, and Bor the horse."

Consequently, I suggest that *bormotik* may mean "cradle." The word *dergûş* is also translated by some as "cradle" and by others as "infant."

¹⁰⁶According to Jndi, the black color of the face is a symbol of disgrace and shame.

So that by my sinning a good deed will come!¹⁰⁷ ."
 Qeretajdîn goes to his house,
 Takes from his pocket steel and flint,
 Sees the chawish before his very eyes,
 Whom he sends to the garden of Torkîrî,
 Saying, "Go tell the mîr that my colorful mansion¹⁰⁸ is on fire,
 That my four golden cradles burnt up in it,
 By this time tomorrow not a single noble will remain alive."

(66) Chawish said:

"Mîr, did you know that Qeretajdîn,
 That brave one, has gone mad,
 He has burned down his colorful mansion,
 Tomorrow he will destroy you and your nobles."
 When the chawish said these words,
 Mîr Sêvdîn:¹⁰⁹ was greatly troubled!¹¹⁰
 He left the garden with his nobles two by two.

(67) The mîr and his nobles swiftly left the garden and headed for Qeretajdîn's house. Zîn and Mem remained. When Zîn came out from under [Mem's] overcoat, [it was] as if someone had thrown a bucket of boiling water on her, she had perspired so much. She wrapped herself in her shawl and headed for home. Bekîr had gone to

¹⁰⁷According to Jndî, this difficult line means that by letting the (children) burn up, khatîrî Perf will have contributed her part toward rescuing Memê from his dilemma.

¹⁰⁸Xantê rengine, or xan-manêrengine. This is a formulaic epithet + noun, also common in epic poetry.

¹⁰⁹According to what we are told fairly early on in this version, mîr Seydîn is Zîn's father, and mîr Sêvdîn is his brother, i.e. her uncle. Perhaps the narrator slipped here and said Sêvdîn when he meant Seydîn (Reminiscent of the 'nodding of Homer'!) A little bit later, in section (70), mîr Seydîn is mentioned. See note 14 above, as well as HR-1 note # (108) and GNA note # (7) for similar occurrences.

¹¹⁰-li: 'Mîr Sêvdîn's heart and liver were burning.'

wait for Zîn on the road, having hid himself in a niche in the [city] wall. Mem got up and headed for the flaming manor. As Zîn was on her way, she looked over and saw Bekir in a niche in the wall, and she said in song:

"Go away, Bekir, master of plot and intrigue,
You are the fox behind these happenings^{110a}
Why are you the author of unhappiness?¹¹¹"

(68) [202] Mem reached the flaming manor, and saw that the flames had engulfed the building, and that the nobles of Jizîr had gathered around, and were running this way and that, out of fear of Qeretajdîn. Mem said [to himself], "I'll say two words to the fire: If my love is divinely inspired¹¹², it will put the fire out, but if it is not, then Zîn and I, our love is a lie." He sang:

(69) "Go away fire, from the fortress,
Between you and me is a divine decree,
What do you want from my brother's house?
Go away fire, without name or breath,
Enough running through our house,
You are on fire, just as I am.
Go away fire, treacherous one,
Without home or hearth,
Enough burning with a flash."
My Memê delal
Took out a handkerchief,
Threw it into the flames,
Instantly they went out.

110a Translation borrowed from Alan Ward's edition.

111 These two lines are very difficult to translate. I am not totally sure my translation is accurate, but it is in line with the Russian translation.

112—lit. "If I am a lover of secret love." The Russian translation explains this as meaning "If my love is sent from on high." Ward render it as: "If I'm a true lover."

Qeretajdîn the sagacious
 Draws his blue¹¹³ sword,
 From its sheath with a shout,
 Sees no nobleman of Jizîr about him.

(70) They dispersed, each one going to his own home. The four legitimate¹¹⁴ brothers went home. Mir Seydîn¹¹⁵ went and sat in his diwan alone. Bekir came in and began slandering. The mîr said,

"Bekir, enough of your slander. Zîn may be my sister¹¹⁶, but she is their *bak*¹¹⁷: whatever they agree to, we will also agree to. I have not yet seen anything dishonest in Mem. If you keep this up, one day we will cause the destruction of men, and disaster will reign forever."

¹¹³See note 59 above.

¹¹⁴*şîrfîtal* - lit. "With legal milk," which Kurdoev translates as "Noble," "Honest," "Sincere." This is more or less equivalent to the Arabic term *ibn ḥalāl* ابن حلال, meaning "Legitimate son" or by extension "Respectable fellow." See note 38 above.

¹¹⁵See note 109 above.

¹¹⁶This contradicts what was stated above. In section (3) we are told that Zînê is mîr Seydîn's daughter. In other versions, e.g. HM, the relationship between them is one of brother and sister. See note 14 above.

¹¹⁷See note 16 above.

[71] Bekir said, "My mîr, I am master of my virtue!¹¹⁸ What I say is true. As long as Zîn is in your house, she is your honor!¹¹⁹ Once she has gone to [live in] Qeretajdîn's house, what they do is their business. Besides that, you send for Mem today, invite him to come here; when it comes time for coffee to be served, have Zîn serve it. If she laughs and turns away when she is handing Mem his cup of coffee, know that I speak the truth, but if she doesn't laugh, know that I am lying."

The mîr listened to Bekir, and sent for Mem and the three brothers, saying, "Zîn, Mem is ill, you pass out the [coffee] cups and glasses."

[72] The mîr's diwan [filled with people] noisily sitting down. Zîn distributed coffee, and when it was Mem's turn, when she gave him a cup, she turned [203] away and laughed. Just before this, Qeretajdîn [took out] his handkerchief and made [it look like] a rabbit!¹²⁰; when Zîn laughed, he threw it before Zîn, so that people would say that she was laughing because of the handkerchief. When Zîn laughed and turned away, Bekir said:

- [73] "Who has [ever] seen the daughter of aristocrats passing around cups,
 Bringing a cup to her father's servants?
 The servant will become [too] insolent!^{120a}
 To pass out cups in the mîr's diwan,

118 **Xîret** = lit "Zeal," "Fervor"; "Striving," "Aspiration" This is from Arabic *ghayrah* غيرة borrowed into Persian as *ghayrat* غیبرت. It can also mean "jealousy," and is used for "Sense of honor," particularly vis-à-vis the behavior of the women of one's family, who in a shame society are perceived as representing the family's honor. This is connected with the concept of a woman's honor, known as *ird* عرت in Arabic, and *nâmûs* ناموس in Persian, Turkish and Kurdish (although the word *nâmûs*, ultimately derived from Greek *nomos*, occurs in Arabic also). Cf. Jear, G. *Peristiany Honor and Shame: the Values of Mediterranean Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1966); John Gulick *The Middle East: An Anthropological Perspective* (Pacific Palisades, Calif: Goodyear Publishing Co, c1976), pp 209-211.

119 'Namûs' See note 118 above

120A Kurdish woman I used to know, a twenty-eight year old woman (in 1988) from Kirkûk, Iraqî Kurdistan, told me that as a child she remembered seeing 'rabbits' made out of handkerchiefs as a way of amusing children. This must be a traditional Kurdish game. See also FK-1, note #[54].

120a =lit: "thick-ribbed"

He should remember his place¹²¹.”
 The mîr knitted his brow severely,
 [And] said, “O scoundrels¹²², get up quickly,
 Make mincemeat of Mem for me,
 Let his heart and liver be raised on the tips of your swords.”
 Like rabid wolves they arose,
 Heroes and warriors all fell in together,
 Mem said, “Mir, now don't you run away!”
 On the spot Memê delal jumped up,
 Made a shield for himself out of diwan cushions,
 Drew his sword from its sheath,
 Was about to remove the mîr's liver.
 He said, “Mir, if you [try to] harm me,
 I'll do in three hundred of you,
 I'll knock down four hundred off the terrace,
 But first I'll liquidate you.”

- (74) Qeretajdîn the deft
 Took hold of¹²³ his [steel] blue sword.
 He regarded the mîr with contempt,
 [And] said, “Make yourself ready now.
 Erfan and Chekan,
 The bells of war,
 Are behind Memê Alan.”

¹²¹-lit: “It is necessary that he see himself in a heavy anchor,” which is explained by Jndi as meaning “He should keep himself according to his position.” Ward has “he must keep to his own place”

¹²²Geî emekherama'-lit “O you whose food is forbidden.” Although the word emekheram is not found in the dictionaries, the following expression does appear both in Kurdoev and Khamoian: ‘Emekê min [li] te helal be’ which means 1) Bon appétit! Eat with hearty appetite; 2) May my labor bring you benefit; 3) I bless you. By replacing ‘helal’ with its opposite ‘heram,’ we can get an idea of what the word ‘Emekheram’ is supposed to mean: Someone whose food is not blessed, i.e. a freeloader, good-for-nothing scoundrel. This is also relevant to the previous discussion about ‘şrhelal’ and like expressions. See footnotes 38 and 114 above.

¹²³Soranîa heşîr: kir hidîr. This is how ‘Hidîr’ is rendered in the Russian translation. It does not appear in any of the Kurdish dictionaries I consulted. Ward has “he gripped his blue-steel sword”

The heroes and warriors arose at once,
 No one took pleasure in the four brothers;
 The brothers took Mem with them,
 Took him out of the mîr's diwan.
 They left and went that way,
 Two horsemen came swiftly down the road,
 A battle proclamation in their hands.

(75) When Qeretajdîn laid eyes on the horsemen, he noticed that they both had grey horses, but they had turned black from sweating so much. An order to do battle was sealed in a box¹²⁴. They brought it and handed it over to Qeretajdîn. When he opened it and read it, he understood that it was an order by the mîr Belg-Mîkhar, written to Mîr Seydîn [as follows]:

[204] "In twenty four hours I want an army of twelve thousand [12,000] mounted soldiers from you. Qeretajdîn and his two brothers should be the commanders of the troops. If you don't carry out this order, you will lose your head."

(76) Mîr Belg-Mîkhar was the support of all the mîrs in the world. Qeretajdîn took the edict and returned with it to Mîr Seydîn's diwan. [When he appeared there] he saw that one [of the mîr's advisers] said, "I would destroy him!" another said, "I would beat him!" Qeretajdîn gave the edict to the mîr and said, "Here, take this edict: it's for you. Now let them 'destroy me', 'beat me', or do whatever they like."

(77) After this, Qeretajdîn returned to his own home!¹²⁵.

¹²⁴This is the Russian rendering of this obscure sentence. The original reads as follows: 'Hukumekî seferî zîmrût kirî nav zilfêdaye' = "An order [hukumekî] of battle/campaign [seferî] was made [kirî] emerald [zîmrût] in/among [nav ...-da] curls [zilfê]." Jaba and Justi's dictionary lists a word [zoumour] meaning "Sealing wax," which sounds like 'zîmrût' = "emerald," and does seem to make more sense than the latter word. However, in the previous sentence, the colors grey [boz] and black [qîmer] are mentioned, and emeralds are green, another color. Nevertheless I fail to see how Jndî came up with "box" or "chest" for 'zilf' = "curl/lock of hair." This is one of many times that the Russian translation must be taken with a grain of salt, although in all fairness there are also instances where it has included very useful explanatory notes. Ward translates this as: "They were carrying a sealed order for a campaign."

¹²⁵No explanation is offered regarding the amount of damage to Qeretajdîn's house as a result of the fire.

When the mîr took a look at the edict, he became greatly distressed and said to Bekir, "Confound you!¹²⁶ because of your meddlesome slandering, you've made them¹²⁷ my enemies. Without Qeretajdîn and his brothers, where will I find twelve thousand horsemen? Who else will leave home to become a fighter? If the sound of those three lions is not heard in Jizîr, what will happen? I will lose my head!"

Bekir said to the mîr, "My mîr, I know! Let Qeretajdîn become mîr in your place. Let's go to his house and throw ourselves at his feet; you tell him that Zîn is their *bok*, if they are willing to give her to Mem, it's all right with you. Then they will agree."

(78) The mîr and Bekir went to Qeretajdîn's house, and the mîr said this to him.

Qeretajdîn agreed, [and] said to the mîr, "You can go back home now, this is my affair now."

The mîr and Bekir went home. Qeretajdîn, Erfan and Chekan got on their horses and rode to the center of Jizîr waving their torches¹²⁸, saying, "All those who have horses should be ready tomorrow morning in the square!¹²⁹"

The nobles of Jizîr didn't sleep that night, they went and stood in the square from the evening on. Twelve thousand did not show up: fifteen thousand did! At dawn Qeretajdîn sent an order to Bekir, saying, "You absolutely must come with us, or else I will cut off your head."

No matter how much Bekir begged and pleaded, in the end he too joined the troops. Qeretajdîn instructed khatûn Perf, saying, "Take care of Mem!¹³⁰ when I come back, we will marry him to Zîn."

(79) The troops left. On the way, Bekir threw himself at [the mercy of] Erfan and Chekan, saying, "Ask for permission from Qeretajdîn for me to go back. I am not

¹²⁶-lit. "May your house be destroyed." A common curse. See ZK-1 notes # (25) & # (39).

¹²⁷i.e. Qeretajdîn and his brothers

¹²⁸Gurzêd at'aşî = lit. "Clubs of fire."

¹²⁹Meydana şêr = lit. "Square or plaza of war."

¹³⁰It is curious that the question of Mem's joining the expedition is not even mentioned.

even on the payroll, and besides, Zîn is already Mem's betrothed, what trouble can I cause?"

Somehow they got permission for Bekir to return home. He went to the mîr, and found him sitting alone in the diwan. Bekir said to him, [205] "My mîr, why are you sitting alone? With one like Memê Ala as your brother-in-law¹³¹, why don't you invite him to come to you so that the two of you can talk, so that you won't be bored?"

The mîr summoned Mem and had him brought over. They were talking together, when Bekir said:

(80) "My mîr, you are both respected.

Bring some game to play.

Become engrossed in it, so you won't be bored."

They brought chess and began [to play]. Bekir said:

"You're both pros, you should place bets¹³² before playing chess."

The mîr said, "What should the stakes be?"¹³³

Bekir said, "I'll say a word, but you must agree to it; if the mîr wins, he can ask whatever he wants, but if Mem beats the mîr, tomorrow we will put Zîn on horseback, and take her to Qeretajdîn's house where she will dismount¹³⁴, until they¹³⁵ come back."

131 *Zava*, cognate to Persian *dâmâd* داماد, is the male counterpart of *bedâ* (See note #16) above). Hence, in addition to meaning "Bridegroom," it refers to a male marrying into one's family, and can mean either "Son-in-law" (vis-à-vis the bride's parents) or "Brother-in-law" (vis-à-vis the bride's siblings). It is the latter meaning that fits the present context.

132: *Bî şer'* =li: "On condition."

133: *Emê ser qî bilîzin?* =li: "What should we play for/over?"

134: This is a description of a wedding procession. He means that if Memê beats the mîr at chess, Zînê will be able to marry Memê.

135: e Qeretajdîn and his brothers

(81) Both the mîr and Mem agreed to what Bekir said. They began to play chess. Eh, the poor mîr, even if Azrael¹³⁶ came [to his aid], he could not have beat Mem at chess. Mem didn't give the mîr a moment's rest.

Bekir went to his daughter [and] said, "My child, bring your dice¹³⁷ and tell me what the outcome of Mem and the mîr's game] will be."

She threw her dice¹³⁸, and said, "Father, if you don't bring Zîn and have her stand where Mem can see her, the mîr doesn't have a chance¹³⁹. But if Mem looks at Zîn, he'll lose himself, [and] the mîr will beat him."

Bekir quickly went to Zîn and said, "Zîn, come to the mîr's diwan. The mîr and Mem are playing chess, and if Mem beats the mîr, they have agreed that they will mount you on a horse tomorrow and marry you to Mem. This is what I've done for you."

(82) Zîn got all dressed up in her Sunday best¹⁴⁰, and went and stood where the mîr could see her. Bekir saw that Mem was only two moves away from beating the mîr. He said to the mîr, "My mîr, why don't you get up and change places, you'll be more comfortable."

They got up and changed places. Zîn now stood before Mem's eyes. When Mem caught sight of her, he looked at her in wonder and amazement. The mîr made his attack, and was one move away from beating Mem.

Bekir said, "My mîr, hit each other real hard, get all worked up!"

The mîr said:

(83) "Mem, I've beaten you, I've won,
I'll shown you who's boss!¹⁴¹,

¹³⁶Azrael is the angel of death according to Islamic tradition.

¹³⁷See note 49 above.

¹³⁸Rami vekîr'-lit. "Opened the rami (See note 49 above)."

¹³⁹-lit. "Next to Memê the mîr is like a child [at the game of chess]."

¹⁴⁰Mîna bazîlîrganê Hemsîk û Heyaê'-lit. "Like the caravan of Hemsîk and Heya." I have not been able to find a reference to the story of Hemsîk and Heya, but this expression is explained in Kharncian as meaning "Elegantly," "Beautifully [dressed]."

¹⁴¹Li mala meî'ê hasê kîr'- lit. "I've chased you into the house of *meî*." In EP-7, *meî*' is translated as "Checkmate" which actually comes from the Persian/Arabic expression "shâh mât"

Know that I will throw you into a stone dungeon."

[206] Mem said:

"My mîr, no, I've won also,
I'll shown you who's best!¹⁴²
Didn't I say I would throw you into a stone dungeon?"

(84) Before Mem knew what happened, the mîr won this set too, and the chess board was taken away. They continued talking together as before the game.

Bekir said, "My mîr, why have you fallen silent about the bet you made? What are you going to dō? You're not children! You played for a bet!"

The mîr said, "Bekir, we didn't mean only today, we will play again many times. Sometimes Mem will beat me, and sometimes I will beat Mem. Bets aren't necessary between us."

Bekir said, "But if Mem beat you at chess, he would be playing with your honor!¹⁴³ Would that be all right? In that case you would be without honor."

The mîr listened to Bekir, and threw Mem into a wooden dungeon.

(85) And Zîn, what did she do? She had a tunnel put in between the dungeon and her house. Night and day she brought Mem to her private quarters!¹⁴⁴, where they had fun, joked and feasted.

(shāh شاه is Persian for 'King'; māt مات is Arabic for 'Died') -lit. "The king has died."

However, there is another word 'Met' (without aspirated t), which means "Paternal aunt," "Father's sister." ZK-1 has an almost identical passage at this point in the story, which features a line which means literally: "I have chased you into the house of the Jews" (See ZK-1, note #[69]). According to Khamician, the actual meaning of this latter expression is "I have subjugated you," "I have made you knuckle under," "I have shown you who's boss." Because of the similarity of the two texts, I assume that the version in the present text, featuring 'Met' instead of Cihû[d] (= "Jew"), has the same meaning, whatever meaning we attach to the word 'Met'.

¹⁴²-lit. "I've chased you into the house of defeat." See note 141 above.

¹⁴³'Namtā' See note 118 above.

¹⁴⁴'Herema xwe.' 'Herem' is the private part of a house, where only the women and males who are family members (i.e. brothers and sons) may set foot.

Bekir went to his daughter [and] said, "My child, bring your dice¹⁴⁵ and tell me what will happen to Mem."

She threw her dice¹⁴⁶, and said, "Father, isn't Mem supposed to be in prison? Zīn has had a tunnel put in from the dungeon to her house. Now Mem is at Zīn's breast night and day."

(86) Bekir went and saw it with his own eyes, then went to the mīr in his diwan and said, "My mīr, I said before that your sister¹⁴⁷ had completely disregarded her honor¹⁴⁸, but you said that Bekir is a slanderer. Well this is what has happened!"

The mīr said, "Throw Mem into a stone dungeon!"

[And] they threw Mem into a stone dungeon.

Let Mem stay in the dungeon. Zīn did nothing but cry bitter tears all day and night¹⁴⁹. Mem stayed in the dungeon for nearly six months and became ill there. Bekir once again went to his daughter and said, "My child, tell me what will happen to Mem."

She said, "Qeretajdīn will return shortly. If men go to take Mem out of the dungeon, he will get well, but if women take him out, he will die."

Bekir went to the mīr [and] said, "Come, let's let Mem go, I've heard that Qeretajdīn is coming."

The mīr said to Bekir, "Go free Mem from the dungeon."

Bekir went to Zīn [and] said, "Girls, I've requested permission from the mīr that Mem be set free. Go set him free."

(87) Zīn took her maidservants and a rope and went and called to Mem from the mouth of the dungeon, saying, "I've come to let you out."

[207] Mem sang out to Zīn from inside the dungeon:

"O Zīn, you rose, o you rose,

¹⁴⁵See note 49 above.

¹⁴⁶Ramī vekīr -lit. "Opened the ramī (See note 49 above)."

¹⁴⁷See notes 14 and 116 above.

¹⁴⁸Namūs' See note 118 above.

¹⁴⁹-lit. "Day and night Zīn's [only] foods were crying and tears."

Wretched one, you have not come to let me out,
I know you will lose me."

Zîn said:

"Servant girls, throw into the well the rope so slender,
Throw it to Mem so tender,
May the roots of my father's house be ripped out!¹⁵⁰
Servant girls, throw into the well the rope so white,
Throw it to Mem my knight,
My Mem has been smitten with blight!¹⁵¹."

(88) When Zîn threw the rope into the dungeon, Mem tied it around himself. Together with her maidservants, Zîn pulled him up. Eh, such is the strength of women! Mem began to sway to and fro, and by the time they pulled him up, his back was broken. When they took him out, he took one [last] look at Zîn's eyes, and expired.

Zîn said:

"Servant girls, look at Zîn's belt [and] buttons,
I will call out for help to the saint!¹⁵² on high.
Mem is dead, Zîn won't live past noon.
Look at my belt and earrings,
I will call out for help to the saint of the slopes.
Mem is dead, Zîn won't live past the evening."

¹⁵⁰ A curse. See note 126 above, and ZK-1 notes # (25) and # (39).

¹⁵¹ Zelûtt' = lit. "Poverty," "Beggary"; "Humility."

¹⁵² 'şexsê berloja' This is translated by Jndi as "Saint." 'şexs' from Arabic *shakhs* شخص means "Person." Berloja is defined by Kurdoev as "the sunny side of a building", "mountain slope on the sunny side": three lines further down, 'Berloja' is replaced with 'Berwara' which also means "Slope." There is a parallel passage in ZK-1, (see ZK-1 note # (81)), in which *şexsê (or-şexsê) navroja* (=the sheikh of noon) and *şexsê dyara* (=the sheikh of evening) are mentioned. In FK-1, there is a similar verse, with *şemsê berloja* = 'Shems (Yezidi deity) of the sunny places' instead. This may reflect Yezidi religious beliefs and terminology.

(89) Zîn and her maidservants carried Mem's body and put it to rest in the ground. Zîn said to her servants, "You can go home now, I will watch over Mem's grave like a hawk."

Khatûn Perf also decked out her house for mourning and dressed in black.

Bekir went to the mîr and said, "My poor fellow! Why are you so sad? Come, let's go take a walk."

The mîr and Bekir went out walking. The mîr saw Zîn's figure standing over Mem's grave. He did not know it was Zîn, [and] said, "Bekir, for God's sake, go over to Mem's grave and see whose figure is standing there."

(90) Bekir went over to the grave, and saw that it was Zîn. He went back to the mîr and said, "My mîr, even though Mem is dead, he is still not rid of your sister."

The mîr felt sorry for his sister, he went over to her and said:

(91) "Come Zîn, woe is me,
I'll set up a polo contest^{152a} in Jizîr,
If you see one [you like] he'll be your Mem."

[208] She said:

"Brother, my father's palace is big,
May a cannonball hit it and knock out its foundations,
Who ever saw women setting a prisoner free?¹⁵³
Brother, whatever nobles there are in Jizîra Botan,

^{152a} K'asholoyel. K'aşo is the name of a Kurdish game that resembles polo or pall-mall, i.e. a game in which a wooden ball is driven with a mallet. Alan Ward's translation of this line is "I'll organize a shinty game in Cizîr." According to Webster's Third New International Dictionary, 'shinty' = shinny, a schoolboys' version of the game of hockey. Whether hockey, polo, or pall-mall, this is reminiscent of the game of jireed (javelin throwing) played in connection with opening Mem and Zîn's graves in versions HM and LC-1.

¹⁵³In ZK-1, there is a very similar passage. This suggests that the prediction of Bekir's daughter Zînê the fortuneteller regarding the sex of those who lets Memê out of the dungeon, namely "If men go to take Memê out of the dungeon, he will get well, but if women take him out, he will die" is a commonly held belief. See what follows note 149 in the main body of this text, and ZK-1 note #176). This belief is curious, because in folklore it is generally women who are a symbol of life (giving birth, preparing food, etc.) and men a symbol of death (hunting and fighting, both of which involve killing).

They are all my fathers and brothers¹⁵⁴,
 Except for the soul of Memê Alan."

(92) Zîn said, "Brother, because you have always listened to Bekir the slanderer, you have caused us great misfortune. I shall die very shortly; let my death be on your head!¹⁵⁵ You open up Mem's grave and bury me next to him, placing us back to back. I know that Qeretajdîn will come open up our grave. [When he does so] if you see that we are lying there face to face, with perspiration pouring out of us like little hailstones, know that our love was divinely inspired!¹⁵⁶ But if you don't find us so, then it is your responsibility to throw our bodies into the wilderness."

(93) Zîn died on the spot. The mir buried her beside Mem, as she had requested.

News was brought that Qeretajdîn was on his way home. The mir and Bekir went and hid in the mosque library¹⁵⁷, and locked the door behind them. Qeretajdîn and his troops approached Jizîr. He looked at his city and at his palace from afar with binoculars.

(94) Qeretajdîn passed the binoculars before his eyes.
 He sees khatûn Perf [sitting] like a hawk on the upper terrace.
 He says, "Woe is wretched me,
 My house looks sad and in mourning!¹⁵⁸"
 Erfan takes hold of the binoculars,
 Passes them before his eyes,

¹⁵⁴i.e. Marrying them would be considered incest, and would therefore be inconceivable

¹⁵⁵=lit. "On your neck."

¹⁵⁶See note 112 above

¹⁵⁷**Mishebxane** =lit. "Place in which holy books (Mishef/Mishef, from Arabic *maṣḥaf* مصحف) are kept." In ZK-1, Beko hides in a mosque and takes all the copies of the Koran in the mosque and piles them up before the door, so that nobody can get in to harm him. It is also possible that Mishebxane comes from the Arabic word *madhhab* مذهب, meaning 'religion,' 'religious sect.'

¹⁵⁸The tragic burning of the children (bormoçk) is not intended here.

Doesn't see Mem and Zîn.
 Chekan takes the binoculars from them,
 Passes them before his eyes,
 [And] says, "The place looks woeful."

(95) They moved on swiftly, and headed for home. They reached the city. The elders of the city went out to Qeretajdîn [to beg him] not to lift a hand against the people of the city, because it was God's will that Mem and Zîn die.

However many elders of Jizra Botan [there were],
 All with their arms under their abas!¹⁵⁹,
 They said, "Mem and Zîn's death was God's will."

Qeretajdîn said:

"I will turn the mill of fate,
 Feeding it with heads rather than grains of wheat,
 [If you don't hurry up and] bring me Mem and Zîn."

[209] Erfan said:

"I will prepare the mill of fate,
 Turning it with heads rather than grains of wheat,
 [If you don't hurry up and] find me Mem and Zîn."

Chekan said:

"I will draw my sword,
 Hack off heads from shoulders,
 Turn houses upside down,
 Until I see Mem and Zîn."

¹⁵⁹ B'va|ne|/k'ba, from Arabic 'abâ' عباءة = "Felt cloak."

(96) All the people of Jizîr said to them, "Mem and Zîn's death was God's will. Nobody killed them."

The troops came and camped near Mem and Zîn's grave, and Qeretajdîn had the grave dug up. He also allowed the mîr and Bekir to be present. When they opened up the grave¹⁶⁰, they found them face to face, with perspiration pouring out of them like little hailstones, [and] light streaming forth.

Bekir craned his neck over the grave and said, "By God, Mem and Zîn are still alive, they aren't dead."

(97) When he said this, Qeretajdîn gave Bekir's neck a blow with his sword which sent his head flying onto another grave, while his body stayed put. But a drop of his blood fell into the grave, between Mem and Zîn. This drop of blood grew into a thornbush between them. Until today they still say that two beautiful and fragrant roses grow on Mem and Zîn's grave, but there is an unsavory and prickly thornbush between them, preventing the roses from being next to each other.

Mem and Zîn's grave is on the road to Jizîr, near the tower of Belek¹⁶¹. No matter how many times people have cut down the thornbush and sprinkled yoghurt and water¹⁶² on its roots to keep it from growing back, the same time next year it always grows back.

(98) After that everyone went home, and the mîr Belg Mikhar made Qeretajdîn the ruler of Jizîr. He also gave each brother a golden claw to wear¹⁶³ as brave horsemen.

After this Mem's horse Bor left the stables and headed for Mikhurzemîn. He went to Al pasha and told him one by one all that had happened.

(99) Then Al pasha gathered a great army, and went and captured the city of Jizîr. He annihilated Mîr Seydîn's entire tribe. Only one man survived, [and that]

¹⁶⁰-lit. "The door of the grave."

¹⁶¹See OM for an explanation of this tower (birca Belek) within the framework of the story.

¹⁶²'Dew,' equivalent to Persian *dûgh* دُغ and Turkish *ayran*, a drink made of yoghurt and water.

¹⁶³In Jndi's Russian translation, this award is described as a "golden emblem of distinction in the shape of a falcon's claw to be worn on one's helmet."

because he was not in Jizîr [at the time]. [Because of this] there are still people from that lineage alive today.

The people of that tribe are numerous; they belong to the Millî tribe¹⁶⁴.

¹⁶⁴According to Kurdoev, the Millî are a Kurdish tribe inhabiting the region of Diyarbakir in Kurdistan of Turkey, and living to the northwest of Lake Urmia/Reza'iyyeh in Kurdistan of Iran. Jaba records the "Millî" tribe as inhabiting Diyarbakir and environs, and numbering 4000 families in 1857. He asserts that their aghas were descended from the ancient family of Temir-pasha Millî. A smaller group of about 400 families is listed as inhabiting the area around Van and Erziş (a town on the northern shores of Lake Van).

Dzhahilov, Ordikhane & Dzhahil Dzhahilov. "Mem û Zîn (şaxa 3)" in *Zargotina K'urda = Kurdskiĭ Fol'klor*. (Moskva : Nauka, 1978), vol. 1, pp. 90-118. [Kurmanji in Latin (Hawar) script] (ZK-3)

ZK-3. Collected in May of 1959 from Hovhannġsyan Karapġt, a semi-literate Armenian who was born in 1926 in a village that he calls Mġrtġn[a], province of Diyarbakır [probably Mirinan, called in Turkish Doluca, in what is now the newly created province (il) of Batman (c.1990), formerly part of the province of Siirt. Source: the Turkish gazetteer *Köylerimiz* (Ankara : Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1968) put out by the İller İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü]. In 1941, his father's household moved to the village of Şemasi, province of Qamişli, Syria. In 1947, the family moved to Soviet Armenia, settling on the sovkhos Mastġġ in the neġiġa (county) of Şahšmyan. Hovhannġsyan learned the story of Mem û Zîn around the age of 13-14 in Syria, from a dengbġj named Xudġda, a Kurd of the Reşkot tribe.

Mem û Zîn (ZK-3)

[90] O peoples of the world and the earth,

[You will] have a look at what happened to Zîn and Mem¹.

O (turning to) the direction of the group^{1a},

[You will] take a look at what occurred to Zîn and Mem².

[He says,] One day the king of the ifrits³, when he held his diwan (assembly),

Thus did he speak, talk, and say:

¹-lit. 'what story came to the head of Zîn and Mem.' The expression *hatin serġ fik-ġ*, literally 'to come to someone's head,' also exists in Turkish (*başına gelmek*), in Persian (*sargozasht سرگذاشت* - 'event,' 'story'), and in Neo-Aramaic (e.g. *sġlebrġġġ* - 'it happened to him': dialect of Zakho [Polotsky in *An Aramaic Handbook*, part II/2])

^{1a}This line is difficult to translate.

²A rhyming translation of this in English is
 O peoples of the earth and world,
 See what on Zîn and Mem has unfurled,
 O members of the human race,
 To Zîn and Mem just what took place.

Although this captures the spirit of the type of rhyming involved in the original, such slavish rendering of the texture of the original would, in my opinion, trivialize the content. Therefore, I have opted to remain as true as possible to the meaning, rather than to the texture of the text.

³Ifrit = Demon, or, ifreet. The word *e'rfit/ġ cinal* is a metathesis of the Arabic word 'ifrit عفریت, which means 'demon' or 'devil'. In another version, ZK-2, the form is *serfit*. The word may be derived from an Iranian form *ġfarid*, meaning either 'a creature' or 'a blessed [one], perhaps a tabooistic euphemism for 'a cursed one' (suggested by Professor Martin Schwartz, personal communication).

[91] "O ifrits, boys, which of you has seen two heads that are alike on one pillow?"

One ifrit gets down on his knees in the middle of the diwan,

Saying, "Yes, my mîr, I have seen two heads that are alike."

The king of the ifrits says, "O hero, do speak, speak much,

Speak your piece in the diwan of the mîr and rulers.

I make three oaths in the name of god,

If what you say does not come to pass,

You will lose (hilqetînt =) your head from between your two shoulders."

The ifrit says, "Yes, my mîr,

If what I say does not come to pass,

May my head and my property, all of it, be a ransom⁵,

Call your executioner,

Have him take a knife to my head,

That my head may be removed⁶ from my shoulders,

I have but one head, I will make it a sacrifice to Memê Ala and Sîtya Zîn."

[He says,] this is Sîtya Zîn,

A new-born dove⁷,

⁴This is reminiscent of the Turkish blessing "Bir yastıkta kocasınlar" = May they grow old on the same pillow, said to a newlywed couple.

⁵Miqîlge. The dictionaries that attest this word, i.e. İzolt, al-Hacîyah al-Ĥâmidîyah, & Anter, give the meaning 'bet,' 'wager'. However, the Arabic root r-h-n رهن includes words meaning 1) 'bet' and 2) 'pledge,' 'deposit as security,' 'ransom'. Apparently the closely related meanings are both applicable to the Kurdish word *miqîlge* as well. Moreover, the idea of offering oneself as a ransom for someone else is common in the languages of the Middle East. Although attested in Persian as *muchaikā* موچکا,

•/muchaikāh موچکاه /muchaikah موچکاه and in Turkish as *müçelge* | موچلگا | (15th cent.),

the word and concept are of Mongolian origin: see Gerhard Doerfer, *Türkische und Mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen: unter besonderer Berücksichtigung älterer neupersischer Geschichtsquellen vor allem der Mongolen- und Timuridenzeit* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1963-75), vol. 1, #370.

موچلگا = 'legal document, by which one obligates oneself to perform a particular deed by oath and by contract, with the simultaneous fixing of certain reprisals or countermeasures in case of breaking of said contract' (my translation).

⁶-lit. "opened"

⁷Cf. other versions.

Possessed of a crown of golden amber,
 The sister of mîr Zêydîn,
 The cousin of Qeretajdîn,
 Her native land is jizra Botan.
 This is Memê Alan,
 The son of the beg of the Alas,
 His father is the commander of eighty cities,
 His native land is the city of Yemen⁸.

It is Friday evening, all of Zîn's servants and maidens have dispersed, only Gulishan ⁹ remaining at her side. Zîn says, "Gulishan my girl, we have not gone to my aunt's¹⁰ house recently, we haven't had fun. Today all the servants and maidens have dispersed, gone home, you and I alone remain, let's go to my aunt's house, and have some fun for a while." Gulishan says, "My Lady, when have I ever contradicted you?¹¹ Get ready, and let's go to your aunt's house."

Zîn stands up, puts on a nice suit of clothes, makes up her eyes with kohl. Gulishan prepares the lamps, and they approach the doorway¹², to go to the house of Zîn's aunt. By God's decree, two ifrits of the jinn throw a slumber bead³ into Zîn's ear, take hold of her arms and take her to the city of Yemen, setting her down at the doorway to Mem's room. When Zîn wakes up from deep¹⁴ sleep, by divine providence, [when] she looks about the room, she sees two golden lamps hanging on

⁸Cf. OM.

⁹The form of her name varies in the text: sometimes it is Gule'yîşan, sometimes Gule'îş, and sometimes Gule'yîş. I have normalized it as Gulishan.

¹⁰Paternal aunt, i.e. father's sister.

¹¹-lit. "When have you said that I have broken your words?"

¹²-lit. "the threshold of the mouth of the door"

¹³Motif D1364.32. Jewel causes magic sleep. Cf. D1071. Magic jewel (jewels); D1071.1. Magic beads; D1364 Object causes magic sleep.

¹⁴-lit. "sweet"

one¹⁵ side of the room, and two silver ones on [92] the other¹⁶ side of the room. In the center of the room was posed a bedstead [inlaid with] rubies and pearls with a prince <şêxzade> lying on it whose brightness outshone the four lamps. [He says,] Zîn falls for him not with one heart, but with 1,000 hearts. She wants to enter [the room], but remains at the door¹⁷. When Mem awakes from a deep sleep, he looks over at the door and sees by divine providence an innocent gazelle, a houri from paradise, standing at the doorway. At that moment Mem's heart falls for her not with one heart, but with 1,000 hearts. Mem thinks to himself, "My God! Can there be such a thing in the world? I am not a child that people should dress up their daughters and send them after men." He says, "It is no use, I will call to her, to see who¹⁸ this is."

Mem says, "Maiden, my heart is very <bi k'ine> (=resentful?)

I am not a child, that your mother and father should dress you up and send you to me,

I make three oaths in the name of God,

If you don't <hilmayni> (=get off?), you will see with your own eyes a great tragedy."

Zîn takes a minute to think, then says, "I am Zîn, I am the sister of the mîr of Botan[n], if people say this to me, why should I stay in the world?"

Zîn says, "O prince, say whatever you will,

Say these things <ji serê> (=on behalf of?) yourself and your 70 ancestors,

I make three oaths in the name of God: if you get off of this bed, that is fine ¹⁹; if you don't,

You will lose your head from between your shoulders to the nobles <cindî û mifirdiyê> of Botan[n]."

15-lit. "this"

16-lit. "that"

17-lit. "she holds herself at the door"

18-lit. "what person"

19-lit. "if you take it off this bed, take it off"

Mem says, "Lady, you may say the room is your room, but I say it's mine, [and] that you are my guest²⁰. Come sit beside me on the bed, call your servants and maidens, and I'll call my boys. The room belongs to the one whose servants answer, and the other one is his guest²¹." Zîn assents, saying, "You speak well." She gets up and goes over to the bedstead of rubies and pearls, sits down beside Mem and says, "Which of us should call first?" Mem says, "O women, you fallen trees! Let it be your turn first, you call your servants and maidens."

Zîn says, "My favorite one, the one they call Gulishan,
Kindle your lady's lamps in the courtyard,

[93] Take a look in pleasure and <li sohbet û rewşê>."

[He] says, may she be struck blind, Gulishan, as she was far away, she did
not answer Lady (Stiya) Zîn,
And next it was Memê Alan's turn.

Mem said, "Lady, did your servant answer you?" Zîn said, "No!" Mem said, "Then is it my turn?" Zîn said, "Yes, it's your turn!"

Mem says, "My father's servant boy, whom they call Bengîn,
In charge of 500 boys, very dear to his master's²² heart,
Boil some coffee for your master."

(He says), Bengîn, a very gallant servant boy,
Boils the coffee, putting it down before them,
At the doorway he [stood], his hands crossed²³,
Asking his master for permission [to leave] the diwan.

Mem says, "Bengîn my boy, my heart is very <bi k'îne>,
Your master has a very dear guest sitting in his room."

²⁰-lit. "that you have come to me"

²¹-lit. "the other one has come to him"

²²mîr, i.e. emir.

²³-lit. "hand put over hand"

Mem says, "Lady, now is the room my room or yours?" Zīn says, "Your servant answered you, the room is yours. I am your guest²⁴." Mem says, "Lady, God on high must have seen us worthy of each other, as he has brought us together today. We will remain together this evening, as sister and brother, with pure hearts, until daybreak. At daybreak, when we get up, we will call a mulla and jurisprudents²⁵, have them make us a Hanafi marriage²⁶. I will be yours, and you will be mine."

Thus they entertained themselves until late at night. They exchanged rings. [When] they became sleepy and wanted to lie down, Mem's trusty sword²⁷ was hanging above his ruby and pearl bedstead. He said, "Lady, let's put this sword between me and you: if something illicit stirs in my heart tonight, this sword will kill me, if something stirs in your heart, it will kill you. If nothing stirs in our hearts, tomorrow we will have them make us a Hanafi marriage. I will be yours, and you will be mine."

(He says), Mem and Zīn lay down their heads and sleep. The ifrits of the jinn stand over them <di bengi> (=debating?). Half of them say, "Zīn is [more] beautiful," and half of them say, "Mem is [more] beautiful." There were some elders among them who said, "O ifrits, Zīn may be beautiful: what is it to us? Mem may be beautiful: what is it to us? They are [so] worthy of one another that even God on high considers them so. Come, let us take Zīn by the arm, and take her [94] to Jizira Botan, and put her back in her bed." All the ifrits of the jinn say, "Yes, you are right." Two ifrits of the jinn get up and take Zīn by the arm, take her back to Jizira Botan, and put her back in her bed.

In the darkness of daybreak, when Mem wakes up, he gropes about²⁸ on his bed with his hand, [but] there is no one beside him. He says, "My God! What have you brought down on me? Was it a dream? That was no dream! Was she a jinn? That was no jinn! Here is her ring, on my finger, there is nothing false here²⁹." Mem gets up,

²⁴-lit. "I have come to you"

²⁵Faqīya, from Arabic faqīh فقيه.

²⁶-lit. "Let them throw a <me'reke ħenifi> over me and you." Hanafi is one of the four main sects (madhhab) of Sunni Islam. The other three are Shāfi'i, Ḥanbalī, and Mālikī.

²⁷-lit. "sword of killing"

²⁸-lit. "moves his hand about"

²⁹-lit. "this is no matter of lies"

bareheaded and barefoot, wearing only shorts and a shirt, and begins pacing now on this side of the room, now on that side of the room, crying now to the earth, now to the heavens. Aman³⁰, a thousand times aman, from the pain in his loving heart his eyes turned red, his blood spilt, all he lacked was a handful of ashes <bi zêrek> (=mixed with gold?) to put on his head³¹. He shouts out,

"My father's servant boy whom they call Bengîn,
At the head of 500 servants, his master is fond of him, the dear and
sweet one."

(He says,) after Mem says this, Bengîn stands ready by his side, saying, "O my mîr, what is wrong³²? Tell me." Mem says, "Bengîn my boy, that [girl] who was with me last night, where did she go, can you tell me?"

Bengîn says, "My dear mîr, last night I did not pass by³³ your room, nor did I see anyone with you. What do I know of jinn or fairies? Whatever you saw before your eyes, where can I go get it?" Mem said, "I don't know. You are my servant, you are always at my doorway, everything -- be it jinn or fairy -- that is inside, must have passed by you. Go and get her! If you don't, you will see a great tragedy with you own eyes!" Bengîn said to himself³⁴, "If I don't lie to him, rescue myself from his grip -- he is very upset -- he might have my head cut off." Bengîn says, "O my mîr, [if] you give me permission, I'll go to town, and whether jinn or fairy, if she hasn't left town, tonight I will bring her here." Mem says, "Go! I give you one half hour to find her and bring her."

Bengîn leaves the room, thinking to himself, "My God, I have been working for them for 10 to 15 years, no one ever treated me unfairly or paid me less than I deserved³⁵. If I <bidime fê> were to set out from here and go home, Mem's father

³⁰An exclamation meaning 'Oh!', 'Mercy!', 'Help!'.

³¹-lit. "a handful of ashes ... did not fall to his hand." Putting ashes on one's head is a mourning custom.

³²-lit. "what happened?"

³³or perhaps "enter"

³⁴-lit. "in his heart"

³⁵-lit. "lessened my salary"

would be angry, he would say, 'What a dishonest³⁶ servant: if he was going, he should have gone, but he should have come to ask my permission and then have gone.' I must go to Mem's father, tell him about Mem's situation, and [95] from there take my leave of him and set out for home. Bengin heads for Alan-beg's room. He comes to the doorway, and Alan-beg still has his cloak on his arm in the early morning darkness³⁷. He is 80 years old; he has picked up his water pitcher to perform his early morning ablutions. When Bengin sees him, he greets him, Alan-beg returns his greeting and says, "Bengin my boy, what is the matter? What brings you to me this early in the morning³⁸? Has someone treated you unfairly, or have you been paid too little, that you should come to me in this early morning darkness?" Bengin says, "No, may you be well (for me in this world), <bi saya xudê û serê te> (=Thanks to God and you?), no one can pay me too little or treat me unfairly, I've come to tell you of Mem's situation," he says, "I don't know if it's the jinn or fairies who have appeared before Mem's eyes, [but] Mem has told me, 'Go bring [her to me], or else I'll put your neck to the sword and send your head a-flying.' I am a simple creature³⁹, where am I to go get her from? I request that you give me leave to go home." Alan-beg says, "No! Bengin my boy, he who does 15 years of honest service for someone⁴⁰ is better than that person's son. I would let Mem go, but I won't let you go. Let's go to Mem: I will calm him down." Alan-beg leaves his water pitcher in the house, throws his cloak over his shoulder, and they set out with Alan-beg in front and Bengin behind⁴¹. They reach the doorway of Mem's room. When they <li derî didin> knock on the door, Mem opens the door for them.

³⁶şîrîheram. Cf. EP-1, notes #[38] and #[114], where şîrîfelal = of noble character. Şîrîheram, its opposite, must mean something like 'ignoble'. Khamsîan gives the expression şîrê min te heram be (lit. "May my milk be forbidden to you"), meaning "I curse you" (said by mothers to ungrateful children).

³⁷=lit. "dark[ness] of daybreak"

³⁸=lit. "What is your condition, this daybreak you have headed for me and come to me"

³⁹=lit. "I [am] poor one of God"

⁴⁰=he who has someone's trusted servant for 15 years

⁴¹=lit. "he sets out/falls into step in front of Bengin, with Bengin after"

When Alan-beg catches sight of Mem, bareheaded and barefoot, wearing only shorts and a shirt, pacing about first on this side of the room, then on the other side of the room, he cries out to earth and to heaven. His eyes turn red, they flow with blood. As great as Mem's pain is from the grief of his love-stricken heart, the grief of his father Alan-beg is a thousand times greater. All sense and reason leave his head⁴², and he says to Mem:

"Beloved of my heart, Mem of the Alans,
Your father is commander of 170 cities,
I shall marry my son to⁴³ the daughters of emirs and rulers,
Mem my son, whatever happens to you⁴⁴, happens to us all,
Curses on her who is the devil."

Mem says, "Father, do devils have rings to exchange with people?" Alan-beg says, "No, my son." Mem says, "Father, if you do not believe me, come see her ring [96] <bi şanê e'rîfta> (=with a mark of the ifrits?) with your own eyes." No matter what Alan-beg does, he cannot get Mem to agree, and [finally] he says to his servant boys, "Boys, one of you go call Mem's aunt⁴⁵ and tell her Mem's situation is <bi vî awiye> (=thus?). Let her come: if she can't calm Mem down, no one can⁴⁶." One of the servant boys goes and calls Mem's aunt.

When Mem's aunt hears about his situation, she quickly gets up and heads for Mem's room. When she knocks on the door, Mem opens it for her. When Mem's aunt catches sight of Mem, all sense and reason leave her head. His aunt says:

"Mem my boy, my heart is very much <bi k'îne>,
I don't know which of those sluts has appeared before my Mem's eyes."
Mem says, "Auntie, it cannot be so,

⁴²-lit. "sense and reason do not remain in his head"

⁴³-lit. "bring my son to"

⁴⁴-lit. "comes to your head"

⁴⁵-lit. "paternal aunt," i.e. Alan-beg's sister.

⁴⁶-lit. "no one can make him agree"

I have wandered the four corners <qurm> of the globe, its countries and towns, a slut more slutty than you is not to be found."

Mem's aunt gets up with a grievous heart, and heads for home. They send word to Mem's father, telling him that even his aunt could not get him to agree (consent / assent). Alan-beg send for Mem, saying, "Mem my boy, give me two weeks⁴⁷: in all the lands and cities that are under my command, I will circulate⁴⁸ a black and blue/green letter. Fortunetellers will read fortunes⁴⁹, mullahs will look in their Korans, if anyone can give me information about Jizra Botan, for money⁵⁰, for battle, for whatever the circumstance, I will bring it to my son." Mem says, "My dear father, I cannot give you two weeks' respite: if I were still alive at the end of two weeks, I would perish <bibe'cim> from grief. I can give you [only] one week's⁵¹ respite."

Alan-beg circulates a black and blue / green letter, fortunetellers read fortunes.

Seven days pass, but Alan-beg receives no answer. Mem sends [a message] to his father, saying, "Father, I gave you a week's respite to bring me an answer⁵². Seven days have passed, and you have given me no answer. I am asking you to tell me if you have found out any information about Jizra Botan or not." Alan-beg says, "Mem my son, during the past seven days I have sent out⁵³ to all the lands and cities that are under my command a black and blue / green letter; fortunetellers have read fortunes, mullahs have looked in their books: there is no one who can give any information about Jizra Botan." Mem says, "O Father, I am asking you then not to hold/close your heart <diê xo negrî>, [but rather] give me leave to go on my way." Mem's father says, [97] "Well, my son, if you do as your father wishes⁵⁴, you won't go; otherwise, do as you like⁵⁵."

47-lit. "fifteen days"

48-lit. "make and send"

49-lit. "throw sand"

50-lit. "property of the world"

51-lit. "seven days"

52-lit. "an answer of goodness"

53-lit. "made, sent"

54-lit. "if you do that [one] of your father"

Mem says, "There is no choice⁵⁶; if I didn't go, I would perish from grief. In that case, it is better that I go." Mem calls out, saying:

"My father's servant boy whom they call Bengin,
At the head of 500 servants, his master is fond of him, the dear and
sweet one,
Get up and bring your master's horse from the stable."
(He says,) when Mem says this, Bengin, a very <serbeste> boy, goes
speedily,
Brings Mem's horse from the stable,
Putting a blessed saddle on its back,
Fastening seven belly straps around its belly,
Thrusting a bit in its mouth.

(He says,) when they brought Mem's horse out into the courtyard,
--May it never happen here⁵⁷-- screaming, mourning and crying <k'ete
çerd û p'erdê Alay di begêda> (broke out in the domains of
Alan-beg)
Mem says, "Bengin my boy, my heart is very resentful <bi k'ine>,
You come ride with me, let us ride all about Alan-beg's <çerd û p'erd>
(domain)
And see with our own eyes
?They went in our hands, they came in the hands of God,
?May the grief of Alan-beg's <çerd û p'erd> (domain) not remain grief
in my heart.

55-lit. "if you do that of yourself, you are in your own pleasure (k'êf)"

56-lit. 'remedy,' 'cure'

57-lit. "far from here"

Mem says to himself, "I am a rose, you are basil <ñfian >; You are Leyla, I am Majnun; You are Zîn, miserable, headshaven⁵⁸, I am Mem.." (He says,) when Mem and Bengî'n return from [riding] around Alan-beg's <çerd û p'er'd> (domain), while they are on the way, Mem's mother went down to the water (river), [and] they informed her of Mem's condition. When she came home and laid eyes on Mem, her heart ached. Mem's father said:

"Mem my son, my heart is very ?resentful,
Your parents' hair and face are white,
If you leave us two old people here and go away, we will very soon <ji
tro pêştir>, [and] the throne and crown of Yemen will remain
unclaimed (without owner/master).
If you leave us two old people here and go away, may God not let you
attain your desire with that daughter of the ruler of Botann."

Mem's mother said, "Mem my son, ?I don't feel sorry for you <ñeyfa min nayê li te ñeyfê>: if you leave both of us old people here and go away, we will die <ji tro pêştir>. This lovely palace will be left to the people. If you leave us and go, [98] I pray to God that you will not attain your desire with Lady Zîn." Mem's father said, "My God, don't cry over me, ?pain from children <derdê kezebê> is a great pain, <qewî dîsa ku ser deste>. Mem my son, if you disobey me and go, may God not let you attain your desire with that little lady in Botann."

Mem's father summons his notables (council of elders), [and] assembles them on the roof of his palace. He says, "O notables, what can we do to make Mem turn back?" They decide to send⁵⁹ 1,000 riders out with him: every hour one hundred riders will turn back, until the point when perhaps sens will come to his head and he'll come back. If he doesn't come back, <t'ucara wîna t'une>." Tears come pouring out of the eyes of Mem's father and mother, like the water of mills and springs. Both of them

⁵⁸p'orkur -lit. "short of hair," is an expression designating women who have lost a male relative, and have cut their hair while mourning them.

⁵⁹-lit. 'prepare'

stand up straight <dibin rep> on the roof of the palace, and fall down. They lose their sense⁶⁰ and – far be it from this place – they go blind in both eyes.

When Mem leaves the city, 1,000 riders set out with Bengîn and him. Every hour one hundred riders turn back. After 10 hours have passed, all 1,000 riders have turned back. A little bit of sense comes to his head, [and] he says, "Bengîn my boy, it seems to me⁶¹ there were many riders with us; where have they all gone?" Bengîn says, "My mîr, it is true that there were many riders with us. Every hour one hundred riders turned back [and] went home. We have been on the road for 10 hours: of all the 1,000 riders who came with us, every hour 100 of them have turned back and gone home." Mem says, "Bengîn my boy, you also have a home, you also have children: you turn back too, go home. Don't put the responsibility for you and your children on my neck (=). Bengîn says, "No, my mîr, as long as you are alive, you are my mîr, [and] I am your servant. I won't leave you."

After having this talk, Mem and Bengîn set out. When it was almost 2:00, they encountered an old man and said, "Good day to you, Uncle." The old uncle said, "Good day to you too, and welcome. Where do you fine young lads come from, [and] where are you going?" Mem says, "Uncle, we are merchants looking for some sheep." The old uncle says, "No boys, you aren't merchants, you have come with a purpose in mind, but this purpose of yours has been cursed by your mother and father; if their curse is accepted, your purpose won't come to pass/be fulfilled. If you listen to God and your old uncle, you will turn back from here [and] go home." Mem says, "O Uncle, it's no use <Çê nabe>. Whether or not I attain (reach/realize) my goal, I have no choice, I must go. If I didn't go, perhaps out of grief, I would perish." The old uncle says, "If you don't listen to what I say, you're on your own <ûn bi k'êfa xone>." Mem and Bengîn take their leave of the old uncle and set out.

[99] As soon as they turned their backs on the old uncle and went on, the old man shortened their journey⁶². It became evening for Mem and Bengîn, they were the guests of a meadow. They set their horses looses on the meadow, took down their saddlebags, made tea and coffee for themselves, and drank it. Mem said, "Bengîn my

60=lit. "their sense goes"

61=bi e'laml min -lit. "according to my knowledge." Cf Arabic bi-'ilmî بعلمي .

62=lit. "made their road near"

boy, this is a foreign land, there are no aghas or servants here (=), we should sleep in shifts, so that on one can strike a blow at us, so that nothing happens to us which would get back to our country, so that they won't say, 'They went with a purpose, they camped out on the way (lay down), and someone did this thing to them'." Bengin said, "Mem, since you know [best], let it be as you [say]." Mem said, "Bengin my boy, I am very tire, <bedéla évaré> ____ evening I will go to sleep until midnight. When you shift is over, call me [and] I will get up and stand [watch], and you will go to sleep." Mey put his head under his cloak and went to sleep. Bengin stood watch until 12:00 at night. Bengin thought to himself, "By God, when I call Mem, he will get up and relieve me, and I will lay down my head and sleep. This time it won't do, by God, even if I die from [lack of] sleep, I won't call (wake) him." Bengin stayed on until daybreak, he did not wake Mem up.

Rays of sun beat down upon Mem's face. Mem woke with a start, sat up and looked around to see that the sun had risen, <ç'e'vê Bengin ji xewa venabin> ?Bengin's eyes have not been open from sleep?. Mem says, "Bengin my boy, why didn't you call me, so that I could get up and relieve you (take my shift) so that you could have slept a little, so that your eyes wouldn't be open from sleep. Now we are going to set out, how are you going to [stay awake]?" Bengin says, "My mir, I hope you will forgive me." Mem says, "This time I forgive you⁶³, but don't do it again!" Bengin says, "It's good that you've forgiven me this time. Next time, I promise, I won't do such a thing." Mem says, "This time, I forgive you. Get up and make us some tea, we will eat and make ourselves ready, so that we can set out."

Bengin gets up and makes tea. He and Mem eat breakfast. [Then] Bengin brings the horses, places their saddles on their backs, tightens their belly straps, puts their bits in their mouths, they throw their saddlebags onto their backs, put their feet in the stirrups, they hop onto the horses' backs, with their faces toward the heavens and their backs toward providence, and they set out.

By the time it was noon, they encountered a farmer (plowman), [and] wished him good day, saying, "<Qewat be ji teŋa> ?=Kolay gelsin (greeting said to someone working), plowman!" The plowman says, "Good day to you too, and welcome, strangers." Mem says, "We would like to ask [100] you a question, plowman." the

63-lit. "you've done it"

plowman says, "Ask⁶⁴," Mem says, "For the love of God, tell us, where this plow is from." the plowman says, "This plow belongs to Jizra Botan". When the plowman says this, Mem is very disappointed and greatly grieved, saying, "May my father live and be well⁶⁵, as he is the commander of 170 cities, I gave him a seven day respite, [but] he could not find out anything about Jizra Botan. Now only two days have passed, and we have reached Jizra Botan." He thrusts his hand into his pocket, fills his hand with gold, rewards the plowman and says, " We are very grateful to you for having given us this good news." They take their leave of the plowman and go on. Once again they stop. Mem and Bengn say to each other, "Son of a gun! (=Malava) The plowman told us that this place is Jizra Botan, yes but he did not <t'i rē û dirba řeml me neda> ?direct us on any roads / give us any road directions? Let's go tell him where we're going, maybe he can show us the way?" As soon as they turn around, the plowman says, "No doubt they have had second thoughts about their gold: they will come catch me, chop off my head, and carry off my gold." The plowman dropped his plow and ran off. Mem called to him and said, "My dear plowman, come, we want to ask you a few questions." The plowman said, "No, you've given me some gold, [and] you've had second thoughts about it. You want to come catch me, hit me and take you gold from me." Mem says, "Come, dear plowman, <em ji te xeber nadin> ?we won't speak against you?, nor will we take your gold from you." When Mem said this, the plowman turned around and went to them, saying, "Tell me what you want!" Mem says, "<Em hıvı dıkn> We are not from this place, we are travellers. Can you give us a few directions, so that we [know] how to go?" The plowman says, "This place is Belek Tower <Birca Belek>, that place is Banê K'ilyasê, and that place is the Mir's Garden <Baıçê Miraye>." When the plowman says this, Mem is very pleased. They take their leave of the plowman and head off. They come to Belek Tower and see someone standing on the tower⁶⁶ – don't eat or drink, just look at her stature⁶⁷. She was

⁶⁴-lit. "say"

⁶⁵-lit. "May my father's house flourish [be built up] so much"

⁶⁶In other versions, it is Beko's daughter, who is also called Zin, is the girl encountered here. A little further on, Zin's maidservant Gulishan is suddenly mentioned. Therefore, in this version it is possible that the girl who Mem encounters at the entrance to Jizra Bota is Gulishan rather than Beko's daughter Zin.

bleaching cloth, hanging it up over the pond. When she laid eyes on Mem and Bengîn, she fell for Mem not with one heart, but with 1,000 hearts. When Mem greeted her, she returned his greeting and spread out her cloth on the road. Mem thought to himself, "Our affair has gone wrong. We have come so far, and nobody has blocked our way, [until] this <bêbavê> fatherless one/bastard (blocked our way). It looks like our affair won't advance from this point." They ask her for water, [but] she won't give them any, saying, "You must give me your word that you will turn back from here and go home, and take me with you⁶⁸."

Mem thinks to himself, "If I say 'We won't take you', it might make our affair go bad. I'll give her my word that when we turn back, I'll take her⁶⁹ with me. When we go home, I'll [101] marry her to Bengîn⁷⁰." Mem says, "I promise that when we turn back to go home, I'll take you with me." [Then] Mem asks her for water, [and] she gives them some. They drink the water, dismounting at the pond. Mem washes his face and hands⁷¹ and relaxes a little.

When Zîn came back from Mem's, she told her servants and maidens, "I had such and such a dream, we exchanged rings." When Gulishan⁷² recalled these words, she said, "Undoubtedly this is the man our lady dreamed about."

Mem asks her, "Where shall we go⁷³?" Gulishan says, "Go to the Mîr's Garden until evening. When the horsemen return from hunting to come home, they will notice you in the garden and come to you, [and] whatever is on your minds⁷⁴, you will tell each other."

⁶⁷Formulaic expression meaning 'She is so beautiful, you can't take your eyes off her!', i.e. the person's beauty is such that one forgets to eat and drink, cf. Turkish *Yeme da yanında yat* = [Something is so delicious that] don't eat it, just lie down beside it.

⁶⁸This could also mean 'marry me'

⁶⁹-lit. 'you'

⁷⁰It was stated earlier that Bengîn is already married.

⁷¹-lit. "washes his mouth and face, takes his ritual ablutions"

⁷²See note 66 above.

⁷³-lit. "Where should we and shouldn't we go?"

⁷⁴-lit. "in your hearts"

Mem and Bengîn get up and go to the garden. Its grass <çayır> is knee-deep. They let their horses loose in the grass and they themselves sit down in the shade of the trees.

When it was nearly 4:00, they saw dust rising from the bottom of the plain/wilderness, which turned out to be a group of horsemen. At their head was someone with an arrow in his mouth (?= a sharp tongue?) <tırkeke devê wîdaye>, the smoke of his pipe became fog and clouds before the feathers/wings of the sky <li ber p'erê e'zmana bûye mij û e'wr> <u usa ji destê hev û dinê di'evînin> ?=causing to flee from each other's hands? Nobody knew who the arrow (?=sharp tongue) was pointed at. Mem said, "The smoke of his pipe is thick, may his house not be ruined by the smoke of their pipe!"

The horsemen approach little by little. When they reach the <ttrabağçe> ____ of the garden, they notice Mem and Bengîn, [seeing] that there are two people in the garden, each one like the <têjkê fakimekî> ?=crown of a king?, don't eat or drink, just look at their stature. The one who was at the head of the horsemen, with an arrow in his mouth (=sharp tongue?), was Faithless Beko. He said to his servants, "Boys, you go on home, I'll be coming." The boys go on home.

Beko reaches the road and dismounts, takes his horse by its reins (bridle) and walks toward [Mem and Bengîn]. They reach each other and shake hands, Beko greets them and they return his greeting. Beko says, "You good men, who are you, where do you come from and where are you going?" Mem says, "Dear Uncle, we are merchants in search of a few sheep." Beko thinks to himself, "By God, <şêla we ne ya t'êcîfêye> you don't look like merchants, but so be it." Beko says, "Come, let's go home." Mem says, "No, Uncle, we'd like to ask you a few questions." Beko says, "Please, ask!" Mem says, "For the love of God, in this city whose house does one go to stay at?" Bengîn says, "Wîl, to tell the truth, if you are looking for tea and coffee, you should go to mîr Zeydîn's house, if you are looking for depravity and wickedness, come to you Uncle Beko's house, if you are looking for honor and valor, go to Qeretajdîn's house. Mem [102] says, "May depravity and wickedness be far from you, [true] men don't get involved in this⁷⁵, nor are tea and coffee important to them⁷⁶. For [true] men, honor and valor are good." Beko says, "Well then, if that's what you want, wait [here] until

⁷⁵-lit. "this is not the business of men"

⁷⁶-lit. 'us'

5:00. The mîr's horsemen will pass by. The mîr never looks around from side to side, he always looks straight ahead: he'll pass by without seeing you. At 6:00, the horseman Qeretajdîn and his brothers Cheko and E'rif will come, see you <îtra we>, <îetana nêyne ba we>, they won't ever pass you buy." Beko takes his leave of them, mounts his horse, and heads for home. Mem and Bengîn remain sitting there. At 5:00, the mîr's horsemen come passing by after hunting, [and] by God's design they don't see Mem and Bengîn. At 6:00, the horseman Qeretajdîn and his brothers Cheko and E'rif are returning from <jixêbê binê beîryê> ?=from _____ of the bottom of the plains, from hunting. When they reach the <îtrabaşçe> the _____ of the garden, they have a look inside the garden and see two men there, don't eat or drink, just look at their stature. They dismount, lead their horses by the reins, and walk over to the two of them. They reach and greet each other. Mem returns their greeting. Qeretajdîn says, "Fine young lads, please come home with use." Mem says, "No, [first] you must tell us something." Qeretajdîn says, "Speak!" Mem says, "If you give us the hand of brotherhood⁷⁷, we will come with you to your house, otherwise, we won't come." Qeretajdîn thinks to himself, "<ferez van merivê hanêkê gotin> _____ these men said 'We are merchants', well, they don't look the part: they are surely the rulers of their land. If I don't give them the hand of brotherhood, they will return to their country and say 'Curses on the rulers of Botan, for <geze nanê xo> _____ their bread, they wouldn't give us the hand of brotherhood'. By God, that would involve/include me too, I should give them the hand of brotherhood."

They pledge brotherhood to one another. All five of them mount their horses and head for home. When they reach the gateway, Qeretajdîn shouts out, "Lady! Tell the servants to come <serê hespê bigrin> take/see to the horses." When Qeretajdîn uses the name "Lady⁷⁸", <t'irpînt> ?=a shudder goes through Mem, and he says [to himself], "What a blunder I've committed! / What a wretch I am! Undoubtedly it is Zîn [that Qeretajdîn called to]: we have pledged brotherhood, so I can neither kill [him] nor kidnap [her]. <Dibe lûba-lûba wîna> _____, he says, "<Ez

⁷⁷-lit "if you make us *destebîra*". Destebîra[ti] is a type of fictive kinship, similar to bloodbrothers.

⁷⁸Sityê

k'etime t'ayê> = _____⁷⁹. They put down a place (mattress) for him, then take him and put him on his place (or - they seat him).

For three nights and three days Qeretajdîn cannot tear himself away from [Mem]⁸⁰, [and] doesn't go to see the mîr. The mîr says, "It seems that Qeretajdîns is making an assembly <hevalbend> for himself, and doesn't bother to come see me anymore." Beko says, "No, my mîr, you are wrong: if this guest who is at Qeretajdîn's house were at your house, you would sit with him for six nights and days, not just three nights and days [as Qeretajdîn has]: of his company or his countenance [103] you would never tire." The mîr says, "Beko, what difference is there between my guests and Qeretajdîn's guests? Let's send [a message] to Qeretajdîn to come here with his guest."

They send a servant boy to Qeretajdîn's house to tell him to come to [the mîr's] chamber together with his guest. The boy goes to Qeretajdîn's house and says, "Uncle Qeretajdîn, the mîr has said that [you] should come to [his] chambers together with your guest." Qeretajdîn says, "You go, I will come." The boy goes. Qeretajdîn gets up and says, "Mem, you are ill, don't get up from your place: I'll go to [the mîr's] chamber to see what he wants⁸¹ (and I'll come back)." Qeretajdîn gets up, throws his cloak over his arm, and heads for the mîr's chamber. When Qeretajdîn arrives there, he opens the door, enters the room, and greets Beko and the mîr. They return his greeting, and they sink into conversation. They speak of Mem, saying that there is not another man like Mem in the world, nor will there ever be one. Qeretajdîn and Beko say, "When he enters the diwan, <ez mîr dibinim> ?=I have yet to see a man whose butt sticks to his chair and does not stand up before him." The mîr says, "Beko, Qeretajdîn, as far back as I can remember, I have never stood up before a commoner, nor will I." Qeretajdîn and Beko say, "No my mîr, when Mem comes to the diwan, you will have no choice but to stand up before him." <Dik'evine miqatê> ?= They start debating, [and] the mîr says, "Go tell Mem to come, then it will become clear."

They send a servant boy after Mem. When the boy comes [and] tells Mem that Qeretajdîn said for him to come to [the mîr's] chamber, Mem gets up, throws his sword

⁷⁹-lit. "I have fallen into a fever." According to Bakaev, this expression is used to chide a person for being lazy, slovenly, or weak.

⁸⁰-lit. "doesn't get up from before [Mem's] head"

⁸¹-lit. 'says'

over his shoulder, throws his cloak over his arm, and they set out with the servant boy in front and Mem behind⁸². They arrive, (and) Mem enters the [mîr's] chambers. When he greets the mîr of Botan, they are all amazed, and do not know how they stood up from their seats before him. The mîr also, without thinking about it, stands up before him. Qeretajdîn says to himself, "If I don't put my handkerchief⁸³ on the mîr's seat, he'll say 'I did not stand up before Mem'." So he puts down his handkerchief on the mîr's seat. They all sit down, the mîr also sits down, and they sink into a discussion with Mem. Qeretajdîn and Beko say, "My mîr, did you stand up before Mem?" The mîr says, "No!" Qeretajdîn says, "My mîr, if my handkerchief is not on your seat underneath you, you will know that you did not stand up: but it is under you, then you will know without a doubt that you did stand up." The mîr stands up and looks at his seat, and Qeretajdîn's handkerchief is under him. The mîr says, "Beko, Qeretajdîn, after this it is clear that everything you have said about Mem is true."

The mîr, Qeretajdîn, Beko, and all the [notables] converse with Mem until their assembly disperses. Qeretajdîn and Mem come home and [continue] talking, until dinner is brought to them. They eat dinner, [then] Mem gets up and goes to his room, [and] Qeretajdîn goes to his room. Qeretajdîn [104] says to his wife, "Woman, while we were coming home through the garden, Mem was fit as a fiddle, but as soon as he laid eyes on you, he began to feel ill. Get up and put on a nice suit of clothes, make up your eyes with kohl, throw slippers on your feet, and go to Mem's room, so that we can test his brotherhood, to see if he is a true brother or a false one."

Just as Qeretajdîn says, his Lady⁸⁴ puts on a lovely suit of clothes, throws slippers on her feet, and heads for Mem's room. When she goes to Mem's room, he says to her, "My sister, this place is a guest room. In case you've lost your way, your way is this way, go through there." When Mem says this to her, she turns around, goes back to Qeretajdîn and says, "This is how Mem reacted: he said to me, 'My sister, in case you've lost your way, this place is the guest room, your way is that way, go your own way.'" When his Lady said this to Qeretajdîn, he said, "May Mem be praised <ji teġa û ji şîrê

⁸²Cf. note 41 above.

⁸³Kevnik or Kewnik -lit. 'rag'

⁸⁴Stiya could either be her name or her title.

tefa>⁸⁵. I know that you are a true brother." From then on Qeretajdîn was very well-disposed toward Mem⁸⁶.

Several days pass, their assemblies always taking place. One day the mîr, Qeretajdîn and Beko decided in [the mîr's] chamber that these men⁸⁷ are deceiving them⁸⁸, saying that they are merchants, while they don't have the <şel> of merchants. There are no heroes or champions like them. If they could convince Mem to stay there with them, they would last forever⁸⁹. Beko and Qeretajdîn say, "What can we do to convince him?" The mîr says, "If we marry him off to one of our womenfolk, then instead of leaving us, he would stay with us." The three of them decide to marry him to Zîn, the daughter of Uncle Beko.⁹⁰ They all agree, saying, "Good, let Qeretajdîn tell Mem this evening, and if he accepts, we'll betroth her to him."

In the evening Qeretajdîn comes home and says to Mem, "My brother, today we have found a girl for you." Mem says, "Who is it?" Qeretajdîn says, "Zîn, the daughter of Uncle Beko." Mem hadn't seen her⁹¹, and thought to himself, "Maybe this Zîn is the one I saw". He said to Qeretajdîn, "Brother, if you have all agreed, I am with you."

The next day they go to the [mîr's] chamber, and Qeretajdîn says, "Mem is willing." All the notables of Botan get up and go to Beko's house and tell him that they have come to betroth his daughter to Mem. They get Beko's consent, and Mem is betrothed to Beko's daughter⁹².

⁸⁵-lit. "May Mem be allowed to you and to your milk"

⁸⁶-lit. "Qeretajdîn's confidence comes well with Mem"

⁸⁷i.e. Mem and Bengîn

⁸⁸-lit. 'us'

⁸⁹-lit. "If we could convince Mem to stay here with us, there is no ceasing of us in the world"

⁹⁰As in other versions, there are two Zîns

⁹¹unless the girl bleaching cloth when he first came to Jizra Bota was she. See note 66 above.

⁹²-lit. "they place Mem's betrothal on Beko's daughter"

Several days pass, Mem's betrothed Zîn⁹³ has heard that Mem has come. She writes a letter and sends it to Mem, saying, "Mem, he who came for sugar [105] and got vitriol ⁹⁴ is you: he who came for the lady and got her servant is also you. If you don't believe [me], come on Friday to Belek Tower and take a look in the Mîr's Garden, then it will be clear who is the lady and who is the servant."

Mem became troubled, saying, "My God, when will Friday come, so that I can go to Belek Tower, to the Mîr's Garden, and finally see Zîn with my own eyes? Then I will gladly welcome death."

On Friday Mem says to Qeretajdîn, "My brother, please, if you don't mind <erke ko tu dilê xo negrî>, in the ten to fifteen days since I've been here, I have not gone outside. Come with me today, let's go to Belek Tower and take a look into the Mîr's Garden, perhaps I'll breathe a little easier." Qeretajdîn says, "No, my dear brother, you are ill, you aren't well yet <hêja baş saxlam nebûyî>. If we go, you will catch cold and fall ill, and I will look bad⁹⁵." Mem says, "My brother, please, get up and let's go, I will dress warmly <ezê xo germ dadim>." Qeretajdîn does not want to offend him, so he gets up and he and Mem prepare to go. They set out with Qeretajdîn in front and Mem behind. They ascend Belek Tower and sit down. At 10:00 in the morning they notice that four young ladies of Botan have come to the garden. Qeretajdîn says to Mem, "Brother, do you know these young ladies?" Mem says, "Brother where would I know them from?" Qeretajdîn says, "How could you not know them? Take a look at them, they are like four doves, who on one day in the springtime⁹⁶, in the chill of the dawn, beat their wings, and in so doing remove all dust from them⁹⁷. Do you see the one in front? They call her Lady Zîn, a new-born dove, possessed of a crown of golden amber, the sister of mîr Zêydîn, the cousin of Qeretajdîn; the one after her is the daughter of your brother Qeretajdîn; the one behind her is your brother Qeretajdîn's wife; the last

⁹³It is not immediately clear whether this refers to the Zîn who came to him in his room at the beginning of the story, or the one to whom he has just been betrothed. Logically, it should be the former.

⁹⁴Şeb or Şev is alum or vitriol.

⁹⁵-lit. "my house will become bad or ruined"

⁹⁶-lit. "April and May"

⁹⁷-lit. "put their feathers and wings, beat their feathers and wings together, the dust and smoke goes from on their feathers and wings"

of all is the betrothed of my brother⁹⁸, the one whom I will marry to my brother, by the words of the prophet of God." Mem says, "No, brother, I don't need the last one: the first one is mine." Qeretajdin says, "Brother, how could you agree [to marry the last one]? If the mir finds out about this, he won't leave any of us alive." Mem stands up, draws his sword from its sheath, and says to Qeretajdin, "My dear brother, all the grief and pain I have been suffering is over Lady Zîn. If you can't accept that, let's part on bad terms, and I will go." Qeretajdin says, "No, brother, go [see her] if you want to."

Mem descends from the tower to go to the Mir's Garden, to Zîn. She is singing a song about herself and Mem.

[106] She sings, "My Mem is thin of stature -- a young willow, step by step, pace by pace, he has come from a strange land, from the city of Yemen to the city of Jizra Botan, and he is most welcome⁹⁹."

Qeretajdin's daughter says:

"Mem, uncle, my heart is very resentful,

When a wretched rose blossoms, a wretched nightingale sticks its beak into it, making it its companion¹⁰⁰, slowly getting into it and

taking it away,

I don't feel sorry for you, today the moustache of wretched Mem will fall before the face of¹⁰¹ Lady Zîn,

Mem, you are my uncle¹⁰², the light of my father's two eyes,

Rosy, in the Mir's Garden, you are my aunt's¹⁰³ guest.

Uncle Mem, my heart is very resentful,

Don't say, 'I'm a stranger, I have no one to care for me here',

My father and my two uncles are your servants,

⁹⁸i.e. Mem.

⁹⁹-lit. 'he has come on my eyes and those of my 1,000 fathers'

¹⁰⁰Tewîn = 'twin'

¹⁰¹perhaps this means 'will be subordinate to'

¹⁰²paternal uncle

¹⁰³maternal aunt. But Zîn, as her father's sister, is her paternal aunt [met(ik)].

They stood by the doorway of the lair¹⁰⁴,
 Before they kill one or two of us, we will bring down forty of them."

In the Mir's Garden, when Mem and Zîn are reunited¹⁰⁵, they rush at each other like ten stars fallen together. Qeretajdîn's daughter goes over to them, takes her veil off her head, and [holds it over them] to shade the two of them with it. When Beko's daughter sees what Mem and Zîn are up to, she tears her garment¹⁰⁶, throws away all the rings on her fingers and gold about her neck, tears out half of her hair, and heads for home in tears. Her father, Beko, is sitting at the window. When he sees his daughter coming home crying, he gets up and goes to meet her. He says, "My child, tell me what has happened to you!" His daughter replies, "What do you think happened, Father? That guest of Qeretajdîn's whom you have betrothed me to took mîr Zêydîn's sister Zîn from me by force¹⁰⁷ in the Mir's Garden today." When Beko's daughter says this, he says, "My child, no harm done, it's not the first time the powerful have mistreated the poor; it's all right, I swear by God that I won't let them have what they want."

Qeretajdîn calls down to his daughter from the tower, saying, "My child, call Mem: if the mir hears of this, we will have to wage a new war here." His daughter replies, "Father, leave them alone, let them wake up and get up on their own. I won't call them."

After two hours had passed, Mem comes to his senses. He and Zîn wake up, [107] he throws his cloak over his arm, throws his sword over his shoulder, and goes to Qeretajdîn. No one knows about them, other than Beko.

Qeretajdîn and Mem come home. A few days later, Mem, the mir and Beko are sitting together in a room. Beko and the mir say, "There is no day better than today, the three of us are alone, let's tell each other the name of our beloved." Mem says, "Sorry, but I have no beloved, nor will I falsely use the name of people's daughters." Beko says, "Mem, why are you so afraid? I'll tell my beloved's name first." And he begins:

¹⁰⁴It is not clear to me what this line and the next are referring to.

¹⁰⁵-lit. "reach each other"

¹⁰⁶-lit. "shirt"

¹⁰⁷-lit. "with blows and force"

"The beloved of my heart, they call her Fatma,
When I walked by the tower, that palace,
Then she came out to greet me gladly, openly, and with sighs."

Beko and the mîr say to each other, "Now whose turn is it?" They say it's Mem's turn. Mem says, "If you please, leave me alone. I have no beloved here whose name I could tell you." The mîr says, "It's my turn," and he says:

"The beloved of my heart, Begîm Khan,
When I walked by the tower, that palace,
Then she came out to greet me gladly and openly."

Once again the mîr and Beko say, "Now it's Mem's turn: we have both told the name of ours." But no matter what they do, Mem says, "I have no beloved here, nor will I falsely use the name of people's daughters."

The mîr says, "No matter who Mem is in love with,
I'll give you rubies and pearls, jewels, money, and treasures."

Beko says, "My mîr, I know the name of Mem's beloved. The mîr says, "Beko, if you know the name of Mem's beloved, you must say it."

Beko says, "My mîr, Mem's beloved is a black, wine colored (?)
<şîrabî(ne)> slave,
With a bucket of yoghurt in her hand,
She wanders about the market of Jizîra,
Every young man who takes a spoonful from her
Gives her 15 pinches in her side."

[108] When Beko says this, Mem is greatly angered and distressed.

He says, "My mîr, what Beko says

Has me quite upset <Perya dilê min disott>¹⁰⁸
 I do have a beloved, they call her Zîn,
 A new-born dove,
 The sister of mîr Zêydîn,
 The cousin of Qeretajdîn."

When Mem says this, the mîr says, "Servant boys, scoundrels¹⁰⁹, rise up against Mem. Certainly God did not make us for such a day."

Forty servants rise up against Mem, [and] Mem responds with his hands, mace, and dagger. Mem, seeing no escape, puts his back to the wall. By God's decree, on either side of him the walls fall down, while his dagger is in his hand. Not one of the mîr's servants dares to approach Mem.

The mîr has three sons,
 The eldest of his sons is called Gurgîn,
 News of this is immediately brought to Cheko, E'rif and Qeret'ajdîn,
 My father's servant is called Bengîn.

When the news is brought to Cheko, E'rif, Qeret'ajdîn and Bengîn, Bengîn gets up bareheaded and barefoot, wearing only underwear and a shirt, picks up Mem's sword and runs towards the mîr's diwan. When he reaches the doorway of the diwan, he catches sight of Mem with the wall collapsed on either side of him, his dagger in hand. As much as Bengîn's heart aches (for Mem), until Mem gives him permission, he may not enter the mîr's diwan. When Mem looks at the doorway and notices his naked sword in Bengîn's hand, he calls out:

"My father's servant boy whom they call Bengîn,
 At the head of 500 servants, his master is fond of him, the dear and
 sweet one,
 Put your master's sword into his hand,

¹⁰⁸-lit. "has burned the precious part of my heart"

¹⁰⁹Cf. EP-1, note # (122).

Today in the chambers of the dog mîr Zeydîn I will do some bloody killing."

When Mem says this, Bengîn enters the diwan and is about to put Mem's sword in his hands. [Just then] the three brothers Cheko, E'rif and Qeretajdîn come through the door and greet Beko and the mîr. Qeretajdîn says, "Beko and mîr, blessed God has given us a dear brother, who [109] has none of the faults of human nature. Are you intent upon destroying our brother Mem?" Beko says, "No, Qeretajdîn, dear brother, we are not seeking to destroy Mem, we are testing out his manliness. May we go blind - - poke out our eyes with our own fingers -- if we were to erase someone like Mem from the world." Qeretajdîn takes Mem by the arm, and leaves the diwan [with him], saying, "Beko and mîr, if you are so manly and clever, that's fine, we will take our brother Mem home and you can prepare for battle." Beko says, "No, Qeretajdîn, we were just testing Mem's manliness." When they say this, Qeretajdîn's anger subsides, [and] they talk until noon. After noon, they get up and go home.

That evening the mîr sends out a town crier through the city [saying] "Everyone who has a horse -- and those who don't should buy one -- at dawn we will all go out and play *jereed*^{109a}!"

^{109a} *Jereed* is a game played on horseback, using blunt javelins called in Arabic *jarîd* جرید , made of palm branches stripped bare of their leaves [jarada جرلة means 'to strip bare']: hence the word for javelin is also the name of the game. The follow description, from E.W. Lane's *Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, should explain what is happening in the present text: "The combatants usually consist of two parties, of different villages, or of different tribes ..., each party about twelve or twenty or more in number, and each person mounted on a horse or mare. The two parties station themselves about 500 feet or more apart. A person from one party gallops towards the other party, and challenges them; one of the latter, taking in his left hand four, five, six, or more gereeds, each six feet, or an inch or two more or less, in length ... and very heavy ... pursues the challenger at full gallop. He approaches him as near as possible -- often within an arm's length -- and throws, at his head or back, one gereed after another, until he has none left. The gereed is blunt at both ends. It is thrown with the small end foremost, and with uplifted arm, and sometimes inflicts terrible, and even fatal, wounds. The person against whom the gereeds are thrown endeavours to catch them, or to ward them off with his arm or with a sheathed sword, or he escapes them by the superior speed of his horse. Having sustained the attack, and arrived at the station of his party, he tries his skill against the person by whom he has been pursued, in the same manner as the latter did against him...." (pp. 350-351). For a brief explanation of *jereed* [jiritil] in a Turkish context, see Warren S. Walker & Ahmet E. Uysal, *Tales Alive in Turkey* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966; reprinted Lubbock, Texas: Texas Tech University Press, 1990), p. 262, note #24; also in the same book, tale #1, "The Blind Padishah with Three Sons," features a *jereed* match (pp. 10-24, esp. p. 22ff.). See also V.J. Parry, "Djerid," in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960-), vol. 2, pp. 532-3 for a discussion and bibliography; and "Chapter 6: Indoor and Outdoor Games" in: M. M. Ahsan, *Social Life*

At dawn, the mir's horsemen, those of Beko, and those of Qeretajdīn were each supposed to go out separately and play *jereed*. At dawn the mir's horsemen, those of Qeretajdīn and those of Beko all went and stood in separate groups in the main square. Mem came out from among Qeretajdīn's men and stood in the middle of the square; from the mir's men, one by one his heroes and champions went and joined Mem¹¹⁰. All of the mir's men who come out, are defeated by Mem. Finally the mir looks around and sees that not 17 of his men are left beside him¹¹¹. The brightness leaves his eyes, he is very distressed, thinking, "How is it that Mem has defeated so many of my heroes and champions today?" He draws his sword from its sheath, and from his seat holds it out to Mem in the middle of the square. Qeretajdīn thinks to himself, "If I don't call out to Mem, he will challenge the mir also, and we will have a war on our hands."

Qeretajdīn says, "Beloved of my heart, Mem of the Alans,
Get hold of yourself, the ruler of Botan has come to you,
Take hold of your horse's reins with both hands and tighten them,
Let yourself down, <binīya Silekane> (?=slaps on your buttocks)."

After Qeretajdīn says this, Mem tightly grasps his horse's reins with both hands, [and] gets down on the ground^{111a}. The mir challenges him. The three brothers, Cheko, E'rif and Qeret'ajdīn go stand over Mem. Qeretajdīn says, "Beko and mir, God has given us a brother, [and] it is clear that you two want to destroy him, our brother Mem." Beko says, "What has happened to you, Qeretajdīn? <Mocē te dīsa weke me'sīya hatine me>¹¹². Mem has fallen, [and] thank God, nothing has happened to him. Let Mem go home, and we will return to our pleasure. If I am not telling the truth, there are many [110] heroes and champions here, let them say whether or not I am telling the truth. From when Jizra was built until now, we have never brought as

Under the Abbasids: 170-289 AH/786-902 AD (London & New York: Longman, 1979), pp. 243-264, for a discussion of the importance of horse-racing and the like in an early Islamic context. *Jereed* also appears in LC-1 (note 139), SHa-2 (note 22), and HM (note 22).

110-lit. "come out to him"

111-lit. "that 17 of his men did not remain around him"

111a This passage has an analogue in SHa-2, pp. 250-1, and note 22.

112-lit. "Once again your waves have come to us like/as fish"

many horsemen together as we have done for Mem's sake. If we did as you wish, we would put an end to our pleasure¹¹³, we would all have to get up and go home. Mem fell, [and] thank God, nothing has happened to him. Let Mem go [home], [and] let us carry on with our amusement." When Beko finished speaking, everyone agreed, saying, "Beko is right, let Mem go home, let us carry on with our amusement."

They set about preparing to send Mem home, carrying on with their amusements. Beko thought about Mem's going home: "By God, as soon as he is out of sight, he won't go home, he'll go to Zin. Let's go secretly find Mem and Zin together."

Beko said, "Horsemen, I have something to say to you." They said, "Speak, Beko." He said, "Let's make a bet today. I'll keep a little distance away from you. I'll ride on, and you let your horses race, pursuing me up to the door of the mir's diwan, on condition that even if <ceh bik'evne pëşiya we>, or the road is bad, you won't let your horses slow down until [you reach] the door of the diwan. If any one of you catches up with me, you must cut off my head with a blow of your sword, my blood is permitted to be spilt¹¹⁴." They all agreed, saying, "There is nothing better than this." Qeretajdin said, "Very well, if I catch up with him, I'll slice off his head, so that we're rid of him."

Beko goes a little distance away from them and says, "Come on!"

When Mem went, he did not go home; he went to Zin, and in the [mir's] chamber they engaged in the amusements and jokes of mankind. They placed a watchman at the door, so that if the horsemen should come in unexpectedly¹¹⁵, he would let Mem know, and Zin could go to her room. However, the watchman, who had never seen so much money in his life¹¹⁶, sat himself down and was slowly counting his money. He had lost track of what was going on around him¹¹⁷. [Meanwhile], Beko was leading all the horsemen, and they were all trailing behind him. Beko was also free¹¹⁸ with his horse. The horsemen were trying to catch up with him. Qeretajdin also wanted very

113-lit. "cause our pleasure to disperse," cf. T keyfini kaçırmak.

114-lit. "legal to you," i.e. no blood revenge would be exacted for killing him.

115-lit. "secretly"

116-lit. "in his father's life." Apparently they bribed him.

117-lit. "he had no awareness of the wind[s] of fortune"

118; a. 'fast'

much to overtake him, and even exhausted his horse [in the endeavor], but Beko was in first place on his horse. Beko had a noble Seklawî¹¹⁹ horse, which is why he made the bet with them. No one beat Beko to the door of the [mîr's] chamber. Once the poor watchman finally noticed, the horsemen were already there. There was no longer any chance for him to go tell Mem [of their arrival], so that Zîn could go to her room. In one leap, all of the horsemen were standing in the mîr's diwan. The servants were tending to their horses, and all of the notables entered the room. Mem had no way to escape: he positioned Zîn behind his back, and threw his cloak over himself, having sat down in the mîr's throne. It was an old custom of the mîrs of Botan, that when [111] the mîr entered the diwan, [if someone was seated on his throne] no matter how old that person was, [the latter] must relinquish the throne to him.

The mîr went down one side of the room, then up the other side, very distraught because Mem was sitting on his throne and would not rise before him. Qeretajdîn made eyes at Mem, [as if] to say, "My brother, let the mîr sit on his throne!" Mem was not timid, he showed Qeretajdîn Zîn's braid under his cloak, to explain that the situation was thus and so.

Qeretajdîn said to his brothers Cheko and E'rif, "Brothers, things are bad, the two of you draw your swords and one stand on either side of Mem, don't let anyone touch him until I get back from the house."

Qeretajdîn went home [and] said to his wife, "Woman, Mem is in trouble: he has sat down on the mîr's throne in the diwan, [and] Zîn is behind him [hiding] under his cloak. What should we do to rescue him once more from this mess?" His Lady says, "Qeretajdîn, do what you think is right¹²⁰." Qeretajdîn removes his horse, his Koran – they had a Koran – and his son's crib from the house and sets his whole manor on fire. Some good people¹²¹ go tell the mîr, "Qeretajdîn has burned down his whole abode; go see what's the matter with him." When the mîr is about to get up, Beko doesn't let him, saying, "No, my mîr, it's a trick!" Qeretajdîn's entire manor burns down. Qeretajdîn says, "Lady, that brother of yours has not left his diwan. What should we do to rescue Mem once again? Is there anything else left?" His Lady says, "We have

¹¹⁹Seklawî or Seglawî is a type of fine horse. According to Jaba & Justi, it comes from the name of a district near Feloudja, west of the Euphrates River.

¹²⁰-lit "as you know, so do for yourself"

¹²¹-lit "there are some masters of goodness"

nothing left but the little crib." Qeretajdîn says, "Woman, go tie your infant¹²² to your back, put your slippers on your feet, and keep a small distance away from me. Run as much as you can, so that I don't catch up with you. If I catch you, I'll kill you and the boytogether."

Qeretajdîn's Lady goes and does just as he says. She goes a little distance away from Qeretajdîn, and jumps. Qeretajdîn pursues her with his sword drawn. [When] they reach the door (?) of the mîr's diwan, his Lady lets out a scream and jumps away. When her screams reach the ears of her brother mîr Zêydîn, the mîr starts to get up, [but] Beko says, "My mîr, stay put, it's a trick!" The mîr gets good and angry [and] says, "Beko, you see that Qeretajdîn is very upset: with his sword drawn he is chasing after his Lady. If he catches her he'll cut her head off." Beko keeps saying, "It's a trick" and the mîr gets so annoyed that he gives Beko such a slap in the mouth that two or three teeth fall out. When the mîr leaves the diwan, there is no one left there, everyone goes out [to see] about Qeretajdîn.

Zîn gets up from behind Mem [and] goes to her room. The mîr says, "Beko, who was that who left the diwan?" [Beko] said, "My mîr, her garment was like that of your wife, [but] I don't know."

[112] They took Qeretajdîn, and all returned to [the mîr's] chamber. [This time] Mem yielded the mîr his throne. The mîr went and sat down on his throne, and they talked until the assembly dispersed in the evening, [and] they all went home.

The next day once again the notables assembled. They spoke about Qeretajdîn, who had burned down his entire manor. They did not have the wherewithal to rebuild a manor the likes of Qeretajdîn's, so they started thinking^{122a}. The mîr said to Beko, "Beko, if you can't find a solution, it's no use." Beko said, "My mîr, this matter does not concern me, I will always be unacceptable to you. Whenever I tell you something, although¹²³ what I say is always right, none of you ever listens to me."

¹²²The dictionaries give "infant's shoe" for the word p'ap'ûçk. Perhaps it is actually the shoes that are meant, as Qeretajdîn also tells his wife to put on her slippers.

^{122a} Cf. B. Nikitine's comment, in speaking of social customs as reflected in Mem û Zîn: "Another, very meritorious custom is to be mentioned, that of collective aid to a person whose house has been destroyed in a conflagration" [my translation]. See his "Essai de classification de folklore à l'aide d'un inventaire social-économique," in *XV^e Congrès international d'anthropologie et d'archéologie préhistorique: VI^e assemblée générale de l'Institut international d'anthropologie, Bruxelles, 1-8 septembre 1935* (Bruxelles: Imprimerie médicale et scientifique, 1936), v. 2, p. 1010.

¹²³=iit. "because"

The mîr said, "All right, Beko, tell us what we should do to rebuild Qeretajdîn's manor. If your words are correct, they will be well known."

They begged Beko, saying, "Tell us, Beko!" He said, "My mîr, you all know that when the subject comes up in conversation, Qeretajdîn and his brothers Cheko and E'rif say that there is no man more manly than they. If they are indeed so manly and clever, we have been unable to collect taxes from the Beraz tribe for seven years: let Qeretajdîn and his brothers go get them. With [the money they collect] we will build a manor even more splendid than the one he had before!¹²⁴"

The next day they call Qeretajdîn and say, "Qeretajdîn, as you know, it is not in our power to build you a mansion like the one you had before. When it comes up in conversation, Qeretajdîn, you say that there is no man more manly than you!¹²⁵ Since that is so, it has been seven years since we collected taxes from the Beraz tribe: you and your brothers go get them, [and] we will build you a fine manor." Qeretajdîn says, "So be it."

The following day, Qeretajdîn and his brother Cheko and E'rif go and mount their horses together with Bengîn, to go to the Beraz tribe. They entrust Mem to Sityê [with the understanding that] he will not leave the house to go anywhere at all. Then they set out.

A few days later, Beko and the mîr are sitting together. Beko says, "My mîr, it's been a few days since Qeretajdîn went off to the Beraz tribe, Mem is all alone in the house, he must be bored. Let's invite him to come here to [sit with] us. Maybe he'll feel better." They send for Mem, saying that the mîr and Beko are in [the mîr's] chamber, and inviting Mem to come join them. Sityê would not allow it. Beko was forced to go himself to beg her to give Mem permission to come to them. [After] he pleads with her a great deal, Sityê gives Mem permission. Mem goes to the [mîr's] room and talks with Beko and the mîr until evening. Once again the assembly adjourns, and everyone goes home.

¹²⁴-lit. "Not a manor like that of him before, one even better than it with it we will build."

¹²⁵-lit. "us"

[113] The next day Mem gets tired of staying at home¹²⁶, so he goes to Beko and the mīr. And so it happened that Mem got into the habit of getting up every day and going to [the mīr's] diwan.

One day Mem, Beko and the mīr were sitting in the diwan, [when] the mīr said, "Today let's play [cards¹²⁷] on the condition of *shar:dilkhaz*: whoever wins can make a demand of the loser, and the loser must grant it." Mem and the mīr play. They make an agreement that whoever wins seven times can ask whatever he wants of the other. Mem beat the mīr six times, only one game remained. Beko got to thinking, "By God, one more game and Mem will beat the mīr, and then he'll ask for Zīn, and achieve his goal. What if I were to go tell Zīn to get all dressed up and stick her head through the skylight? Maybe Mem would be distracted by her and the mīr would beat him."

Beko goes to Zīn's room and says [to her], "Zīn, Mem and your brother are playing on the condition of *shandilkhaz*. Mem has beaten your brother six times, if he beats him once more, your brother will have to give him whatever he asks for. I know that Mem is in love with you, [I'm sure] he'll ask [to marry] you. Your brother will be forced to give you [to him]. Go put on a nice set of clothes, make up your eyes with kohl, and go stick your head out the skylight of the cage¹²⁸; soon we'll be celebrating your marriage."

Zīn does just as Beko said: she gets all dressed up, and goes towards them, sticking her head out of the skylight.

Beko returns to the mīr and Mem, and says to the mīr, "My mīr, in my childhood when we used to play knucklebones¹²⁹, one place was luckier than the others." Mem says, "Beko, if it's because of where we are sitting, let's trade places." Mem and the mīr get up and switch places. Mem sits in the mīr's place, and the mīr sits in Mem's spot. Mem's eye falls on the skylight, and sees that Zīn has stuck her head out of her cage through the skylight. When he sees her, all reason goes out of Mem's head, he has one eye on the cards and one eye on Zīn.

¹²⁶-lit. "his patience does not come at home"

¹²⁷it is only clear that in this version they are playing cards rather than chess because of one sentence, appearing three paragraphs further down: "Mem keeps one eye on his cards, and one eye on Zīn."

¹²⁸Presumably the cage (*qefes*) refers to the harem or women's quarters.

¹²⁹Кар ū k'ap|a|. K'ap, f. = Knucklebone [Russian *babka* бабка, al'chik а́льчик].

The mîr beats Mem seven times. Mem says, "State your conditions!" The mîr says, "Beko, what shall we ask for?" Beko says, "My mîr, what shall we ask for? We have a well 50 meters deep: let's take Mem and put him at the bottom of the well, and leave him there for three or four days¹³⁰. Those are our conditions. They ask Mem, "How's that?" Mem says, "If it is true that you will keep me at the bottom of the well for [only] three or four days and then let me out, that's fine." Beko and the mîr say, "After three or four days we'll let you out."

They tie a few ropes together and tie them around Mem, [then] let him down into the bottom of the well. Zîn has a tunnel dug from her room to the bottom of the well, [and] secretly takes blankets and mattresses to Mem, [and] feeds him like a king. And so it happens that Mem's bed is better than ever.

[114] One day Beko says, "Why don't I go to the well and see how Mem is doing?" He goes and stands over the well and says, "Mem, walk back and forth for me down there, so that I can see how you are." Mem walks back and forth. When Beko sees him, he notices that he is better than [those] outside. Beko says nothing, and goes straight to the mîr and says to him, "My mîr, today I went to the well to see Mem, and he's better than [those] outside. As far as I know, the appearance of people at the bottom of a well should not be better than those above ground, but Mem's appearance is better than others." The mîr says, "You are right, people under ground and people above ground should not look the same¹³¹. The mîr and Beko go investigate <oxîme dîkîn> the bottom of the well. They find the tunnel that Zîn made to go to Mem every day. Some people walk through it, coming out at Zîn's room. The mîr is annoyed [and] says to Zîn, "From now on you won't go near the well. If I hear that you've gone to the well one day, I'll kill you." He removes Zîn from that room, takes her to [another] part of the city [and] gives her a beautiful palace there, saying, "I don't want anyone except Beko to give Mem bread and water or to care for him." They take Mem from there, and put him in a dungeon forty fathoms¹³² deep. Every day Beko takes [him a loaf of] salted barley bread, and sprinkles ashes on it.

Ten days pass.

¹³⁰-lit. "after three-four days we will take him out"

¹³¹-lit. "be [of] the same color"

¹³²-lit. "spears" i.e. a unit of measure equal to the length of a spear.

Zîn thinks to herself, "If I don't send word to Qeretajdîn, Mem will die at the bottom of the well. She takes a fine piece of paper and writes, "Beko and the mîr have put Mem at the bottom of a dungeon; his bread and water are in Beko's hands. If you don't get to Mem soon¹³³, he will die at the bottom of the well." A baldheaded servant boy was in Zîn's employ, [and she] said [to him], "Baldhead¹³⁴, come take this letter to the Beraz tribe and give it to Qeretajdîn. I'll give you as much money as you want." Baldhead said, "No, my Lady, if you don't give me your promise, I won't go." Zîn said, "What promise?" He said, "If you promise that once I've returned, I can give you a kiss¹³⁵, I'll go to the Beraz tribe. Otherwise, as long as I can remember I've always been poor, and the money you would give me wouldn't make me rich, so I wouldn't go to the Beraz tribe." Zîn realized that Mem might die at the bottom of the well [if Qeretajdîn did not receive the news, so] she said, "I have no choice¹³⁶." At the bottom of the letter she wrote, "For Mem's sake I was forced to promise the baldhead that he could kiss me once upon delivering the letter. Otherwise, he would not have delivered it. I trust that you won't let the baldhead return alive¹³⁷." She handed the letter over to the baldhead, and said, to him, [115] "Take the letter quickly; when you come back, I'll let you kiss me once." When the baldhead picked up the letter, he was

133>-lit. "If you reach Mem soon, you reach him; if you don't reach him,"

134>K'eç'elok. The Bald Boy is a standard figure in Middle Eastern folklore, known in Turkish as Keloglan, in Persian and Azeri Turkish as Kachal کچال, in Arabic as al-Aqra' الأقرع, and in Kurdish as K'ed'jelok. Generally the Bald Boy is a trickster figure who wins out in the end, unlike his fate here. Although generally appearing in folktales as the main character, he also occurs in some episodes of the Turkish *hikâye* of Koroğlu, which belongs to a genre of folk story similar to Mem û Zîn.

135>-lit. "come to your face"

136>-lit. "It makes no use," i.e. There is no use protesting.

137>Motif K978. Uriah letter. Man carries written order for his own execution. This famous motif appears in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, as well as being an integral part of the plot of several tale-types, including AT 428 *The Wolf*, and AT 930 *The Prophecy*. Moreover, it also occurs in a medieval Arabic novel, *Akhbār al-kibār al-tiwāl* = *الأكبر الطوال* *أخبار*, by al-Dīnawarī (from Dīnawar, a town in Persian Kurdistan), which tells the story of the exploits of the Persian epic hero Bahrām Chūbīn.

so happy, he didn't know what to do. He said, "I'll go and come back, then I'll get to kiss Zîn once." Out of joy, he put it¹³⁸ now here, now there.

The baldhead made the three to four day trip to the Beraz tribe in a little more than a day¹³⁹, stood before Qeretajdn, handed him the letter and saluted him, standing in a respectful position. When Qeretajdn read the letter [and learned] that Mem was in dire straits, and that if they reached him [perhaps they could save him]¹⁴⁰, he summoned Cheko, E'rif, and Bengfn and said, "Tell the boys to pull up the tent stakes¹⁴¹, to forget about monetary considerations¹⁴²; let's go try to reach Mem¹⁴³."

Cheko and E'rif pull up the tent stakes together with their servant boys, and they set out. They reach a depression [in the earth]; the baldhead, elated, accompanies them on foot. When Qeretajdn remembers the situation of the baldhead and Zîn, he draws his sword and swings it at the baldhead's neck: his head falls to one side, his body to the other, and they ride on.

Zîn goes up to the roof of the palace to watch for them¹⁴⁴. She sees dust rising from the bottom of the plain, and says, "Those must be Qeretajdn's men."

Zîn sings, "You've come, master of my father,
The one they call Qeretajdn,

¹³⁸Perhaps the letter is meant by "it."

¹³⁹Qonaxê sê-çar roja, k'eç'elok roj û de'nekî diçe -lit. "A three or four *qonax*[- *manzil* = stage of a journey, the distance travelled in a day] journey the baldhead made in a day and a *dan/de'n*[-one third of a day, an eight-hour period]. This appears to be a formula. Compare the following: Qonaxa sê meha kir ya roj-de'nekêye = "The *qonax* of three months he made in a day and a *de'n* 'in the story of Memê û E'yşe [Jndi, Hajie, ed. *Kurdskîe Epîcheskîe Pesnî-Skazy*, (Moskva : Izdatel'stvo Vostochnoi Literatury, 1962), p. 142, paragraph #32], and: Dibêjin, "Rîya şerêrê Tulusxemê rîya hêft rojana," / Bi îzna xwedê kuîrê teê nav roj de'nekîda biqedîne = "They say, "The journey [-lit. 'road'] to the city of Tuluskhem is a seven-day journey," / With God's permission your son will carry it out in a day and a *de'n* 'in the story *Sêva Had* (*Kurdskîe Epîcheskîe Pesnî-Skazy*, p. 151, paragraph #3).

¹⁴⁰-lit. "Either you will reach him, or you won't reach him"

¹⁴¹i. e., to break camp or start packing up, in preparation for leaving.

¹⁴²-lit. "Let them not be masters of (i. e., guard or control) the money and property of the world"

¹⁴³i. e., before it's too late.

¹⁴⁴-lit. "her eye is on the road," a Kurdish way of saying 'She is waiting.'

Master of the green edged sword,
To rescue from the dungeon
The wretched prisoner of my father's house."

She goes on to say:

"You've come, beloved of my heart,
Red Qeretajdn,
Master of the purple edged sword,
To rescue from the dungeon
The wretched prisoner of my father's house,
With a blow and a mighty response."

By the time Zîn finishes her song, Qeretajdn reaches Jizra with his brothers Cheko and Enif, together with Bengin and all their servants. They turn onto the road [leading to] the gate of the mîr's diwan, and approach.

The mîr and Bengin hear that Qeretajdn has come. They go stick their heads out of the skylight and see Qeretajdn standing there holding his sword drawn, and saying, "Where will you go today? <Xo têxine k'êderê>. Become birds, fly to the heavens if you will, today I will break your wings and feathers no matter what." The mîr says, "Beko, now what?" Beko says, "My mîr, what [do you mean] 'Now what? This has nothing to do with me. I said, 'Imprison him' <girttye xelkê bigre>, [116] I did not say, 'Imprison him and don't let him go'. No matter what trouble happens, I will get myself out of it. If you are a clever man, get yourself out of it." The mîr can find no solution; he begs Beko to get him out of it this time, [but] no matter what he does, Beko says, "It's not my affair¹⁴⁵." One last time, the mîr pleads with Beko, saying, "Will you save me?" Beko says, "My mîr, saving you is very easy. If you promise to give Zîn to Mem, I'll get you out of this." The mîr says, "Beko, I hereby give Zîn to Mem. I leave permission to marry her off, and everything pertaining to her, in your hands. When you go get Mem out, we'll marry them off with seven drums and seven zumas¹⁴⁶."

¹⁴⁵or, "Leave me out of it."

¹⁴⁶A zurna is a wind blown reed instrument. This expression means 'We'll make them a fancy wedding.'

When the mîr says this, Beko says, "Qeretajdîn, relax, Mem's position is better than mine or yours. The mîr has just given permission to marry Zin to Mem, so why are you upset?"

Qeretajdîn thinks to himself, "Mem's grief and suffering has all been [lover] Zîn. If the mîr gave Zîn to him, it would all be over, everything would right itself." He says, "Beko, that's fine!" Beko goes to Zîn's room and says, "Qeretajdîn has come back from the Beraz tribe, and your brother mîr Zêydîn has given in. Get all dressed up, take forty maidens of Botan, go to the top¹⁴⁷ of the well, and bring Mem up from the bottom of the well; [then] we will make your wedding."

Zîn gets all dressed up, takes forty maidens of Botan and goes with them to the top of the well. They form an enclosure, standing side by side surrounding the well.

Zîn says, "Beloved of my heart, Mem of the Alans,
The master of my father, see for yourself,
I have brought forty maidens of Botan and have made [with them] a
hedge for my Mem,
If I don't die today, I will make my Mem the mîr and king of Botan's
groom¹⁴⁸."

Mem says, "Zîn, it's not so, it can't be so,
Going back seventy generations I am forbidden from being the son-
in-law of the king of Botan¹⁴⁹."

Zîn says, "Master of my father, get hold of yourself, _____
<'ifaq hatne serê mêrane>,
If I don't die today, I'll make Mem the brother-in-law of the mîr of
Botan."

¹⁴⁷-lit. 'the mouth'

¹⁴⁸Zava, cognate to Persian dāmād داماد, means 'groom,' and by extension also 'brother-in-law' or 'son-in-law' vis-à-vis the siblings or parents of the bride respectively. The corresponding female terms is **BQk**, meaning 'bride,' and also 'sister-in-law' or 'daughter-in-law' vis-à-vis the groom's family.

¹⁴⁹-lit. 'Being the son-in-law of the king of Bota is forbidden to me and my 70 fathers [ancestors]'

Mem says, "Zîn, you have not come to let me out,
You've come to set free the drop of breath left in me!¹⁵⁰"

(He says), When they threw a rope down to Mem at the bottom of
the well,

Angels from the mouth of the Lord of the world greeted Mem with
an embrace in the bottom of the well.

[117] When they brought Mem out to the top of the well,
--May it never happen here!¹⁵¹-- screaming, mourning and crying broke
out in the domains of Jizira.

Zîn says, "O masters of goodness,
Take up picks and shovels,
Take my Mem to the grave of lions!¹⁵²
O God and forty angels,
By forty earths and forty skies,
After my Mem [is gone], don't keep me alive beyond the evening
watch!¹⁵³"

All the nobles of Botan gather there.

Bengîn says, "Beloved of my heart, Memê Alan,
Mem my son, my heart is resentful,
I don't pity you,
The hair and face of your parents are white,
Very soon they will die,

¹⁵⁰-lit. "You've come, there is the end point of the soul, you will let it out."

¹⁵¹See note 57 above.

¹⁵²Lions are a symbol of bravery.

¹⁵³The evening *dan/de'n*. See note 139 above.

Leaving the throne and crown of Yemen unclaimed¹⁵⁴."

Bengîn goes and points the hilt of his sword at the ground, and the tip of the sword at his belly, and says, "After Mem[is death], let me not remain alive." Mîr Zeydîn, [seeing] how much Zîn was crying, says, "Sister, what you and Mem desired did not happen, but don't worry, I'll marry you to someone even better than Mem." [But] no matter what they did, they could not get Zîn to agree.

Zîn falls ill. They take her home and put her to bed. Not two hours pass, when her prayers are heard¹⁵⁵, and she dies too. Graves are dug for all three of them. They dig the graves of Mem and Zîn next to each other, and Bengîn's apart from them. All the nobles of Botan go to the graveyard, bury Mem, Zîn, and Bengîn, and return home.

A few days pass. One day, in the mîr's diwan, the subject of Mem and Zîn comes up. They say, "It was something [ordained] by God, but we prevented it from happening¹⁵⁶." Beko says, "No, you're wrong, o nobles of Botan, God had nothing to do with the matter. This was the work of the devil. If you don't believe me, let's go at dawn and open up Mem and Zîn's graves: if they are not in each other's arms, you will know that everything I [have said] is a lie." They all say, "All right, Beko."

In the evening Beko goes and opens up Mem and Zîn's graves. He puts them both in one grave, and puts their arms around each other. Then he covers up the grave, and returns home. He says to himself, "I brought them together with my own hands: what if they get up from the grave and go back to their own graves?" [118] Beko could not believe that in the morning, they would go to Mem and Zîn's grave and that what he said would turn out to be right.

At dawn all the nobles of Botan, and Beko with them, go to Mem and Zîn's grave. Qeretajdîn had gone out hunting. He comes back from hunting and says, "Stiyê, now who has died? Why are so many people gathered at the graveyard?" Stiyê says, "What [do you mean] 'Who has died? Even after Mem and Zîn are dead, they aren't rid of Beko!" Qeretajdîn says, "No?" Stiyê says, "That's right!" Qeretajdîn does not dismount, he goes straight to the graveyard, draws his sword, and points it at Beko. The mîr says,

¹⁵⁴-lit. "ownerless"

¹⁵⁵-lit. "her curses are accepted"

¹⁵⁶-lit. "We did not let their desire for each other be"

"Qeretajdîn, we have taken Mem and Zîn out of their [common] grave, we are burying them again in their separate graves. Don't implicate poor Beko. <Çendî welat zinaye, hew çend aşê me pê bi fitil û baye> _____." Qeretajdîn says, "No, my mir, Beko has already done enough." He swings his sword at Beko's neck, and he falls in two pieces: his body falls to one side, his head to the other. He goes to the graves, and in front of everyone he puts Mem and Zîn in their [common] grave once more. A drop of Beko's blood drips from the blade of his sword [and falls] between Mem and Zîn, becoming a black thornbush between the two of them. No matter how many years they have cut down the thornbush, it always grows back.

All the nobles of Botan, after burying Mem and Zîn once again, and Beko, return home.

Ritter, Hellmut. "Sittîye Zîn und Mämme Alâ," in *Türöyo : die Volkssprache der syrischen Christen des Tür 'Abdîn* (Beirut ; Wiesbaden : Franz Steiner Verlag, 1969), v. 2, pp. 256-297 [*Turoyo* (a Neo-Aramaic language) in Latin phonetic transcription + German translation on facing pages] (HR-1)

HR-1. Collected for Hellmut Ritter by his native assistant Besim in 1960 from Yüsus Mälke Asmar, a 60 year old native of the village of Kfärze in the Tür 'Abdîn region of the province of Mardin, Kurdistan of Turkey. Yüsus seemed to be almost more comfortable in Kurdish than he was in Türöyo, which can be seen by the decidedly Kurdish flavor of the material collected from him. Numbers in brackets [] refer to page numbers, while those in parentheses () refer to sentences.

Sittîye Zîn und Mämme Alâ (HR-1)

[256] (1) (He said)¹ One night² the prince of the jinns had a toothache. (2) He could bear the pain no more, unable to sleep because of the tooth. (3) So he called his slaves, his servant spirits, and said, "O servant spirits! Tonight, won't you tell me a story, so that I can forget my toothache?" (4) His servant spirits gathered around him, from hither and yon, and those assembled [said], "O emir³, what shall we tell you?" (5) He said, "Tell me about the land; perhaps I will forget about my tooth." (6) One of them stepped forward and said, "O my mir! In the city of Gziro there is a girl who they call Sittîye Zîn: she is the daughter of Mir Sheref, the sister of Mir Zeidîn, the cousin of Qara Tajdin. (7) She is so beautiful that you could call her a firefly⁴." Her description pleased the prince. (8) Another came forth [and said], "O emir! There is a boy they call Mämme Ala. You could say, 'By God! He looks like he was peeled

¹Many of the sentences in this text begin with an untranslatable "He said."

²-lit. "One night of the nights of God."

³i.e. "Prince."

⁴Brightness and beauty are often connected in Middle Eastern folklore. A very common way of describing a woman's beauty is to say that she is as beautiful as the moon on the fourteenth of the (lunar) month, when the full moon is out. Eg. in Kurdish: *Riwê te ji heyva çardehê rewşentir e* = "Your face is brighter than the moon on the 14th [of the lunar month]."; in Turkish: *Ayın onördü kadar güzel bir kız* = "A girl as beautiful as the fourteenth of the (lunar) month."

from inside an egg⁵ (9) There is no one more handsome or charming than he⁵. (10) The two servant spirits flew at each other's throats, this one shouting, "Mine is more beautiful!" and that one shouting, "Mine is more handsome!" (11) The emir said, "Stop making such a racket! Take slumber pearls⁶ and put them in your pockets and go! This one should go to Gzîro and that one should go to Mâmmê Ala! (12) Bring them here together with their beds and bedding to this assembly!" (13) One of them set off for the city of Gzîro, crawled under the girl's bed, slipped the slumber pearl in her ear, and grabbed her bed, bedding, and everything he could think of⁷ and Poof! he brought it all to the emir's diwan. (14) The other one, who went to the boy, did the same, took the boy's bed and everything else, loaded himself up, and brought it all to the emir's hall. (15) With the slumber [258] pearls still in their ears, the emir came and lifted the handkerchiefs from off their faces, and covered them again, while they slept on. (16) The emir was dazzled by their appearance. He was unable to say, "She is more beautiful than he," or "He is more handsome than she," for they were both so charming and so beautiful. (17) The emir just looked and looked at them, until he had had his fill of looking. (18) "Well, O emir, now what should we do with them?" (19) He said, "With the slumber pearls still in their ears, grab them and take them away to Mâmmê Ala's diwan! But then you must crawl under their beds and take the slumber pearls out of their ears, then listen and see what they say!" (20) So the servant spirits took them away to Mâmmê Ala's diwan and took the slumber pearls out of their ears, then crawled under their beds and hid.

(21) As for the girl, she woke up and looked about. What did she see? There was a man's bed beside her. (22) The girl began raving, "What is this business, and who is this man who has come to me?" (23) She looked around the room, and it looked just like her room, and her bed, and her things. (24) The boy looked about: there was a

⁵Although the sentence literally means "There is no young man more handsome or charming than he," in context the way I have translated it makes more sense.

⁶*Âmirto di-şânîq*, in German: *Schlafperle*. Apparently it is believed that when one of these slumber pearls is placed in someone's ear, that person will fall asleep immediately, and not wake up until the pearl is removed from his ear. Motifs D1364.32. Jewel causes magic sleep; D1071. Magic jewel (jewels); D1071.1. Magic beads; D1364. Object causes magic sleep. This motif also appears in FK-1, FK-2, HR-2, and ZK-2.

⁷*û-jahr u zuqqûmejdâ* = lit. "Her poison and zaqqum." This apparently means something like our expression "Everything but the kitchen sink." Zaqqum is a mythical infernal tree with exceedingly bitter fruit which is mentioned in the Koran.

girl beside him, a girl so beautiful and charming, truly a wonder! He fell in love with her. (25) Mämme Ala looked about the diwan: it looked just like his room, and his bed, and his assembly room. He decided to wait.

(26) The girl began making noise. (27) Since men have a little more sense than women, Mämme Ala said to her, "Lady, wait a little! (28) This is surely the work of jinns. (29) Don't make any noise! You must have servants⁸ at your beck and call; call them and see if they come! And if I call my servants and they don't come, then you will know that -- God forbid! -- I have committed this bit of folly by coming to you. (30) But if I call mine and you call yours, and yours don't come but mine do, then you will know that you have come to me." (31) "Yes," she said, "that is the right decision." (32) Mämme Ala said, "Lady, shall I call mine or will you call yours?" (33) She said, "I'll call mine." (34) "Yes," [260] he said, "Call your maidservants!" (35) The lady called her maidservants. (36) She said, "Hâlîma!" But she didn't appear. "Fâîma!" But she didn't appear. "Medîna!" But nobody appeared. (37) Then she said, "Well, not one of my people has appeared; you call yours now!" (38) So he called his servant, "Kelesh!" "At your service, sire⁹," came the reply. "Stay where you are, boy! O Lady," he said, "have I come to you, or have you come to me?" (39) "Well, whoever you are," she said, "it looks like I have come to you." (40) "Well," he said, "Never mind¹⁰, sit down; it doesn't matter!"

(41) They both sat down again, each on his own bed; they enjoyed each other's company very much, and fell in love with each other! (42) They chatted and rejoiced together, until they got tired. (43) When they got tired, Sittfye Zîn said, "Mämmo!" He answered, "What is it, my Lady?" She said, "We're tired and we're going to sleep! [But first] let's promise¹¹ to have [only] each other so long as we live. (44) If this is the work of jinns, it could happen that while we are sleeping, we may vanish from before each other's eyes. (45) So take my ring and put it on your finger! It's possible that you won't think of me anymore after I vanish; when your eye falls on my ring,

⁸=lit. "[male] servants and maidservants."

⁹ *Buyurun ef'andim*, in Turkish

¹⁰ *Neyse*, in Turkish. I have heard Kurds use this expression while speaking Kurdish.

¹¹=lit. "Let's give each other our word."

however, you'll remember me and come after me." "Yes," said [Mämme], "that is a good idea." (46) The girl gave her ring to Mämme Ala, who put it on his finger, then they gave each other their solemn word. (47) The girl said, "Anything is possible in this world; if I should vanish and you want to come after me, (48) then get yourself to the great water¹², and follow the water until you get to the city of Gziro! (49) If you come, that's fine, and if you don't come, that's up to you!¹³" He said, "That is good." (50) When they had enough of chatting, they gave each other their word, put their hands behind each other's neck¹⁴, placed a curtain between themselves from the chest down, and clung to each other from the chest up. (51) Each one put his hand behind the neck of the other, and they fell asleep.

(52) After they were fast asleep, the jinns came out again, put the slumber pearl in the girl's ear, and Poof!¹⁵ [262] picked up her bed and brought her back to the city of Gziro, leaving her in her room. (53) The jinns removed the slumber pearl from her ear, then returned to their homes, where they remained.

(54) In the morning the girl awoke, stretched out her hand to the side, and it hit the ground with a bang¹⁶. "Mämmo!" [she called], but there was no Mämmo there. (55) Mämme Ala stretched out his hand toward the girl. "Sittiye!" [he called], but as God would have it, there was neither hide nor hair of Sittiye!¹⁷. (56) Woe is me! He grew very sad! "Now," he said, "what will happen?" (57) Sittiye was grieving because she didn't see Mämme Ala, and he didn't see her! May God make it easy on them, they were burning inside!¹⁸.

¹²e. the Tigris River, called 'Dijlah' in the local languages

¹³hat kuç, a-lit. "You know." This is a literal translation of the Turkish expression 'Sen bilirsin,' which is used when the speaker wants to avoid taking responsibility for an action, depositing it squarely on the shoulders of his interlocutor. Perhaps it should be understood as meaning 'You know [what's best].'

¹⁴=lit. "head."

¹⁵=lit. "O Allah and O God."

¹⁶=lit. "[Her hand] said 'Raç' and touched the ground."

¹⁷=lit. "'Sittiye' may God give, no Sittiye and nothing."

¹⁸=lit. "May God make it easy, a fire fell to their innards"

(58) Mämme Ala got up. His servant came to him and filled his water pitcher, (59) and handed it to him. [Mämme] went out and washed himself, then spread out his prayer rug or whatever¹⁹, to pray²⁰. (60) He said his prayers²¹, then remained seated with his head bent forward. (61) His servant said, "O my God! O dear me²² (62) I have worked for this man for years, and he has never been fretful or sad for a single day; I have noticed that today he is out of sorts. (63) I want to ask him what is the matter." (64) He placed his hands one on top of the other and bowed low to the ground before his master, [saying], "O Mämme Ala! May it be something good²³. Tell me what is on your mind today.²⁴" (65) [Mämme] answered, "Man, such and such is my situation. (66) From last night until early this morning I was in great spirits, and Sittÿe Zîn was with me, (67) I fell asleep and slept a little, and this morning when I woke up, Sittÿe Zîn was nowhere to be found.²⁵ (68) For this reason, a great sorrow has descended upon me²⁶. (69) I don't know where in the world she has gone, or

¹⁹The narrator is Christian, and therefore not completely familiar with Islamic prayer rituals. We get a clue to this in the wording 'his prayer rug or whatever.'

²⁰Muslims must perform ritual ablutions or washing (Arabic wuḍū' وضوء; Turkish *aptes* from Persian *âbdast* آبست; Kurmanji *destnîmêj*) before performing the prayer ritual (Arabic ṣalâh صلاة; Turkish *namaz* from Persian *namâz* نامل; Kurdish: Kurmanji *nîmêj* / Sorani *nîwêj*). For a complete description of the Islamic prayer ritual, see Edward William Lane *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians Written in Egypt during the Years 1833-1835* (Hague & London: East-West Publications, 1978 [1895]), chap. iii: "Religion and Laws," pp. 69-115.

²¹-lit. "He prayed his prayers and finished his prayers."

²²Ya mälava! = lit. "O one whose house should prosper." This is a Kurdish expression used in wishing someone well. See note 35 below and ZK-1, note # (43).

²³hêdê xêr = lit. "One of good." This expression has equivalents in other Middle Eastern languages, e.g. Palestinian Arabic *khayr inshallah* and Turkish *hayırdır [inşallah]*. If someone comes to see you unexpectedly, you would say this expression, meaning 'I hope you come with good intentions'; in my opinion, this fits into the larger Middle Eastern world view, in which strangers and newcomers are perceived as potentially hostile until proven otherwise.

²⁴-lit. "Today tell me your desire what it is."

²⁵-lit. "This morning I woke up, I see not Zîn and not anything."

²⁶-lit. "A great sorrow has crept into my heart."

where the city of Gziro is located. This is what has been bothering me." (70) "So what should I do?" he said.

(71) Mämme Ala stayed this way for a day, two, three, twenty, a month; his spirits were low and he steadily deteriorated. (72) His servant informed his father. "O Ala," he said, "your son's spirits are very low, he's very unhappy: go talk to him! (73) You had better get some doctors, physicians, medications and the like for your son: he could go anytime now²⁷." (74) He went to his son [and said], "Well son²⁸, what is wrong with you?" "O father," he replied, "Such and such [264] is my situation. (75) Bring me Sittÿe Zîn if you can; otherwise, you are no longer my father, and I am no longer your son." (76) "My son, Sittÿe Zîn, where is she?" said [his father]. "In the city of Gziro," he replied. "Son, as old as I am, I have never heard the name of Jizra Bota²⁹. There is no such place." (77) "Father," [Mämme] said, "there must be such a place. Here on the ring on my finger [it says] the city of Gziro. [What you say] is impossible: there *is* [a place called] Gziro."

(78) The father went out looking: he went around the city, asking young and old, in hopes that people would tell him something about Gziro, that they would say, "Yes, there is a place called Gziro," but no one had ever heard of it³⁰. (79) He came back and said, "By God, I haven't found it³¹. (80) No one could tell me any about it, no one said it exists, either nearby or far away." (81) [Mämme] said, "Father, it exists. Go search the whole country [for it]!" (82) The father mounted [his horse], filled his saddlebag with money for the trip, and hit the road, going out into the world. (83) He wandered about for seven or eight days. (84) One day he came to an inn like the inn of Midyat³². (85) He reached the inn at one or two at night, and he saw a merchant

²⁷-lit. "Either he is going today or he is going this evening."

²⁸[*Awq* a Kurdish word meaning "son."

²⁹Notice that the father uses the Kurdish form 'Jizra Bota' [Gizra Bo(h)ta], rather than the Turoyo form 'Gziro.'

³⁰-lit. "People hadn't seen it, hadn't heard of it."

³¹-lit. "I haven't seen it." In Kurdish, also, the verb *Lîtin* means both 'To see' and 'To find.'

³²Midyat is the principal town of the region of Tûr 'Abdîn, where Turoyo, this dialect of Neo-Aramaic, is spoken. The provincial capital is the city of Mardin.

coming towards him. (86) He too was staying at the inn, and they started talking about this and that³³: "Where have you come from and where are you going, Merchant³⁴?" (87) He replied, "Well, I have come from the city of Gziro." (88) "You don't say!" "That's right," said [the merchant]. "You've come from the city of Gziro?" "Yes," he said. "Then Gziro exists?" "Yes, it exists," he replied. (89) "Wonderful!" said [Mämme's father], "May your house prosper 100 times³⁵ I have been looking for the city of Gziro for a month or two, but no one has told me whether or not it exists, either nearby or far away; now you're telling me, 'I have come from Gziro', so it's true! It does exist!" (90) "Why, yesterday at this time I was in Gziro," said [the merchant]. "May your house prosper, it is good!"

(91) The man returned to his son. "Well, Father, what have you done?" [266] "It exists, Son!" he replied. "Didn't I tell you it exists?" said [Mämme]. (92) [The father] said, "It exists, Son, but no one knows whether it is near or far, no one knows where it is. Now the rest is up to you.³⁶ "That's fine!" said [Mämme].

(93) What did the father do? He gathered up forty servants and brought them to his son, and made them responsible for him.³⁷ (94) He said to them, "Go with my son, and every day," he said, "one of you return! (95) Today one, tomorrow one, the next day one, until your forty days are up. (96) When your forty days are up, not one person will remain with him; he will be all alone. (97) If he gets scared and begins to feel sorry for himself and comes home, well and good; if he doesn't come home, the responsibility is his, and he can go wherever he wants to."

(98) The son filled his saddle bag with coins, goods and travel money, mounted his horse, and set out with his servants behind him. (99) He rode on; today one

33=lit. "They slipped into talking of the earth."

34=lit. "Head merchant."

35Cf. note 22 above.

36=lit. "Both from you and from yourself now."

37=lit. "and put his sin on the necks of these forty servants." This expression exists in Kurdish also: *Gunehî kirin stûyê kesekî* = lit. "To put a sin on someone's neck," meaning 'To consider someone guilty of committing a crime.' See M.U. Khamoian. *Kurdsko-Russkii Frazeologicheski i Slovar'* (Erevan : Izdatel'stvo A.N. Armianskoï SSR, 1979), #126 under letter *Γ*, p. 79

turned back, the next day³⁸ one turned back – why should I give you a headache³⁹? By the end of the forty days, all forty servants had turned back, and he remained all alone. (100) [Mämme] said, "I vow that either the birds will eat my flesh in the wilderness, or else, since I won't return home, I will reach Sittiye Zîn." (101) He rode on a while longer, and with God's help he reached the great water⁴⁰. (102) When he reached the great water, he cheered up considerably⁴¹, (103) and said, "Now she told me to follow the water, so I will stick by the water until I get to the city of Gziro!" (104) He rode straight on, for a week or ten days, (105) His provisions ran out, he had nothing left in his saddlebag but a slice of bread. (106) He sat and thought to himself, "My provisions have now run out, I will die in the mountains; I don't know a soul, and there is no one to take care of me⁴²." He sat down in the middle of the road. (107) It was a day like today, foggy and dark; the clouds [hung so low that they] reached the ground, now raining and now hailing; and he was immersed in his sad thoughts.

[268] (108) It just so happens that he had nearly reached Gziro; he only had to go as far as from here to Āstîl⁴³. But strangers are blind⁴⁴. (109) There was a plowman there who came out to the middle of the road; the furrows came out as far as the

³⁸Rambîl = lit. "Tomorrow."

³⁹i.e. by laboriously enumerating every day. This is a way of saying "To make a long story short."

⁴⁰See note 12 above.

⁴¹-lit. "his heart became broad." A similar expression exists in Kurdish: 'Bêna/Bihna min fireh] bû' - lit. "My breath has become wide." The opposite of this is 'Bêna min teng bû' - lit. "My breath has become narrow," which means "I am upset."

⁴²-lit. "to be my master." A similar expression exists in both Turkish and Kurdish. The Turkish is 'Birsine sahip çıkmak' - lit. "To turn out to be the owner to someone"; the Kurdish is 'Lê xweyf kirin/bûn' - lit. "To do/be owner to him." The idea here is that a stranger has no family who will protect him or care for him: while on the road one needs someone who will fulfill this role: somebody who will take charge of one.

⁴³ = lit. "there remained like from here to Āstîl [a town near Midyat]." This comment, which is repeated in sentence #320), is an example of what İlhan Başgöz calls *digression*, i.e. when "the narrator ... stands before an audience interjecting himself into the narrative." See his "Digression in Oral Narrative: A Case Study of Individual Remarks by Turkish Romance Tellers," *JAE* 99 (1986), pp. 5-23.

⁴⁴A proverbial statement

middle of the road. (110) "May God give you strength,⁴⁵ plowman!" [The plowman] replied, "May you be well, may Allah grant you long life!⁴⁶" "Where are you from, plowman?" asked [Mämme]. "I'm from the city of Gziro." "From Gziro?" "Yes," [the plowman] replied. "Where is Gziro?" (111) "You must be kidding!⁴⁷" he said, "You've reached it!" "But it can't be!" "But yes!" said [the plowman] "you're only a quarter of an hour away!" (112) "Wonderful!⁴⁸" [Mämme] said, "May God's house prosper!" (113) He ate his [last] piece of bread there, and when he had finished it, he mounted his horse; (114) By the grace of God, the weather cleared up, and he was very happy. (115) He rode on until he caught sight of the city. (116) When he saw it, he was just opposite it, as close as from here to the lower khan⁴⁹.

(117) Zîn the daughter of Bakko and Sittfye Zîn, her mistress, had just brought their laundry to the washing stream. (118) When they came to the washing place, Bakko's daughter's eye fell on him. (119) She took an immediate liking to the horseman; she was a maidservant. (120) As for her mistress, when she looked and saw the horseman, she recognized him as Mämme Aia on horseback. (121) She said to herself, "It is surely he! He has come!" She was ashamed before him, and turned her back on him. (122) Bakko's daughter said to herself, "By God, I swear that I will test this horseman out! (123) I will spread out a piece of laundry in the middle of the highway. (124) If this horseman is a gentleman⁵⁰, son of a noble father, he won't tread on our laundry, but rather will tap on the horse's neck and sidestep it; (125) But

⁴⁵In many Middle Eastern languages there are blessings or greetings which one says when passing by someone working. In Turkish, one says, 'Kolay gelsin,' lit. = "May it come easily," and in Colloquial Palestinian Arabic, il-'äfyeh, lit. = "Good health."

⁴⁶Many of the greetings mentioned in note 45 above have fixed responses, such as these.

⁴⁷-lit. "May your home be destroyed." In this context, the expression is a mild expletive, rather than a serious curse.

⁴⁸The Turkish expression 'Hay hay,' which means "Aye aye sir" may actually be the origin of the English expression 'Aye aye.' In Turoyo the meaning has changed.

⁴⁹A khan is an inn. This sentence could only have meaning to the original audience, for no one else could know how far it is to the lower khan. This is another example of digression. See note #143 above.

⁵⁰He uses the Kurdish word 'Cwamâr' for this.

if, God forbid, he is a profligate⁵¹ and a scoundrel, he'll trample our laundry and just ride on." (126) She took a piece of laundry, then went and spread it out. (127) Her mistress, Sittye Zîn, exclaimed, "Maid-servant! I'll have your head! What do you have against a son of the people?" (128) Why are you blocking the road, so that people cannot pass by?" (129) [The maid-servant] said, "My Lady, what do you have against me?" (130) Why [270] should what I do bother you? I am having fun." (131) She did not heed her mistress, but rather went and spread out the piece of laundry in the middle of the road. (132) Mâmmê Ala noticed from afar that the piece of laundry had been spread out [on the road]. (133) He said to himself, "I will certainly not tread on their laundry; instead, I will tap on my horse's neck and have him sidestep it." (134) When he came up to the piece of laundry, he tapped his horse's neck with a stick and went around the edge of it. (135) Zîn, the daughter of Bakko, said to herself, "May my head be one hundred times a slave to his head⁵²" (136) When you die, you will belong to the earth; while you are alive, you are mine! I won't let you go!" (137) Mâmmô came near the stream. (138) Sittye Zîn, his betrothed, was ashamed before him and turned her back, and remained that way.

(139) Mâmmô said to himself, "I know! I'll test them by asking them for a cup of water!" (140) Let's see whether the servant brings it, or the lady!" (141) Mâmmê Ala asked them for a cup of water, (142) the lady was shy, and the maid-servant ran and took the cup from her lady's hand. (143) "Give it to me," said [the maid-servant], "O my Lady, I'll bring the water to our dear guest!" (144) She took the cup and held it under the stream, washing it two or three times, then put one hand under the cup, filling it with water, then put her [other] hand up to her chest and brought the cup for the horseman. (145) He noticed that it was the maid-servant who brought it. He said to himself, "It would be a disgrace for me to take it from her hand!" He tapped the horse's neck and rode off. (146) "Hey, horseman, drink!" (147) He said, "I cannot drink your water!" (148) He tapped on his horse's neck. (149) The girl threw the cup into the stream and ran after the horseman. (150) She grabbed the horse's bridle. (151) "O horseman!" she said, "I pray to God and then to you! I have noticed that you are a stranger; yet you have not drunk our water. Tell me whose guest you are!" "O

⁵¹He employs the Kurdish word 'Tolaz[el], meaning an adulterer, profligate, or libertine.

⁵²This expression indicates admiration.

woman," he said, "Let go of my horse! I want to ride on. What do you think you're doing? You are but a woman!" (152) She said, "Tell me whose guest you are! Who are you going to [see]?" (153) No matter what he did^{52a}, she would not let go of his horse. (154) He said, "Woman, I'm going to God's house. Let me [272] go to God's house." (155) "Ooh," she said, "he's crazy! What sort of man is he?" (156) She let go of his horse and went back to her mistress. (157) Her mistress said, "You crow! You wretch! What do you think you're doing to the sons of good people? How long you held him up! What is he to you?" (158) She replied, "My Lady, I don't know if he is crazy or drunk on arak⁵³. (159) I asked him whose guest he is, he said he was going to the house of God. (160) May I be a sacrifice to God, where is the ladder that he climbs up to God?" (161) [Sittîye Zîn] said, "I'll have your head! He's going to the mosque⁵⁴. That is the house of God⁵⁵." (162) She went and sat down, while he rode on to the mosque⁵⁶. (163) He sat in the mosque, not knowing anyone; while Zîn [Bakko's daughter] went to her mistress. (164) When the maidservant noticed that Mâmmê Ala had gone to the mosque, it ate away at her soul, she couldn't stand it anymore. (165) She said, "My Lady⁵⁷" "What is it?" she replied. "I am sure that our laundry

52a *smle lû-smle*. This is identical to the Kurdish expression *kir nekir*. Both mean literally "[he] did, [he] did not," but are used to express the idea "no matter what [he] did, ..." or "regardless of what [he] did, ..."

53 Arabic 'araq عرق', a strong colorless liquor made of anise, similar to Pernod, which turns milky white when diluted with water.

54 Here 'Mizgeft' (<Arabic masjid مسجد), the Kurdish word for mosque, is used. See note 56 below.

55 It is interesting to note that a Christian, as all speakers of Turoyo are by definition, should have such a favorable attitude towards a mosque. This suggests how strongly the informant identifies himself with the (Muslim) Kurds. To the best of his ability, he tells the story the way a Kurd would, even down to minute details such as this.

56 Here and in the following sentences the word used for mosque is 'cêmiç' (<Arabic jâmi' جامع). It is curious that in the space of two sentences two different words for 'mosque' are used by a Christian informant. It would be nice to know if there is any difference in connotation between the two words as used by the speaker. As for denotation, according to Hellmut Ritter's dictionary, Turoyo agrees with Arabic (and Turkish) in defining a *mizgêfte-masjid (mescl)* as smaller than a *cêmiç/cêmiçê* = *jâmi'* (*camii*). See note 54 above.

57 'Xatûna min': this he says in Kurdish.

won't be getting any whiter today, there's no use in continuing to wash it. (166) Let's gather up our laundry and take it home; we can come back tomorrow morning" (167) "Girl, I'll have your head! We haven't even put our laundry in the water twice yet. (168) Stay put; we still have to wash our laundry!" (169) "No, my Lady, I'm sure that it won't get any whiter; let's go home!" (170) And without waiting for her mistress, she threw her laundry together, put it in a washbasin, threw it on her shoulder and off she went, saying, "I'm going; come or don't come as you see fit" (171) Her mistress was forced to take her laundry home. (172) But the other one could stand it no longer. (173) When the mistress had gone home, the servant also went home. (174) She went home and said, "Okay, where's the mosque⁵⁸?"

(175) She came up to him and what did she see? There he is sitting all alone in the mosque, without a soul around. (176) She said, "Horseman!" He said, "Huh?" She asked, "What are you doing here?" (177) He replied, "Woman, I don't know anyone, that's why I'm sitting here." (178) She said, "Get up, get up, get up! I'll bring you to some people!" (179) "But I don't know to whom I should go," he said. "I'll tell you," she said. "Speak!" he said. (180) She said, [274] "Listen! If you're looking for your bread to eat for one day, two, three, a month, go to the house of Mir Zeidin! (181) If you're looking for a man who keeps his word, who is a perfect gentleman in his own house, who would sooner sacrifice his head than break his word, go to the house of Qara Tajdin! (182) And if you're looking for a man who understands and turns words into lies, then [go] to the house of my father, Bakko 'Awani" (183) He said, "I'm not looking for a man of lies, nor for bread by the day or month. (184) I am looking for a man who possesses honor, who would sooner sacrifice his head than break his word, and who is a perfect gentleman." (185) "Then Qara Tajdin it is!" she said, "Mount your horse so I can take you to Qara Tajdin's house!" (186) The young man mounted, and the girl took hold of the horse's halter, dragging him to Qara Tajdin's house. (187) She led him back and forth and up and down⁵⁹, and brought him safe and sound to her own house. (188) She seated him in her own house, saying, "This is Qara Tajdin's house." "This is?" "Yes," she replied. (189) "May God

⁵⁸Once again, the word 'Mizgeft' is used.

⁵⁹-lit. "She took him, she brought him, she spun him around."

let it prosper, it is good," he said. (190) The man was a stranger⁶⁰! The girl showed him all the honors due a guest, (191) to the point where she even said, "He shouldn't [have to] step on the ground!" (192) She took care of him herself, (193) thinking, "I wonder if his heart will change towards me, so that I can seduce him!" (194) The girl sat with him, [showering him] with coffee, tea, cigarettes and the like. Bakko 'Awan wasn't at home; he was with the mfr.

(195) When the girl went outside -- what work could she have to do?-- (196) Bakko 'Awan came in from outside. (197) As soon as he came in, Mämme Ala rose before him.⁶¹ (198) "Please come sit down, Qara Tajdin!" (199) [Bakko 'Awan] said, "I ask God's forgiveness!⁶² I am not Qara Tajdin! I am his servant, Bakko 'Awan." (200) When he said this, it came as a blow to Mämme Ala⁶³; his face fell, and he became sad⁶⁴. (201) He became very sad, hung his head low, and began to brood. (202) In this condition, he saw the daughter come in. (203) Zîn, the daughter [of Bakko 'Awan], came in and noticed that her guest was very sad, that his head hung low, and that he was engrossed in thought. (204) "O Father," she said, "what did you say to my guest?" (205) He replied, "Daughter, I came in from outside, [276] and he rose and said 'Agha⁶⁵, please come over here!' and I said 'I'm not the agha, I'm his servant', and then he made this face." (206) She said, "Father, you are not welcome!⁶⁶ (207)

⁶⁰i. e. How should he know any better?

⁶¹As a sign of respect. See EP-1 section [61].

⁶²Arabic *astaghfir Allāh* استغفر الله, an expression used when someone criticizes himself or unduly praises the person addressed. In this case, Bakko 'Awan is implying that to be mistaken for Qara Tajdin is too great a compliment.

⁶³-lit. "When he now said thus, [it was] like you are hitting the ear of Mämme Ala."

⁶⁴-lit. "His facial expression turned over and his heart broke."

⁶⁵A local landowner, member of the upper class. Thus it is clear that Qara Tajdin was supposed to be an agha.

⁶⁶-lit. "You have not come in goodness and you have not come on my eyes!" Normally when someone comes in, he is welcomed with the expressions "You have come in goodness" [Kurdish: *Tu bi xêr hatî!*] and "You have come on my eyes" [Ser: *ç'avê min hatî!*] Here, these two expressions -- taken over word for word from Kurdish into Tûroyo -- are turned on their head by being used in the negative, a practice which would be unthinkable in real life, because of the disrespect it would show.

May your neck break and your eyes fall out, Father! (208) I had slowly but surely made him tame,⁶⁷ and then you made him wild and let him go off into the world. (209) Father, I swear⁶⁸, if you don't bring this man to me and let us take one another [in marriage], I am no longer your daughter, nor are you my father!" (210) He said, "My child, I vow to you, that when he dies he will belong to the earth, but as long as he lives, he will be yours. (211) I am your father, Bakko 'Awan; what are you worried about?" (212) "Well then," she said, "what else shall I say?" (213) [Bakko 'Awan said] "O honored guest, where do you want to go?" He said, "To Qara Tajdin's house." (214) [Bakko 'Awan] said, "Get up, and I'll take you!" Bakko 'Awan led the way and took him to Qara Tajdin's house, and saw that he was settled there.

(215) As for Qara Tajdin, for three days and three nights he didn't ask his guest [anything]⁶⁹. (216) After three days, he had to dispose of the matter he had come for. (217) After three days, [Qara Tajdin] welcomed him⁷⁰, (218) [and asked,] "O honored guest, tell me what your purpose is. Where are you coming from, where are you going, and why have you come?" (219) [Mämme Ala] said, "O Qara Tajdin, I have come to God and then to you because of Sittiye Zîn. (220) I want you to request Sittiye Zîn for me.⁷¹" "Sittiye Zîn?" "Yes," he said. "Believe me, o honored guest, Sittiye Zîn is my [future] daughter-in-law, the fiancée of my son. (221) But since you have [come] from distant lands [and] made a request of God and then of me, I vow that I will take her from my son and give her to you." (222) "I am very thankful to you," said [Mämme Ala]. "So stay here!⁷²"

(223) Mämme Ala stayed with Qara Tajdin for a day, two – a month went by in this fashion. (224) It was known that Mämme Ala loved Sittiye Zîn very much. "By

⁶⁷Ritter translates this as, "I had slowly made him trust me ..."

⁶⁸-lit. "May it be forbidden to me."

⁶⁹This is an accurate portrayal of Kurdish etiquette regarding hospitality.

⁷⁰-lit. "gave him a 'bi xêr hatin' [Kurdish for "Welcome"].

⁷¹In Kurdish and other Middle Eastern cultures, the prospective groom does not directly ask for the bride's hand in marriage; rather, the groom's family and friends ask the girl's father for the hand of his daughter in marriage. Here, Mämme Ala is asking Qara Tajdin to perform this function for him, by asking Sittiye Zîn's father to marry her to Mämme Ala.

⁷²-lit. "Sit!"

God⁷³," he said, "when will I see her?" (225) Qara Tajdin said to him, he said, "Brother! "Huh?" [Mämme Ala] replied. "Brother, [278] do as I say, and don't disobey me⁷⁴ (226) Is there anyone sweeter than my daughter-in-law? She was my daughter-in-law, I have given her to you; I will give her to you. (227) But be patient with me⁷⁵! "Let it be so!" said [Mämme Ala].

(228) The second that Qara Tajdin leaves the house⁷⁶, Mämme Ala [has] his eyes on Sittîye Zîn's quarters. (229) "By God," he says, "When will I go there and see her?" (230) When Qara Tajdin leaves the house, Mämme Ala goes out too. (231) Finally he manages to reach the audience hall of Sittîye Zîn. (232) He goes and sits beside her, and they have such a good time together that he forgets himself and remains there.

(233) Bakko 'Awan looks around; he wanders around slowly and seems to see Mämme Ala sitting with Sittîye Zîn. (234) He comes and tells Mîr Zeidîn: "O my mîr, Mämme Ala is surely sitting with Sittîye Zîn. (235) Sittîye Zîn and he are talking together, he's talking to her." "It can't be!" "But it is," said [Bakko 'Awan]. (236) "Well, what do we do?" "What to do? We must do something to him." (237) [Mîr Zeidîn] said, "But dare we do anything because of Qara Tajdin?" "So be it!" he said. (238) Bakko 'Awan said, "My mîr!" "What?" he said. "I am going now; I know for certain that he is sitting with her, (239) I am going to see if I can catch them there. And then, when you come, I will hand him over to you." [Mîr Zeidîn] said, "Go!"

(240) Bakko 'Awan came running; as soon as he got to the middle of the courtyard, Sittîye Zîn caught sight of him. (241) As he reached the door, the girl got up and whoosh! up the stairs she climbed to the roof⁷⁷. (242) Bakko 'Awan wasted no

⁷³Xudêwq' using Xwedê/Xudê (cf. Persian khudâ خدای), the Kurdish word for "God."

⁷⁴-lit. "Don't go out of my words." This expression also exists in Turkish: 'Birisinin sözünden çıkmak,' and in Kurdish: 'Ji xebêra kesekî derk'etin.'

⁷⁵The expression 'fîş li-hêvîyeçî,' = lit. "Remain in hope/waiting of me" = "Wait for me," is a calque of the Kurdish expression 'Hêvîyê man/bûn/sekînin' (unless the Kurdish is a calque of the Turoyo expression, not altogether out of the question: when two languages have co-existed as long as Kurdish and Neo-Aramaic have, it is sometimes impossible to know which language has borrowed a shared word or expression from which).

⁷⁶-lit. "Goes out from inside"

⁷⁷'mîddâra,' a small room with its own special staircase, on the roof of a house. In Ritter's dictionary, it is defined as a guestroom; a large room; a room on the second (=top) floor.

time, he caught the girl halfway up the stairs, took a scissors to her braids, cut off a piece from one of her braids and put it in his pocket. (243) When he had put it in his pocket, Bakko 'Awan went out, and Mämme Ala also got up and ran off. (244) Bakko 'Awan showed the hair to Mîr Zeidîn: "O my mîr, here is her hair, I cut it from her braids⁷⁸. He is with her⁷⁹." "It can't be!" "But it is," said [Bakko 'Awan]. "Oh well!⁸⁰"

[280] (245) That day he got away; as soon as Bakko 'Awan went home, his daughter assailed him with blows and questions⁸¹. (246) "O Father," she said, "when are you going to bring me that guest?" (247) He said, "Take it easy, my child! I have sworn not to let him and Sittiye Zîn attain their desire; when he is dead, he will belong to the earth, while he is alive, he is yours." "Quickly! When?" she asked.

(248) One day Bakko 'Awan said to Mîr Zeidîn, "My mîr!" "Huh?" he said. "My mîr, if I don't tell you, can't you figure it out for yourself?⁸²" "What is it, Bakko?" asked [the mîr]. (249) He said, "It has been several days since Mämme Ala came to Qara Tajdin; let's go tell them that Qara Tajdin and Mämme Ala should mount their horses, and your and I also will go riding for a while, [we'll go] hunting. (250) We'll see if he is good at riding or not!" [Mîr Zeidîn] said, "Go tell them!"

(251) Bakko 'Awan went and said to Qara Tajdin and Mämme Ala, that the mîr says for them to mount their horses and prepare themselves, so that we can go hunting for a while, to breathe some mountain air, then come back." "Okay," they said, "we'll go."

⁷⁸Whereas above (sentence #242), the Semitic word *gû* (*gâlât*) is used for "braids," in this sentence a form of the Kurdish word *kef* is used.

⁷⁹It is not immediately clear how this proves that Sittiye Zîn was sitting with Mämme Ala, but I believe it is a "displaced element": in other versions, Qeretajdin sees Zîn's braids sticking out from under Mem's cloak, and immediately understands what has happened and what must be done. Here the braids have a similar function, but without knowledge of the more usual context, the significance is lost.

⁸⁰See note 10 above.

⁸¹-lit. "with sticks and words"

⁸²*û-g-mublât bin?* -lit. "Don't you bring thought/mind/memory?" 'Br' is a Kurdish word which means "memory." Common Kurdish expressions using it include *Bira min qû* = lit. "My memory went" = "I forgot"; *Hat bira min* = lit. "It came to my memory" = "I remembered." This is parallel in usage to the Persian word *yâd* یاد.

(252) Qara Tajdin and Mämme Ala got on their horses, and together with Bakko 'Awan and Mîr Zeidîn, the four of them mounted, called out their hunting dogs and hounds, and set out. (253) They had gone no further than the distance from here to that slope over there, when Mämme Ala felt like turning back, he wanted to return home. (254) Qara Tajdin said, "Brother, ride on!" [Mämme Ala] said, "I don't feel well. I want to go back to the house." (255) "Brother," [Qara Tajdin] said, "Listen to me, ride on, don't turn back" (256) Mämme Ala's heart was with Sittÿe Zîn, he wanted to go to her. He tapped on the horse's neck, not heeding them, and turned back. (257) Bakko 'Awan said, "Let him go, leave him alone!" (258) Mämme Ala rode home, tied up his horse in the courtyard, and no sooner had he arrived than poof! he was at the audience hall of Sittÿe Zîn! He went and sat down beside her.

(259) Bakko 'Awan knew that Mämme Ala had gone to Sittÿe Zîn, and said to Mîr Zeidîn, "My mîr!" "Huh?" replied [the mîr]. "It is [282] certain that our hounds can't sniff out game today, they're no use in hunting; let's turn back today, we can come again tomorrow!" (260) "Bakko," said the mîr, "we haven't even gotten there yet or let the hounds loose or anything" (261) [Bakko 'Awan] said, "It's just not right, my mîr, they can't follow the scent." (262) And Bakko 'Awan placed himself at the head of the hounds and called to them, and before you knew it, he was heading for home. (263) He rode home, with Mîr Zeidîn behind him, and Qara Tajdin too -- the three of them rode.

(264) As they rode, Mämme Ala and Sittÿe Zîn were so wrapped up in each other⁸³ that they forgot themselves. (265) All at once Mîr Zeidîn was at the door. (266) When he opened the door, the girl no longer had any way to run and hide on the roof. (267) She silently lifted up Mämme Ala's cloak and sneaked under it from behind, hiding⁸⁴ behind him. (268) As she was hiding behind him, Mîr Zeidîn came in from outside, and Mämme Ala didn't rise before him. (269) Mîr Zeidîn was very displeased and angry. "How can it be," he asked angrily, "that I come in from outside and a man doesn't rise before me?" (270) Bakko 'Awan also came in, and all the notables of Gziro assembled before [Mîr Zeidîn]. (271) A murmur arose among those assembled. The room filled up. (272) Until the mîr speaks, it is forbidden for anyone

⁸³-lit. "they made harmless scuffles with each other."

⁸⁴-lit. "sneaking behind him."

else to speak. (273) There was no speaking in the room. No coffee, no speaking, nothing.

(274) Qara Tajdin came home and asked his wife and sons, "Where is Mämme Ala?" "We haven't seen him." (275) "Oh, the poor wretch! He's a goner, they've caught him!" (276) Qara Tajdin goes to the mîr's hall, sees that it is so crowded with the mîr and notables that there is no room to set one's foot down, and no one is speaking with anyone else.

(277) Qara Tajdin called to Bakko 'Awan: "Bakko, quick! Bring the coffee pot!" (278) He brought the coffee pot and put it on the fire; Qara Tajdin quickly made coffee, and with his own hands passed it around the assembly.⁸⁵ (279) He brought a cup to his brother, [saying] "Stand up, Mämme Ala!" The latter signalled with his eye, as if to say, "She is under the cloak"

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[Break for a completely different topic: a poem the narrator's nephew composed for the metropolitan (priest) in Mardin is recited]

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(284) (280) He went home and said, "Bêgi Khanim⁸⁶!" She said, "Yes, Qara Tajdin!" (281) He said, "I'm sure that if I don't act as crazy as before⁸⁷, our brother won't be saved from there." "Well," she said, "do what ever you want⁸⁸, Qara Tajdin!" (282) "Bring out my horse," he said, "I swear that I will kill it!" (283) She brought out his horse, and stopped it in the middle of the courtyard. (284) He drew his pistol from his belt and shot his horse three times, knocking it down in the courtyard. (285) [Bêgi Khanim] called for help: "Help!" she said, "100 times help! Qara Tajdin has once again gone crazy, and has killed his racehorse!" (286) News reached the diwan of the mîr. The mîr started to get up, [saying.] (286) "What is this

⁸⁵It will be recalled that Qara Tajdin is an agha, himself a notable, and it is therefore normally beneath him to serve coffee. See note 65 above.

⁸⁶Bêgi Khanim = "Lady Bêgi" Qara Tajdin's wife.

⁸⁷In many versions, Qara Tajdin even has the epithet *Dîn* = "Crazy."

⁸⁸-lit. "Your hand to yourself! The thing that you want, do!" "Your hand to yourself" (*li-dux li-rûhux*) is an idiom which means "Do whatever you want." Cf. note 13 above.

all about^{89?} (287) Bakko 'Awan said, "Stay where you are, my mîr, I'll go see what it is!" He went to the door and came back. (288) "It's nothing, my mîr," he said, "It's just some boys: one stole another one's marble⁹⁰, and that one is reproaching him for it; it's nothing," and they sat back down.

(289) Qara Tajdin saw that his action had had no effect. "Bêgi Khanim," he said, "nothing has come of it." (290) "Do whatever you want!" she said, "But you won't rescue your brother from prison this time either." (291) He said, "I swear, bring all my books out [of the house]! I will set my seven story mansion on fire!" (292) She brought out his books, and Qara Tajdin took a match -- may it never happen here -- to his own house. He set fire to the seven stories of his mansion. (293) The woman again called for help. "Qara Tajdin has once again gone mad," she said, "and had set fire to his whole mansion!" (294) The news reached the diwan itself. (295) Just as the mîr was about to get up, Bakko 'Awan said, "No need to get up, my mîr! I'll go see what it's all about!" (296) He went out for a while, then came back and said, "My mîr, it's nothing! Some boys are fighting: this one hit that one, so that one is reproaching this one. It's nothing." And again they sat down.

(297) When Qara Tajdin saw that this had had no effect either, he called Bêgi Khanim, his wife, and said, "Bêgi Khanim!" "Here I am^{91!}" she said. (298) "Come over here!" he said, "Take our⁹² sons and tie them to your chest, then bind yourself tightly, and run [at a distance of] three steps ahead of me, from here to the door [of the mîr's diwan]! (299) I swear, I will take my sword and set out after you; when I catch up with you at the door of the diwan, I will kill you. (300) So be prepared!" "As you wish,⁹³" she said.

⁸⁹-lit. "What is the call for help?"

⁹⁰The game is played as follows: Coins are placed on the ground, one for each player. Each player tries to hit one of the coins with his marble (gare/xare): if he succeeds, the coin is his; if he fails, his marble stays wherever it has rolled to; if said marble is hit by another player, the owner of said marble must forfeit the game. See Helmut Ritter, *Türöyo : die Volkssprache der syrischen Christen des Tür'Abdin*, B. Wörterbuch (Beirut ; Wiesbaden : Franz Steiner Verlag, 1979), p. 176.

⁹¹Libe, cf. Arabic labbayka لبيك. This is the response of a loyal servant to the master's call.

⁹²'Your' in the original.

⁹³See note 13 above.

(301) She prepared herself, tied her infant to her chest, tied the seams of her pants legs tight and whoosh! she fled before him. [288] (302) As she fled, Qara Tajdin took out his sword and set out after her. (303) She screamed for help as he pursued her. (304) At the door of the mîr's diwan, she⁹⁴ burst through the door into the room, (305) shouting, "Help! 100 times help! He's killing me⁹⁵!" (306) When she burst into the diwan, the mîr and his assembly all rose at once. (307) When they stood up, the girl slipped out from under [Mämme Ala's] cloak and leapt up the steps to her rooftopquarters.

(308) When Qara Tajdin noticed that his friend had gone out with them⁹⁶, he said, "Hooray! May God's house prosper 100 times! I have rescued my brother; now let whatever happens happen!" [and so saying] he took his brother by the arm and brought him home⁹⁷. (309) When he brought him home, --⁹⁸ this is Qara Tajdin, a tough man; he gave the people of the city of Gziro instructions, (310) and began his mansion again in exactly the same dimensions as before, and [when it was finished] he lived in it.

(311) When he had gotten settled in it, Bakko 'Awan went home. May God save us, what a scene his daughter made! "Father, where is he? When are you going to bring him to me?" Her father said, "Daughter, don't worry, I will bring him. Whenever it will be, I will bring him, and you and he will have each other⁹⁹."

(312) A couple of days later, Bakko 'Awan said to Mîr Zeidîn, "My mîr, until when will I [have to] tell you. (313) Send Qara Tajdin to collect taxes for the son of

⁹⁴-lit. "The girl"

⁹⁵-lit. "He has killed me."

⁹⁶The members of the assembly?

⁹⁷The fact that there was no home to bring him to after the fire is quickly forgotten! Such is the logic of folk narrative.

⁹⁸It seems that the story teller has just now remembered about the fire.

⁹⁹-lit. "You will be each other's desire." This expression exists in Kurdish also.

the sultan, from the Shammar¹⁰⁰, for instance. He should go take taxes from them for the last seven years¹⁰¹. (314) If they refuse to pay taxes, no one can go take the taxes from them unless Qara Tajdin goes to collect them; none of us can go." "Go tell him, Bakko!" said [the mîr].

(315) Bakko 'Awan went and said to Qara Tajdin, "The mîr says that you must go collect taxes¹⁰²." "All right," he said, "I'll go." (316) Qara Tajdin readied himself for the trip and called to his brother Mämme Ala: "Mämmo!" "Huh?" he replied. [290] "Mämmo, I'm going. (317) I vow before God and give you my word that I will be back in forty days. On the forty first day, if I am still alive, I will marry you to the girl¹⁰³. (318) But during these forty days you must not budge from the house!" "I won't budge," he said. (319) Qara Tajdin took his leave of [Mämmel], and went off. Mämme Ala stayed indoors with his two nephews.

(320) Qara Tajdin had scarcely gotten as far as Āstîl¹⁰⁴, when Mämme Ala went out the front gate, saying, "By God, when will I go to Sittîye Zîn?" (321) He saw his chance and zoom! he went to Sittîye Zîn. He went and sat down right beside her. (322) Qara Tajdin had gone, and Mämme Ala didn't think about him at all¹⁰⁵. (323) When he sat beside the girl, once again they rejoiced and amused themselves, until Bakko 'Awan and the mîr caught the girl and him red-handed. (324) "My mîr, I have been saying all along that Mämme Ala and the girl were aware of each other: you

¹⁰⁰The Shammar are a Bedouin tribe that lives in the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula. See Bruce Ingham, North east Arabian Dialects (London and Boston: Kegan Paul International, 1982), esp. p. 15ff.

¹⁰¹In other versions of the story, e.g. EP-1, Zîn has been given a piece of jewelry equivalent to the value of seven years of taxes.

¹⁰²-lit. "It is necessary that you go for their taxes, go take them from them, and come."

¹⁰³-lit. "if I don't die, I will bless the girl on you."

¹⁰⁴See note 43 above.

¹⁰⁵-lit. "Mämme Ala had no *haj* of him." *Haj* (or *hay*) is a Kurdish word which has been taken over directly into Turoyo and other Neo-Aramaic languages. In Kurdish, 'Haj/Hay ji kesektî t'nebbî' means "He was unaware of someone," as in the proverb 'Têr zikê birqê haj t'üne' = "Someone who has had enough to eat (i.e. one who is sated) is not aware that there are hungry bellies." In the present case, Mämme Ala has forgotten (=is not aware of) the promise he made not to leave the house until Qara Tajdin's return: in Proppian terms, this is a violation of an interdiction, which will have dire consequences.

said, 'It isn't so'. Now see if they are sitting together or not!" (325) "Well, Bakko," said [the mîr], "what should we do with him? Let's kill him!"^{105a} (326) [Bakko] said, "My mîr, we can't kill him, for if we kill him today, tomorrow Qara Tajdin will come back from strange lands, and here we will have killed his brother. Then he will certainly kill us and finish us off. (327) Instead, let's throw him in the dungeon underground; by the end of 40 days he will die of hunger. (328) Then we can say 'He died by God's decree.'" "Bakko, you know best!"¹⁰⁶, said [the mîr].

(329) So they tied a rope around his waist and lowered him down into the dungeon. (330) The dungeon was 40 ells deep, and poor [Mâmmê] stayed inside it where no bread or water reached him. (331) They also placed guards at the door of the dungeon, with strict instructions not to let any water get to him.

(332) Sittiye Zîn realized that they had put him in prison. "Now what shall I do with him? No bread or water is reaching him, he'll die of hunger." (333) She brought in artisans, and from her quarters she had them dig¹⁰⁷ [292] a type of tunnel that led to the underground dungeon, to Mâmmê Ala. (334) She had them dig a tunnel such that a man could fit in it. (335) Through this she brought him food to eat.

(336) Bakko 'Awan noticed that for a day, two, a week, Mâmmê Ala was not getting any thinner, and his spirits were not low. "What's going on here?" (337) He made up an excuse to go to Sittiye Zîn's quarters, to her room. (338) And what did he see? She had a tunnel dug from her room down to the dungeon, and was bringing him food. (339) He came and told Mir Zeidîn, the father¹⁰⁸, "My mîr, you say they've put Mâmmê Ala in the dungeon. You didn't say that he has once again sneaked into God's graces, and is enjoying himself there, and is pleased with the food, which, by the way, come to him three times a day." "But it can't be!" "But it is," replied [Bakko]. (340) [The mîr] said, "Go up the tunnel with pitch and tar!"

^{105a}This motif has a parallel in the story of Bizhan and Manizhah in the *Shahnameh*. See Reuben Levy (tr.) *The Epic of the Kings: Shah-Nama the National Epic of Persia* (London et al.: Routledge & Kegan Paul, c1967, 1985), pp. 152-172.

¹⁰⁶Cf. note 13 above.

¹⁰⁷=lit. "she opened"

¹⁰⁸It should be noted that at the beginning of the story, Sittiye Zîn is referred to as "the daughter of Mir Sheref, the sister of Mir Zeidîn." See also EP-1, note #109: a similar slip occurs in that version.

(341) Bakko 'Awan didn't wait an instant, (342) he plugged up the tunnel with tar, and tied him up tightly, so that he stayed there. (343) Food and water no longer reached poor Mämme Ala. (344) In one day, two, a week, he grew weak, and his spirits sunk, as expected. (345) By the end of the thirty ninth day, there was still life in him.

(346) Bakko 'Awan went and said to the mîr, "My mîr!" "Huh?" said [the mîr]. "My mîr, let's let him go! (347) He has only today left, tomorrow Qara Tajdin will come. He'll come back and see his brother lying there dead; then he won't leave one of us alive. (348) So let's let him go!" [The mîr] said, "Bakko, you scoundrel!¹⁰⁹ go let him out!" (349) "I can't go let him out; tell your daughter Sittiye Zîn to go let him out!" "Go tell her!" said [the mîr].

(350) Bakko 'Awan came to Sittiye Zîn, the daughter, and said, "Sittiye!" "Huh?" He said, "Sittiye! Your father said 'Let her go around the city of Gziro and gather forty girls like herself, have them get all dressed up and go let Mämme Ala out of the dungeon, so that I can marry her to Mämme Ala!¹¹⁰ [294] Today I will marry them.'" (351) What more could Sittiye Zîn ask for? She was delighted, and set out to round up forty girls like herself, who she dressed up and brought to the gate of the dungeon. (352) She came to the gate of the dungeon and called to Mämme Ala. She said, "Mämmo, beloved of my heart! I've come to set you free!" (353) "May God destroy your father's house," he said, "O Sittiye, you certainly haven't come to set me free! You have come to take out the last breaths of life left in me! Throw me the rope!" (354) Sittiye Zîn threw down the rope, and began shouting for joy¹¹¹ down into the dungeon. (355) He tied [the rope] around his waist for her to pull him up, (356) She pulled him halfway up from the dungeon, and grabbed his hand to pull him to the mouth of the pit¹¹². (357) When his hand came this far out of the mouth

¹⁰⁹Qwiro -lit. "one who should be buried"

¹¹⁰-lit. "I will give her and Mämme Ala to each other."

¹¹¹Hêhlo, equivalent to Arabic zaghānī, زغاريط, ululations which women call out on joyous occasions such as weddings

¹¹²or, cistern. Note that from here on out, the 'dungeon' (zāzāmīye) is referred to as a 'pit' (gūbç).

of the pit, a drop of his blood dripped on the stone door of the pit¹¹³, and he gave up his life to those present. Mämme Ala died at the mouth of the pit. (358) As soon as Sittÿe Zîn saw that Mämme Ala had died at the mouth of the pit -- God forbid -- she burst out crying, and ate her heart out crying and lamenting. (359) She said, "Now after his eyes [have closed], it is forbidden for me to continue living!" (360) She swiftly took out her penknife and thrust it into her heart, (361) and killed herself, throwing herself on top of him.

(362) The two were finished there; Bakko 'Awan said, "O my mir! They are dead, so let's take them to the graveyard!" (363) They took the two of them and brought them -- May it be far from this place -- to the graveyard, prepared their places and buried them. (364) While they were still at the graveyard Qara Tajdin returned from tax collecting. He did not stop at home, but rather rode straight to the graveyard. (365) "What has happened!¹⁴" "It's Mämme Ala and Sittÿe Zîn." "But it can't be!" They all said, "But it is so." "Eh!"

(366) May it be far from this place -- They buried them; then they went home by turn. (367) They buried them the way they bury, one here and one over there!¹⁵ by the entrance gate, (368) Three or four meters apart from each other.

[296] (369) As they were on their way home from the graveyard, Bakko 'Awan said, "Mir Zeidin!" "Huh?" said he. "You think that Mämme Ala and Sittÿe Zîn are now dead! Go open up their graves now, and look! (370) If they don't have their arms around each other, and their mouths aren't touching, you can cut off my head." (371) Mir Zeidin said, "May your house be destroyed, can't they even be free of you once they're [buried] under the ground?" (372) Because Qara Tajdin was so concerned, they opened up the graves and looked: and indeed, it was true. (373) From the chest down there was a curtain between them, and from the chest up their arms were behind each other's neck, and their mouths were touching.

¹¹³şoodûto = well-enclosure, a stone with a hole in the center used for covering a well.

¹¹⁴Min-yo mîn lö-yo? = lit. "What is there, what isn't there?" This expression also occurs in Turkish (Ne var ne yok), Kurdish (Çi heye çî t'üne), Iraqi Arabic (shaku maku), and Armenian (ի ն չ կա յ շ կա յ - mch' ga ch'ga).

¹¹⁵The narrator indicates this with a gesture.

(374) Because Qara Tajdin was so angry and sick of him, he pulled out his sword and sliced off Bakko 'Awan's head. (375) He said -- apologies to those present -- "May your father boil, can't they even be free of you once they're [buried] under the ground?" (376) While he stood there, a drop of Bakko 'Awan's blood dripped between the two [of them] and became a thornbush; even now there is a thornbush between them, even to this very day ... And you remain healthy for me!¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶This ending, which is in Kurdish, is a common concluding formula for folktales. PN, a Türoyo version of Mem û Zîn collected in the same area in 1869, ends with the same Kurdish formula!

Ritter, Hellmut. "Mammo und Zine," in *Türöyo : die Volkssprache der syrischen Christen des Tür 'Abdin* (Beirut ; Wiesbaden : Franz Steiner Verlag, 1969), v. 2, pp. 500-519 [*Turoyo* (a Neo-Aramaic language) in Latin phonetic transcription + German translation on facing pages] (HR-2)

HR-2. Collected by Hellmut Ritter in Beirut in 1961 from Sleimân Hanna Maskôbi, a carpenter born in 1913 or 1914 in Midin, a village in the Tür 'Abdin, in what is now the province (il or vilayet) of Mardin, Turkey. The family name Maskôbi (=Muscovite) was originally a nickname given to Slêmân's father Hanna, who as a soldier in the Turkish army during the First World War was captured by the Russians. When, after a seven year absence, he was the only one to return from the war, his stories about his experiences earned him the name Maskôbi. In 1926, when Sleimân was about 13 years old, the family spent six months in Aleppo (Halab), Syria, after which they settled in Beirut for three years. In 1929 they moved to Jerusalem, remaining there until 1949, at which time they returned to Beirut, where Hellmut Ritter was introduced to Sleimân 12 years later. In Hellmut Ritter's opinion, Sleimân's version of M&Z is superior to both Dschano's (FN) and Yûsuf Mâlke Asmar's (HR-1). The village of Midin (Middo, Midih) is 32 kilometers east-southeast of Midyat, the center of the Jacobite Christians, who speak a neo-Aramaic language called Türöyo. The dialect of Midin differs in a few minor points from the Türöyo spoken in the neighboring villages. Numbers in brackets [] refer to page numbers, while those in parentheses () refer to sentences.

Mammo und Zine (HR-2)

[500] (1) They say that once the king of the jinns was sitting in the diwan, having gathered his men around him. (2) Each one of them talked, each about something different. (3) Their king said to them, "Tell me what you have seen in your wanderings about the earth!" (4) One of them raised his hand [and] said, "O King, if you give me leave, I will speak." [The king] said, "Speak!" He said, "I have seen a girl in the place they call Bota, praised be God, praised be [502] he who created her! I have never seen one more beautiful than her in all the world. (5) A girl that, when she goes out walking, the eye is ashamed to gaze on her." (6) Another one got up and said, "O my King, I have seen a young man, among the [tribe of] Ala, praised be God! I say that there is no other young man as handsome as he in the whole world." (7) The king said to them, "Now it is night, go and put slumber pearls¹ in their ears, and pick the two of

¹Motifs D1364.32 Jewel causes magic sleep; D1071. Magic jewel (jewels); D1071.1. Magic beads; D1364. Object causes magic sleep.

them up, once they've fallen asleep, and bring them here to this diwan. (8) Let's see whether what you say [about them] is true or not!" (9) They arise -- they are jinns, now remember -- in the blink of an eye, and go bring the girl from the place [called] Bota, and the young man from the place of the Ala. (10) They bring in both of them asleep on their beds, and place them in the center of the diwan. (11) The jinns look at them, praise their lord and say, "It is true! These two should have one another: there is no one more beautiful, more deserving of each other than they! How do we let them have one another, how do we introduce them to each other?" (12) The king says, "Pick them up and take them to the young man's room², and let them wake up! Let them see one another, and [from] tonight until the morning, let them stay together, [then] early in the morning³ put them to sleep, and return the girl to her place, but he should remain in his room!" (13) The jinns arose and picked up the two beds and took them to the place of the Alat, and put them in Mammo's room -- the boy's name is Mammo. -- (14) They put them there and woke them up.

(15) This one⁴ got up and looked about: there was another bed in his room! "Who is here?" (16) The girl says, "Who are you?" The two don't know: he says, "This is my place," and she says, "No! This is *my* place⁵!" (17) In the evening she went to sleep in her room, and she knows that she didn't go anywhere⁶, and the same for him⁷. (18) The young man, Mammo, looked and said, "Hey, girl! If this is your place, don't you have a servant?" She said, "Yes, of course I do⁸!" (19) He said, "Call [504] you servant! If she is at the door, then it is I who have come to you, and I shall leave!" (20) She starts calling, she calls her servant, but there is no [one] there; no one answers her. (21) He said, "Then now it's my turn, I will call my servant. If my servant is at the door, then you have come to me." (22) He calls his servant once, and [the latter] says,

2=lit. "to the room in the young man's chambers"

3=lit. "face of the morning"

4= e. Mammo

5=lit. "No, I am here!"

6=lit. "didn't budge and didn't go out, and didn't go anywhere"

7=lit. "and he also thus"

8=lit. "Yes! How is there not to me?" = "How could I not have one?"

"Here I am!" [Mammo] says, "Stay [where you are]!" [The servant] says, "Do you want something, my Master?" [Mammo] says, "No, I don't want anything, stay [where you are] and go to sleep!" (23) Then he says to her, "See? You have come to me." (24) They gaze at one another and fall in love; there is none more beautiful than the two of them. They fall in love and start talking: each one tells something, where he's from, and the like⁹. (25) He says to her, "Where are you from?" She says, "I am from the place of Bota, my brother is the emir of Bota, and we live¹⁰ in the palace of Bäläk." (26) She describes to him the place, the city in which her brother lives. She has no father: she has a brother and a married sister. She describes to him where they live¹¹; they remain [so] until morning. (27) They exchange rings and swear to each other that they will marry no one else¹². (28) They remain so until the early morning, [when] they become sleepy and lay down their heads and sleep. (29) Mammo gets up in the morning and sees that there is no one there. He is all alone in his room. (30) He looks around and says, "O God! Was it a dream? But I saw her and spoke with her! Here is her ring on my finger¹³." (31) She also got up in the morning and found¹⁴ herself alone in her room. (32) She calls her servant: there she is at the door. She¹⁵ is going crazy. She sees that the ring [on her finger] is not her ring, it has been switched. (33) And she knows that it was not a dream: she had [actually] spoken with him: she had seen the boy, and he had seen her, and they had exchanged rings!

(34) Now, let's return to the boy! With every passing day he got thinner and thinner, the boy got thinner, as if some disease had befallen him; he wouldn't eat or drink, or anything, he was constantly sad and gloomy. [506] (35) What¹⁶ should he do

⁹-lit. "from where he is, from where he is not"

¹⁰-lit. "we are"

¹¹-lit. "they are"

¹²-lit. "that one of them will not take, except they become the destiny of each other"

¹³-lit. "on my hand"

¹⁴-lit. "saw". In Kurdish also *Ditin* can mean both 'to see' and 'to find'. Cf. HR-1, note 31.

¹⁵i.e. Zîne, the girl from Bota

¹⁶-lit. "how"

to go find¹⁷ that girl and bring her back¹⁸? (36) One day he goes to his father; his father says to him, "My son! What's wrong with you? Why are you like this? Why have you gotten [so] thin? Why don't you eat? What are you lacking?" (37) [Mammo] says, "Father, I lack nothing, but I have seen [something]; if I tell you I've seen something, as one usually sees things¹⁹, you won't believe me; I'll tell you that [what] I've seen [is] a dream. (38) I've seen a girl ... oh, I've never seen the likes of her anywhere, not in folktales, nor in descriptions²⁰. (39) And I want you to give me permission to go looking for her, to bring her back²¹. [His father] says, "My son! Strange lands are not for us, we²² cannot let you go. (41) Not one of us, of our family, has gone to a strange land and come back. We have no luck in strange lands. (42) You have many cousins²³ here, the whole city is there before you; whatever girl you like, regardless of whether she be married or a virgin, we will give her to you, we will bring her for you²⁴! (43) Now if you go away, no one knows what will happen to you. You will go to a strange land, no one will know you there, nor will you know anyone, you won't be able to do anything²⁵, you won't accomplish anything." (44) [Mammo] says, "Father, never! I love that girl and besides her, I declare all girls on earth *ḥarām*²⁶ for me; If not her, I won't marry²⁷ any girl [at all]." (45) No matter what his father did, he had no control over him. (46) The boy goes and mounts his horse, his father gives him money; what

17-lit. "see". See note 14 above

18-lit. "return, bring her"

19-lit. "seeing of customary practice"

20 *Wasf* = "description". Also, in Arabic poetry, *wasf* is the name of a genre of poetry used in describing the beauty of women. Perhaps it is this genre of poetry that is being referred to here.

21 This could also mean "to marry her".

22 Perhaps this is the "royal we".

23-lit. "paternal uncles' daughters"

24 or, marry her to you.

25-lit. "to bring, do a thing"

26 Undeal or forbidden.

27-lit. "take"

he can give him, he gives him; he mounts his horse, and departs. (47) He goes riding through lands in which he doesn't know whether he is coming or going. (48) He asks after the place he's headed for [as follows]: "Which way to Gzîro²⁸?" (49) They tell him, "It's to the west." (50) He passes a month travelling in this way, until he arrives. They say, "This is Gzîro."

(51) He went and there was a girl at a well, drawing water. (52) He saw her and took a good look at her, [then] said, "This must be the one I saw in my sleep, [508] she resembles her to a tee!" (53) This was, they say, the daughter of Bakko 'Awan, the emir's adviser. (54) This girl was also very beautiful, and looked like Zîne -- Zîne, the girl he had seen in his sleep -- she also resembled her in her beauty. (55) He asked her, "Maiden, where do you live²⁹? Where do you people live?" (56) She says, "We live³⁰ in such-and-such a house, our house, we say, is near the emir's palace, it's three or four houses away from the palace; (57) My father's name is Bakko 'Awan, if you'd like, you may come to us!" (58) The man, Mammo, enters the city and asks for Bakko 'Awan's house; they direct him [and] lead him; he comes to Bakko 'Awan's house and enters as a guest. (59) -- They receive guests there³¹: in those mountains a man, who may be a stranger, they take him in, whichever house he goes to³² -- (60) He settled there. In the evening, Bakko 'Awan had dinner brought out and they dined, then they went to the assembly at the emir's. (61) They go and sit down; the emir looks at him³³ [and thinks]: "Praise be to God! What a young man, what a handsome fellow is this

²⁸The full name of Zîne's homeland is Jezira Bohta in Kurdish, or Gzîro Bota in Turoyo. The town of Jezira (Cizre) still exists, in the province of Mardin, Turkey, on the Tigris (Dicle) River. Bohtan is the Kurdish name for the region in which Jezira is situated.

²⁹-lit. "Where are you?"

³⁰-lit. "are"

³¹i.e. in Gzîro

³²This is a revealing digression. Gzîro is not in the mountains, but rather on a flat plain, on the Tigris (Dicle) River (see note 28 above). However, the man telling the story is from the Tur 'Abdin, a mountainous area in the same province. My guess is that telling the story made the informant think back to his native region, and that in his mind he identified (read: confused) Gzîro/Jezira with his native Mîdin. For a discussion of the functions of digression in oral narrative, see İlhan Başgöz. "Digression in Oral Narrative: A Case Study of Individual Remarks by Turkish Romance Tellers," *IAF* 99 (1986), pp. 5-23.

³³i.e. Mammo

one with Bakko 'Awan!" (62) 'He says to Bakko 'Awan, he says, "Where is this man from?" (63) Bakko 'Awan says, "O my emir! He is a stranger, he came to me today. I don't know where he is from." (64) [The emir] says, "Well, let him be welcome³⁴! Very good! Let him stay here two or three days, let him stay two or three days, then ask him where he's from and why he has come, from what place he has come."

(65) They say: he stayed three days, as is customary among the Arabs³⁵; after three days [had passed], he said, "O so-and-so! Tell us where you've come from and what your reason is!" (66) [Mammo] said, "I have come, I have, from among the Ala; I have come [because] I have a goal here; (67) I saw a girl in my sleep, she is supposedly³⁶ from this place; (68) I have come [because] I want to ask for her [hand] if I find³⁷ her." (69) Now Bakko 'Awan's daughter fell in love with the young man when she first saw him and said to her father, "Father! I want that boy."

(70) While he was staying in Gzîro, Mammo realized that the girl that he had seen³⁸, the daughter of Bakko 'Awan, was not the Zîne that he had come after. (71) Word gets around³⁹, the girl Zîne finds out that Mammo has come to the city and [510] is looking for her⁴⁰. (72) She has a brother-in-law -- called Qara Tâjdîn -- she says to him, "O my sister's husband! Do me a favor, let me see that young man; he has come from a distant land, he wants to see me." He says, "All right!"

³⁴ahla u sahla, which is Arabic for "welcome", literally "family and easy", the idea being "[you have come to] family [and have trod on] easy (or, soft) [ground]. Arabic is spoken in Mardin, as well as Turoyo, Kurdish, and the official government language Turkish, but it should also be remembered that the informant has lived most of his life (since age 13) in Arabic-speaking countries (Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine).

³⁵As stated in the previous note, mentioning the Arabs may reflect the informant's having lived among Arabs for most of his life, even though they have nothing to do with the story being told.

³⁶-lit. "they say she is"

³⁷-lit. "see". See note 14 above.

³⁸i.e., at the well

³⁹-lit. "word comes"

⁴⁰-lit. "is wandering on her". This is identical to Kurdish *li ... gerîn*: in both Turoyo and Kurdish, 'to wander about for [=in search of]' is the normal way of saying "to look for", "to search for", "to seek".

(73) He comes and speaks to the emir, Mîr Sêvdîn, and says to him ⁴¹, "Let's go out hunting today." (74) [The emir] says, "Make the horses ready, prepare the stuff and let's go!" (75) [Qara Tâjdîn] sends word to his wife⁴² and tells her, "Let Zîne be with you, and go [together] to your brother's palace, and the young man will be in the palace; after we set out for the hunt, for the hunt we'll set out, [then] he and I will return. (76) We will return," he says, "We'll make an excuse: He'll say he has a headache: [saying] 'My head aches, I can't come,' he will return." (77) They did so. They went out hunting, the emir and his people, [and] Bakko 'Awan with him. When they have gone a short distance from the city, (78) Mammo says, "O my mîr! My head aches, I cannot come [with you], I want to go back, if you will permit it⁴³." (79) [The emir] says, "It's all right with me⁴⁴, go back!" (80) He goes back to the palace, he comes in and finds the girl there. They sit down together. (81) Bakko 'Awan was a devil. He knew about the whole matter. (82) He said to the emir, "O my mîr! Today your guest" - (83) We left [something] out. The guest who was ... the guest Mammo had gone to stay with the emir, he had become the emir's guest; he left Bakko 'Awan's - (84) He said, "Your guest had a headache and went back, so our day has not been very good, let's all turn back" (85) He deceived⁴⁵ the emir; he [succeeded in] making the emir and everyone [else] turn around and come [home].

(86) They came and passed through the gate of the palace, and there were Mammo and Zîne sitting together. (87) She had no place through which to go out, through which to climb out of the room or of the pavillion ⁴⁶, so she sneaked under [Mammo's] cloak and stayed there. (88) The emir came in, [but] he⁴⁷ did not stand up before him; the emir was greatly angered. (89) She stayed sitting like that, [and] he

41-lit. "his brother-in-law says to him"

42-It will be remembered that Qara Tâjdîn's wife is Zîne and Mîr Sêvdîn's sister.

43-lit. "if you give the command"

44-lit. "There is no worry." This expression also exists in Kurdish: *Rem nîne*.

45-lit. "laughed on the head of"

46>köçake/koşke, cf. Turkish köşk, Kurdish koçk.

47-i.e., Mammo

could not get up, for if he got up, the emir's sister would be visible under his cloak. What should he do?⁴⁸ [The emir would] cut off his head!

[512] (90) Thus they sat down; the emir was very angry, he didn't speak. (91) They sat down, and coffee was passed out. [When] the coffee came to him, he said, "Today I want a man who is the son of a [noble] father to serve me a cup of coffee!" (92) The emir's brother-in-law⁴⁹ understood⁵⁰; he got up and took the coffee thing⁵¹, [then] went and gave him coffee. (93) From under the cloak Zîne's hair could be seen⁵², he knew that Zîne was sitting under [Mammo's] cloak, and that therefore he [=Mammo] could not get up. (94) He [=Qara Tâjdîn] stepped back [to see if] Mir Sêvdîn was looking at them: no, he had neither caught on nor seen anything.⁵³

(95) Qara Tâjdîn went out. He started a fight with his wife. (96) The woman cried for help; they brought news to the emir: "Qara Tâjdîn is coming after your sister with a sword, trying to kill her! Get up and go see him!" (97) He [=the emir] was about to get up, [when] Bakko 'Awan said, "Let him be! He's crazy, (98) and he'll return to his senses. Do you really think he'll kill her?" He got [the emir] to sit down again.

(99) Qara Tâjdîn saw that the emir did not come out. He wanted the emir to come outside so that the girl could come out from under [Mammo's] cloak, [and] so that the boy would be saved from the mess he had fallen into. (100) He went and set fire to the pavilions, to his own house. (101) News came to the emir: "Qara Tâjdîn has set his own house on fire, he's gotten so raving mad, he's set his house on fire; go to him, maybe you can talk some sense into him!" (102) The emir got up, Bakko 'Awan said, "Sit!" [The emir] said, "Drop dead⁵⁴," slapped him and shut him up, (103) he shut him up and said to him, "Last time he almost killed my sister, and now he has

48-lit. "How?"

49; i.e. Qara Tâjdîn.

50-lit. "knew"

51; i.e. the coffee tray

52-lit. "showed"; "appeared"

53-lit. "nq, he did not know, did not see a thing"

54 "Dê mi!" -lit. "Hey, die!" The particle *dê* also exists in Kurdish, where it has the form *de*. It is used with imperatives, to urge someone to do something, e.g. "De bigre" = "Come on, take it!"

set his house on fire. Let's go see what his trouble is!" (104) He got up and so did his people with him, they went out. (105) [Then] the girl Zîne got out from under the cloak, she went and entered the palace. (106) She entered; then the emir returned, having seen that they had succeeded in pacifying him [=Qara Tâjdîn]; [he and his men] came and sat down again.

[514] (107) They sat down, and Bakko 'Awan said to the emir, "You see that guest who is with you, the stranger, who you said was a good man? When you returned from hunting, he didn't rise before you." -- (108) The intelligence of these people -- after all they were Kurds⁵⁵ -- He got very angry: how could he, a guest, get it into his head not to rise before him?

(109) In the evening, Qara Tâjdîn brought Mammo to his house [and] said to him, "How could you do this thing today?" (110) [Mammo] said, "Well, Qara Tâjdîn, you know how it is; we were in such and such a situation, and you people came and walked into the room on us, and I had no alternative⁵⁶, I put her under the cloak." (111) [Qara Tâjdîn] said, "Then there's no problem. Let us see now, this evening we'll go ask for her from him according to custom!"

(112) They went in the evening, and Qara Tâjdîn said to the emir Mir Sêvdîn, "This young man has come to ask for your sister, he's come from a distant place; he wants your sister." (113) [The emir] said, "All right, but I have a condition." [Qara Tâjdîn] said, "What is it?" (114) -- Who told [the emir to say] that? Bakko 'Awan told him [to say] that. -- (115) He said, "Let's play a game of cards, he and I. If he defeats me, I'll give her to him, but if I win, I'll cut off his head." [Qara Tâjdîn] said, "All right."

(116) They sat down and played. The palace had a window on the inside. (117) Zîne was sitting in the window watching them. Mammo's back was to her, he did not see her. (118) Her brother sees her, he looks at the cards [and] looks at his sister, [and] loses. He loses the first round. (119) Bakko 'Awan noticed. He saw how things stood. (120) He said, "My emir, it's [no good] this way. You are not sitting in a good place⁵⁷. Go [sit] in his place, and let him come [sit] in your place!" (121) Now [Mammo] was a

⁵⁵-lit. "Kurmanj". This comment bespeaks a negative attitude toward Kurds, or at least reflects a stereotype that they are quick to anger. This is also the only time that the characters in the story are specifically called Kurds (Kurmanj).

⁵⁶-lit. "I could not that there be for me an escape."

⁵⁷-lit. "Your place is not good"

guest, the poor thing did not object. (122) They got up, he went to the emir's place, the emir sat in his place. (123) They sat and played; [Mammo] raised his head [and] saw little Zîne⁵⁸ opposite him. (124) He stopped paying attention to the cards or to anything else, he threw them as they came. [516] [The emir] beat him. (125) The emir won three times in a row. He said, "Now throw him in prison!" (126) They took him [and] threw him in prison. But what sort of prison did they have? It was a well, a cistern; they put him in a cistern. (127) They put him in a cistern, and every evening they threw him a cake of dry bread; and he stayed there.

(128) Qara Tâjdîn ran around⁵⁹, doing everything he could⁶⁰ to save the young man, until the emir knew the whole story: how Bakko 'Awan had poisoned their relationship⁶¹, and wanted to give [Mammo] his daughter; (129) He didn't [want to] let [Mammo] ask for the emir's daughter; when the emir understood, he said, "Go release him! Go take him out of the well!" (130) He asked [his] sister, "Do you want him?" She said, "I want him!"

(131) They went, [but] Bakko 'Awan went on ahead, he went and said, "Mammo! Mammo!" [Mammo] said, "What is it?" [Bakko 'Awan] said, "By God, Zîne will be married tonight." (132) [Mammo] said, "That cannot be; We gave each other our word: she won't get married [to anyone else]." (133) [Bakko 'Awan] said, "You'll see, she will come tonight to take you out of the well, She will tell you 'Come out' and she will be wearing a bridal gown. (134) And if she isn't wearing a bridal gown, then I am a liar." (135) Now poor [Mammo] had grown weak, and was not in good shape.

(136) After Bakko 'Awan went, Zîne came and called to him, "Mammo! Here is the rope! Tie it around your waist⁶²!" (137) He says to her, "Zîne, have you come to deepen my watchamacallit, my wounds, (138) after all these things I've gotten caught up in, for your sake? And now you want to go marry [someone else]?" (139) She said to

⁵⁸Zînak.

⁵⁹=lit. 'goes and comes'

⁶⁰=lit. 'he does self-sacrifice [fādāviye] before him'

⁶¹=lit. 'put between them discord [fiṭnah]', i.e. sewed discord between them.

⁶²=lit. 'tie/hang yourself to it'

him, "Damn you⁶³! I've come to rescue you, and yet you tell me I am going to marry⁶⁴ someone else." (140) He said, "By God! You are making fun of me [with] all this" (141) She said, "Come out!" She gave him the rope, he pulled on it and saw that she was indeed dressed in a bridal gown – but she was wearing it for him! (142) As soon as he saw her that way, he fell: his heart broke⁶⁵, he gave up the ghost. (143) She looked about: when she saw that her beloved was dead, she pulled out his dagger and stabbed herself in the heart, [518] she killed herself over him. (144) The emir came and looked: there were the two of them, he was dead and she had killed herself. (145) He was angry: she was [his] sister, and he had been his guest. He was very sad. (146) They went and buried them – may it never happen to you⁶⁶.

(147) Now Bakko 'Awan didn't want to leave them alone⁶⁷, even after they died⁶⁸. (148) He came in the evening to the emir and said, "O my emir! Something bad happened between them⁶⁹." (149) [The emir] said, "It can't be, what you are saying is not so." (150) [Bakko 'Awan] said, "I'll prove [it] to you. Let's go in the morning and dig up the grave. (151) If they are not facing each other,⁷⁰ then it's true that I am lying; but if they are facing each other, then [even] in death they turn to face one another." (152) They got up in the morning and went to open up the grave: Lo and behold, the two of them were facing towards each other. (153) That Bakko 'Awan had gone at night and opened the grave and turned their faces towards each other, then went and told the emir [what he told him]: (154) In the morning they went and opened the grave, and behold, it was as he said. (155) For three nights [in a row], he repeated this.

63=lit. "May your house be destroyed"

64=lit. "and you still say to me 'You are going to marry'"

65=lit. "hurt"

66=lit. "May it be far from your (plural) face". Cf. (Colloquial) Arabic ba'id 'annak **بعيد** عنك.

67=lit. "turn from them"

68=lit. "even in death"

69=lit. "those, there was no-goodness between them"

70=lit. "if their faces are not facing each other"

(156) On the last night, Qara Tâjdîn said, "By God, there is something strange here⁷¹!"
(157) He went at night and stood⁷² guard over the grave. (158) At midnight he saw Bakko 'Awan coming. [Qara Tâjdîn] waited until [Bakko 'Awan] opened the grave and was about to reach out and turn their head toward each other, (159) then [Qara Tâjdîn] pulled [his] sword on him and said, "[Even] in death you won't leave them alone?" He drew [his] sword and cut off [Bakko 'Awan's] head. (160) His blood fell between the two [of them], and became a thornbush between them. (161) To this very day there is a thornbush between their graves. (162) They call it the grave of Zîne and Mammo, and [say that] even in death he would not leave them alone.

71=lit. "this thing, there is in it, there is in it [a] thing!"

72=lit. "was"

Dzhalilov, Ordikhane & Dzhalil Dzhalilov. "Memê û Zîné (şaxa 1)" in *Zargotina K'urda = Kurdiski Fol'klor*. (Moskva : Nauka, 1978), vol. 1, pp. 45-65. [Kurmanji in Latin (Hawar) script] (ZK-1)

ZK-1. Collected in April 1963, from E'gtê T'êcir, in the village of Stçanlı (now called Avt'ona), district of Talîn, Armenian SSR. E'gt, who is literate, was born in 1922 in the village of Baysizê, district of Talîn, and moved to Avt'ona in 1947. He learned the songs he knows from his father, T'êcirê K'eleş and his paternal uncle, Reşidê At'aşî.

Memê û Zîné (ZK-1)

[45] Mem was the son of Al-pasha. Al-pasha was the pasha of the city of Mukhurzemîn. Al-pasha and his wife were quite old, and Mem was all they had in the way of offspring. They loved their *Memê delal*¹ very much. Not only his parents loved Mem, but indeed all the members of his father's diwan² and all of Mem's friends and companions also loved him very much, because Mem was an intelligent, conscientious and very beautiful young man. For this reason both Al-pasha and his coterie liked Mem always to stay in the diwan. Mem would get up early every morning, go to his father's diwan, and distribute tea and coffee. This was Memê delal's job.

When Mem grew up and it was time for him to marry, Al-pasha was in a constant state of anxiety, and thought, "How will a girl meet his beloved Mem, who is worthy of him?" Several times Al-pasha summoned Mem's friends and instructed them to learn Mem's thoughts, to find out which girl Mem loves, so that they could ask for [her hand] for him. But Mem would give no word to his friends, because at that time Mem was not in love with anyone.

This trait of Mem's kept his mother and father in a state of constant anxiety. In this fashion the days passed for Memê delal and his old father Al-pasha. Mem was as untroubled as his father was impatient.

Let us leave Al-pasha, his old wife and Memê delal in the city of Mukhurzemîn, take a journey of forty days to the land of Jizîr, and reach Jizîra Bota.

¹=fine Mem.

²=court.

The mîr³ of Jizîr, mîr Sêvdîn, resided in the city of Jizîra Bota. Mîr Sêvdîn had a daughter, whose name was Khatûn Zîn⁴. Zîn was more beautiful than the houris - so beautiful, so perfect, all in all a ravishing beauty. Zîn had matured by then: the time had come to marry her off.

Mîr Sêvdîn's diwan was served by Qeretajdîn, Chekan, and Efan. The three of them were brothers, and all three of them were like the lions of God⁵. The fate⁶ of the land of Jizîr (46) was in their hands: whatever battles they participated in they would return from victorious and revered. One day they took some of the notables and noblemen of the city of Jizîr, and went to mîr Sêvdîn's court, brought the question (or-word) of manliness, to ask for [the hand of] lovely Zîn for Chekan, the brother of Qeretajdîn. Since the might of the three brothers was great in the land of Jizîr, mîr Sêvdîn had given his eldest daughter Perf khatûn to Qeretajdîn, in recognition of their prestige and bravery. Since their reputations preceded them⁷, mîr Sêvdîn promised Zîn to Chekan. Afterwards they showed their great satisfaction with lovely Zîn through [the gift of] a golden talisman, equal in value to seven years' worth of Jizîr's taxes^{7a}.

A few days passed. Lovely Zîn and a group of her maidservants took a long stroll in her father's private gardens [Xas-baxçê], and returned contented to their diwan. The maidservants prepared lovely Zîn for a nap so that, tired from the day's outing, she might rest a little. Zîn got into her bed, and gave leave to her maidservants to go rest up also.

Much of the night had passed when three charming doves landed on the window of the diwan in which Zîn was sleeping. When the doves saw delicate Zîn, they were astonished. The youngest sister said to the eldest sister, "Sister, can humans also be this beautiful? Have you ever in your life seen anything so

³-emir, prince

⁴-Khatûn means "Lady."

⁵-courageous warriors

⁶-lit. "the taking and leaving (of the land)."

⁷-lit. [?Their manliness in advance was to each of them?]

^{7a} or, expenses

beautiful in the world?" The eldest sister said, "Sister, I've seen a young man who is more beautiful than this girl, he is the son of Al-pasha in the city of Mukhurzemîn." Both younger sisters begged the eldest sister, saying, "Sister, why don't we bring this delicate girl to that young man you speak of? They are both delicate and beautiful, let them rejoice in each other." The elder sister consented to her sisters' demand, and they prayed to God and dressed Zin up.

"Oh God, you make a command,
Send down a dove's attire
We are three, lovely Lady Zîn will be the fourth,
At the hour of midnight, in the city of Mukhurzemîn, set
her down at the window of Memê delal."

These blue-winged doves
Flap their wings and attire,
They take lovely Zîn with them,
To the blue sky, wander from land to land,
At the hour of midnight they put down at Mem's window.

They removed the dove's garb from Zin, and put Zin in Mem's bed. Not many minutes intervened before lovely Zin woke up, and saw that a delicate youth was at her bosom. Zin was very surprised, got angry and said,

[47] "My dear [Qurba], my father has seven gates of steel,
Completely surrounded by guards and sentinels,
How dare you⁸ put your
mouth near the birthmark on my chest?"

Mem said, "My darling, my father has seven gates of iron,
Watchmen and guards stand before them,
I can tell that you are going to trouble me today."

⁸-lit. "the limit of whose father."

A big quarrel ensued between them. Zîn was saying, "You have come [to my house]!" Mem was saying, "No, you have come [to *my* place]!"

Zîn and Mem took lamps and candlesticks,
 Counted the minarets one by one,
 There were 366 of them,
 Then Zîn knew that she was the guest of fine Mem.

Delicate Zîn was [finally] convinced that she was Mem's guest. They fell in sweet love with each other; Zîn took off her ring and gave it to Mem, and took his ring for herself, saying, "Mem, my dear, those who brought me here will take me away again. I am the daughter of mir Sêvdîn, from the city of Jizîra Bota, I am the sister-in-law of Qeretajdîn, the betrothed of Chekan, I am the owner of the green gown⁹. My dear, these are my attributes." But Mem said, "Why are you going out of my hands? I won't let you go!" And with these words of love they embraced and went to sleep.

When the doves saw that Mem and Zîn were sound asleep, they dressed Zîn up as a dove, took her, and a couple of hours later they put her in her own bed in the city of Jizîr, at the palace of mir Sêvdîn, in her own apartment.

Let us return for a moment to the diwan of Al-pasha. The diwan was astir with the notables of the city of Mukhurzemin. They were all waiting for fine Mem, but Mem did not show up. That day he was very late, the tea and coffee in the diwan were waiting for Mem to come, but Mem was not present in the diwan.

Al-pasha called two messengers, and said, "Boys, go see why my Mem is late today, has something happened to make him unhappy?" When the messengers opened the door of Mem's bedroom, they saw that Mem was sleeping sweetly. Love had brought Mem to believe that lovely Zîn was still in his arms. When the messengers called to Mem, he got up, but he was very sad and forlorn. He felt as if he had lost something precious. He considered what had happened to him last

⁹-K'êxbê. In FK-1, the form is *k'êxbe*. Neither k'êxbê nor k'êxbe appears in the dictionaries, but Kurdoev has *k'ixme* = 'type of woman's overgarment,' which may be a variant of the same word. I think the 'green gown' is a reference to Zîn's wedding gown: Erich Brauer says 'the dress of the Jewish bride is red, whereas the bridal gown of the Kurdish woman is green' [see his *Yehude Kurdistan*. I = The Jews of Kurdistan] (Yerushalayim : ha-Makhon ha-Êretsîsre'edi le-Folklor ve-Etnologyah, 1948), p 711

night to be a dream. The boys brought water, so that Mem could freshen up his hands and face. While Mem was washing [48] his hands, he noticed the ring on his finger, and he immediately lost his senses and fell down in a swoon. The boys were distressed, and sent news to Al-pasha's diwan that Mem was ill, that he was in a bad way.

When old Al-pasha and his wife heard these words about Mem, they felt weak, as if their souls had flown away. In a subdued condition they came with the elders of the court to Mem's sleeping quarters. What they saw was a grave, dark misfortune: Mem was laid low, he was pale¹⁰, his blood was boiling^{10a}. Al-pasha and his entourage debated a great deal among themselves, one said it was the flu, one said it was a cold, one said it was out of fear. In short, no doctors in the surrounding assembly could comprehend Mem's illness. Al-pasha and Mem's mother were sick over him. There was no one left in town whom Al-pasha had not called on, neither hermit, nor doctor, nor elder. No one knew fine Mem's problem.

In the city of MukhurzemIn there was an experienced old man. News of him reached Al-pasha. As is clear to you all, Al-pasha's love for his beloved Mem was unique. He would offer up his old age, as if he were the physician of the heavens, for his delicate and perfect Mem^{10b}. When Al-pasha heard of this old man, he got up and went to see him. He took the old man by the arm and brought him to see Mem. When the experienced old man saw Mem, he said, "O noblemen, may Al-pasha be well, I have good news for you: Mem is not sick, he's in love! Call an ashik¹¹, have him come play his saz¹², by God's leave Mem will get well, and we will marry off our beloved Mem." The advice of the experienced old man was

¹⁰-lit. "there was no color left in him."

^{10a} x0n ber tbye gol -lit. "his blood had become hot." According to Bakaev, Gol b0n could have two possible meanings, either a) 'to be warmed up,' 'to be heated up'; or b) 'to be blocked or dammed up.' In addition, Khamcian's phraseological dictionary has Gola x0n0, which he translates literally as 'lake of blood' (from Turkish gol = 'lake'), and for which he gives three meanings a) 'someone looking for an excuse to fight,' i.e. 'troublemaker'; b) 'hell,' 'inferno'; and c) 'slaughter,' 'carnage,' 'big fight' or 'great disorder or tumult.' I find Bakaev's definitions more likely, as the context clearly shows that Mem is ill.

^{10b} This is a difficult sentence. My rendering is only an approximation.

¹¹=folk poet and singer.

¹²=a string instrument.

immediately carried out. An ashik came, and Al-pasha ordered him to sing a love song for Mem. The ashik began to play his saz. At the sweet sound of the saz and the crooning of the voice of the ashik, Mem opened his eyes, [awakening] from a [deep] sleep. When Mem opened his eyes, the good news was passed around the city of Mukhurzemîn to young and old alike. Al-pasha and his entourage had no wings, or they would have flown¹³.

They got Mem up. His servant boys put clothes on him, and brought him to the diwan of Al-pasha. Al-pasha and the noblemen of his diwan deliberated about the marriage of Mem. Al-pasha ordered that, "Whoever has even one goat, should [sell it] to buy fancy garments, to dress up their daughters and daughters-in-law, and tomorrow morning all the girls and women¹⁴ of the city should come to the garden of Tûrkîrî, so that we can see who my Mem will fall in love with."

The people -- it was Al-pasha's command -- even those who had only one goat, [sold it and] bought fancy dresses for their daughters¹⁵ and sent them the following day to the garden of Tûrkîrî. The girls and women¹⁶ of the city of Mukhurzemîn, each one with the love of Mem in her heart, strolled arm in arm [49] into the private garden of Mem's father. At this time fine Mem and his servants were sitting in the garden. Mem was so cool and aloof, it was as if he were alone in the garden, for the comings and goings of such beautiful and noble creatures did not move Mem in the least. The daughter of the vizier of Mem's father paraded back and forth¹⁷ several times before Mem, but he didn't look at her even once. Then, out of grief for loving Mem, she said:

"Fine Mem, why are you playing hard to get?
Take your head out from beneath those furs and clothes,

¹³out of joy.

¹⁴-unmarried (girls) and married (women) alike.

¹⁵-lit. "Made expenditures, adorned their daughters.."

¹⁶See note 14.

¹⁷-lit. "Came and went."

Don't you want one of the daughters of the judge, mufti¹⁸,
or aghas?"

Mem said, "Vizier's daughter, the one my heart loves,
She is not here,
She lives in Jizfra Bota,
She's the daughter of mîr Sêvdîn,
The sister-in-law of Qeretajdîn,
The betrothed of Chekan -- lion of the earth,
She has a green gown,
The name of this beauty is Lady Zîn,
The likes of you will never see her color or face."

When Memê Ala¹⁹ said these words,
Fire and flames erupted in the hearts and breasts of the girls
and women,
They left the garden of Tûrkîrî, two by two.

The dignitaries of the city of Mukhurzemîn and Al-pasha were upset over Mem, because their plan did not work and Mem had spoken about a country that nobody knew anything about.

Mem went to the stables of his father's horses, called the stablehands and said, "O servants, show me a bay horse that will take me to my desired destination a long way off." Whatever illustrious bay horses they brought to show to Mem, when he pressed down on their backs, their backs went low under the pressure of his hand²⁰. Mem's father had a horse which they used for hauling water until evening, because its back was wounded and it was weak. Mem said, "Enough of this, I'll try that one too." When Mem pressed down on its back with his hand, its back rose up four

¹⁸An official expounder of Islamic law.

¹⁹Memê Ala[n] is Memê's full name. The romance itself is often referred to as *Memê Alan*, to distinguish it from Ahmed-i Khani's poem *Mem û Zîn*. However, the people I met in Turkey used 'Mem û Zîn' for both.

²⁰A sign of weakness.

fingers' breadth. Mem said, "O servants, I tell you, for two weeks you take care of this Bor²¹ so that if I water his mane from the front, it will come out his croup²². I will give you a reward to your liking." [After] Mem had given them instructions, he went to the one who makes saddles, and said to the master, "Fashion a saddle for my horse made completely of rubies and pearls." Next he went to the tailor, and instructed him regarding his clothes.

[50] Mem thus prepared himself for his journey. Old Al-pasha was in a sorry state. He called Mem to him, and together with his council of notables advised Mem to give up this plan. Al-pasha said, "Son, you know your mother and I have grown old, we have nobody else but you, why are you doing this to us, leaving us desolate?" But no matter what Al-pasha and his entourage, or his own friends and companions said, they could not change Mem's heart. His thoughts would fly to Jizra Bota, [to be] with lovely Zin.

Mem's appointed time had arrived, his horse and saddle, equipment and weapons were all ready. Mem gave them²³ three times what they deserved, so that they would not be offended but rather would wish him well. Mem had gotten his things together, and was to leave the following day. They gave the news to Al-pasha, saying, "Mem is leaving tomorrow." Al-pasha summoned the gatekeepers of the city of Mukhuzemîn, and instructed them as follows: "Lock the gates of the citadel with steel, if Mem can get out, I'll have your heads cut off." He also told his horse grooms to chain Mem's horse Bor.

Al-pasha said, "Hey, my beloved Mem, my son,
Is there no sense in your head at all,
Don't you [ever] think²⁴ 'My mother is elderly, my father
is old?'
To whom can I hope to leave my throne and crown of gold?"

²¹=horse, and also the name of this particular horse.

²²cf. EP-1: "for forty nights water him so well that when you water his croup, it will come out his mane, and when you water his mane, it will come out his croup" (paragraph 16).

²³the stablehands, saddler, etc.

²⁴=lit "say"

Mem said, "Hey, Al-pasha, my beloved father,
I know that my mother is elderly, my father is old,
?Bless what I am about to embark on,?
Now my relationship to you is null and void."

No matter what Al-pasha did, Mem would not come back, Al-pasha wept and cried bitterly.

Mem said, "O boys and servants,
Bring my Bor outside,
Put on him the saddle of rubies and pearls - father of
jewels,
I am headed for Jizra Bota."

The gates of the city of Mukhuzemīn were locked up tight, Mem's Bor was chained up according to Al-pasha's command, but love had brought fine Mem to the point where he could see nothing but the face of lovely Zīn, nothing else attracted his attention: not his mother and father, nor the golden throne and crown of Mukhuzemīn, nor even his friends and companions. Mem begged the gatekeeper to open the gates of the city; but the keys were in the hands of Al-pasha, he didn't have them. Mem was very angry and troubled.

When fine Mem spurred Bor on,
Bor flew over the city walls like a bird,
He said, "Yallah²⁵, God and great one."
Bor finished off the wall in one try.

[51] Mem passed beyond the city wall, he was beside himself. Bor was flying like a bird, but nonetheless Mem whipped him again and again, dug the spurs into his sides, it seemed to him that Bor was going too slowly. Bor saw that at the hands of young, love-smitten Mem his situation was not good, the chains and shackles had cut his legs, so he spoke to Mem.

²⁵Arabic Yā Allāh ﷻ ﷲ - O God.

Bor said, "Hey, my beloved Mem, my boy,
 You poor thing, there is no sense in your head,
 For several days now you have been jabbing me with spur
 after spur,
 Did you ever think "The chains and shackles have cut
 my Bor's legs?"

Hey, my young, love-drunk Mem,
 For several days now you have been riding me, spur against
 haunch,
 Did you ever think "The chains and shackles have cut
 my Bor's legs, the bones are exposed ²⁶?"

When Mem heard the words of his Bor,
 He promptly leapt down off Bor's back to the ground,
 He unsheathed Zilfeqare²⁷,
 And cut the chains and shackles.

Mem said, "Woe is me my unhappy, miserable, poor,
 humiliated one,
 The chains and shackles have cut my Bor's legs, the bones
 are exposed,
 I don't know which direction to Jizira Bota, which plain?"

Bor said, "My beloved Mem, don't worry at all,
 Leave me for three days at the springs of these wells,
 Tie up my wounds with a handkerchief,
 By God's leave, on the fourth day I will take you to Jizira
 Bota, the place of beauties."

²⁶-lit. "have remained."

²⁷From the name of the prophet Ali's famous sword, Dhū al-Faqr **ذو الفقار**

Mem removed Bor's saddle, washed Bor's feet with pure water, wrapped them with his handkerchief, and led Bor to the meadow encircling the spring, draped his cloak over his head, and lay down to sleep beside the spring. For several days he had remained without bread or water, and the grief of being in a strange land plus Bor's wounds had rendered Mem very troubled. After a day or two had passed, Mem took a look at Bor's feet, and saw that the wounds had healed. Mem saddled up Bor and after praying to God, went on his way. Bor, you might say, flew. Mem could not tell if he covered much ground or little, it seemed that Bor was crawling. Mem thought to himself:

"What a desolate plain,
Neither bird, nor fowl, nor plow, nor farmer,
I don't know, which way to Jizra Bota?"

[52] Mem once again spurred Bor on, and when he had gone a long way, he looked and saw the vague image [of a man] in the distance. He rode on, and when he got near he saw that it was a farmer. He approached the farmer, and greeted him. When the farmer saw Mem, he was dumbstruck, and said, "Can humans also be this beautiful and perfect?" The farmer returned Mem's greeting, saying "On my eyes²⁸, dandy young man." Mem asked, "My dear man, what country do these plowed fields belong to?" The farmer said, "Dandy young fellow, they're the fields of Jizra." Mem gave the farmer a handful of gold [pieces] and urged Bor on.

Mem had gotten quite far from the farmer, when he thought, "May God not destroy my house²⁹, I am really foolish, I didn't ask the farmer 'the fields of which Jizra?' There are a thousand Jizras^{29a}!" Mem turned back and once again approached the farmer, and asked, "My dear man, I beg your pardon, you said these

²⁸Standard Kurdish greeting of welcome, with parallels in colloquial Arabic ('alá rāsî wa-'aynî = lit. "on my head and eye," but the idiom means 'gladly'), Persian (chashm = lit. "eye" but idiomatically means 'OK'), and Turkish (baş üstüne = lit. "on my head," but idiomatically means 'gladly,' and in Karş, one even hears göz üstüne = lit. "on my eye," a literal translation of the Kurdish).

²⁹An expression. Compare colloquial Arabic yikhrab bêtak = "May your house be destroyed." See also note 43 below.

^{29a}Jizra is from the Arabic word jazīrah جزيرة, which means 'island.'

are the fields of Jizîr, but which Jizîr? Who is your respected [ruler]? Who are your brave men?" The farmer said, "My dear boy, I am from Jizîra Bota, our mîr is Sévîdîn, our brave men are Qeretajdin, Chekan and Efan, our city is the city of beauties." Then Mem was convinced that this Jizîr is the one he was in search of.

When Mem had gotten very far from the farmer, he looked and saw in the distance someone mounted on a horse pursuing a fawn. No matter what he did, he could not catch it, and the mare under him was black with sweat. Mem's [sense of] justice would not accept this, he wanted to help the hunter, so he spurred Bor on, [and] the fawn soon tired under Bor's feet. Mem dismounted to pick up the fawn, when the mounted hunter came up to him, and said, "My dear boy, how dare you³⁰ go after my game? Who do you think you are³¹, to do such a thing? Let us fight here and now, and may the best man win³²." Mem said, "My dear man, I did you a favor, I felt sorry for you and your bay horse, but if you want to fight, let's fight, no problem."

They got themselves ready, with swords drawn they mounted their horses. Mem said, "My dear fellow, let's not jeopardize the animals we are [sitting] on, let's wrestle with each other". The hunter agreed, and they dismounted. They tied up their horses and went at each other, but Mem's strength was that of love: when he gave the hunter a shake, the hunter fell down. Mem drew his sword³³, knelt over his [opponent's] chest, and said, "My dear fellow, I am satisfied, I won't kill you, I won't incur your people's vengeance; looking at you I can tell that you are a man of virtue." Then they embraced. The hunter asked Mem, "Where do you come from? Where are you going? Tell me your name and origin." Mem told him everything one by one. Then the other one said, "Brother Mem, I am Qeretajdin, the bravest of Jizîra Bota. From today on I am your brother, and you are welcome. I won't be back from hunting today, but I beg you to be a guest at my house. Just ask which house is Qeretajdin's, [53] they'll take you there. Go rest until I come, you've come a long way, and are tired."

³⁰-lit. "the limit of whose father."

³¹-lit. "How many heads do you have?"

³²-lit. "May God give to me or to you."

³³See note 27 above.

Qeretajdin took his leave of Mem, and went on hunting. Mem rode towards the city of Jizîr.

In the city of Jizîr there was [one called] Bekoyê Ewan. Beko was a troublemaking slanderer. Beko was mîr Sêvdîn's uncle³⁴, and Beko had a daughter, also named Zîn. Zîn was a fortuneteller³⁵. On that day, Zîn looked at her fortune telling book^{35a}, and saw that Mem, the son of Al-pasha of the city of Mukhurzemîn, was coming to Jizîra Bota for Lady Zîn, [the daughter] of mîr Sêvdîn. She went and gathered up the wool of her father's house and betook herself to a spring on the road to Jizîr. She went to the spring and began washing the wool. At that very moment Mem rode up to the spring and, seeing a girl there, greeted her, wanting to ask her some questions. She returned his greeting, "Alaykum al-salâm³⁶, my dear Mem, son of Al-pasha."

Mem said, "Girl, how do you know that I'm Mem,
Mem, son of Al-pasha?"
Zîn said, "How could I not know that you're Mem,
Mem, son of Al-pasha,
It's been forty one days today [you've been] on this road,
For my sake -- noble, delicate Zîn."
Mem said, "Fair maiden, if you are Zîn,
Zîn the daughter of the mîr of Jizîr,
Why has your appearance changed?³⁷
Where is my ring of betrothal?"

34-lit. "paternal uncle"

35 Re'mildar = 'fortuneteller.' See note # (49) of EP-1 for an explanation of *remil*.

35a re'mil. See note # (49) of EP-1 for an explanation of the fortune telling practice known as *remil* (often translated as *geomancy*).

36 Muslims greet each other by saying al-salâmu 'alaykum **السلام عليكم** (Peace be upon you), to which the reply is wa-'alaykum al-salâm **و عليكم السلام**.

37-lit. "Why have you not remained color and face?"

Zîn said, "My Mem, I have been here waiting for you for
seven days,
The dust of the flocks [of sheep] has gotten on me,
I look a mess³⁸,
When I saw you, my love, the ring fell off my finger, and
was lost."

When Mem heard these words from the girl, he was most distressed, and thought, "You could have broken my neck, were there no Arabs³⁹ in my father's city? Have I left my father's house, left my old father and mother, and the throne without an heir for the sake of this Arab?"

Bor saw that Mem was upset, and said:

"Poor Mem, let's be on our way,
Take my bridle out of the hands of this profligate,
She is the daughter of Bekoyê Ewan,
She is on this road day and night,
Fooling thousands like me and you."

[54] When the daughter of Bekoyê Ewan saw that her secret was exposed, she let go of Bor's bridle, and said, "Mem, when you marry Zîn, will you take me on as Zîn's handmaiden?"

Bor said, "Mem, let's be on our way,
There's the city of Jizîra Bota,
By the time the sun sets, may the lords and masters not be
forgotten."

Mem let go of Bor's bridle, and Bor went straight up to the palace of Qeretajdin, and stopped. When Peri-khatun, Qeretajdin's wife, came out of the house, she was

³⁸-lit. "I have not remained color and face."

³⁹Arab [E'reb] = 'swarthy,' by extension: 'ugly person.' This word also has this meaning in Turkish, Bulgarian, Serbian, etc.

so happy to see Mem that she went down the steps by herself. Instead of sending the servants, she herself took Mem's bridle, saying, "Please dismount, dear guest, you are welcome in the name of my sister"⁴⁰. They led Mem's Bor to the stables. Perikhatun took hold of Mem's arm, and led him up to the diwan. She spread a mattress⁴¹, and put cushions beside Mem. She and the servants stood before Mem and served him.

Several hours had passed since Mem's arrival. Khatun-Peri and the servants were so taken by Mem's beauty and perfection that they forgot to offer him any food. Qeretajdin had not been to the mir's diwan for three or four days: He was at his own home, with Mem, his beloved guest. After four days passed, the mir said, "Send a boy after Qeretajdin, it's been four days, why doesn't he come to the diwan? We're up to our necks in plaintiffs⁴²." A servant boy went to Qeretajdin's house, but when he laid eyes on Mem, he forgot [what he came for]. In this way, the mir ended up sending three or four men. Later, when Qeretajdin went to the mir's diwan, the mir said, "Qeretajdin, may God make your house prosper⁴³, what have you been doing at home for the last three or four days?" Qeretajdin said, "Mir, [I swear] by your head, a very dear guest has come to me, I couldn't bear to leave his side." The mir said, "Malava ⁴⁴, your guest is not a prophet, you could have brought him with you." Qeretajdin said, "Mir, [I swear] by your head, my guest is greater than prophets. When my guest comes in from outside in just a minute, you will stand up before him ⁴⁵." He and Qeretajdin made a bet and sent chawish⁴⁶ Mêrdîn to Qeretajdin's house to [bring] Mem.

40=lit. "You come on the eyes of my sister." See note 28 above.

41 Mattresses are used in the Middle East as couches are in our culture, as seating for guests.

42=lit. "Plaintiffs are stepping on each other's tongues." By 'plaintiffs' are meant people coming to the court to air their grievances.

43 An expression for wishing someone well. This is the opposite of the expression noted in note #[29] above.

44=lit. "One whose house prospers." See note 43 above.

45 A sign of respect usually practiced by others to the mir.

46=sergeant.

When chawish Mêrdîn went to Qeretajdin's house and told Peri-khatun that he was sent to bring Mem, Peri-khatun cracked him over the head with a wooden ladle, and said, "My guest is not the guest of beggars, that you can have him come to you!" She took a ladle to chawish Mêrdîn's head, and broke his skull, so that blood was flowing. The chawish returned to mîr Sêvdîn's diwan with a long face, saying, "May the Mîr be well, look what your daughter did to me⁴⁷: she hit me, and didn't let me take her guest, saying 'My guest is not the guest of beggars, that you can have him come to you. Unless Qeretajdin comes with some notables, I won't let my guest leave the house'."

[55] The mîr sent Qeretajdin and a few of the nobles of the diwan after Mem. They brought Mem to mîr Sêvdîn's diwan. When Mem came in, the mîr rose from his seat involuntarily. When he rose from his seat, Qeretajdin threw his handkerchief, which was at hand, under the mîr. The mîr gave his seat to Mem. Mem and the notables were seated, and after greeting one another, food was brought to the diwan, and as they ate they began asking questions. Each said something about his own country and its customs and traditions.

Zin had found out about Mem's arrival from the first day. When Mem would come to the mîr's diwan or leave it, she would always see Mem and melt out of love for him.

After several days had passed, one day Mem, Qeretajdin, Chekan and Efan were walking around on the roof of Qeretajdin's palace. From afar Zin saw her beloved Mem and the three brothers. She went and tied up a light caravan [?'bazirganekt sivik], took the copper utensils from her father's house, and went with her maidservants to the spring with the excuse of washing the copper things, so that she could see her Mem: the road passed by the side of Qeretajdin's palace. When Zin's caravan approached Qeretajdin's palace, Mem saw his dear, dainty Zin at the head of the caravan and sang out:

"If all three brothers will permit,
I will go before this caravan, and exact from it heavy tolls
and taxes."

Chekan said, "That caravan is not a caravan of beggars,

⁴⁷-lit. "did to my head."

That is the caravan of princes and rulers,
 Nobodymaydare⁴⁸ to
 Intercept it, to exact from it tolls and taxes."

Qeretajdin saw that Chekan and Efan had their hands on the hilts of their swords, wanting to strike Mem; Mem was also ready for a fight. But Qeretajdin was acquainted with Mem's skill, and said, "O brothers, we are brothers, as your elder brother, listen a little to my words. Why are you angry at our brother Mem? You've made ready your swords, do you want to strike Mem? Is this how you show respect to an honored guest? What will the nobles of Jizir and the world say about you tomorrow? Put your swords back in their sheaths and listen to me. Let Mem go to the spring to water his horse: if he brings back a sign from ZIn, let ZIn be legally Mem's; if he doesn't, we'll cut off his head." In this manner, all three brothers consented to Mem's request. They stayed on the roof of the palace, while Mem descended from the roof, and said to the servant boys:

"O boys and servants,
 Bring my Bor outside,
 [56] Put on him the saddle of rubies and pearls -- father of
 jewels,
 I am headed for the spring behind the houses".
 Fine Mem rode up to the spring,
 He gave a sweet greeting to ZIn-khatun the maiden.
 ZIn said, "Alaykum al-salām⁴⁹,
 My dear, dandy Mem."
 Mem said, "ZIn, o ZIn, wretched one, make haste,
 Bring me a sign,
 [Or else] my head will be cut off today."
 ZIn immediately comprehends Mem's words,
 She raises and lowers her right and left hand,

⁴⁸lit. "The limit of nobody's father." See note 30 above.

⁴⁹See note 36 above.

Flucks a string of gold coins from her forehead⁵⁰,
 Places it on fine Mem's knee,
 And says, "My fine Mem, take this, may your heart not be
 angry with me."
 Mem says, "Come on Zîn, they say: Women are fickle^{50a} ,
 You give me a reliable sign,
 Which will be believed by the brothers."
 This is Zîn, crazy Zîn,
 She raises and lowers her right and left hand,
 She plucks off of her necklace the gold of her betrothal⁵¹
 [equal in value to] the taxes of Jizîr for seven years,
 Places it on fine Mem's knee,
 And says, "Mem, my dear, take this, may your heart not be
 angry with me."

Fine Mem makes haste,
 Betakes himself to the palace,
 Places the gold of her betrothal on Qeretajdin's knee.
 Chekan sees this wonder with his own eyes,
 Sheds⁵² tears from his black⁵³ eyes,
 He says, "May God not accept this, who has ever seen a
 man, take another man's betrothed from him by
 force."
 Qeretajdin said, "O brothers, we are three brothers, all
 three of our horses are grey,
 We roam the world in search of fights,

⁵⁰Qol, m. = 'a string with coins sewn to it, hung from the forehead of women as an ornament.'

^{50a}This is either a traditional saying or a commonly held belief, or both.

⁵¹The talisman for her engagement to Chekan.

⁵²lit "causes to rain."

⁵³Belek = the ideal quality of eyes: very white whites and very black pupils.

Zîn is my sister-in-law to be⁵⁴, may she be happy
with Mem."

Efan said, "O brothers, we are three,

All three of our horses are chestnut color⁵⁵,

We go to wars in the world,

Zîn is my *bak*⁵⁶, I say [let her be] legally Mem's."

Chekan said, "O brothers, we are three, our horses are all
three black,

[57] We roam the world, light-headed,

Zîn is my fiancée, may she be legally Mem's."

The three brothers and Mem embraced each other on the roof of the palace,
they got along like brothers, without hatred or fighting.

The mîr sent out a decree, that Qeretajdin, his brothers and Mem should
prepare themselves together with the entirety of the noblemen of Jizîr to go out
hunting on the following day. Beko went to Zîn, and said, "Zîn, tomorrow your
father, Qeretajdin and the nobles will go out hunting, and won't be back for several
days. If you and Mem find each other appealing, tell Mem to pretend to be sick⁵⁷, so
that he doesn't go hunting." Zîn was young and naive, so was Mem, and love had
brought them to the point where they could find no fault with the words of Beko the
slanderer.

When Mem went in the evening to the diwan of mîr Sêvdîn, as soon as Zîn
saw him, she said, "Memo my sweet, you know that tomorrow my father,
Qeretajdin and the notables will be going hunting. When they come⁵⁸ to you,
pretend you are sick, don't go, let's stay here, and have our fill of talking together."

⁵⁴*Bak* means 1) Bride; 2) Girl marrying into the family: hence, for the groom's parents it means 'Daughter-in-law,' while for the groom's siblings it means 'Sister-in-law.' In Hebrew also *kalah* אלה means both 'Bride' and 'Daughter-in-law.'

⁵⁵*Şe* = Chestnut-colored (Kurdoev); Horse whose forehead and three legs are white (Anter; Izolt); Horse or mule of yellowish color (Izolt).

⁵⁶See note 54 above.

⁵⁷-lit. "throw himself sick."

⁵⁸-lit. "say."

Mem accepted Zîn's words. The following morning when Qeretajdin called Mem, he said, "Brother, I'm feeling weak, I'm very ill, I can't hold myself on Bor's back." Mîr, Qeretajdin and the notables rode off, heading for the hunt.

Mem and Zîn guessed that the riders were by now quite far from the city, they fell into each other's arms, and walked towards the garden of Tûrkîrî. At the same time, Beko pretended to be busy with his horse's saddle girth, and stayed behind, to keep an eye on Mem and Zîn⁵⁹. When he saw that Mem and Zîn had entered the garden of Tûrkîrî, the hunters were still not all that far from the city. Black storm clouds came out and it began to rain so hard that the mîr and his notables could not see the road. They got only as far as the garden of Tûrkîrî.

Chawîsh Mêrdîn called out from the gate of the
garden of Tûrkîrî,
Zîn recognized the voice of her father's sergeant,
She ran, and hid under [Mem's] fur coat and clothes.

The mîr and his notables gathered in the garden. Their clothing was totally soaked. Beko lit a fire right next to where Mem was. Zîn had hidden underneath Mem's overcoat, he was pale with fright⁶⁰. Beko said, "Mem, are you so sick that when the mîr comes, you don't rise before him?"

The mîr said, "Come, look, I have never
Seen anyone like this khan⁶¹,
Who has seen [such a thing], that when the mîr comes in
from outside,
Is he a precious servant, that he doesn't rise before him?"

[58] Mem said, "Mîr, you went hunting, I stayed in my
place,

⁵⁹-lit. "his eye was on the road of Memê and Zînê." This expression, *ç'avê ... li rîya ... bân* (for one's eyes to be on someone's road), is one way of saying 'to wait for someone' in Kurdish.

⁶⁰-lit. "Blood had not remained in Memê"

⁶¹=feudal lord, i.e. Memê

My sense of reason has gone, [only] my shell⁶² remains,
I opened my eyes [and found myself] in this place."

Beko said, "O notables, rise to your feet all,
For the sake of the name of God,
Let's perform a farz⁶³, two namazes⁶⁴."

Beko wanted Mem to rise to his feet, so that the mir and notables would see Zîn, to bring a great disgrace⁶⁵ on Mem and Zîn.

Mem said, "Beko, I swear to you in the name of God,
I am ill, I can't pick my head up⁶⁶,
I can't perform a farz, two namazes."

Mem said, "Qeretajdin, you've gone, it's noon.

Fire is burning my ribs one by one,
The mir and Beko are arguing with me."

Beko said, "Mir, Memo the boy
Is trying to fool you and the notables,
Let him rise to his feet, what is that beneath his colorful
overcoat?"

Memo said, "Beko, enough of doing wickedness,
Bor's harness and bridle are beneath my overcoat,
I've come to a strange land, I'm homesick⁶⁷."

Beko said, "Mir, why should the house of the masters of
Jizîr be ruined?

62=mold, outer shell, body.

63=religious duty required of all Muslims from Arabic farz (فرض).

64=Islamic prayer ritual, from Persian [and Turkish] Namaz (Kurmanji nimêj); Sorani niwêj).

65=lit. "disaster."

66=lit. "My head won't rise from the ground."

67=lit. "My breath comes out of it."

Let Memo show Bor's harness and bridle,
So that the notables of Jizîr can have them made that way
for their horses."

Memê Ala⁶⁸ waved to Qeretajdin with his hand,
Qeretajdin could make out each one of Zîn's locks [of hair]
under the coat,

He saw that Mem and Zîn were in a bad state.
Qeretajdin put his hand on the sheath of his blue sword,
And said, "Mîr, our destiny⁶⁹ is not in our hands.
Our destiny is in the hands of one above,
Your house always brings great wonders on our house."
Chekan says, "Mîr, our destiny is not in our hands,
Your house always brings great wonders on our house,
With hatred will I finish off whoever hurts our brother
Mem."

Efan says, "Mîr, our destiny is not in our hands,
Your house always brings great wonders on our house,
If you let Mem get hurt,
I'll kill one hundred, destroy two hundred."

Qeretajdin saw that a great misfortune was hovering over Mem and Zîn⁷⁰: the notables of Jizîr had their hands [59] on their swords, and when they were just about to unsheathe them, he called his chawish and said, "Boy chawish, don't just stand there, go to Peri-khatun, tell her that Qeretajdin said to take only the cradle of Gurgin out of the house, to set the colorful palace on fire, so that Mem and Zîn may escape this crisis⁷¹.

⁶⁸See note # (19) above.

⁶⁹e' col, from Arabic ajal *أجل* = 'appointed time that each one of us is fated to die.'

⁷⁰=lit "had stopped in front of Mem and Zîn."

⁷¹i e perhaps the fire will distract people's attention away from Mem and Zîn.

Chawish Mêrdîn betook himself to Qeretajdin's house, and told Peri-khatun that "This is the situation, Mem and Zîn are in grave danger. Qeretajdin said to set the palace on fire taking only the cradle of Gurgîn out of the house." When Peri-khatun heard these words, she was upset, and didn't even take the cradle out, saying, "Gurgîn is not better than Mem and Zîn." She set the colorful palace on fire, and flames encircled the building. Chawish Mêrdîn went to the garden of Tûrkî and shouted out:

"The tree of the minaret is a red tree,
 Out of it came green and purple flames,
 In it were burned the baby's cradle, and Bor the horse.
 The tree of the minaret is a green tree,
 Out of it came green, red, and blue flames,
 In it were burned the horses of the four brothers, and
 handsome Gurgîn.^{71a}"
 When chawish Mêrdîn said these words,
 Fire and flames engulfed the hearts of Qeretajdin and his brothers,
 They left the garden with the notables, two by two.

The notables and Qeretajdin hurried to the palace, to put out the fire. Only Mem and Zîn stayed in the garden. But Beko again hid himself from them. When Mem got up, he and Zîn hurried off. Then Beko reported to the mir, saying, "Mir, I swear to you, after you [left] I saw such a pair of gazelles..."

Mem went to the palace and saw that flames had engulfed Qeretajdin's residence, and no matter what the people of Jizîra Bota did, the fire would not go out. Mem threw his handkerchief on the fire, saying, "Do you think you are greater than the flames in my heart?" The flames went out, but the palace was badly damaged. [Nevertheless] Qeretajdin and his brothers, Peri-khatun and her maidservants, were only concerned about Mem and Zîn, and said, "Let Mem be rid of this difficulty." Their colorful palace was not on their minds, nor their treasury, nor their belongings, nor even little Gurgîn, whom Peri-khatun had left in his golden cradle in the palace, so great was their love and respect for fine Mem and Zîn.

^{71a}These verses have a parallel in FK-1, p. 283.

A few days passed, and the mîr and his notables thought that they should help Qeretajdin rebuild his palace. Qeretajdin and his two brothers made ready to go out and collect the amount of money equal to Jizîr's taxes for seven years, [60] to rebuild their palace with it. Before they set out they warned the mîr, saying, "Mîr, if even a small misfortune befalls Mem our brother, we will raze the city of Jizîr to the ground." After warning the mîr and his notables, they left.

Every day Mem got up and went to the mîr's diwan, and returned in the evening to Qeretajdin's house. Peri-khatun always paid a great deal of attention to fine Mem. She knew that Mem was a stranger, that he had nobody here, that Qeretajdin and his brothers were not at home.

One day Beko said, "Mîr, may God increase your kingdom, you and Mem sit around until the evening, don't you get bored? Why don't you occupy yourselves with something, so that your days don't pass in that manner, since you sit around until evening?" The mîr said, "Beko, what should we do, so that we don't just sit around?" Beko said, "May you be well, Mem and you could play chess⁷² with the condition that if Mem wins, you give him whatever he wants, but that if you win, you'll throw him in prison." The mîr said, "Beko, in truth you speak well, we will do as you say." Mem agreed, and they placed a chessboard between them, and played. They decided to play three games, and whoever won, would get his wish. It didn't take Mem long to beat the mîr twice. Beko saw that there was only one more time for Mem to beat the mîr. When Mem won, he would certainly ask [to marry] Zîn, and the mîr would carry out his promise.

Beko went and called Zîn, and said, "Zîn, get up, your Mem has beaten the mîr twice [at chess], there's only one turn left, before he gets you from the mîr. Get up and come see." Zîn was naive, and did not know Beko's tricks: she got up and adorned herself, then went and stood by the window behind her beloved Mem. Beko said, "Mîr, it shouldn't be this way, each time you play you should change places, but you haven't done so. I swear that nobody does it that way, for this game you and Mem should switch places." The mîr said, "Beko, I guess you're right, we should switch places this time." And he and Mem switched places. Mem was now facing the window, in which Zîn was standing. Out of love for Zîn, Mem no longer

⁷²The word used in the Kurdish is 'k'işik.'

saw the chessboard. The mir switched the bishop and the knight, to his heart's content. Mem's eyes were glued to beautiful Zin in the window.

The mir said, "Mem, you wretch, I have beaten you, I
 have,
 I have made you knuckle under⁷³,
 I will throw you today into the stone dungeon."
 Mem said, "Mir, my beautiful Zin, the houri, was standing
 in the window,
 One eye was glued to the window, the other went blank⁷⁴."

The mir beat Mem three times [at chess], because Mem's love of Zin caused him to forget himself. The mir ordered them to throw Mem into the wooden dungeon. This pleased Beko very much, [61] but made Zin miserable. From morning till night she shed tears⁷⁵ and grieved for her beloved and foreign Mem.

One day Zin got an idea and called some ditch diggers⁷⁶, and said to them, "O brothers, you must make a tunnel from my quarters to the dungeon my Mem is in. I'll give you as much gold as you want, only you must be quick about it, and you must not tell anyone my secret, as if I were your sister." The ditch diggers agreed to Zin's conditions, and began to dig the tunnel. For every heap of dirt that they dug up, Zin and her maidservants dug up ten. In this manner Zin's tunnel was ready three days later.

Day and night Zin brought Mem to her quarters, where they could not get enough of each other's love. Much time passed in this way. One day Beko said to his daughter, "My daughter Zin, go see how Mem is doing in the dungeon, to make sure that nothing has happened to him. [Otherwise] when Qeretajdin and his brothers return, they'll destroy us and the whole city." When Zin looked at her fortune telling book, she was surprised: it almost looked as if he hadn't been

⁷³-lit. "I have chased you into the house of the Jews."

⁷⁴-lit. "dark."

⁷⁵-lit. "caused it to rain water and tears"

⁷⁶or sewer worker; Leqemç from Turkish lağımca.

imprisoned, his appearance [was so fine] that people were afraid to look at him – roses and lilies fell from Mem's cheeks. She said, "Father, Mem is not imprisoned, day and night Zîn is with him, and she takes better care of him than his own parents did."

Beko was waiting for something like this: he went to the mîr, and said, "Mîr, may God not destroy your house or your name, wasn't Mem supposed to be imprisoned? Go take a look and see who is better off, you or him? Go see what wonders your daughter has worked."

When the mîr, Beko, and the notables go take a look, they are astounded. Zîn had a tunnel dug from her quarters to the dungeon that Mem was in, and in this manner she took care of him. The mîr was very angry and ordered them to put Mem in a stone dungeon.

They threw Mem into a stone dungeon.

After a few days passed, Mem was in terrible shape⁷⁷, he looked disheveled, there was dust on his mouth. Mem, the darling son of a pasha, had [always] been well cared for. In the cold stone dungeon, because of the dampness and filth, Mem could not fall asleep⁷⁸. He lost his appetite⁷⁹, and day and night he spent worrying and languishing. No matter how much Mem languished in the dungeon, lovely Zîn languished and pined for him even more. Day and night, tears were never absent from her eyes or those of [her sister] Peri-khatun. They waited and waited for Qeretajdin and his brothers to return, but they were hopelessly late. In the dungeon, Mem's condition got worse day by day.

One day Beko said to his daughter, "Daughter, go see how Mem is doing now!" The girl looked, and said, "Father, Mem is in a bad way, he won't last more than two or three more days [62] under these conditions. Qeretajdin and his brothers are approaching, so go find a remedy, or else Qeretajdin will lay waste to the city and exterminate us if he sees Mem in this condition."

Beko hurried to the diwan of mîr Sêvdîn, and said, "Mîr, may God not destroy your house, Qeretajdin and his brothers are nearby, and Mem is in bad shape in the

⁷⁷=lit. "There was no soul left in Memê."

⁷⁸=lit. "Sleep did not fall into Memê's eyes"

⁷⁹=lit. "Bread, water fell."

dungeon, he has lost his strength. When Qeretajdin sees Mem in that condition, he will lay waste to the city and many people will be killed. Until he returns, he put you in charge of Mem." The mtr said, "Beko, it is because of your tricks that this has happened to Mem, now tell me what we should do." Beko said, "You must give them permission to let Mem go free." The mtr agreed, and told Beko to set Mem free. Beko slyly went to Zîn to give her the good news, saying, "I have good news for you! Your father has ordered that Mem be set free. Go adorn yourself, set your beloved Mem free." Beko said these words with a heavy heart, because he did not like Mem and Zîn's love for each other, it made him jealous.

Lovely Zîn forgot her tears of not too long ago, went and made herself up, put collyrium on her eyes, and walked to the dungeon. When Zîn [stood] at the entrance to the dungeon and saw Mem in his condition in the dark dungeon, Mem was very much ashamed and upset. He seemed very frightened⁸⁰. He looked and saw a pretty servant girl coming to lead him away. Mem looked disheveled, he was pale. Zîn called out from the door of the dungeon, saying, "My beloved Mem, I have good news for you, I've come to take you away from here."

Mem said, "Yes, my beloved Zîn, you have not come to
take me away,

Wretched one, you have come to lose me my head."

When lovely Zîn threw a yellow rope into the dungeon,

Wound it around [him], brought up Mem out of there,

Mem fell dead at the entrance to the dungeon.

Zîn said, "My father's city is a great city,

May cannonballs make it level with the ground,

⁸⁰cûcîkê dilê Memê qetîya =lit. "You might say that the dick in Mem's heart burst." This exact expression does not appear in the dictionaries, however I did find a similar one in Khamolan's phraseological dictionary, and a parallel expression in the Neo-Aramaic dialect of the Jews of Zakho, Iraqî Kurdistan. Khamolan has *Dil-hinavê x-e qetîyan*, =lit. "for the heart and inner organs of someone to break off," which is explained as meaning "for someone to be very frightened." In a Neo-Aramaic text collected by Professor Hans Jakob Polotsky, the following expression occurs: *mastatlebbâ qe'lâma-zdo'sa*=lit. "the hair of her heart broke from fright" [see Franz Rosenthal, ed. *An Aramaic Handbook* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1967), pt. II/1, p. 75]. In a personal communication with Professor Yona Sabar at UCLA, he explained that in order to understand the latter expression, one should imagine the heart as if hanging by a hair: if one is very frightened, that hair may break off, and the heart will fall

Who has ever seen that prisoners are brought in by men,
yet released by women⁸¹?"

Zîn and Peri-khatun took Mem's body home, and dressed him in cloth: the mîr and his notables [came and] filled up Qeretajdin's house. The entire city of Jizîr was in mourning that day.

The mîr said, "Yes, Zîn, O Zîn,
Wretched one, the notables of Jizîr are blaming us,
They are saying, Mem was the son of Ala, he loved Zîn."
Beko said, "Yes, Zîn, O Zîn,
Wretched one, there is no sense in your head,
Find yourself someone from the notables of Jizîr,
(63) Consider him Memê Ala."
Zîn said, "Beko, your eyes are the eyes of a pig,
Your tail is like the tail of a fox,
Woe to you, wretched one, how do they break the hand of
good fortune and desires?"
The mîr said, "Yes, Zîn, O Zîn,
Wretched one, that's enough, mourn for him,
If I could buy you a Memê Ala today,
I'd throw gold on the scales,
And buy him for the sake of sweet Zîn^{81a}."

⁸¹ Cf. EP-1, where it is stated that: If men go to take Memê out of the dungeon, he will get well, but if women take him out, he will die.

^{81a} This imagery is reminiscent of an episode in the story of Joseph and Zulaikha (Potiphar's wife), which is very popular among the Kurds. When Zulaikha sees Joseph, she buys him by putting him in one pan of the scales and filling the other with his weight in gold pieces. For Kurdish versions of this popular Middle Eastern story, see the late M.B. Rudenko's monograph Литературная в фольклорные версии курдской поэмы "Юсуф и Зейнеб" [=Literary and folkloristic versions of the Kurdish poem "Yusuf i Zelikha"] (Moscow : Nauka, 1986), 367 p; CH. Kh. Bakaev. Язык курдов СССР [=The language of the Kurds of the USSR] (Moscow : Nauka, 1973), pp. 313-1346 and his Роль языковых контактов в развитии языка курдов СССР [=The role of linguistic contact in the development of the language of the Kurds of the USSR] (Moscow : Nauka, 1977), pp. 147-1211; D. N. MacKenzie. "Yusif û Zilaxâ = Joseph and Zuleikha," in: Kurdish Dialect Studies-II (London et al. : Oxford University Press, 1962), pp.188-201; Yona Sabar. "Joseph and Zulikhayeh" in: The Folk Literature of the Kurdistan Jews an Anthology, Yale Judaica Series, vol. 23 (New Haven & London : Yale University Press, c1982), pp. 11-15; Otto Jastrow. "Josephslegende," in:

Zîn, grieving deeply, with incessant tears, together with Peri-khatun dressed in black⁸² and mourned Mem bitterly and sorrowfully. In this foreign country, there was no close relative to sit beside Mem's body other than Zîn and Peri-khatun.

Fine Mem, boy,
No one is nearby - neither mother, nor father, nor even
sweet relations,
Except for Peri-khatun and delicate Zîn.

The mîr ordered that Mem's funeral begin⁸³. They picked up Mem's body, and the entirety of the people of Jizir, notables and aristocrats, noblemen and the mîr, went to the gravesite. They buried Mem⁸⁴, and returned. Only lovely Zîn and Peri-khatun stayed by the grave. Zîn had no will to live⁸⁵, her beautiful eyes had gone blind, her rosy cheeks had lost their graceful color, dust had accumulated on her mouth and lips, not even tears flowed from her eyes: Zîn had become dry, she just looked at the grave of Mem, the beloved of her heart.

Zîn said, "Tonight, is the night of rains,
Water will go into the holes of mice and snakes,
It will be wet around the shrouds of the beautiful.
Tonight, the night will be wet,
Hail and rain will come down,
In the graveyard the tombstone of my Mem will be wet."

Peri-khatun could find no words with which to console her dear sister. She knew whom Zîn had lost. She was very sad about delicate Zîn's broken heart.

Der neuaramäische Dialekt von Harteyin (Provinz Sirt) (Wiesbaden : Otto Harrassowitz, 1988), pp. 148-163.

⁸²Reş girêdan = 'to cover one's head with a black kerchief, as a sign of mourning.'

⁸³-lit. 'that they pick up Mem's corpse.'

⁸⁴-lit. 'delivered Mem to the ground.'

⁸⁵-lit. 'There was no spirit left in Zîn.'

Zîn said, "I call the sheikh of noon for help,
 ?Dust has clung to my string of earrings and buttons,
 Mem died in the morning, I won't live to see the noon.

I call the sheikh of evening⁸⁶ for help,
 ?Dust has clung to my rings and strings and earrings,
 Mem died in the morning, I won't live to see the evening.

[64] Peri-khatun looked at Zîn and saw that it was useless, she was in a bad way, she took Zîn's arm and took Zîn home, where she immediately passed away.

The next day the notables of Jizîr and the mîr took lovely Zîn's body to the gravesite. They dug up Mem's grave and positioned Zîn in her beloved Mem's arms, then returned.

Mem and Zîn had been dead for several days. Peri-khatun had lost interest in her house and chores⁸⁷. From morning until evening, she wrapped herself in a black shawl⁸⁸, and did not go far from the graveyard. Nothing the mîr or his notables could say would console Peri-khatun. At that time news came that Qeretajdin and his brothers were on their way back, that at any moment they would reach Jizîr. A shiver of worry ran through the hearts of Beko and the mîr. Beko went to the mosque, and he took all the copies of the Koran that there were in the mosque and piled them up before the door, so that Qeretajdin could not get in to do him harm.

When Qeretajdin and his brothers neared the city, Chekan said, "O brothers, see how ignoble our brother Mem has turned out to be, he has heard that we are coming, but he can't tear himself away from Zîn's side to come out to greet us." Qeretajdin said, "O brothers, something has happened to Mem, my heart fears that Mem may not be well, I don't believe that he could be so ignoble." When they

⁸⁶Here the text has an inconsistency: in the preceding verse, it had *şêxê navroja* = sheikh of noon, but here it has *şêxê êvara* = person of evening, with *şêxê* instead of *şêxê*. This could be a printing error. In EP-1, there is a similar passage, in which *şêxê* is used both times (see EP-1 note #(152)).

⁸⁷=lit "Peri-khatun's hands had gotten cold from her house and condition."

⁸⁸The Kurdish is *egaleke reş*. See note #(62) above.

reached the edge of the city of Jizîr, they saw that the city was decked out in black. They asked shepherds and cowherds and found out that Mem and Zîn had passed away. Qeretajdin and his brothers were dumbfounded⁸⁹. They laid waste to one section of the city. Nobody told the mir or Beko about them. Peri-khatun, all dressed in black, went to Qeretajdin, and said, "Swear by this black shawl on my head that you won't destroy these innocent people, that you won't connect them with the deaths of our beloved Mem and Zîn. Come rest a little, then you will meet the culprits." Qeretajdin and his brothers immediately realized that the one who did this was the culprit Beko. They told Qeretajdin where Beko was. When he went and looked, he saw that Beko had fled inside the mosque and filled the doorway with Korans and [other] books. No matter what Qeretajdin did, Beko would not come out, so Qeretajdin swore, saying, "I won't kill you, come let's go to the graveyard." But he hid his sword underneath his overcoat.

The mir, Qeretajdin, and the notables went to mourn by the graves of Mem and Zîn. When they opened the door of the tomb, it looked to them as if Mem and Zîn had arisen, you might say that the smile of love was on their mouths. Beko stuck out his neck and said, "Mir, I swear by your head, come see! It looks like they've arisen." Just then Qeretajdin took out his sword and sent evil Beko's head flying. A drop of his blood fell between Mem and Zîn, and it became a bad thornbush. Every year, no matter how many travellers have gone there and tried to pull it out, it always grows back.

[65] Qeretajdin took Mem's [horse] Bor from the house, tied Mem's clothes and weapons to Bor's back, and let him go. Bor went until he reached the city of Mukhurzemîn. They let Al-pasha know, by saying, "Mem's Bor has come, but there's no Mem." Al-pasha gathered his army, let Bor lead him back to the city of Jizîr, and said, "I want to see that my Mem's chosen one is worthy of him, otherwise I will raze the city of Jizîr to the ground." When he and Qeretajdin opened the door of the tomb, and when Al-pasha saw Zîn, he said, "You are worthy of my Mem, mercy be upon him, may they be happy together in the other world."

He stayed a few days in the city of Jizîr with his army, then headed back to his own land.

⁸⁹-lit. "In front of the eyes of Qeretajdin and his brothers became smoke."

Good are the three months of summer,
Very fine are the summer pastures of Fereshîn,
Nowhere on earth are Memê Ala or khatun Zîn.

Dzhalilov, Ordikhane & Dzhalil Dzhalilov. "Mem û Zîn (şaxa 2)" in *Zargotina Kurda = Kurdski Folklor*. (Moskva : Nauka, 1978), vol. 1, pp. 65-90. [Kurmanji in Latin (Hawar) script] (ZK-2)

ZK-2. Collected in 1970 from Ohanyan Israél (Isé Vartê), resident of the sovkhos Artênilyêl in the district of Talin, Soviet Armenia. Ohanyan Israél, an Armenian, was born in 1910 in what he describes as the Armenian and Yezidi village of Hiznemîre, province of Diyarbekir, in what is today Kurdistan of Turkey [=Haznamir, called in Turkish İnpinar, in the county (ilçe) of Beşin, province (il) of Siirt*, according to the Turkish gazetteer *Köylerimiz* (Ankara : Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1968) put out by the İller İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü]. He grew up among the Reşkot, a Kurdish tribe. At age 17, his family moved to Qamişli, in what is now Kurdistan of Syria. In 1966, he moved his household to Soviet Armenia. Ohanyan, who is illiterate, knows Kurdish very well -- perhaps better than he knows Armenian. He knows a great many Kurdish songs and stories of the Reşkot tribe, which he claims to have learned from Yahoê Mistê Qulo, a native of Bolind, a village adjacent to Hiznemîr. Ohanyan's version of Mem û Zîn is almost entirely in verse.

Mem û Zîn (ZK-2)

[65] Every time, every time, among the times,
The emir of the jinn¹ calls out, "O musicians², I implore you³,
When you assemble⁴ and set to tuning up your sazes, tell first the story of Lady Zîn
and Mem."

*This part of Siirt is now in the newly formed province of Batman.

¹All Middle Eastern peoples believe in the existence of the jinn. The following is E.W. Lane's description of them: "The jinn are said to be of pre-Adamite origin, and, in their general properties, an intermediate class of beings between angels and men, but inferior in dignity to both, created of fire, and capable of assuming the forms and material fabric of men, brutes, and monsters, and of becoming invisible at pleasure. They eat and drink, propagate their species (like, or in conjunction with, human beings), and are subject to death, though they generally live many centuries. Their principal abode is in the chain of mountains called "Kâf," which are believed to encompass the whole earth ... Some are believers in El-Islâm; others are infidels ... Of both the classes of genii, good and evil, the Arabs stand in great awe, and for the former they entertain a high degree of respect." [Edward William Lane *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians Written in Egypt during the Years 1833-1835* (Hague & London : East-West Publications, 1978 [1895]), chap. x "Superstitions," pp. 223 ff.]

²Gell sazbanda = lit. "O saz players." A saz or tembûr is a wooden stringed instrument with a long neck.

³Ez li bextê weme = lit. "I am at your luck." According to Khamolan, this means "I beg or implore you." See Khamolan #8-9, p. 118.

⁴The word 'cadya' which appears to be a verb, is obscure.

All the musicians⁵ said together, "O my mîr, our hearts are heavy,
 The city of Mukhurzemin is a great city, very weighty,
 This city contains three hundred and sixty six stone heaps,
 Each heap contains three hundred and sixty six town quarters,
 Each quarter contains three hundred and sixty six minarets,
 Each minaret serves three hundred and sixty six houses,
 The castle and palace of Alan-pasha is on four anchors,
 Two of its anchors in the middle of the sea,
 Two of its anchors on the tops of mountains,
 The castle contains four storeys,
 Each storey contains three hundred and sixty six rooms,
 In every corner of the castle is a stone of rubies and diamonds,
 These stones shine out over the middle of the sea.
 In every room three scribes are seated,
 In chairs, their hands on the table,
 Their pens like the venom of snakes⁶,
 Every day they take a thousand [men] and throw them in the dungeon, and set five
 hundred free.

Oneday⁷,

A great feast came over this city, the Feast of the Sacrifice⁸.

[66] Nephews went to visit their uncles,

⁵Saz û sazband - lit. "Saz and saz players" This is an expression meaning something like 'all the musicians,' 'every last one of the musicians'

⁶i.e. pitch black, a reference to the ink.

⁷=lit. "One day of God's days"

⁸Also known as the Feast of Immolation (Arabic عيد الأضحية *al-ʿid al-aḍḥiyya*) or Greater Bairam (Turkish *Kurban bayramı* or *Büyük bayram*), on the 10th day of the Islamic month of Dhū al-Ḥijjah الحجة ذو. This is the most important feast of the Islamic year, during which every Muslim slaughters a sheep (or goat), hence the name. Visiting and congratulating one's friends and relatives is an important custom connected with this feast. For more details see Edward William Lane *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians Written in Egypt during the Years 1833-1835* (Hague & London: East-West Publications, 1978 [1895]), chap. iii: "Religion and Laws," p. 98; chap. xxiv. "Periodical Public Festivals," p. 481.

Nieces went to visit their aunts,⁹
 Brides left the homes of their fathers-in-law,
 Headed for the homes of their fathers,
 And went to visit their parents¹⁰.
 There were three noblemen¹¹ whose luck was dry¹², whose houses were empty,
 They got up from the chairs and tables,
 Went to the top of the towers and castles,
 The three of them sat and cried of their plight to their Lord,
 The sound of their crying went up to God on high, went to the heavens.
 God on high sent Khizir¹³ to the three of them,

⁹ lit. "Sisters' sons went to visit their mothers' brothers, / Brothers' sons went to visit their fathers' brothers." In translating English words such as 'nephew' and 'uncle' it should be noted that the Kurds, like most Middle Eastern peoples, distinguish between the husband's and the wife's side of the family. For 'nephew, Kurdish has *Xwarzî* = "Sister's son" and *Bî[r]azî* = "Brother's son"; for 'uncle' *Xîwjal* = "Sister's brother" and *Ap a Mam* = "Father's brother." There is even a proverb which reflects the difference between the two: *Li şera xal û xwarzî; li xwarîna mam û brazî* = "For battles, maternal uncle and nephew; for food, paternal uncle and nephew." For parallels to the passage in question in other versions of Mem û Zîn, see LC-1, p. 36, lines 4-10 [of original transliterated Kurdish] and LT, p. 3, lines 11-19.

¹⁰ *Çûne zeyane* *Zeyf* refers to a married woman who goes back to visit her father's household. These last five lines realistically reflect Kurdish kinship relations and holiday customs. See also note 9 above.

¹¹ *Milûk* = lit. 1) "Owner (of land, etc.); 2) "Governor (of a province)." The word comes from the Arabic broken plural *mulûk* ملكوك = "kings" (The singular is *malik* ملك).

¹² *Kurdê wan kore* = lit. "Their Kurd is blind." In a note to the text, this is explained as meaning "They have no luck"; "Their luck is down." This is similar to the expression *Ocaxa wan kor bû* = lit. "Their oven was blind," which means either "They are childless" or "They have no luck." Notice the connection of an oven with fertility, a common motif in folklore. See M. Mokri, "Le Foyer Kurde," in *Recherches de la Kurdologie. Contribution scientifique aux études iraniennes* (Paris : Librairie Klincksieck, 1970), pp. 22-23]. In the present context (as in LC-1 and LT), the three noblemen are childless.

¹³ *Xocê Xizir*, equivalent to Turkish *Hızır* and Arabic *Khizr* خضر, often identified with Elijah the Prophet in the Jewish tradition. *Hızır* is generally depicted as a little old man with a long white beard who appears out of nowhere to help people in trouble, rather like a *Deus ex machina* figure. The name comes from the Arabic *khizr*, from the root for 'green'; this suggests a connection with fertility. For a monograph in Turkish on the belief in *Hızır*, see Ahmet Yaşar Ocak *İslâm-Türk İnançlarında Hızır yahut Hızır-Elias Kültü* (The *Hızır* or *Hızır-Elias* cult in Islamic-Turkish Beliefs) (Ankara : Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1985), 229 p. For a brief discussion of al-Khizr in an Egyptian context [in English], see Susan Slyomovics *The Merchant of Art. An Egyptian Hilali Oral Epic Poet in Performance* (Berkeley et al. : University of California Press, 1987), p. 12.

He dressed up like a dervish,¹⁴
 [And] said, "I know that the three of you are brothers,
 The eldest of you is named Alan-pasha,
 The youngest of you is named Osiv-khan¹⁵.
 At dawn open the gate of your treasury of gold,
 All three of you mount your horses,
 Fill up your saddlebags with gold,
 And head for Egypt¹⁶, for the quarter of the Qureyshis¹⁷.
 Go to the house of Qulïkhan,
 Qulïkhan from the line of the prophets,
 Sit on the mattress¹⁸ of the suitors¹⁹,
 Ask for the hand of Teli²⁰ İshan.
 Give one saddlebag full of gold for the attire, harness, and bride-money²¹,

¹⁴This is a very common motif in Kurdish folklore in particular, and in Middle Eastern folklore in general. Dervishes generally dress in rags, and look rather like our homeless do today. In folktales, often a king dresses up like a dervish and sets out to seek his fortune. Motif K1817.1. *Disguise as beggar (pauper)*, cf. Aarne-Thompson tale-type 900 *King Thrushbeard* and Eberhard-Boratav tale-type 190 *Der Granatapfel*.

¹⁵Osiv or Usib is the Kurdish form of the Arabic name Yūsuf, i.e. Joseph.

¹⁶Bajaré Misiré = lit. "The city of Egypt."

¹⁷Qureysh is the name of the tribe to which Muhammad, the prophet who founded Islam, belonged. The word quraysh قريش means "shark," cf. Hebrew karish כריש.

¹⁸In the Middle East, it was (and in some places still is) customary to sit low to the ground on mattresses, rather than on chairs.

¹⁹Xazgîni (or Xwezgîni) is the practice of coming to ask for the hand of a girl on behalf of the prospective groom. This is equivalent to Persian khāstegāri خواستگاری. See also note 95 below.

²⁰Têlî, which is one of many words for "beautiful" in Kurdish, is also a woman's name. In some versions of the Turkish *destan* 'Koroğlu,' Koroğlu marries a girl named Telli Nigâr. In Turkish, 'telli' means "characterized by tel [=wires]," i.e. in speaking of a bride or young girl, it means "adorned with very thin silver or gold-colored wires" [See *Redhouse Çağdas Türkçe-İngilizce Sözlüğü* = Contemporary Turkish - English Dictionary (Istanbul, 1983), p. 384.] Both Têlî İşan and Telli Nigâr are double names denoting females.

²¹*Qelen* may be defined as: "Money paid by bridegroom to bride's family"; according to Jaba and Justi, "Trousseau given to the fiancée, which the parents keep for [the newly wed couple?]" or "Price of purchasing a wife"; and according to Bakaev, "Bride-money." This is the equivalent of Turkish

And distribute one saddlebag full of gold to the blind, the crippled, and the poor,
God will give you a son, whom you will name Memê Alan."

The next day they prepared themselves,
In the morning they opened the gate of the treasury of gold,
Filled up their saddlebags with gold,
Mounted their horses,
And headed for Egypt.
They went to the quarter of the Qureyshis,
To the house of Qulïkhan,
Qulïkhan from the line of the prophets,
They sat on the mattress of the suitors,
And asked for the hand of Teli Ishan,
For Alan-pasha.
One saddlebag of gold they emptied out [to pay] the bride-money,
One saddlebag of gold they spent on clothing and harnesses for both of them²²,
One saddlebag of gold they distributed to the poor and wretched,
To the deaf and the blind,
They married Teli Ishan to Alan-pasha,
And headed back to the city of Mukhurzemin.

[67] In the city of Mukhurzemin there were wedding festivities,
Their wedding lasted for seven days,
Khizir again came to them,

başlık. The following is a proverb illustrating the use of *qelen*: *Keç'a mîran bi qelenê gavana nayê* - "For the daughter of an emir, a cowherd's trousseau won't do" [See Roger Lescot. *Textes Kurdes* (Paris : Paul Geuthner, 1940), vol. 1, p. 219, #219, & *Ordikhane Dzhaliî & Dzhaliîe Dzhaliî. Meselê û Me'elokê K'urda bi Zimanê K'urdi û Rûst* - *Kurdskie Poslovitsy i Pogovorki na Kurdskom i Russkom Jazykakh* [=Kurdish proverbs and sayings in Kurdish and Russian] (Moskva : Glavnaia redaktsiia vostochnoi literatury, 1972), p. 171, #822]. The dictionary of colloquial Turkish known as the *Derleme Sözlüğü* has the form *galın*, defining it as 'the money which the groom gives to the bride's family,' and listing it as occurring in the following regions: Emirdağı-Afyon; Sunguru-Çorum; Malatya; Gaziantep; Teliin, Gürün-Sivas Pınarbaşı-Kayseri; Niğde (the underlined ones coincide with Kurdistan). [See: "galın (II)," *Türkiye'de Halk Ağzından Derleme Sözlüğü*. (Ankara : Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1963-1982), v. 6, p. 1901]. The Russian word *калым* = "bride-money" is related to this word also

²² e the bride and the groom.

An apple in his hand as a gift,
 He split the apple into two,
 Gave one half to Teli Ishan,
 And one half to Alan-pasha,
 Saying, "In nine months and nine days, God will give you a son, you will name him,
 as I have instructed you, Memê Alan."

When nine months and nine days had passed,
 God gave them a son,
 Whom they named Memê Alan.
 The children of people grow by years and months,
 But Memê Alan grew by hours and minutes²³,
 And when he was big, they sent him to school,
 Memê learned all the languages of mankind,
 The Lord of the world placed under his tongue two drops from King Solomon's ring,
 And Memê learned the languages of birds and beasts.

Memê's father placed him in a room,
 He²⁴ loved his son very much,
 He²⁵ was very precious and dear to his father's heart.

²³Motif A511 4.1. Miraculous growth of culture hero; cf. T615. Supernatural growth. This motif is also found in the Islamic version of the story of Abraham or Ibrahim [see: Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Kisā'i. *Qisas-al-anbyā'* (=Stories of the prophets) (Leiden : E.J. Brill, 1922), pp. 128-130] and the Russian bylina of Volkh Vseslavevich. Compare the beginning of Memê Alan as seen in the present version with that of Volkh Vseslavevich in the following: "... For indeed a hero was born, / A hero young Volkh Vseslavevich: / Fish submerged deep into the sea, / Birds ascended high into the sky, / The auroches [sic] and deer sought the mountain tops, / Hares and foxes the thick of the forest, / The wolves and bears hid in the fir-grove, / Sabres and martins in the holms, / And when Volkh was one hour and one half old, / He spoke in a thunderous voice: / "Hail mistress, dear mother, / Young princess Marfa Vseslavevna! / Do not swathe me in crimson linen, / Do not gird me with a silken sash, / Swathe me mistress, mother dear, / In tough armor plates of steel, / On my daring head golden helmet place, / And on my right you place a mace, / Indeed a heavy mace of lead, / A heavy mace of one thousand pounds" / And when Volkh was seven years old, / He was sent by his mother to learn to read, / And Volkh learnt quickly to read ..." [see: Alexander, Alex E. *Russian Folklore an Anthology in English Translation* (Belmont, Mass : Nordland Publishing Co, c1975), pp. 228-229.]

²⁴e Alan-pasha

²⁵e Memê Alan

Bengin opened the door to his room,
And said, "Water, food, whatever Memê wants, he should ask Bengin for."

One day Bengin came to the room and saw that Memê was afraid, and was pressing his head up against the wall²⁶. Bengin said, "My pasha, what is the matter? Why are you doing that?" There was a ray of sunlight which was streaming into the room, and Memê was afraid of it. Since they had put him in that room, he had not seen the sunlight.²⁷

Bengin went and told Memê's father, saying, "My pasha, ever since we put Memê in that room, he hasn't seen the sunlight. Today a ray of sunlight streamed into his room, and he was afraid of it." Memê's father said, "That was very wrong of us. Go take Memê out of that room and put him in a ship, let him roam and see the world, let him learn some sense."

They took Memê and put him on a ship, and the ship went around on the sea²⁸. Memê passed six months in this way, then the ship returned once again to the city of Mukhurzemin. Three fishermen were standing on the shore, and when they laid eyes on Memê's ship, they said, "For Memê's sake, let's cast our net to the bottom of the sea." They cast their net to the bottom of the sea, and it became heavy. They pulled in the net with great force, and lo and behold there was a horse's foal in it.²⁹ The foal was just six months old. He was grey. They took him home, and took care of him. When him was a year old, [68] how happy Memê was with his foal!³⁰ Memê

²⁶This is the only section of ZK-2 that is in prose.

²⁷OM also features this motif. In fact, the motif is given in full detail there, whereas in this version it is sketchy and unclear.

²⁸-lit. "on the face of the seas."

²⁹The motif of getting a special horse from the sea appears in the Turkish *destan* of Koroğlu as well. This also occurs in LC-1: see note #41 (p. 38, l. 84). Motif B184.1.3. Magic horse from water world; B71. Sea horse. Horse living in sea; B401.1. Helpful water-horse. Under the first motif listed above, there is a reference to Chalaitants in the *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 19 (1909?), p. 152.

³⁰It must be assumed that the fishermen gave the foal to Memê

rode on him, and taught himself how to ride. When two years had passed, Memê had learned how to ride. They called the horse Bozê Rewal³¹.

Let's leave Memê and his horse here, and go to the diwan of the emir of the jinns.

The assembly of the emir of the jinns³² convened,
 An aged ifreet³³ of the jinn arose in the assembly, stood upright,
 And called out, "My mir, I have wandered about the earth and under the seas, among
 slaves and masters,
 In the whole world, among jinns and mortals, I haven't seen any young man as
 beautiful as Memê Alan,
 Or the likes of Lady Zîn³⁴ among girls and brides.
 Memê Alan is in the city of Mukhurzemîn,
 Lady Zîn is in the city of Jizîra Bota, in the Tower of Belek³⁵."
 The emir of the jinns said, "Hey ifreet, what a big mouthed³⁶ ifreet you are!
 You keep blasting³⁷ the diwan and the assembly with your talk.
 If what you say is a lie, I will take a sword to your neck,
 I will sever your head from your body."
 The ifreet said, "My mîr, my heart is heavy,

³¹Bozê Rewal means "The gray one of the pre-pubescent youth." Rewal actually has two meanings according to Kurdoev: 1) Youth who has not yet sprouted facial hair; 2) Way of life or way of walking. Situation. In EP-1 and Z-1, the horse's name is not Boz but Bor, which means both "horse" and "grey."

³²See note 1 above for a description of the jinns.

³³ferfît = 'Demon.' The word ferfît is a metathesis of the Arabic word عفریت *ʿafriyat*, meaning 'demon' or 'devil.' In another version, ZK-3, the form is e'rfîf (ê cînal), which is closer to the Arabic form, which itself may be derived from an Iranian form *âfarid*, meaning either 'a creature' or 'a blessed [one],' perhaps a tabooistic euphemism for 'a cursed one' (suggested by Professor Martin Schwartz, personal communication).

³⁴Stiya Zîn' in this version.

³⁵Birca Belek.

³⁶Zîman dirêj' = lit. "With long tongue."

³⁷dirêjî = lit. "You pour/spill." This word, which comes at the end of the line, rhymes with 'zîman dirêjî' in the previous line. See note 36 above.

May my head be a sacrifice for Lady Zîn and Memê Alan."

The emir of the jinns summoned four servants,
Two he sent to the city of Jizra Bota,
Two he sent to the city of Mukhurzemîn,
He gave them instructions about Memê Alan and Lady Zîn,
Saying, "Bring their two beds this very hour,
Set them down in the assembly of the jinns."

In an hour they brought their two beds,
They put slumber pearls in their ears,³⁸
Into the assembly of the jinns their beds were brought.
The emir of the jinns gathered all of his jinns,
Lifted the handkerchiefs from off their faces.
The emir of the jinns said, "That ifreet spoke the truth, there's no lie in what he said."
The emir said, "O ifreets! It is only fitting that both their heads should rest on a single pillow,³⁹
Get up and take their two beds to the city of Jizra Bota, set them down in Lady Zîn's room."
The aged ifreet said,
"O my mîr, who has ever seen a young man go to the girl's place?
Listen to me and don't disregard my words,
[69] Take both their beds to the city of Mukhurzemîn, set them down in Memê Alan's room,

³⁸Apparently it is believed that when one of these slumber pearls is placed in someone's ear, that person will fall asleep immediately, and not wake up until the pearl is removed. This occurs in HR-1 also. Motif D1364.32. **Jewel causes magic sleep.**

³⁹i. e., that they should be married to each other. A common Turkish greeting used in congratulating newlyweds is *Bir yastıkta kocasınlar* - "May they grow old on the same pillow." There is also a Kurdish proverb *Do serê çê naçine ser be'lgîki* - "Two good heads don't fit (lit. 'go') on one pillow." In the story behind it, a man sees an industrious man married to a lazy woman, and a lazy man with an industrious wife. When he asks why the two industrious ones aren't together, he is given this proverb in response. [See *Orûtxanê Cella & Cella Cella* (Dzhalilov). *Mesela û Met'elokê Kurda - Kurdskie Poslovitsy i Pogovorki* [=Kurdish Proverbs and Saying] (Moskva : Nauka, 1972), pp. 377-378]

Remove the slumber pearls from their ears,
 Let them wake up and rejoice in each other,
 They will be swept away by love⁴⁰.
 And so saying, they picked up the beds of Lady Zîn and Memê Alan,
 The emir of the jinn and ifreets took them to the city of Mukhurzemîn, setting them
 down in Memê Alan's room.
 Those two are humans, these four are jinns,
 Jinns are not visible to human eyes.⁴¹

My heart is heavy, heavy,
 Memê Alan and Lady Zîn became aware of each other,
 Fear and awe entered their hearts,
 They were amazed⁴² at themselves and at each other.
 Lady Zîn said, "Young man, what are you doing in my room?⁴³
 Ever since the day God gave me to my parents,
 I have forbidden myself to look at boys."
 Memê said, "Girl, what are you doing in my room?
 As for me, I am Memê Alan,
 I have forbidden myself to look at girls."
 Memê said, "Lady Zîn,⁴⁴ if I have come to your room, call your servants."
 Lady Zîn said, "Guleishe, commander of my forty servants,
 Bring a lamp for your lady to the gate of the yard,
 Come see this sight, this conflict, for yourself."
 No matter how much Lady Zîn called, none of her servants appeared,

⁴⁰Mufbeta wan ê hev hiltne = lit. "Their love will lift up one another," i.e. They will be carried or swept away by love for each other.

⁴¹= lit. "Humans in the world don't see jinns with their eyes."

⁴²'Şaçis mane.' *Şaçis* does not appear in any of the dictionaries. Judging from the context and the form of the word, I am assuming that it is equivalent in meaning to 'şaş' which means "surprised" or "amazed," and is also used in conjunction with the verb 'man.'

⁴³=lit. "What is your business in my room?"

⁴⁴We are not told how he knows her name, when they have not yet introduced themselves! Such is the logic of folk narrative.

She said, "Memê, you call your servant."
 Memê called the commander of his eighty eight servant boys,
 "My dear and sweet Bengîn,
 Hurry, rush, and make haste,
 Boil me up some coffee,
 Pour it in two porcelain cups and put them on a golden tray,
 Give one to Memê Alan, and one to Lady Zîn."

Bengîn immediately rushes off,
 Boils coffee for his mîr,
 Pours it in two porcelain cups,
 Puts them on a golden tray,
 [And after] opening the door, gives one to Memê Alan, and one to Lady Zîn.
 When she sees this marvel, this wonder with her own eyes,
 Then Lady Zîn believes that she has come to Memê Alan's room,
 And that this place is Mukhurzemîn.
 Lady Zîn is carried away by love for Memê,
 [70] She jumps up from her bed and throws herself onto Memê Alan's bed,
 They throw their arms around one another,
 [She] says, "I know that this thing has been ordered by God,
 At the hands of the emir of the jinns."
 Then Memê Alan and Lady Zîn became aware of each other,
 They fell to joking and talking,
 They exchanged rings with each other,
 Until before dawn their heads sank and they fell asleep.

The ifreets⁴⁵ put slumber pearls in their ears,
 Picked up Lady Zîn's bed and took it back to Jizîra Bota.
 When the sun shined, Memê awoke, and saw that there was no one around,
 He immediately rose to his feet,
 Put on his royal garments, put his crown on his head,
 And headed for the assembly of his father, Alan pasha.

⁴⁵See note 33 above.

He went and opened the door to the room and saw that the noblemen, judges⁴⁶ and muftis were all assembled.

Memê called out to the assembly:

"Father, last night I had a dream,

On one side of you is a judge,

On one side of you is a mufti,

Have them look at the papers to find out what the meaning⁴⁷ of my dream is."

The judge and mufti together called to Memê.

They said, "Your dream is that of a young man,

Whatever you saw,

Came over all of us.⁴⁸"

Memê called out to them,

"If my dream wasn't a divine dream,⁴⁹

So help me God, let me become blind and deaf in both eyes and ears,

Let me become lame in both legs and both hands,

So that I have to walk on my hands and knees.

If my dream is true, if it's divine,

May both of you become blind and deaf in both eyes and ears,

May both of you become lame in both legs and both hands,

So that you have to walk on your hands and knees."

Memê's words⁵⁰ went up to the Lord on high, went up to the heavens,

And the judge and mufti became blind and deaf in both eyes and ears,

They became lame, and had to walk on their hands and knees.

Those in the assembly looked at each other in amazement.

⁴⁶**Qazi**, an Islamic judge. From Arabic *qaḍīn* قاضي (qāḍī) (قاضي) --> Persian قاضی *qāzī* and Turkish *kadı*.

⁴⁷**Hecran**. Although the dictionaries define this as "separation," from Arabic *hijrān* هجران, in this text it appears several times in a context that suggests a meaning such as "interpretation of a dream." See also note 134 below.

⁴⁸i. e., when we were your age

⁴⁹i. e., if it wasn't sent by God

⁵⁰- lit "voice"

Memê said, "Father, the dream that I had,
 I'll tell it to you truly,
 [71] Lady Zîn came last night from Jizra Bota in the evening,
 If you don't believe [me], Bengîn saw [her] with his own eyes,
 He boiled coffee for us,
 Both of us drank coffee,
 We exchanged rings with each other,
 My ruby and diamond ring, with my name written on it,
 And this here is her ring, on my finger -- it's gold,
 The name of Jizra Bota, the Tower of Belek is written on it."
 Memê took the ring off his finger,
 And walked towards his father,
 Handed the ring to his father.
 His father looked at the ring,
 Beat his knee with his hand,
 Saying, "No one has ever seen such a great marvel⁵¹."
 He called up forty or fifty gendarmes,
 And said, "Make haste, hurry, ask around in the city of Mukhurzemîn,
 Bring me anyone who has heard of Jizra Bota."

The gendarmes wandered around the city of Mukhurzemîn,
 But no one said, "We've seen Jizra Bota",
 No one had heard of it.
 Khizir, the one who gave Memê his name,
 Disguised himself as an old man, as white as cotton,
 Sat down at near the gendarmes' path,⁵²
 All of them came and gathered around him,
 They all asked him,
 "Uncle, you haven't seen Jizra Bota either, have you?"
 He said, "No my sons, I haven't seen Jizra Bota,
 I heard about it from my father,

51. e'cêba giran could be positive ("a great marvel") or negative ("a great disaster").

52-lit. "on the mouth of the road of the gendarmes"

When I was fourteen years old, my father said to me,
'I went to Jizîra Bota with a caravan!'

Memê's father said, "Memê my son, my heart is heavy,
As many towncriers⁵³ as there are, they should come out to the minarets,
Let them call as many girls and brides⁵⁴ as there are,
Have them all leave their homes and come right here,
You go mingle among them,
Choose a girl to your liking from among them,
[72] Forget about Jizîra Bota,⁵⁵
I will make my son the son-in-law of viziers and rulers."
Memê said, "Father, my heart is windy⁵⁶,
My heart is swaying, like the waves of the sea,
As for the girls and brides of the city of Mukhurzemin, they should all call me
'brother', and I shall call 'sister'⁵⁷
[All women] on the face of the earth except for Lady Zîn."

Memê's father started to cry,
He let out a moan, which became rumored about,
Memê's mother caught wind of the rumor,
She ran out of the house,
Went to the diwan of Alan pasha,
And saw Memê in the diwan.
Everyone in the diwan was mourning and crying,

⁵³ delîlî. I am assuming that this is some form of the word *delal*.

⁵⁴ i. e. both unmarried girls and married women.

⁵⁵ -lit. "Make your heart cold from Jizîra Bota."

⁵⁶ 'li bêye' This word, which appears also in Le Coq's versions collected in Zindîrlî in 1901, is obscure. It could be the preposition *li* + the oblique case of *ba* = "wind" + the copula *-ye*, meaning altogether "it is from the wind." As it appears at the end of the line, its main function seems to be to introduce a rhyme scheme that lasts for the next several lines. So also "My heart is heavy, heavy" on p. 69 [pagination of the original] above. This is a rhyme signalling device, discussed in the section of Chapter Five entitled "Kurdish Folk Poetics."

⁵⁷ This implies that it would be incestuous to marry any of them.

Memé's mother put her hand on his shoulder,
 And said, "Memé my son, my heart has found you,
 Tell your mother, what this is all about?"
 Memé told his mother everything,
 He took out his ring, handed it to her, and she looked at it.
 Memé's mother let out a shout,
 "Bengîn, commander of eighty eight servant boys,
 Go quickly and make haste,
 Take Bozê Rewal out of the stable,
 Saddle him up with an Erzurum saddle and seven straps,
 Fasten a saddlebag full of gold pieces to his back,
 Adorn him with a garland of flowers,
 Fasten his shiny sword to Bozê Rewal's side.
 Go quickly and make haste, bring a box of Memé's clothes from his room,
 Gather up your eighty eight servant boys,
 Open up the box, dress Memé in his clothes,
 Have everyone arrange his buttons and his clothes,
 The beloved of my heart will be heading for strange lands,
 May he not harbor grudges against his parents or his servants."

Bengîn goes quickly and makes haste,
 Takes Bozê Rewal out of the stable,
 Saddles him up with an Erzurum saddle and seven straps,
 Fastens a saddlebag full of gold pieces to his back,
 Adorns him with a garland of flowers,
 Fastens his shiny sword to Bozê Rewal's side.
 He runs to Memé's room, brings a box of Memé's clothes,
 Gathers up his eighty eight servant boys,
 Opens up the box of Memé's clothes,
 Dresses Memé in his clothes,
 Has everyone arrange his buttons and his clothes.

[73] Memé put his foot in the stirrup and mounted Bozê Rewal,

Every last one of the citizens of Mukhuzemîn gathered round Memê,⁵⁸
 When they saw him, they began to bleat like ewes and lambs,
 They were weeping over the golden throne⁵⁹ and over Memê.
 Memê had Bozê Rewal head for Alan pasha's diwan,
 He stopped in front of the diwan, taking his leave of those there and giving them
 greeting,
 Memê's father did not rise, but kept on crying,
 Saying, "Memê my son, my heart is windy,⁶⁰
 This trip does not bode well,⁶¹
 So help me God, may the legs of Bozê Rewal break at the two front knees,
 May you be reduced to walking on roads and highways,⁶²
 May ten years pass before you reach the city of Jizîra Bota.
 May you become a shepherd and a cowherd among people,⁶³
 As you leave the golden throne and crown, and city of Mukhuzemîn without a
 master,
 For some old woman."
 Memê's mother said to Memê's father,
 "Why do you speak so to the beloved of my heart?
 Why are you cooking his kidneys and liver in front of my eyes?
 He is about to leave for strange lands, don't make him grieve."
 Memê's mother said, "Memê my son, your trip bodes well,
 God help me, may Bozê Rewal become a windy horse for you,
 May you go in peace to the city of Jizîra Bota,
 And return safely to your mother,

58- lit "However many people there are in the city of Mukhuzemîn, they gathered around Memê"

59- i. e, losing Memê as the heir to the throne.

60- See note 56 above.

61- lit "Your luck and [horoscope] signs are not those of goodness."

62- lit "May you fall to 'pedestrianness' (peyatî) on roads and highways"

63- Shepherds and cowherds are considered low class, i.e. several steps down from being the son of the ruler Cf. OM, p 27

May your father's food and the milk of your mother's breast be blessed to you.⁶⁴

Memê took leave of his mother and father,
 Raised Bozê Rewal's bridle and took to the roads and highways,
 The fish of the sea stopped and gave greeting,
 Every last one of the citizens of Mukhurzemîn wept.
 Memê's father called up forty gendarmes,
 Bade all forty to get on their horses,
 And said, "Riders, twenty of you keep to his right side, and twenty to his left side, be
 his advisers,
 Maybe you can make him turn back from the road to Jizra Bota,
 As you know, the golden throne and crown have lost their master."⁶⁵
 The forty gendarmes mounted their horses,
 Twenty placed themselves on his right side, and twenty on his left, becoming his
 advisers,
 No matter what they did, Memê would not turn back,
 The gendarmes became disgusted,
 [74] Memê took his leave of them and continued on alone.
 Over wilderness and desert, steppe and plain,
 Summer went and winter came,
 Memê Ala was on the verge of going insane.⁶⁶

Memê neared a village,
 He saw an old man sitting by the edge of the road.
 Memê called to the uncle,
 Stopping before him,
 And said, "Uncle, you are old, come ride with me, let's you and I become travelling
 companions."

⁶⁴See EP-1 note #138].

⁶⁵- lit. "the golden throne and crown here have remained ownerless." This means that there is no heir to the throne when Alan pasha dies.

⁶⁶These last three lines rhyme more or less in the way the original Kurdish rhymes throughout.

The old uncle said, "Son, good for you! You ride on, I will go take a leak,⁶⁷ and then you and I will be travelling companions."

Memê rode on a little,

He turned [and looked] back, there was no uncle there,

He had disappeared from sight,

This uncle was Khizir⁶⁸, who with his own tongue had given Memê his name,

He suddenly appeared on the breast of Memê's horse, and the horse rode on,

Memê couldn't see him, and the horse flew like the wind.

The city of Diyarbekir was a year's distance away, but in an hour Memê reached

The Black Bridge, this close to Diyarbekir,⁶⁹

Khizir got off the horse's breast on the bridge and took hold of Bozê Rewal's harness.

Khizir turned into a twenty year-old youth, but Memê couldn't believe his eyes,⁷⁰

Memê took one look at him, fear and awe took hold of his heart.

Memê was very much afraid.

Khizir said, "Memê my son, don't be afraid, these things are the will of the lord on high,

Your trip bodes well,

From here on our paths must part.⁷¹"

Khizir disappeared and Memê rode on,

⁶⁷ez hea p'êşkek av birêjim = lit. "until I spill out a little water."

⁶⁸See note 13 above.

⁶⁹The Pîra Reş or Black Bridge is a stone bridge which crosses the Tigris River to the south of the city of Diyarbekir. It is visible from the Mardin Gate (Mardinkapî), the gate to the old walled city of Diyarbekir which looks south, on the old road to the town of Mardin. It should be remembered at this point that the informant was originally from the village of Biznemir, in what he describes as the district of Diyarbekir. (Actually, the village is today part of the newly formed province of Batman, but until recently belonged to the province of Siirt, just east of the province of Diyarbekir.) Similarly, in PŞ a version collected in Zakho, the narrator has Mem passing through Zakho on his way to Jizra Bota.

⁷⁰The second half of this line includes an idiom that is not sufficiently well documented in the dictionaries. In Kurdish, the whole line reads as follows: "Xocê Xizir xwe kire xortekî bîst salî, ko Memê ne.hêjaye dîna.wîye."

⁷¹= lit. "My hand and yours have parted from each other."

He entered the city of Diyarbekir, where everyone gathered around him,
 No one had seen such a beautiful rider as this in all the world.
 Memê looked back and went on,
 He left the city, and saw a porter with a sack of flour on his back.
 He stood before Memê and stared at him,
 Saying, "Horseman, you are worthy of Lady Zîn in Jizra Bota, who lives in the Tower
 of Belek."

This porter had come from Jizra Bota,
 Memê was very pleased with him,
 [75] And said, "Porter, is Jizra Bota near or far, how do you see it?"
 The porter said to him, "Young man, Jizra Bota is very far."
 When he said that, Memê was very disappointed,
 And said, "How, if I'm a year's distance away, did I come here in one hour?"
 Memê drew his sword from its sheath,
 Held the sword to the porter's neck,
 The porter turned pale with fear,
 Then Memê fell out of favor with God.⁷²

Memê then passed before the door of a mill,
 The miller was sitting before the mill's door,
 He took a look at Memê,
 He had never seen anyone the likes of him in the whole world.

72= lit. "Then God took good luck and good fortune away from Memê." This is as a punishment for Memê's unnecessarily frightening the porter. The expression 'Siñûd û Iqbal,' which I have translated as "good luck and good fortune," is composed of two Arabic words: Siñûd or siñûd is from the Arabic form *suñûd* سَعِيدٌ, broken plural of *sa'd* سَعِدَ = 'good luck'; Iqbal/Ikbal/ëibal (the latter form preferred by Kurdöev) is from Arabic *iqbal* اِقْبَالَ, verbal noun (*maşdar*) of the 4th form of the root q-b-l, meaning 'welfare,' 'prosperity,' 'good fortune.' In the introduction to his "Kurmānci-Texte aus dem Tūr'abdin 2. Yeziden" *Oriens* 25-26 (1976), pp. 1-37, the late Hellmut Ritter notes that a characteristic of the Kurdish speech of the Yezidis is their pronunciation of the phoneme ع ([e]) as ح (h), and gives the example /suñûd/ instead of /suñûd/. We know that the informant from whom the present text was collected, Ohanyan Israëil, grew up in a village which was inhabited by Armenian Christians and Kurdish-speaking Yezidis. Hence, it makes sense that Ohanyan Israëil, who uses the form *siñûd*, should use the Yezidi pronunciation of the word (rather than *siñûd*).

He said, "That horseman there is worthy of Lady Zin, in the city of Jizira Bota; in the Tower of Belek, she sits at the upper window."

Mem  said to him,

"Son, is Jizira Bota far or near, how do you see it?"

The miller said, "Young man, you look like an excellent rider,

Your horse looks like a windy horse⁷³,

Jizira Bota is just under your horse's feet,

Ride on this way, and you'll be in Jizira Bota in five minutes!"

Mem 's heart lit up like a rose when you water it.

Mem  stuck his hand into his pocket,

Took out a handful of gold from the pocket,

Gave it into the miller's hand,

Saying, "May this gold be blessed unto you,

Take me to the road to Jizira Bota."⁷⁴

The miller fell into step in front of Mem  and led him to the road to Jizira Bota.

Then the miller returned to the mill, closed the mill's door, cut off the mill's water, took himself to Diyarbekir,

Went to a tailor, and had a fine suit of clothes made for himself.

Mem  went on towards Jizira Bota, and when he came close to it, he saw a well⁷⁵,

He dismounted at the well, drank water, and set his horse out to pasture,

Expressed his thanks to God,

Took out his bread, ate his food and relaxed,

Unaware of the winds of fate.

He looked up and saw three riders coming by,

With their greyhounds and pups behind them,

These riders were riding bay horses,

The sides of their mares were covered with rabbits tied to them,

⁷³i. e. a horse as swift as the wind.

⁷⁴Riya Gizira Bota temlmlde   ji mira bivne. The expression temlmlde does not appear in any of the dictionaries, but it does appear in ZK-3 in a similar context. Ti r    dirbe f mi me neda, which means something like "He didn't show us the way." The expression R  [  dirba] teml f -  dan must mean something like "to show *someone* the way (or road)," "to give *someone* directions on how to get somewhere." See also note 170 below.

⁷⁵or "a spring"

[76] They passed by Memê without greeting him.

Memê remembered his father's curse⁷⁶, and he beat his knees with his hands and wept,

Beko looked at him with a scornful glance,

Noticed that the horseman had a golden crown on his head,

That he looked like the son of a sultan,

Beko called out to mîr Zêydîn and Qeretajdîn,

Saying, "My mîr, you are so well-bred,

Why didn't you greet that horseman at the well with the golden crown?"

Mîr Zêydîn and Qeretajdîn turned and looked,

And said, "Beko, hurry over to that horseman,

Quickly bring him to us;

That horseman will be our guest, he is very distinguished."

Beko went and stood by Memê,

Giving greeting to those present and to him,⁷⁷

Saying, "Get up, these here are mîr Zêydîn and Qeretajdîn."

Memê is delighted, he is filled with love,⁷⁸

He gets up and mounts his horse, he and Beko spur on [their horses],

They come to mîr Zêydîn and Qeretajdîn,

Memê greets them and causes them to stop.

Mîr Zêydîn says, "Guest, you are most welcome,⁷⁹

You will be our guest, we can tell that you are a most distinguished guest."

The four of them rode on,

Mîr Zêydîn, Qeretajdîn and Beko said to each other,

"We don't know, of the three of us whose guest he should be."

⁷⁶- lit. "his father's words"

⁷⁷It is not clear to me what is meant by "those present."

⁷⁸I am not totally sure what the second half of this line means. The Kurdish is: eşqa mîhûbetê hêja wi hiltîne.

⁷⁹- lit. "you have come on our heads and on our eyes" This is the standard way of saying "Welcome" in Kurdish.

Beko said to Memê, "Memê, if you are looking for bravery and justice, go to
 Qeretajdîn's house,
 If you are looking for corruption, disloyalty and slander, come to my house -- [I am]
 Beko the dishonest and unreliable⁸⁰."
 Memê said, "I am not one for corruption or disloyalty,
 If I were a mîr, if I were a prince,
 I would not leave the city of Mukhurzemîn, my father's kingdom,
 I am looking for the house of a courageous man -- the house of Qeretajdîn."
 Then mîr Zêydîn became angry with Qeretajdîn,
 And said, "I am the mîr, yet the sons of monarchs come stay at *his* house.
 These words of Memê's wounded him in his heart,
 But they didn't speak together, and rode on.
 Mîr Zêydîn and Beko headed for home,
 Qeretajdîn and Memê stood before the door of the room.
 Lady Ereb⁸¹ came out to receive them,
 [77] She saw what a distinguished guest had come to Qeretajdîn's house,
 Qeretajdîn said, "O guest, our fate is with God,
 Come, dismount from your horse."
 Memê the stranger neither spoke nor dismounted.
 Qeretajdîn said, "Memê, my heart is heavy,
 You are most welcome in my house,
 From today on you and I are brothers of one mother and father,
 I am ready to sacrifice [my] two brothers, Cheko and Ereb⁸², for you,
 I am ready to sacrifice my whole household for you,
 I am ready to sacrifice Lady Ereb -- my honor in this place -- for you."
 Memê dismounted at these words and they walked together towards the hall.
 When the townspeople found out,
 They all converged on Qeretajdîn's hall,

⁸⁰ bēdîn' actually means "religionless"

⁸¹ Qeretajdîn's wife.

⁸² As Lady Ereb is Qeretajdîn's wife in this version, in this line Ereb must be a mistaken for Erfan, the name given to one of Qeretajdîn's brothers in other versions.

Musicians⁸³ gathered in Qeretajdîn's hall,
For four hours musicians played, singers sang, and dancing boys⁸⁴ danced for Memê
Alan.

Memê did not speak, not with his heart, not with his tongue,
Everyone headed for home,
Memê and Qeretajdîn alone remained in the hall.
They made up Memê's bed, and Memê went to sleep.
Qeretajdîn went and said to Lady Ereb,
"Woman, how sullen our guest is,
He doesn't speak, we don't know what's wrong with him,
When I said to him, 'O guest, I am ready to sacrifice for you [my] two brothers, Cheko
and Ereb, my whole household, and Lady Ereb, my honor in this place,'
Only then would he dismount from his horse.
So get up and get dressed,
Put your slippers⁸⁵ on your feet,
Go to this guest, let's see what our guest's nature⁸⁶ is like.
If his nature is good, he and I are brothers,
But if his nature is bad, let him not even stay the night in this house."

Lady Ereb got up and got dressed,

⁸³See note 5 above

⁸⁴K'öçek <Turkish köçek = "youth who performs erotic dances in woman's garb" [see: C. Robert Avery, S. Bezmez & M. Yaylali: *Redhouse Çağdaş Türkçe-İngilizce Sözlüğü - Contemporary Turkish-English Dictionary*. (Istanbul: Redhouse Yayınevi, 1983)]. For a discussion of this institution, see Metin And. *A Pictorial History of Turkish Dancing from Folk Dancing to Whirling dervishes - Belly Dancing to Ballet*. (Ankara: Dost Yayınları, 1976), pp. 139 ff.; figs. #27, #32, #36, #48, #60, #62, #74, #82, #83, #84, #90, #110.

⁸⁵Şim û me'sane = lit. "slippers and yellow-leather slippers." *Şim*, or more commonly *Şimik*, is a common word for slipper: Cinderella is known in Kurdish as 'Şimikzâfîn' = "girl of the Golden slipper." The only definition for *Me'sane* that I could find was in J]: [mas] حَس - "Slipper of yellow leather."

⁸⁶The commonest forms of the word for 'Nature' are T'ebî'e't (Kurdoev) and T'ebî'iyet (Bakaev), from Arabic tabī'ah طَبِيعَة. In this text, the form is T'ibî'iyet, once again replacing the ع (el') with ح (h), typical of Kurdish as spoken by Yazidis. See note 72 above.

Put slippers on her feet,
 Went and stood at the door of Memê's room,
 And called out, "Memê, my heart is windy,
 Please get up on your feet,
 Come open the door of the room,
 Let's you and I indulge in joking and chatter together."
 Memê got up on his feet,
 And said, "Lady Ereb, my heart is heavy⁸⁷,
 You and I are sister and brother,
 [78] Qeretajdîn and I are brothers from one father and mother,
 My name is Memê [son of] Alan-pasha."
 When Memê said this, Lady Ereb turned around and went to Qeretajdîn,
 Took her slipper off her foot,
 And Bang! let Qeretajdîn have it on the forehead,
 Saying to him, "What sort of crazy man are you?
 Your guest has not yet tasted bread in your house, and you are testing his honor?
 Your guest is not a rogue⁸⁸, he's the son of kings."
 The Qeretajdîn said, "Woman, testing has its uses in this world,
 I wanted to test my guest,
 And now he and I have become brothers from one mother and father,
 My house, my children are a pledge⁸⁹ to Memê Alan."

Memê and Qeretajdîn go to sleep,
 Moming came for those present and for them,
 In the morning they went out for a walk among the gardens.
 Lady Zin had heard that an honored guest had come to their house,
 She called Zin the daughter of Beko and four other maidservants,

⁸⁷This four-line answer, in rhyming verse, constitutes a refusal on Memê's part to be alone with the wife of his host.

⁸⁸Hayetajyel, a word which does not appear in the dictionaries. The onomatopoeic quality of the word and the context suggest the translation I have chosen.

⁸⁹i. e. Qeretajdîn would be willing to sacrifice his house and children for the sake of Memê Alan, foreshadowing of what is to come

She dressed Zîn [the daughter of Beko] in her clothes, took off her ring and put it on
 [the other Zîn's] finger,
 And the four others picked up jugs of water.
 Zîn the daughter of Beko put on Lady Zîn's clothes,
 Put her ring on her own finger,
 And set out for the spring,
 [While] Qeretajdîn and Memê were sitting on chairs.
 Zîn the daughter of Beko and the four maidservants passed by them,
 When Memê's eyes fell on the one in front,
 He saw his ring on her finger,
 Then he remembered the nighttime dream,⁹⁰
 As they went to the spring, Memê could not take his eyes off of them.
 Qeretajdîn said, "Memê my brother, you keep looking at those girls, choose one of the
 five for yourself,
 I'll bring her before you, house and all."
 Memê said, "Qeretajdîn my brother, my grief is [for] the first girl,
 The ring on her finger, how it glistens."

The two of them sat by the door,
 The five maidservants filled their jugs, and passed by again.
 Qeretajdîn said, "Memê, you go home, I'll go to the house of the first girl."
 [79] Memê was elated⁹¹, he was in great spirits.
 Qeretajdîn went to Beko's house, greeting him and his family.
 Beko said, "Qeretajdîn, by God's goodness, you have never [before] come to my house,
 What is on your mind⁹² today?
 Let me know what is on your mind."
 Qeretajdîn said, "Beko, I have come to request your daughter for my guest,
 He is very precious and dear to my heart."

⁹⁰i.e. when Lady Zîn appeared in his bedroom, etc.

⁹¹-lit. "Memê's heart was very good."

⁹²-lit. "in your heart."

Beko said, "Welcome, welcome,⁹³ put down something as a pledge.⁹⁴"
 Qeretajdîn put down two gold pieces as a pledge for Beko's daughter.
 Qeretajdîn returned home and said, "Memê, don't worry, don't trouble your heart
 about your request,
 I have made the request for you, may God do the rest."⁹⁵

The Lady, Beko's daughter,⁹⁶ went to Lady Zîn,
 Laughing and full of giggles.
 Lady Zîn said, "Beko's daughter, what is this laughter, what are these giggles?"
 Zîn, the daughter of Beko, said, "My father has given me to Qeretajdîn's guest,⁹⁷
 And two gold pieces were put down as a pledge to me."
 She made Lady Zîn's heart grieve and ache strongly,
 And [the latter] said, "I will take forty of my maidservants and pass by the gate of
 Qeretajdîn's house with them,
 I'll make myself and his guest aware of each other."

Lady Zîn got dressed up,
 Put golden slippers on her feet,
 Put her ring of rubies and diamonds on the finger of her right hand,
 Took forty maidservants with her and marched by the gate of Qeretajdîn's house with
 them.
 Memê once again noticed the one in front,
 Lady Zîn walked by slowly, nodding with her head to Memê.

⁹³-lit "You have come on my head and my eyes." Cf. note 79 above.

⁹⁴-e of engagement.

⁹⁵-lit "May God bring [you] to each other." This passage accurately reflects the practice of *xwezgîni*, i.e. the way one would go about requesting the hand of a girl in marriage to a suitor. See also note #19) above.

⁹⁶Zîn, Beko's daughter, is referred to here as 'Stiya çîza Bek'o' - "The Lady daughter of Beko." Hitherto in this text, the term *Stiya* has only been used in conjunction with Lady Zîn and Lady Ereb.

⁹⁷-lit "to the guest of the house of Qeretajdîn"

Qeretajdîn said, "Memê my brother, you get up and go to the spring, see your
 betrothed with your own eyes,
 If she's not to your liking⁹⁶, I will withdraw the pledge.
 Memê was elated, he got up from beside Qeretajdîn and swiftly headed for the spring,
 He went to the spring, and he and Lady Zîn saw each other at the mouth of the
 spring,
 They laughed together, and remembered their nighttime dream,
 Embraced⁹⁹ and kissed each other.
 Zîn, the daughter of Beko, saw this with her own eyes,
 She wept and let out a cry,
 [80] Went home and said, "Father, Qeretajdîn's guest and Lady Zîn are engaged."
 Beko said, "Zîn my child, I am Beko the dishonest and unreliable,
 So long as I live, I won't let Memê Alan and Lady Zîn obtain their desire."

Memê said, "Lady Zîn, my heart is windy,
 I have come to the city of Jizîra,
 I have entered strange lands,
 I don't know which girl is whose daughter."
 Lady Zîn said, "Memê Alan,
 Don't you remember your nighttime dream?
 You have requested the daughter of Beko the dishonest and unreliable rather than
 Lady Zîn."

The maidservants filled up their jugs and headed for home,
 Leaving Lady Zîn and Memê alone at the mouth of the spring.

Beko went to the hall of Mîr Zêydîn and said, "My mîr, go see where Memê Alan and
 your sister Lady Zîn are.¹⁰⁰"

Mîr Zêydîn went out to where they were,

⁹⁶-lit. "according to your heart."

⁹⁹-lit. "brought their hands to each other's neck."

¹⁰⁰-lit. "You go out beside Memê Alan and your sister Lady Zîn, there they are, in that place."

Lady Zîn was going home, and Memê was going to Qeretajdîn's house.

Qeretajdîn said, "Memê, what has kept you there so long?¹⁰¹"

Memê said, "Qeretajdîn, the one I wanted was Lady Zîn,

The sister of Mîr Zêydîn,

You have betrothed me to¹⁰² a gypsy daughter of a gypsy, the daughter of Beko the dishonest and unreliable."

Mîr Zêydîn and Beko were speaking together,

Beko said to Mîr Zêydîn,, "My mîr,

Your sister is our honor,

Qeretajdîn's guest is not one of us,

I can't accept this way, it is of no use."

Mîr Zêydîn said, "Beko, let's make up something that only you and I know about,

Let's play checkers."

Beko went and summoned Qeretajdîn and Memê, bringing them to sit in the hall.

[Mîr Zêydîn] said, "Memê, I know that you are a good player, you look like one,

So let's you and me play, setting conditions as follows¹⁰³:

If you beat me seven times, you can have whatever you want,

And if I beat you, I can have from you whatever I ask for,

[81] Qeretajdîn, Beko, and this assembly are witnesses,

They have sat down between you and me."

The two of them set down the checkers before them,

They sat down on felt [mats] near the door of the hall,

Playing together and unaware of anything else.

Lady Zîn went out to view them through the skylight,

Memê's back was to her,

¹⁰¹-lit. "What was your condition, until now you remained there?"

¹⁰²-lit. "You have requested for me..."

¹⁰³-lit. "We will place between us the condition of *şendilxaz*." *Şendilxaz* does not appear in any of the dictionaries: the second part, *Dilx[w]az* or *Dilxwaz*, means "Heart's desire." A note to the Russian translation of EP-1 explains this as being "a wager or game in which the victor has the right to request whatever he pleases [from the loser]" (note #45, p. 92).

Mir Zêydîn was facing her.
 Six times Memê beat Mir Zêydîn,
 [And] Beko said to Mir Zêydîn, "My mîr, get up and trade places,
 Some spots are unlucky for [some] people,
 Perhaps [this way] you will be more equally matched!¹⁰⁴"
 Mir Zêydîn said, "Memê, get up, let's trade places."
 Memê said, "I have six and you don't have one yet,¹⁰⁵ but let's trade places anyway."

[When] they got up and traded places,
 Memê directly faced Lady Zîn in the window,
 [And] Mir Zêydîn's back faced Lady Zîn in the window.¹⁰⁶
 Memê and Lady Zîn exchanged glances,¹⁰⁷
 Beko¹⁰⁸ picked up every checker¹⁰⁹ that Memê put down,
 Out of love for Lady Zîn, Memê lost all sense of reason,¹¹⁰
 Mir Zêydîn won six, and Memê lost six.¹¹¹
 Beko said, "My mîr, enough playing, let's have a verbal duel!¹¹²"

¹⁰⁴-lit. "Perhaps you both may be like each other."

¹⁰⁵-lit. "I am six and you are not yet one."

¹⁰⁶-lit. "Memê's face fell on Lady Zîn in the window, / Mir Zêydîn's back fell on Lady Zîn in the window."

¹⁰⁷ *Avîr*, or more commonly *Avîr*, generally means "a disdainful or scornful glance," "a scowl." Although a negative connotation is attested in all the dictionaries consulted, in this context the connotation must be neutral, if not positive.

¹⁰⁸Is Beko playing Memê's opponent, or is Mir Zêydîn? This is an example of "the nodding of Homer."

¹⁰⁹Kevir - lit. "stone"

¹¹⁰- lit. "From love of Lady Zîn sense and reason don't remain in Memê's head."

¹¹¹- lit. "Mir Zêydîn became six, Memê remained six," i.e., they were tied. In all other versions, Mir Zêydîn wins out at this point.

¹¹²- lit. "We will throw songs [k'ilama] at one another." Poetry contests are very popular in the Middle East. Among the Turks, poetry contests (*atışma*) are common among *aşks*, or bards. Verbal dueling rhymes, particularly among boys, are very popular. [See: Alan Dundes, Jerry W. Leach & Bora Özkok "The Strategy of Turkish Boys' Verbal Dueling Rhymes," *Journal of American Folklore* 83 (1970), pp 325-349; reprinted in: Alan Dundes *Parsing Through Customs* (Madison, Wis.: The

Beko said, "Memê's girl is of the tribe of Reshkot,¹¹³
 Shoe nails have gnawed the heel of her foot,
 With my own eyes I saw her selling yoghurt in Jizra Bota¹¹⁴."

Memê said, "Enough of you and these words, you knave,
 If I get my hands on the hilt of my glaive,
 We will surely fill up each other's grave¹¹⁵."

Beko said, "Memê's girl is from Dudan^{115a},
 The nail of the shoe of her sole is gone,
 With my own eyes I saw her buying and selling yoghurt in Jezira Bohtan¹¹⁶."

Memê said, "Enough of you and your palaver,
 Once I touch the hilt of my Egyptian saber,
 We'll fill up the earth with all sorts of cadavers¹¹⁷."

University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), pp. 82-117.] What is different about this phenomenon as it appears in this text is the fact that here it is engaged in by adult males, whereas among the Turks, to quote Mark Glazer, "These duels never take place in front of grown men. First of all, the adolescents participating in such a duel would not dare for such behavior to take place in front of grown men. Respect for elders is too important for such behavior to take place in front of them. Furthermore, such an attempt would be strongly and physically interrupted by any grown men even if attempted."

113^{Ya} Memê-lit. "The female one of Memê." It should be remembered that the informant grew up among the Reshkot tribe.

114^{This} is the first bout of the verbal duel. I have tried to mimic the end rhyme. In Kurdish, the rhyming words are *reşkotî*; *k'otî*, *dîrotî*. In English, I have supplied: Reshkot; foot; Jizra Bota.

115 -lit. "Beko, enough of you and these words, / When we put our hands on the hilt of our dagger, / We will fill each other's tomb and grave." In Memê's response, the rhyming words in Kurdish are *xebera*; *xencera*; *mezela*.

115^aDudan is a village near Zirkani in the county seat of Şêrwan, near Sirt, in Kurdistan of Turkey.

116^{In} Beko's beginning of the second round, the rhyming words in Kurdish are *dudanî*; *hilanî*; *dibir û danî*.

117^{Or} perhaps: "Enough nonsense from your mouth has been spilt, /

Once I touch my Egyptian saber's hilt, /

We'll fill up the earth with men dead and killed." In Memê's response to Beko's second bout, the rhyming words in Kurdish are *mirt'ibîya*; *k'ose misirîya*; *mîrîya û kuştîya*.

Memê said, "Beko, the one I want is Zîn, it's Zîn and it's Zîn,
A newborn dove, she's gazing down at me through the window screen,
Unlike you and your father, she's the sister of your prince Mîr Zêydîn."

When Memê said this, Mîr Zêydîn got good and mad,
He said, "Memê, the one I want wears a shawl,¹¹⁸
[82] The sister of the flaxen shirt,
The sister of the golden necklace,
Sister Memê Alan.¹¹⁹"

Memê and Mîr Zêydîn reached for their daggers,
Qeretajdîn was not there with them,
Memê had no hope against them.
They all came after Memê together,
Memê has put me in a sorry state.

Lady Zîn said, "I will ¹²⁰ search through all the children,
Until I find Gurgîn, the son of my sister,
I will get Memê Alan out of this situation."
Lady Zîn looked around,
And found Gurgîn below the palace, among other children,
She called out to him,
[And] said, "My dandy one, Gurgîn,
Hurry up and make haste,
Take news to your father Crazy Qeretajdîn,
Say, 'Father, my aunt says that your guest has no means of escape,
He has had to use the cushion at his side as a shield."

Gurgîn hurried up and made haste,

¹¹⁸şare û şaribane, the meaning of which is not entirely clear.

¹¹⁹or perhaps, "Memê Alan herself," or "the sister of Memê Alan." Whatever these last four lines mean, they obviously succeed in insulting and angering Memê to the point of reaching for his dagger.

¹²⁰-lit "I will cause my eyes to wander among the children"

He [went and] called out to his father,
 Saying, "Father, our guest has no means of escape
 From the hands of Beko and Mîr Zêydîn."

Qeretajdîn got up, unsheathed his Lahore sword,
 Arranged his shield on his shoulder,
 [And] set off for Mîr Zêydîn's hall.
 Like a wolf with bloodied mouth,
 He waved his sword at Mîr Zêydîn,
 Took Memê by the hand, led him away from those villains,
 [And] brought him home with him.

Beko and Mîr Zêydîn had another conference,
 Saying, "Let's do some hunting for Memê's sake,
 We'll invite Memê and Qeretajdîn
 To come riding and hunting with us.
 My mîr,¹²¹ you get two servant boys,
 Have each one of them secretly point a pistol at Memê,
 Qeretajdîn won't be aware of us,
 And you will avenge your sister's disgracing of your honor.
 The two youths should then hurry to the desert of Hîmûd,
 [83] They should stay there for a while,¹²²
 Qeretajdîn will calm down, he'll say 'No harm done'".

They summoned Qeretajdîn and Memê,
 And went out hunting,
 Memê, Mîr Zêydîn, Qeretajdîn and Beko mounted their horses,
 Four servant boys left with them,
 Their greyhounds and pups followed them.
 They came to a desolate plain, a rabbit crossed their path,
 The greyhounds and pups set out after it,

¹²¹Beko is speaking

¹²²-lit. "Year[s] and mor:th[s]."

The four youths and Beko also went after the rabbit on horseback,
 [While] Memê and Mîr Zêydîn and Qeretajdîn stayed behind in a gorge.
 Memê said to Qeretajdîn, "My head hurts, I don't feel well, I've taken leave of my
 senses."

In the presence of Mîr Zêydîn he got down off his horse,
 Sat down and cried.

Qeretajdîn said, "Mîr Zêydîn, let Memê go home, he's not himself today,¹²³
 Let's just hunt for ourselves."

Mîr Zêydîn gave Memê permission to go.

Mîr Zêydîn and Qeretajdîn set out after rabbits.
 Memê once again mounted Bozê Rewal,
 [And] headed for Jizra Bota,
 He spurred¹²⁴ on the horse and it flew,
 When he came to Mîr Zêydîn's courtyard, he dismounted,
 Tied up his horse, [and] went into the hall; when he and Lady Zîn saw each other,
 they were excited,¹²⁵
 They beamed¹²⁶ at each other and then laughed,
 They embraced and rejoiced in each other.

Beko came back to Mîr Zêydîn and Qeretajdîn, but nowhere could he see Memê,
 Beko put his mouth to Mîr Zêydîn's ear, secretly saying to him "This hunt was for
 Memê Alan."

"Hurry and gather up your youths,
 Let's head homeward."

Beko called over his youths,
 Had them assemble,

¹²³-lit. "There is no condition of God for him."

¹²⁴-lit. "He gave heel to the horse."

¹²⁵-*bi hev hisiya bûn* -lit. "They became aware of one another."

¹²⁶*bû* *p'irçîna wan ji hevfa*. The word *Pirçîn* does not appear in any of the dictionaries, but perhaps it is synonymous with *Birçîn*, meaning "To shine."

--Beko's mare was very light, there was no other bay horse like her--
 He said to them, "I will [set out] ahead of you and bridle [my mare],
 Each of you bare his sword, and if you succeed in catching up with me,
 Strike my neck with your swords, and send my head a-flying!¹²⁷"

[84] Beko bridled his horse,

The riders rode neck in neck, [but] no one could overtake him.

Beko reached Mîr Zêydîn's courtyard, and saw that Bozê Rewal was tied up there,
 He ran into the hall, opened the door and saw Lady Zîn and Memê seated side by side
 on a mattress,¹²⁸

He closed the door on them and went out,

[And] stood by the doorway.

Mîr Zêydîn and the youths reached the courtyard and dismounted;

Qeretajdîn went home, he did not accompany them.

Beko called to the youths,

[And] said, "By order of Mîr Zêydîn you must come to the hall, no one at all should
 go home."

The boys entered the hall, Beko sat down on a felt [mat],

Mîr Zêydîn went to his house, changed his clothes,

Refreshed himself,

[Then] came to the hall, giving greeting to his diwan.

The youths and servants and Beko stood up,

[But] Memê wouldn't get up off his ass.¹²⁹

Mîr Zêydîn was perturbed, he scowled and sat down.¹³⁰

¹²⁷This mini-contest is supposed to show how powerful Beko's horse is: even though he bridles, i.e. restrains his horse, he is ready to wager on pain of death that no other horse will be able to overtake his horse. Perhaps this whole exercise is intended to get back to Mîr Zêydîn's court as soon as possible by racing.

¹²⁸It should be remembered that mattresses take the place of couches and chairs: people sit closer to the ground than in the West.

¹²⁹-lit. "Memê, his ass/rear/butt/backside [çûna wî] did not rise from those places and that ground."

¹³⁰Mîr Zêydîn *simbêlê wî melûl bûn*, *me'dê wî qermiç'l*, *ji xwefa rûniştiye* -lit. "Mîr Zêydîn, his whiskers became gloomy, his stomach faded, he sat himself down." For someone's whiskers to be dark, gloomy, or sad apparently means "To be angry"; although the exact expression *Simbêlê wî melûl/bûn* does not appear in the dictionaries, in Baxaev's dictionary I did come across the word

Beko sang out to Mir Zêydîn:
 Saying, "O youths, our prince, Mir Zêydîn, gave greeting to his diwan,
 [And] we all stood up,
 But Memê did not rise from his place on the ground."
 Beko said, "My mîr, Mir Zêydîn, I swear that Memê's cloak is a dome,¹³¹
 I suspect that there is something under it,
 Who has ever seen such a thing as one person with two pairs of shoes,
 One pair a man's and one pair a girl's."

Mîr Zêydîn and his youths frowned and sat down,
 Qeretajdîn noticed this and hastened to the hall,
 Saw the coffee pourer standing at the doorway,
 [And] said, "Coffee pourer, why do you think the hall is so deserted?"
 The coffee pourer said, "My mîr Qeretajdîn, Mîr Zêydîn came in from outside,
 Gave greeting to his diwan,
 The youths and servants and Beko stood up,
 [But] Memê wouldn't get up off his ass.
 Beko said, 'My mîr, Mir Zêydîn, I swear that Memê's cloak is a dome,
 I suspect that there is something under it,
 [85] Who has ever seen such a thing as one person with two pairs of shoes,
 One pair a man's and one pair a girl's."
 Qeretajdîn said, "Coffee pourer, quickly boil up some coffee,
 Then come bring it to me,
 I'll¹³² go around the hall with it,
 To see what is going on there."

The coffee pourer boiled up the coffee,
 He poured it into cups and brought it to Qeretajdîn,

Sîmêlîş = 1) [Someone with] black whiskers 2) Angry, annoyed, irritated. As for 'His stomach faded,' although again not in the dictionaries, both Kurdoev and Khamoian have the expression *Macê xwe tîş kirin* -lit. "To make one's appetite/stomach sour," i.e. "To frown, make a face; To be dissatisfied."

131-lit. "I swear by my mîr's forehead, Memê's cloak is *qube*". *Qube* has two meanings: 1) Rough, coarse, vulgar; 2) Dome, cupola; Arch.

132-lit. "He will go around...." This must be another example of "the nodding of Homer."

Who brought it to the hall, stopping before Memê.
 He said, "Memê my brother, our mîr Mîr Zêydîn came in from outside,
 Gave greeting to his diwan,
 The youths and servants and Beko stood up,
 Why didn't you rise from the ground?"
 Memê said, "Qeretajdîn, you have seen my heart,¹³³
 Love has taken over my head and my eyes,
 I can explain it this way¹³⁴,"
 [And] he pointed to the braids under his cloak.¹³⁵
 Qeretajdîn understood Memê's situation,
 And hurried out of the hall,
 [And] when he reached home, he set it on fire.

A cry and a shriek and a clamor arose,
 The news reached the hall, Mîr Zêydîn found out,
 And stood up,
 [But] Beko said, "Mîr Zêydîn, his house is old and decrepit, he's burning it down on
 purpose,
 Don't leave the hall, I will have it completely rebuilt."
 Qeretajdîn saw that no one left the hall,
 [So] he drew his sword and drove it into his horse's back,
 His horse was a *k'êş* horse,¹³⁶
 Such a horse had never been seen in the world.
 The news reached Mîr Zêydîn
 Who stood up when he found out.

¹³³or possibly, "I have given you my heart."

¹³⁴This line is obscure. If *fiucran* means "Explanation," which it seems to in this text, although the dictionaries only define it as "Separation" or "Departure," then it may mean something like "My explanation is from this." See note 47 above.

¹³⁵Although not spelled out in this version, it is clear from all the other versions that Zîn hides behind Mem, under his cloak, when the others enter unexpectedly and almost catch them together.

¹³⁶Hespê k'êşê ye. *K'êş* by itself means "Weight" or "Fulling" or "Walking, going." None of the dictionaries gives a definition specifically related to horses.

Beko said, "Mîr Zêydîn, my mîr, I have ten foals, they are better than his horse was,
I'll give him all of them."

Qeretajdîn saw that no one left the hall,
[So] he said to his wife, who was Mîr Zêydîn's sister,
"Lady Ereb, get up and fasten the infant!¹³⁷ to your garment,
Then flee before me,
I swear before the Lord on high,
When I overtake you, I will run you and the child through with the sword, and kill
you."

Lady Ereb fastened the infant to her garment,
And swiftly headed for her brother's house,
[86] Running and screaming.
[When] she reached the doorway her brother, Mîr Zêydîn, heard her screams,
[And saw] Qeretajdîn with a sword in his hands,
Like a wolf with bloodied mouth.

Mîr Zêydîn stood up, opened the door, and ran out.

Beko said, "Mîr Zêydîn, my mîr, who ever heard of
Someone killing his own wife and child,¹³⁸

Except for Crazy Qeretajdîn?"

This got on his nerves,¹³⁹ [and] Mîr Zêydîn gave Beko a smack on the mouth and
nose,

Then left the hall and asked Qeretajdîn,
"Qeretajdîn, was it you who went crazy, you who did the killing,
You who set his house on fire?"

The youths and servants all left the hall, leaving Memê and Lady Zîn.
Qeretajdîn lifted Memê up by the arms,

¹³⁷or, the infant's cradle

¹³⁸It is not clearly stated in this version if Qeretajdîn actually carried through with the killing. In some versions (such as HM) he actually does, whereas in others (e.g. HR-1) he stops short of committing the act.

¹³⁹*Beta xuyê birî da.* This is obscure, but may come from the expression *Betka ... birin* = "To get on someone's nerves." The fact that Mîr Zêydîn slaps Beko supports this idea.

Beko left Jizîra Bota out of fear for Qeretajdîn, and no matter how hard Qeretajdîn
 tried he couldn't find him,
 But if Qeretajdîn found him,
 He would take a sword to his neck and sever his head from his body.

Mîr Zêydîn said, "Qeretajdîn, your house and home are in ruins,
 Take yourself to the great tribes, collect this year seven years' worth of taxes and
 tributes."

Qeretajdîn said, "Mîr Zêydîn, my brother, I will put Memê into a room, that nothing
 may happen to him,¹⁴⁰
 And then I will go to the wealthy¹⁴¹ tribes."

Mîr Zêydîn placed Memê in a room and provided servant boys,
 Saying, "Brother Qeretajdîn has entrusted me with Memê,¹⁴²
 Qeretajdîn has gone down to the tribes, may he harbor no grudge against me."¹⁴³

Beko came back to Jizîra Bota, to the house of Mîr Zêydîn,
 He passed before Memê's room, looked in through the skylight,
 [And saw] Lady Zîn and Memê sitting in the room,
 Laughing together, embracing each other out of pleasure and joy.
 Beko went back to Mîr Zêydîn

¹⁴⁰The second part of this line is unclear, but the context suggests that my translation approximates the meaning.

¹⁴¹rengîn = 1) Colorful; 2) Wealthy.

¹⁴²*Emaret*, entrusting a person with something until one's return, is a very important concept in the Middle East. The entrusted person is honor bound to protect that which has been deposited with him, even if doing so means sacrificing the life of a loved one. For an account of the story of the Arab poet al-Samaw'al ibn 'Adiyâ and how he sacrificed his son to the enemy rather than hand over the coats of armor that Imru' al-Qays another poet, entrusted to him, see: Reynold A. Nicholson. *A Literary History of the Arabs* (Cambridge, England, et al. : Cambridge University Press, c1907, 1969), pp 84-85

¹⁴³-lit 'may his heart not stay [back] from me.'

And said, "My mîr, honor!¹⁴⁴ is very treacherous, come see the two of them with your own eyes."

Mîr Zêydîn and Beko went and saw them with their own eyes.

Mîr Zêydîn said, "O servants, grab Memê by the hands, and put him at the bottom of the dungeon."

[87] The youths and servant boys picked Memê up by the arms and took him to the bottom of the dungeon.¹⁴⁵

Memê was all screams and cries and shrieks,

[As] he remembered what his mother and father had said.

Beko counselled Mîr Zêydîn,

Saying, "I am leaving Jizra Bota, lest Qeretajdîn find me,

But if men go release Memê,¹⁴⁶

Memê's soul will remain in his body,

He is a brave man, he will take his own revenge,

[So] let Lady Zîn go release him.

If Lady Zîn goes to release him,

His innards will burn, his flesh will melt,

He will see the dirt of his grave with his own eyes.¹⁴⁷"

Lady Zîn went to the marketplace of Jizra Bota, and stopping before the door of a shop,

She saw a poor young man, his clothes ripped, standing at the doorway of the shop,

He took gold out of his breast pocket,

¹⁴⁴For a discussion of *Namî's*, see EP-1 note #118), and: Jean G. Peristiany. Honour and Shame the Values of Mediterranean Society. (Chicago University of Chicago Press, 1966); John Gulick The Middle East: An Anthropological Perspective (Pacific Palisades, Calif.: Goodyear Publishing Co., c1976), pp 209-211.

¹⁴⁵-lit. "...and took him to the mouth of the dungeon and put him in the bottom of the dungeon."

¹⁴⁶i.e., from the dungeon.

¹⁴⁷Cf. EP-1, paragraph (86), in which Bekir's daughter Zîn says, "If men go to take Mem out of the dungeon, he will get well, but if women take him out, he will die."

The shopkeeper said to the poor boy, "Son, what is this gold for, what has happened?¹⁴⁸"

The poor boy said to the shopkeeper,

"Make change for these gold pieces, give me silver coins, twenty piasters and five piasters,¹⁴⁹

Qeretajdîn has camped out below our tent,

I will use this money to pay tax on our sheep,¹⁵⁰ he is collecting taxes from us.¹⁵¹"

Lady Zîn stood there,

And listened to what he said.

The poor young man had his gold changed, took his coins,

¹⁴⁸lit. "What is there and what isn't there?" This is a way of saying "What's new?" or "What's going on?." It has analogues in Turkish (*Ne var ne yok*), Armenian (ինչ կալ չկալ) = *mch' ga ch'gal*), Iraqi Arabic (*shakû makû*), and in Neo-Aramaic -- at least the Turoyo dialect (*mîn-yo nîn lô-yo*): see HR-1 note #1114).

¹⁴⁹*Ev zêrê hana ji mîta hûr bike t'emam bike medîne, quruş û pexîne* = lit. "Make tiny this gold for me, completely make 20-piaster-silver-coins, piasters and five-piaster-coins." A *medîne* was an Ottoman coin worth 20 piasters, and a *pexî* (according to two dictionaries. *Anter and Zîyâ al-Dîn Pâshâ* was worth five piasters.

¹⁵⁰*Qamçîra paz* According to Roger Lesoot, "[t]he agha [or tribal chief] collects certain taxes on the tribe's internal affairs, notably on the sale of livestock: these taxes are called *qamçor*..." [my translation] see Roger Lesoot. *Enquête sur les Yezidis de Syrie et du Djebel Sindjâr*, Mémoires de l'Institut français de Damas, tome 5 (Beyrouth, 1938), p. 164, body of text & note 2. The word *Qamçîr* only appears in one dictionary, that of Izolt, where it is defined as "Tax, Animal tax" [*Vergi. hayvan vergisi*]. According to Izolt, the form *Xamçîr* also exists, cf. Armenian *khamch'owr* խամչուր /*khap'ch'owr* խափչուր = 'sheep tax', Tatar *qubçur* = 'animal tax' and Uigur *qubçir* = 'general tax on behalf of the government' [from: V.M. Nadetiaev et al. (ed) *Drevnetiurkskii slovar'* [Древнетюркский словарь = Old Turkic dictionary] (Leningrad : Nauka, 1969), p. 462]; originally of Mongol origin, see: Gerhard Doerfer. *Türkische und Mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen: unter besonderer Berücksichtigung älterer neupersischer Geschichtsquellen vor allem der Mongolen- und Timuridenzeit* (Wiesbaden : Franz Steiner Verlag, 1963-75), vol. 1, #266. قچور =

'type of tax, originally most commonly collected in kind (primarily in cattle), it later came to denote set taxes levied on nomads and farmers' (my translation); and Modern Mongolian *rovçuur / гувчур / гувчур* = 'impost,' 'tax' [from: Gombojab Hangin et al. *A Modern Mongolian-English Dictionary* (Bloomington : Indiana Univ., 1986), p. 1211 (*Special thanks to Anne Avakian for this etymology*)]. The dictionary of colloquial Turkish known as the *Derleme Sözlüğü* (mentioned above in note 21) has the forms *gamçîr* from Erzincan, Bitlis, and the towns of Ağın and Keban in Elâzığ, and *kamçîr* from the town of Eriş on the northern shores of Lake Van = 'animal tax' [*hayvan vergisi*] [see: *Türkiye'de Halk Ağzından Derleme Sözlüğü*. (Ankara : Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1963-1982), v. 6, p. 1907; v. 8, p. 2615]. *Paz* = *Pez*, equivalent to Arabic *ghanam* غنم = "(flock of) sheep"; it is cognate to Latin *pecus* and German *Vieh*.

¹⁵¹lit. "He is taking his payment [*heçê xwel*] from us."

And walked away from the shop, [when] Lady Zîn called out after him,
 Saying, "Young man, wait, I want to entrust you with something."
 The young man stopped, and Lady Zîn wrote a letter,
 In which she said, "Qeretajdîn, stop collecting animal taxes and hurry back,
 They've put Memê at the bottom of the dungeon,
 Come to him quickly."
 She handed the letter to the boy and said, "I beg you and the Lord supreme,
 Deliver this letter to Qeretajdîn."
 The young man said, "Girl, how lovely you are in my eyes,¹⁵²
 Give me a kiss, as payment for delivering the letter.¹⁵³"
 Lady Zîn opened the letter and wrote in it some more,
 Instructing Qeretajdîn as follows:
 "When you come, bring this boy with you,
 And on the way sever his head from his body,
 [88] I have promised him, that when he returns here safely, he can have a kiss¹⁵⁴ from
 me before your eyes,
 Which would wipe Memê Alan's honor off the face of the earth.¹⁵⁵"
 She handed the young man the letter and said, "Go and come back, then you will
 have earned a kiss."
 The boy, delighted, hurried off,
 Reached the tent of the chief,
 And delivered the letter to Qeretajdîn.
 Qeretajdîn read the letter,
 Quickly mounted his horse, left off collecting money,
 Unaware of anything else.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵²-lit. "In my eyes how sweet your blood is"

¹⁵³-lit. "I will take from you the value of the letter." In the original, this is worded in the same way as "he is collecting taxes from us" a few lines earlier. See note 151 above.

¹⁵⁴-lit. "that he will receive a kiss from my face"

¹⁵⁵-lit. "will remove the *xîret* and *namûs* of Memê Alan from the world." See note #[145] above. This is an example of Motif K978. Uriah letter. Man carries written order for his own execution. This famous motif appears in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

¹⁵⁶but the contents of the letter.

Qeretajdîn said, "Young man, you come with me, hurry up!"
 The boy, delighted, led the way, and off they sped.
 When they were far from the tent, Qeretajdîn stopped the boy in a deep ravine,
 Drew his sword from its sheath,
 And struck the boy with it, severing his head from his body.
 He drove his horse on, bridling him,
 His horse rode over rocks¹⁵⁷, his knees were broken,
 Qeretajdîn grew pale, he carried his sword in his arms and hurried on,
 Swiftly arriving in Jizira Bota,
 [Where] Lady Zîn was waiting for him at the side of the road.
 [As] they proceeded together into town,
 Lady Zîn cried out to him,
 Saying, "Qeretajdîn, you crazy dandy,
 Quickly unsheath your sword,
 You've said 'I am a brave man', go bring Memê Alan out from the bottom of the
 dungeon."
 Lady Zîn said, "You are my Qeretajdîn of the beautiful neck,¹⁵⁸
 Bring your shiny sword out of its sheath,
 You've said 'I am a brave man', go free Memê Alan from the bottom of the
 dungeon."

Qeretajdîn broke down and cried, made haste and hurried
 To the diwan of Mîr Zêydîn,
 Beko had spoken his piece and was hiding.
 Qeretajdîn said, "Mîr Zêydîn, bring Memê Alan out from the bottom of the dungeon,
 If you don't, I swear, the city of Jizira Bota will be rolling in blood."
 Mîr Zêydîn became afraid and called his sister Lady Zîn,
 Swearing to her by the prophet Mohammed,
 "Go bring Memê Alan out from the bottom of the dungeon,

¹⁵⁷-lit. "His horse's legs fell on rocks," i.e. came across obstacles

¹⁵⁸According to Kurdoev, *Gerdanzer*, literally "yellow of neck," means "possessed of a beautiful neck (or throat)."

By the law¹⁵⁹ of God and the prophet."

Lady Zîn was delighted,
 She gathered up her maidservants,
 Went and stood at the door of the dungeon,
 [89] Lady Zîn picked up a rock from the ground and threw it [all the way] to the
 bottom,
 And when the rock hit the bottom of the dungeon, it brought Memê back from his
 sleep, his pain and his grief.
 Lady Zîn said, "Memê, the dungeon is totally surrounded with meadows and fields,
 My maidservants have formed a circle¹⁶⁰ around the dungeon,
 I have made up my eyes for you, I've hung fringes and tassies of gold¹⁶¹ from my
 brow,
 I will take you by the hand and bring you to the diwan of Mîr Zêydîn, I will ask for
 you in marriage¹⁶²."
 Memê said, "O Lady Zîn, your father's prison is a great prison,
 God help me, may a cannonball fall on its foundations,
 May its stones be blown apart,¹⁶³
 Who has ever heard of imprisoning the son of royalty in a dungeon,
 Allowing women to release him from it?"
 Lady Zîn said, "O Memê Alan,
 I will let down rope and twine for you,

¹⁵⁹Shan'ah, the Islamic code of law.

¹⁶⁰-lit. "a line"

¹⁶¹zêr û t'erwêze. Zêr is definitely 'Gold,' but T'erwêze does not appear in any of the dictionaries. Perhaps it is a metathesis of Tewrêz, the city of Tabriz in Iranian Azerbaijan.

¹⁶²If I understand this passage correctly, this is the reverse of the usual practice: it is usually the family of the prospective *groom* who initiates such proceedings, but here the prospective bride, Zîn, is saying that she wants to ask her brother Mîr Zêydîn's permission to marry Mem. This reversal is not uncommon in folktales and the like. For Turkish examples, see the collected texts of Ahmet Caferoğlu (in nine volumes); for Arabic examples in English translation, see Ibrahim Muhawi & Sharif Kanaana Speak Bird, Speak Again (Berkeley et al.: University of California Press, 1989).

¹⁶³-lit. "May stone not stand on stone."

Tie it tightly¹⁶⁴ around your middle,
 I will bring you up from the bottom of the dungeon and take you to the mir's diwan."
 Lady Zîn lowered the rope to the bottom.
 Memê tied it around his middle,
 Lady Zîn and her servants took hold of it and pulled it up rhythmically,
 Memê moved halfway up the pit,¹⁶⁵
 Both of Memê's vertebrae¹⁶⁶ were pressed together by the rope,
 [As] they pulled Memê up to the entrance of the dungeon, two drops of black blood
 dripped out of Memê's nostrils,
 And he gave up his spirit before Lady Zîn's eyes.
 Lady Zîn let out a cry, saying, "O benefactors,
 Take up shovels and hoes,
 Dig Memê a grave fit for lions and heroes."
 The benefactors assembled and buried Memê in a grave for lions and heroes,
 [While] Lady Zîn wept and cried, saying,
 "O Memê son of Alan-pasha,
 Killing and capturing are the ways of men,
 I don't grieve for you, I grieve because your father's crown and throne in the city of
 Mukhurzemîn have no heir because of me!¹⁶⁷"
 With these bitter words, she gave up her soul over Memê's grave,
 The soul was removed from her body.

Beko came to Mîr Zêydîn and said, "My mîr, your sister has gone mad, she has gone
 crazy,
 She won't leave Memê's grave and come home!¹⁶⁸"

¹⁶⁴bi t'erbîyet û bi t'ekbîre =lit. "with good breeding and with recognition of the greatness [of God]."

¹⁶⁵At this point, the dungeon has become a *Bîr* = 'Well' or 'Pit.' Cf. HR-1, note 112.

¹⁶⁶Herdu movikê piştê Memê. Apparently we only have two vertebrae according to Kurdish anatomy! Perhaps something other than the vertebrae proper are intended. *Movik* by itself means 'joint' (i.e., between two bones).

¹⁶⁷=lit. "... because the throne and crown of your father ownerless in the city of Mukhurzemîn because of me is orphan[ed], has remained ownerless."

¹⁶⁸=lit. "From over Memê's grave she doesn't come home."

Mîr Zêydîn and Beko went and stood over Memê's grave,
 [90] And saw that Lady Zîn was also dead,
 They had her grave dug beside Memê's grave."

Beko came the next day, opened their graves and put them in one grave,
 Put their hands around each other's necks and went to Mîr Zêydîn,
 Saying, "My mîr, what a strange dream I had last night."
 Mîr Zêydîn said, "What did you dream?"
 [Beko] said, "I dreamed that Lady Zîn and Memê were in one grave, with their hands
 around each other's necks."

Mîr Zêydîn didn't believe him,
 He summoned Qeretajdîn,
 [And] Beko, Mîr Zêydîn and Qeretajdîn went to the graveyard.
 Beko opened the door of the tomb, and by order of God on high he saw a row of
 stones between the two of them,
 Lady Zîn stood up and said,
 "O Mîr Zêydîn, my powerful brother,
 At your waist is a sword,¹⁶⁹
 Let's you and I act according to the shari'ah,
 With God, until the day of judgment."

Mîr Zêydîn unsheathed his sword,
 And struck Beko with it, severing his head from his body.
 The sword knew the way by itself,¹⁷⁰
 And said, "You, too, see Beko's blood with your own eyes!"
 There was no soul left in Lady Zîn's body,
 She didn't see Beko's blood with her own eyes.
 Beko's blood dripped from the sword drop by drop,

¹⁶⁹-lit. "A sword of zeal." See note 145 above.

¹⁷⁰çor re'mî xwexwe dide. If re'mî is the same as femî in note # (74) above, then my translation is possible. If it is from Arabic rahm رَحْمٌ = 'pity,' then it could mean something like "the sword took pity [on itself]," however this is rather unlikely considering the Yezidi accent of the informant: see notes 72 and 86 above.

And fell on the grave; a large thornbush grew there, which is still there for the world
to see.¹⁷

My tale has gone to the plain,
The parents of those present and listening have gone to paradise.

¹⁷: =lit: "there grows there a large thorn[bush] and the world together sees [it] with its own eyes"



Text & Translation



Mem û Zîn. 90 minute tape. Acquired in the province of Van, Kurdistan of Turkey, in 1988. (MC-1)

MC-1. Recorded circa 1988 in the region of Van. Because of the political situation in Turkey today, the details regarding the age, name, and whereabouts of any Kurdish informant must be withheld in order to insure protection from the Turkish police. Suffice it to say that the informant is in his forties and recites stories like Mem û Zîn as a pasttime only, being gainfully employed elsewhere. Unlike most other versions included in this study, this one has been transcribed from the original tape. Hence, such details as the intonation of the speaker and the presence or absence of pauses between phrases can be documented. The language of this version includes many Turkish words and forms. These have been indicated in the transcription by italics. The Kurdish text is followed by an English translation.

(MC-1)

< *Tempo: slow and deliberate, pausing(#) often*

(1) ...Niha em # li vilayeta Wanê # [.....]da nin, # mi ji bi zanîna xwe # ji guhdarê e'zîz ra bibêjin <=bibêjim>: Esselamu e'lêkum wa raîmatû lîlahi wa berekatuhu.

(2) [Memo kurê padişahê Merxêbzemîné, navê bavê wî Al-paşa biye. Al-paşa # *hükümdarê* # melmeket biye, de guhdarê e'zîz, paşa biye.

(3) Zîn, # qîza mîrêkane, yanî, # xûşka nîr Sêvdîn biye -- bavê wî tunebiye -- bal birê xwe -- xûşka mîr Sêvdîn, # li bajarê Cizîra Botan mine. Ew camêra hanê ji *hukümdarê* # Cizîra Botan in.

(4) Axâyê min binêre, îşê xwedê k'a çawa li hev tên. (5) tîş li bal e'vda gelek zor e, ama ji bal xwedê wisa *qolaye*, # tu tîşt nîne, guhdarê e'zîz.

(6) *Malûm*, yek li bajarê Merxêbzemîné biye 'aşîqek, # êk jî # li bajarê Cizîra Botan biye. (7) *Malûm*, # guhdarê e'zîz, # bi frada xaliqê 'alîyê, # bihîstina ko me jîlî # camêran bihîstî, # em dikarin bi vî şeklî ji we ra # arz bikin ve în <=hûn> guhê xwe bidnê.

(8) Dîbê, # rojekê # di xewa xweda, # Memó # Zîn ji Cizîra Botân dî. Ew xewnê hanê, # minanê qasidekî hate li Memo. (9) Bi vî şeklî, guhdarê e'zîz, *ânçe* em *başlangîcî* xwe biken, # k'a çî şeklî digêhene hev:

(10) Go bira êvarê ser cîha-anê <? çîya-anê> ,

Du meleke ji e'smanan diken şev û ro bi dîwa-anê,

Bi emrê xaliqê 'alîyê înadînan danane bajarê # Merxêbzemîne <çima>

oda Memê Aja-anê.

(11) Aẓayê min, # zamanê ko Zîn raket danîne # dîvana Memê Alan. Memo çavê xwe ji xewê vekir, <dîna xwe dide> horîyek ji horîyekê cennetê # di dîvana Memoda rûniştiye -- *Allah Allah!* (12) Mem[lo dibêje ev xjewne *acaba* yan # eseñî ye?" <Heyat bû xebitî dîne> xwedê eseñî ye.

< *Tempo: faster, few pauses*

(13) Heyran go, "Tu çi kesî? Tu çima hatî maqamê mi?" Evî go, "Zilamê xerîb, k'a tu çima hatî oda min, maqamê min?"

(14) *Malûm*, pirslyar ji hev kirin, go, "Tî kî?" Go, "Ez xûşka mîr Sêvdîn im, navê min Zîn e." Jê pirsî, go, "Tu kî?" Go, "Ez Memê Alan im, kurê padşahê Merxêbzemînê me."

(15) *Malûm*, *mücadele* kirin: evî go, "Oda min e," evî go, "Oda min e."

(16) "*Öyleyse*," go, "*Mademki* tu dibêji, 'Ez xûşka mîr Sêvdîn im,' *malûm*, mêrkê maqûl *eğer* paşa bit, # vezîr vûzaratê wî, kuñê wî, -- e -- dîsa xulamê wî hene, *eğer* ko # tu jî şahzade bî, # *malûm*, xedamê te hene. (17) Tu gazî ke xedama xwe, ezê gazî keme xulamê xwe. Eker ku xulamê mi hat, # heyran, ev e tu hatî oda min. (18) *Eğer* ko xulamê min ne, ama xedama te hat, eva mi *tecavüz* kirîye, emê *özür* tev *dilemiş* ken." Go, "Gazî ke, mi *söz* daye te."

(19) Ve Zînê wiha kire gazî:

"O navê xedameke min heye Melek Rihîa-anêye,
Melek Rihîane ti ba min bîne destekî gula-anêye,
fro şahzadek li min mêhwa-anêye."

(20) Sê caran gazî kir, guhdarê e'zîz, nehat. (21) Ewa go, "Melek Rihan nehat, zilamê qenc, Memo," go, "Tu gazî ke xulamê xwe." *Sira* da # Memê.

(22) Memo wiha kire gazî:

"Navê xulamêkî min heye Bengî-îney,
Xulamê min zilamêkî pîr emî-îney,
Tu legen û mesîna ji mîfa bî-îney,
Du ruke't nivêja subê li min neboñî-îney."

(23) Bengîn ma, tue'cib ma. Hêyran go, "Aşayê min," ewa 'aqil awêt, "wallahî," go, "ezê ji bavê wî ra bêjim bila bizewicnît. (24) Hêyran sevdayê zewacê <dayê lîl sêrên>. Zamanê xwe *gayip* kirye. Nizanit ê k'a şew see't çend e. *Hîç* see't danzde dibe du ruke't nivêja subê li min neboñne?!"

(25) Bengîné xulam *cevap* da:

"Memo," Bengîn go, "Memo, mabirab tu nabînî selam <davêjê>
Eve şevan e nivê şevan e ne çaxê destnivêjê!"

(26) Zamanê ko xulamê wî *cevap* da, Zîné tue'cib ma, "Ya rabî!" go, "Hêqîqaten tukes bi îştyê te aqlê wî nágehedin." (27) Zanî ko # dîwana # Memê Alan e, *malûm*, bi îrada xaliqê alîyê, ewana gehîştne hevde, bi wî şeklî. (28) Ama, guhdarê e'zîz, zamanê ku Xidir Nebî, Xidir Eylas ew hêrdu zilamê hanê, yanî du meleket min e'smana pişî gotin? Ewan înadin gehandne hev, di vê anê dane, *gelmiyek*¹ # di beñra *Qaradenize* da keti bî tengastyê, ve îmdad # ji xwedê ji wan zilama xwastin, ew hêrdû çûne îmdada wan. (29) Ewana çûne wê derê, ew hêrdu, Memo û Zîn, bal hev ma bûn. Zîné ko zanî oda wî ye, jêra teslîm bî.

(30) Memo dîsa wiha ji Bengîné xulam ra got:

"Go Bengîné xulam derî veke, bibîne wisa herdu çava-anêy,
Vê subê dîwanê camêran bite xeberdan û bi dîwa-anêy,
Tu ji boy xwedê şahid ve înkâr neke me'sûqa Memê
Ala-anêye."

(31) Bengîné xulam derî vekir, dîna xwe daye horîyek ji horîyekê cennetê hêqîqatennaête înkâr kimê. (32) "Ya rabî!" dibê, "Roj nederkevîtin, tek şewqa wê ye." *Malûm*, bedewtyâ Memo û Zîn # *meşhûr* e, guhdarê e'zîz. (33) Ew hêrdu mane odê ji xere *hev ra* xeberdan, *şibîat*² kirin. Înadin gustilê xwe di vê anê # ve

1=Gemlyek. Gemî = 'ship,' from T gemî.

2=Sohbet. T sohbet etmek = 'to talk.' Sohbet is from Arabic *şuḥbah* صحبة, meaning 'friendship.' In Persian it became *şuḥbat* صحبت, and came to mean not friendship itself, but rather what friends do when they are together, i.e. talk. The Turks (and Kurds, apparently) took the word from the

destmalê xwe bi hev guhartin. (34) Wexta ku bi hev guhartin, fabin, fazan, go, "Heyran, ewehe min xwedê, ez te em gihande hev, lakin bêbextî ji *ara* me da çê nabitin. (35) *Ara* min û te qur'an, şehadê min û te qur'an, bêbextî ji *aramin* te tu nebitin. Şîr danane orta hev, guhdarê e'zîz, fazan. (36) Wexta ku fazan, Xidir Nebî, Xidir Eylas # heyran go, "Min ev herdu însanê şîrê xammêttî danane ber hev: niha fabin eger ku bê emrîya xwedê biken, emê di agirê cehenemê da bişewitin." (37) Hatin dîna xwe daye heqîqaten herdu bi <bext û rara> fazane tekrar mînanê xewnekê. (38) Zîn rakirin ji bajarê Merxêbzemîné danane oda Zîné. Danane Cîzra Botan oda Zîné. Zîné çavê xwe vekir, dîna xwe daye, ne zîlam, ne Memo, tukes tune, ama di tuftiya wê da # gustîlek li ser nivîsiye Memo. (39) Memo çavê xwe vekir xewê, dîna xwe daye heyran, ew hûrîya ko dîtî bal tune. **Ey-wah!** (40) Ewa got, "Kî ye kir, kî ye kir? Bengîné xulam kir! Ji xwedê pêşvatir ji me ji Bengîn tukes bi vê sufa min nizan têda ne. (41) Ewa ev dîtîye, Bengîn biye. *Muñakkak* ewa çî kirîye, Bengîn kirîye!" Gazî kire Bengîné xulam.

(42) Guhdarê e'zîz, k'a çî jê ra <got>:

"Memo go Bengîne xweş Bengî-fney,
Ewa şevê tu min dîtî, xatûnê ji mi ra bî-fney,
Tu nanî rabe ku topê çaw hinde çara serê xwe bibî-fney."

(43) *Malûm*, guhdarê e'zîz, **ama!** îşê xwedê mêze kel Memo minanê xewnekî <wetî>, "Bengîné xulam # nikare înkâr bike, bi çavê xwe dîtîye!" (44) Zan ti ku # agirê e'şqê da serê Memo. Memo <*dedîgîn*> nizanitin bi emrê xwedê ku wiha çê biye. 'Aqilê wî fîeta li vê derê, guhdarê e'zîz, jê nehate su'al kirinê. *Malûm*, bi emrê xwedê ye jî. (45) Evî zîlamî fîbî, xo awête bavê Memo. Bavê Memo # Al-paşa bî, go, "Al-paşa, ha-a-a!! Hikayê kurê te ewe ye. Ez bibêjim, belê. Ne wisane mi bi çavê xwe dîtîye, lakin bi trada xwedê ew mesela ha çê biye! Tî emrê bajêr bide destê min, *çoluk çocuk* ê min hûre, Memo agirê e'şqê da serê *çoluk çocuk* ê min ... serê mi jêke³, *çoluk çocuk* ê min belengaz û perîşan bin." (46) Go, "Emir emir e Bengîné xulame." (47) Bengîné xulam # fîbû, delal dane gazî kirin di nava şehîr dane. Go, "Heç kesek ku qîzekî wî hebe, *yazê* wî yanzdeh jî bigoî be, ew jinê ku em bibêjin

Persians, together with its modified meaning. Such occurrences are quite common. The metathesis in the Kurdish form is noteworthy.

³He corrects himself

'jinebi' mane, *yaşêwan genç* be, çiyê wan heyê wê bifroşê bixemilînin li ber koçka bavê ... li ber koçka kuîrê padşah Memo derbaz be⁴. (48) Memo sêwa xwe li kî bide, evê wê ji xwe hilde." (49) <Heyran deka kî> nake, ew pîrî fîeystê sall <ji hana> heyecanê, fâbin destmala xwe li xwe kirin, çarşefê xwe li xwe(y) kirin, di bazarê çî hebû firotin we xemilandin minanê qîzekî lêkir. (50) "Heyran," gote, "çte sede te bî şans olarak sêwa wî qaymîş be li serê me jî ke, ewa em bine jina Memê Alan, kuîrê padşahê Merxêbzemînê ye!" _____ anîn ber koçkê derbaz kir. (51) Memo Zîn diye, horîyek jî horîyê cennetê ye, ewanê li ber te derbaz bin minanê e'rebekî fîşî lêv deqandî jê wetrî.

(52) Tekrar gote Bengîn:

Memo go, "Bengîne xoş Bengî-îney,
 Temamê ciwat û qîzan dicivî-îney,
 Tî li ber oda mi da diboîrne we ti dê Memo bê'aqil û sewda li
 serî nî-îney,
 _____ qîzina wî tamamê Merxêbzemînê bixapî-îney."

(53) *Tövbe!* Memo qe bera xwe nadê, guhdarê e'zîz. (54) Tekrar fâbî, çû xo avête Al-paşa go "Al-paşa, firo ji te, emrê bajêr bide destê min." (55) "Hay hay" go, "Bengîne xulam, lewra ku tu xîramê kuîrê minî fîeyat û çî fîez biket, emir emirê te ye." (56) Evî fâbî delal dane gazî kirinê, go: "firo Al-paşa bi e'skerê xo ve wê heîne geştî û seyranê. Ew kesê ku dixwazit bi *gönüllü olarak*, bira *qatılmışê* me bibitin."

(57) Çend fîeb suwar suwar bûn, berê xwe dane deştê. (58) Bengîne xulam fâbî, <wiha> gote li Memo, go, "Memo!" Go, "Can!" (59) Go, "Memo, bavê te bi pîrê esker hilda çû pey me'sûqa tel" *We-e-ell* teze ji Memo xweş hat, 'aqilê wî hate serî. (60) Navê hespê wî # Bor e. *Etiendim*, Bor daîma # di tewlêda biye, rûyê rojê nedîtî. Evê fîeywanê daîma *qaytlî* biye. (61) Evî fâbî, kurkê xwe serê xwe kir, di vê qeydê ra li agirê e'sqê li serê da bî, nezani ku qaydê ji lingê da wa *kırsket?*>. (62) Ama bi vî şeklî hespê xwe suwar bû, bera xwe da deştê ku here bigihe û eskerê bavê xwe herin me'sûqa Memo binin bèn. (63) Evî fâbî, bera xwe da suwar, suwar tamam zivîrîn hatin. Ew malxîrab agirê e'sqê serê da qet zivîrê. (64) Heyran, em bibêjin *epey* çû <ç>. E'sker tamam zivîrî hat. (65) Agir bi dilê Bengîne xulam ket, go fîeyran,

⁴He corrects himself again.

"Xaliqê aliye li vî zilamê hanê rê wiha aniye, lakin aḫayê min <merpekê xiralm/b> bine, xwedê jê rabin biçe serê min bilav û serê Memo rabin. (66) Rabi hespê xwe suwar bi, berê xwe da, *efendim*, çû, gihîşte Memo. (67) Wexta gihîşte Memo, go, "Esselamû e'leykum, ya Mem." Zivîr go, "E'leykum esselam, ser çavan û ser seran!"

(68) Ve # bi stiranê gotê:

"Wesselamu e'leykum ya Memê ca-anê,
Bila serê Bengînê bi *çoluk çocuxbite* qurba-anê,
Memo bila tenê neketin serê rê û dirba-anê,
Zamanê <rûştê nav û> welatê xerîbe bila nebê ji bêxwey û
bêxuda-anê."

(69) <Lawo> li Memo hiddet hat, Memo wiha cewab dayê:

"Go <_____> qelpe bextê xulama-anê,
Te me'şûqa Memê dîtîye bi herdu çava-anê,
Ji bona aşqa Zîne ez keltîme serê rê û dirba-anê,
Lawo, tuê geře here ne <___> *çoluk çocukê* xwe dane <axas
daxwazê xulaman di berê kerek na-anê."

(70) 'Aynî zamanê ku bi vî şekli jê ra got, Beko, # na --- yanî Bengînê xulam⁵ ze'f jê ra mutee'sir ma # go, "Aḫayê min, diqewimitin, ez *özür dîlemiş* dikim, *malûm ya*, ji biçûkan xeta ji mezinan êda⁶. (71) Bi vî şekli, hespê wî daîma qeyd kirî, wisa çû heyra sê-çar rojan wisa çû heyran. (72) De Memo nizane ka bajarê Cizîra Botan ki derê ye, wê kuda heşin, ve Memo wê çawa bibîne? (73) Ama # bal Memo ze'f e, bal xaliqê aliye tu ntne, guhdarê e'zîz! (74) Ev zilam qederekê çûn, lakin # qeydê lingê hespê biñ. (75) Bengînê xulam *düşmüş* bi⁷, go, "Ez ji Memo ra bibêjim, 'Heyran, me'ra heywan heywana nedaye, em bêhnekê bidine wan heywana, bila em

⁵He corrects himself again.

⁶A proverb?

⁷More often *duşurmiş bûn* = 'to think' < Turkish *düşünmek*, even though this appears to be from the Turkish verb *düşmek* = 'to fall.'

jî partiyekî nan bixun.' (76) Ez bi wî şekî bibêjim, mutleq Memo <ne dîsa li> min bixeydit, lo, xwedê çawa, ez jî wisa." (77) Jê ra negot. Qederekê derbaz bûn, çûn, (78) Hesp bi Memo <rane>, guhdarê e'zîz, bi awayî riwayeta hate gotinê # jê ra ziman hat, (79) ka çi dibêjit, guhdarê e'zîz:

Bor go, "Memo tu nedî selam bi mestî
Hey, mala te bişewite, tu dizgîna min biye qasekê rawestî,
Hey, mala te bişewite, agirê e'şqê li serê te daye, sewda li
serê te nine, qeydekê lingê min birî, gihand hestî."

(80) Memo go, "Eywah! Eva xwedê ko bi canê min <bi keti bitin>." (81) Kurkê xwe kêşa serê xwe, go, "Hêya hespê min lê lingê wî qenc nebe, tûka sipî li birîna nê, <sê edwat> li canê mi keti bit, ez ji bona Bor ji vê e'rdê narabim." (82) Guhdarê e'zîz, xaliqê alîye vê zû lihev bîne. (83) *Efendim*, Xidir Nebî, Xidir Eylas # herdu # zatê mibarek # heyran go, "Bi îrada xaliqê alîye zilamê ha ketîye serê, lakin em derdê wî dîsa bi îrada xaliqê alîye belkin derman bikin." (84) 'Aynî deqê dane, zamanê ko # *epey* himmet kir, birîna Bor qenc bû, tûka sipî lê hat. (85) Memo serê xwe rakir, dîna xwe daye, heqîqaten # birîna Bor # sax biye, ve tûka sipî lê hatîye. (86) Qederekî serê xwe tekrar danan, ewan # herdu zatê *mûbarek* # Bengînê xulam ve hespê ve, Memo bi hespê wî Bor ve, rakir, danî Cizira Bota li serê sê rêya.

(87) *Efendim*, Memo çavê xwe vekir, dîna xwe d[ay]lê, hêla *hewarî* (88) Heyran qirçîna darêdarumane, boîna me'nekane, qîre qîra dîkane, vêlê vêlê şivan û gavanane, hîr hîra çemek zîra şetê di Cizira Bota ne, çyekî xerîb e, *qomman* e, ji Memê ze'f xerîb hat, kur go, "Bengînê xulam hefe, fabe, ka em li kij mekanî ne?" (89) *Malîm ya*, xaliqê alîye ji bal wî tiştekanî nine, fêbûn <bi hîr sê hatin> qederek <_____> zilamekî hatin. (90) Memo silav lê kir, *sof* jê kir. Evî wiha ji Memo mêze kir, guhdarê e'zîz, ji ber bedewîya Memo ew zilam çawa ku <merin mêşke> kir serê wî jêkir bi xûna xweda <difilifilit>, 'aynî bi wî şekî ser serê xwe filifit. (91) Bengîn go, "Memo, su'al ji te ... selam ji te⁸, su'al ji min," go, "heqîqaten bedewîya te ze'f e, millet ji ber vê bedewîya te tee'mil nake, *sersam* dibitin." (92) "Hay hay!" go, "Bengînê xulam bila .." [[interruption]] (93) ... qederekî hatin, hatin serê sê rîyan. Rê bîne sê. (94) Memo ma di teredûdê dane, "*Eceba*," go, "ez kîjan rê da

⁸He corrects himself again.

biçim?" Ama go, <Hez miraze heyran> ezê *dizgîna* hespê <da ma> li ser <bûjan/dûjyar>. (95) Hesp kîjan rê tihêrê, di vê rê da biçim. *Yalnız*, *sen* gotinê xwe wiha dibêjite hespê, yanî Bor.

* _____ Boro <ke faraşînoy>
Serê wan <he perê> qantirmane xwe bide di rêkeke <jar ji
boy Memo jar derfnoy>"

(97) *Malûm ya*, guhdarê e'zîz, bi vî şekî zaman ku jê ra got, êca Bor jê ra xeber da, go:

"Memo, eker tu ne bajoy bi desta-ane
Tu xulamê < _____ >
< _____ > ezê te bajome tax kê _____ mîrane"
Go, "Memo, eger tu bajoy _____
_____ tu yê yemê bidey min bi kêşane
Ezê te bajome ta xîyara-ane"

(98) *Dizgîna* Bor danî li ser <bûjan>, evê heywanê rîyek jê <rane>, *efendim*, û girt bera xwe da, hate, rast <bol/bûl> hat. (99) Yanî şetê Cizîra Botan *gêçî* heye, guhdarê e'zîz, *rastgele* mîre li ka tê ji wî çemî derbaz be, evî heywanî wisane neçû li derê buhur. He! Qiseta me bête li ser Zînê. Bila Memo <hey der> Borê here were, ka çi şekî wê derbaz be altyê Cizîrê.

(100) Êca, em ji Zînê hindekî beşis dîkin, guhdarê e'zîz. (101) Zemanê ko Zînê çavê xwe vekir, dîna xwe daye, Memo ko li oda wî da nîne. (102) Ewê fîrmetê jî zef ma <di e'dûtê> danê, *malûm*, qisma jina dibê, <paryekî> giran e. (103) Beyan nekîr, subê rîabû, ze'î *mûteesir* ma. (104) Melek Rîfîanê go, "Xêr bit, xanima min, îro efîwalek ji te peyda bûye. Derdê te çîye?" (105) Go qet "Na!" Go, "Ez xîdama te me, lazim e tu ji mi ra bibêjî," (106) *Malûm*, go <çîstê wa jina> ji xwedê. Ha! Li fikayet, guhdarê e'zîz, mi çawa ji we ra gotî, ewî bi wî şekî fîedîsa xwe ji Melek Rîfîana qîza Bekîrê Direwîn xîdama -- e -- Zîna xûşka mîr Sêvdtî e. (107) *Malûm ya*, guhdarê e'zîz, ewî fikaye ko jê ra got, *yalnız* -- e -- qîza Bekîrê Direwîn, Melek Rîfîan, *sihîrbaz* bî. Çawa *sihîrbaz* bî? Rîmil jî diawêt, wexta ku rîmil awêt, dîna xwedaye, mabeyna çil rojan danê, Memo, ev zilamê ko dibêjîtin wê derkete Cizîra

Botan. (108) Roja ku sî û nehê danê, fâbî, çû bal xanima xwe, go, "Xanima min, îro temam *gencê* me dişne [=diçine] li <barajê> ve [li] şetê Cizîrê, bi îzna me bide, ez jî biçim!" (109) "Hay hay," go, "ser çavê min! Tu jî fabe, hefe!" Ama, fâbî, çû li oda Zîne da gustîla Memo ku navê Memo li ser da, destmala Memo kire cêba xwe. (110) *Efendim*, çend cil xwe fâ hildan, <ma hina> cilada hat bi derê⁹ şetê Cizîra Botan disekine. Ama, xereza wê ne ku bala wa cil dişo, xereza wê ev e: (111) Zîlamê xerfê ka ji Kîderê derkeve, Memê bibîne, Memê ji xwe fâ bişevîne, guhdarê e'zîz. (112) Ewa ku hate li berê şetê Cizîra Botan, dîna xwe daye, du suwarê <teke> suwar a-a-a [li] dûr xuya kirin. "Ehel" go, "Wellahî, hebe nebe Memo ewe ye!" (113) Hat, hat, hat, hate faste buhur, derbaz <diwî>, aliyê avê, ama Melek Rîfîan hey <xwe dem dê wanda/ ?zengîya wanda?> digirin. (114) Wexta ku ji bendê girt, Memo go, "Bengîne xulam, ez ku su'alekî ji vê nazenîne bikem, îzna te heye?" Gote ki, "Tu zanî, a xayê min!" (115) Memo ji qîza Bekîrê E'wan di xaliqê aliyê ku îşan lihev bîne, tîne, guhdarê e'zîz, ku <xira ke>, fîedê bavê kesî nîne çê ke. (116) Jê su'al kir, ka wê çî bêjî:

Memê go, "Werê, nazenîne şikîl cindî-î,
Bejna te zirav e, şitêla bî-î,
Tu bi xatîrê Alî Muliemed bike, tu ji me fabe, bêje duxîf, em
bine mêhwanê kî-î?"

(117) *Malûm*, guhdarê e'zîz, Melek Rîfîan ev *kelîme* jî hilda, wiha ji wan zîlama fâ got:

Go, "Eğêr ku tu mîr î, bajo [li] ber derê mîr Sêvdî-în ey,
Eğêr tu mîr î, bajo [li] ber derê Çeko û Anîf, Qeretajdî-în ey,
Eğêr tu xeberê te hene, bajo [li] ber derê Bekîrê Direwt-în
ey."

(118) Memê jê fâ go,

Go, "Ey, şikîl cin dîye reb il e'lemîne mezin miraza te çê bî-îne,

⁹Cf. T dere = 'brook,' 'stream'; P darreh دەرە = 'valley'

Qedera te serê yekê baş bigeñî-ine,
Belê êwara te xêr, roja te [bi] xweş bimî-ine."

(119) Xatirê xwe jê (lê?) xwastin, guhdarê e'zîz, *devam* kir. Wexta ku *devam* kir, Melek Rîfianê go, "Hey! Mi ji wan nepirsî, wellahî ewa diqewime Memo bitin!"

(120) Melek Rîfian pey ket, jê su'al kir:

"Erê," go, "zilamê xerîb min ji we fê, gote, duxî
Hin ji xwe fê min beyan bikin ka hûn kî-ine?"
Wiha <çîye>, "Ez Memê Ala-an im,
Evê dûmahikê Bengîné xula-am e."

(121) Eywah! <kuî wê ewan> Memo e, <kes berdide/ez berdidim?>! Melek Rîfianê jê su'al kir:

"<Bu kadar> qelpe bextê paşa-ane,
Hey mala te xirab be, çima naê bîra te <odê>, şîhadê min û te
qur'a-ane?"

(122) Memo dîna <dîna> xwe daye, ku rûyekî pis, lêv deqandî, fîeyran, "*Eğer* ku yê wiha bitin, wellahî, di bajarê melmeketê bavê milyone hebî. (123) Kuîro dêmek <li xwe bêje li seba vî,> eva rîşî paşa derketibim <evê/evî> melmeketê hanê. Kuîro Bengîn lawo, ewa min te dîtî ewa ye!" (124) Bengîn go, "*Tövbe, tövbe, aşâyê min!*" *Devam* kirin. (125) *Devam* kirin, Melek Rîfianê dîsa pey ket:

Go, "Erê # *yabancı okadar* qelpe bextê paşa-ane!
<O dê> şîhadê min û te her qur'a-ane,
A ji te fê destmala te, gustîla tultîyan me jihev guha-ame!"

(126) Memo qederekî *düşmüş* bî, fîeyran go, "Ji min, ji Bengîné xulam, ji vê fîurmetê tukes pê nizanite <dêdî nura> têda ne.[" (127) Zîné ji xidama xwe fê gofîye, eywah qîza Bekirê Direwîne, guhdarê e'zîz, biqewime ku xaliqê alîye emrê wî bi vî şekî ye, gerek lazim e mêra ji qederê fê ji stiyê [stuyê] xwe xwar kir, guhdarê

e'ziz. (128) Memo rabi, zengiya xwe jê ra *boşanmiş*¹⁰ kir, feyran go, "Nesîbê me ji xwedê emê *gêrf* biçin!" (129) Qederekî *gêrf* hat, hespê dêna xwe daye, heyhal! Memo, qîza Bekirê Direwîn anî # ve, guhdarê e'ziz, bi riwayeta ku me bihistî – *tabf*, ewa fierfa qur'anê nîne -- çawa hatiye gotinê me ji (jî?) camêran bihistiye, (130) *tekrardivê Bor <gel daha>* xebêrdan kir ka wê çî jê ra bêjî:

Bor go, "Memo tu < ____ > nîni selam bidî-lne
Ewa tu dibêjî, ew nî-lne,
Ewa qîza Bekirê Direwîn e, te dixapî-lne,
<Cadeke> terkîya xwe <dişeqîne>."

(131) Zemanê ku ev *kelime* ji Buhur <Bor> seh kir, Memo, "Weyyy! Heyat (feyrak?) û quweta wî hebî," <heft quwet> ji xaliqê aliye hat, wisa li e'rdê da guhdarê e'ziz, ez bibêjim deh, tu bibêjî <heftin lima ku pere sû li hev miş kin>. (132) Nazentîn ma <e'rdê/fievde>, lakin <nazentîna evî ja> jê ra got, go, "Erê, Memo, Memo, feyran, te ez nebirim, nebirim. Te çîma <eseqat> kirim <lo e'hdê we'de> bi car min keti bin, min û bavê min, feya ku <avranê> di <cavê> min, û bavê min û hebe, feyran, tu negiheyştî vê meqseda xwe." (133) We *devam* kirin, hatin. Wexta ku *devam* kirin, Memo go, "Xulamê min, em bine mêhwanê kî?" (134) "Aşayê min," go, "Tu dizanî. Ji te ra *tarîf* nayê kirinê." (135) "*öyleyse*" go feyran, "<Kevirê mêran dani, mêr xerab (ke/ket/kir). Mêrkê mêr mêrê bikuje, vê mêrê biwa şêra jî. Lo mêra xwe dawite ber bextê mêra>." (136) Emê heime mala Qeretajdîn bine mewan. Bera xwe da, <hala> ber derê Qeretajdîn. "Esselamu e'leykum." "E'leykum esselam." (137) *Efendim*, hespê wan zilama hilkişandin hindur dane. Qeretajdîn wiha li Memo fukurî, ji cemala Memo feyranî mutehîr ma, *dünya* xwe winda kir! (138) Guhdarê e'ziz, bila Bengîn li wê derê bisene. Ava xwe, nanê xwe bixo, Bengîn haj tu îşt nema. (139) Meydan vêca xwedê fêz bike bibe ya Memo, ya Qeretajdîn. (140) Ewan zelaman gel hev xebêrdan # suhbet kirin, ji subê fêtayî merxêbê. (141) Heta merxêbê ji hev suhbet kirin, ji subheta Memo, feyran, gul

¹⁰cf Turkish *boşandırmak* = 'at, eşeği dörtmal ile rahvan arasında koşturmak' [to make a horse or donkey run at a speed between a gallop and an amble]. Attested for the village of Doğanbey, Beyşehir, in the province of Konya, Central Anatolia. See: *Türkiye'de Halk Ağzından Derleme Sözlüğü* (Ankara : Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1963-1962), vol. 2, p. 743.

dihate barîné. Tajdîn jê tu zemana têr nebû. (142) Gul[hi]darê e'zîz, çawa ku xaliqê alîye emir kirî ev zelamê hanê, yanî Memo û Zîné fikaya wî hate gotinê, fieta <(h)al> man mewanê Qeretajdîn, -- e -- Memo bi vî şeklî ji birayê xwe Qeretajdîn fîne] *izah* kir. (143) Wexta ku *izah* kir, Qeretajdîn mêrkê zana bû, zanî(n) ku belê ew e'şqa ha ji terefê xaliqê alîyê ye. (144) Ama tu îşî mêze kel Xûşka # Zîneyê jina Qeretajdîn e. Navê wî Sîfî ye. Ama Zîn jî nişan kirîya birayê Qeretajdîn, Çeko, e. (144) Wexta ku fieryan ev *kelime* hanê ji Memo seh kir, bî *yardımayê* Memo, guhdarê e'zîz. (145) Go, "Bira, ez tu destebirayê axiretî, <lo ehd bit>, çi bête ser min, ez *esirgemiş* nekim, fiyat wi fiyata min ji *dünyayê* bitin." (146) Subfieta xwe *dewam* kirin, fieta se'et bî danzdê şevê.

[[Interruption]]

-îye

Pênc deqîqe îzin bide li *düşman* ser kantî-ye

(147) *Malûm*, guhdarê e'zîz, tekrar îzin da çû, çû di nava Xasbaxçe, fieryan dîna xwe daye xatûn Zîn li ser kanîya şadûrawan rûniştîye, ew *ova* ku jî tazîk dawêje ji qudretê, *bûlbûl* ser gulan rûniştê jê ra dixûnîtin, *efendim* Zîn di halê xwe da daîma *düşmiş* dibitin, Memo aqil û <xîm> xeyalê wê dane. (148) Di pîş aîî sekînî, jê ra go:

"Esselamu e'lêkum Xatûn Zî-îney

Ewham û xeyalê ku tu dikêşî # dûr nîne, nêzîk bibî-îney."

(149) Zîné serê xwe fakir, ew wiha lê fukurî, nas nekir, jê ra wiha go:

"Ne ser seran, û ne ser herdu çava-ane

Tu weke <şenwane>

Ezê niha gazî kem mîkanê Botan <min pirtîya dê rakem>
asîma-ane."

(150) Ze'f dilê Memo ma, guhdarê e'zîz, agirê e'şqê li serê didaye. (151) *Tekrar* wiha gotê:

"Weke bareke qelpe bexte qîza mîreka-aney

Odê şehadê min û te her qur'aney

Gustîla tulfya li ser da nivîsiye Memê Ala-aney."

(152) Guhdarê e'zîz, wexta ku serê xwe rakir, Memo di, aqil ji ser çû, qîrîn hat ji kezêbê dane alê xwe awête pêsîra Memo, *efendim*, mabeyna niv see'tê nehişar ketne wê derê. (153) Herdu bi hevîra fabin, *tekrar* ser kanîya şadûrawan lehtîstî bi hev ra, hinday xebêrdan -- e -- go, "Memo, mi du baq gul kirîne, yek sor e, yek zêr e, heyran, ezê wan fierdu gulan ya sor destê min ê rastîye, ya zêr min ê çepî ye. (154) Ezê hawa bawêjim. Tu xwe bavêje gulan. Eker ku te baqa gulê sor girt, heyran, emê bi *dûnyayê* bigehene mirazê xwe, ama te ya destê min ya zêr girt, ya çepê, emê bin axretê bigehene mirazê xwe. (155) *Efendim*, di vî awayî dane gula xwe avêt, wexta ku avêt, *tesadûf* Memo ya zêr girt. (156) Wexta ku ya zêr girt, Memo piçektî dilê wî ma, jê ra go, "Mabîrab, ewê kime min te ye de ka xaliqê aliye wê çi binivîse?" Tesellî danê. (157) Xatirê xwe jihev hatin, Memo ji bajêr ... ji Xasbaxçê¹¹ ve ku derkeve, dîna xwe daye, bilbîlekî fût # belengaz # perîşan li ser gulê fûniştîye, wisa jê ra dixûnitin, ji kezêbê dilane. (158) Eywah! "Kûro," mi go, "Qey *dûnyayê* da *dertî* ez im. Heyran, ewe heywaneke ji min *dertî* ye." (159) Evê bilbilê ziman hat, go, "Memo, tu bidî xatirê xwedê, tu serê min û e'sqa gula min Zîne xwe da mi nekî, bibêje!" (160) Ka de ji bilbilê ra çi dibêje, guhdarê e'zîz:

Memo go, "Bilbila xweş bilbi-ilê,
Savdayê te yê min xweşti-irê,
Rengê Zîna min li gula te geşti-irê."

(161) Berê xwe da hat li mala Qeretajdîn. *Efendim*, evê rojê wisa kêfxweş bû, wisa ku subhîet kir ji Memê. Memê ji Me... Tajdîn¹² ra -- Qeretajdîn heft roja *sobbeta* Mem neçû dîwana Qeretajd -- e -- mîr Sêvdîn¹³. (162) Mîr Sêvdîn < > kelime, su'al kir, go, "Acaba Qeretajdîn çima naête dîwanê? Diqewimî tîştê ji me

¹¹He corrects himself.

¹²He corrects himself.

¹³He corrects himself

señ kiri bitin." (163) *Malûm* Qeretajdîn pehlewane wan biye, yanî xerecdarê¹⁴ miletê biye, daima pêşiya miletê ew biye, *başpehlewane* # mîr Sêvdîn e.

[[Interruption]] (164) "... xweş hatiye, *misafirê* min heye, ez îro neşeme, ez subê tem." Çûn e'ynî bi vî şeklî ji mîr ra got. (165) Mîr go, "Bila ev *misafirê* xwe bînin # dîwana min." (166) *Efendim*, evî fabi, Memo hilda, ew Memo tev çûne dîwana mîr. (167) "Esselamu e'lekum," "E'lekum esselam." Gazî kir, dîna xwe daye, fêqîqatençîqa Qeretajdîn metfîhê # Memo kirîye, wesfê # subhîeta (?subhîeta) # Memo, wesfê # xweşkûlîya ve bedewîya Memo, tukes nikare bide, guhdarê e'zîz. (168) Mîr Sêvdîn jî, heyran, wisanî aşîq bî, îdî ewqa[s]. (169) Memo go, "--Çend rîj *misafirê* te heye?" go, "Qeretajdîn?" "--Wellahî," go, "fêft rîj e." "--*Ûyleysê*" go, "Tu dizanî, fêft rîj e jî *misafirê* me bitin." (170) Qeretajdîn biselkîne "Ey," go, "Hayhay, tu zanî, mîrê min."

(171) *Efendim*, fêft rîjan ma *misafirê* mîr Sêvdîn. Weku ma *misafirê* mîr Sêvdîn, vêca fêrto ev û Zîne hev dibînin. (172) Kêf kêfa Memo ye, guhdarê e'zîz Memo ji xaliqê alîye tiştê wiha dixwe # di mala Zîne danê. Mîr Sêvdîn ew [bi] xwe ji Memo fêz biket, û bike *misafirê* xwe û fêrto bi Xasbaşçe da lihev hat *görüsmüş* bîn. (173) De ka dayîna xwedê ji kî ra dibê, guhdarê delalî?

(174) *Malûm*, guhdarê e'zîz [[Interruption]] -ne çiyayî fêv û nêçîrê. (175) *Malûm*, zamanê ku gone, "Memo # subê em diçne nêçîrê # temamê suwar suwar bîn bera xwe <dane # he qolekî we da>," (176) Guhdarê e'zîz, berê nêçîr <isa bûn> herdu dihev neçûn bibînin du qevlan, em bibêjin qevlek bi vî alî, yek bi vî alî | | noqta xwe dida dan orta wê noqtê danê bi hev ra *görüsmüş* dibin. (177) De ka kî nêçîr kirîye bi vî şeklî -- e -- herkesê nêçîra xwe nîşa dida. (178) Zamanê ku jê ra gotin, subê fêbûn, herkes suwar bûn, bera xwe dane çî herkes alîyekî va çû, ama Memo xwe nexweş êxist, hêla di nava çîya dane. (179) Wexta hêla nava çîyan, ev, Zîne di oda mîr Sêvdîn ra *görüsmüş* bî. *Al şeftalî, ver şeftalî, gel keyfîn, keyfîn gel* (180) <Dê da> mîr Sêvdîn <çwet> çiyayî digefe, Qeretajdîn ji qolê¹⁵ dihate, ewana herdu hatin bi hev ra *görüsmüş* bîn, go, "Ka Memo?" (181) "Wellahî," go, "*Mîrim*, Memo nexweş e, nehatiye." (182) "*Ûyleysê*" go, "bila bê Memo fêv û nêçîr ji min

¹⁴According to Bakaev, xercdar = a) tax-payer; b) head of an economic section or department.

¹⁵According to İzolî, çol = a military unit.

heram bit." E, *tekrar* dizivîfe. (183) Temam zivîfn hatin, *efendim*, bi şingîna suwara, Sittiyê xwe gîhande ber derê dîwanê, go, "Memo, mala te xirab e, wellahî mîr Sêvdîn [(interruption)] (184) ... temamê xulaman û xizmetkaran hespê wan kişandin, û Beko gel # mîr Sêvdîn # û Qeretajdîn ewana haftîne li dîwana mîr, (185) ama, guhdarê e'zîz, berê # *sobe* tunebûn, bixêrî hebûn, mêrkê maqûl axa begler daîma ber bixêrî ciyê germ bû, yanî di qulçê odê danê, bixêrî çêkiri bûn. (186) Memo jî # xweda ser doşeka mîr Sêvdîn e'bayê xo awête pişt xwe, Zîne awête li bin e'bayê, *efendim*, ewan go "Esselamu e'lêkum." (187) Memo kir ku ji ber fabe, go "E'lêkum esselam we rehîmetu llah û berekat, *mîrim* ." (188) Wexta ku kir fâbit, Zîne pa'ra kir, "Mala te xera nebit, tu çawa dikey, tê me fêzil key!" (189) Ama Beko E'wan zanî ku Zîne li 'bin kurkê Memo # di qulçê odê dane. (190) Evê fêjê jî, guhdarê e'zîz, *nöbetçiyê* odê Beko E'wan bî. Xulam bi *ya!* (191) Emir da xulamê mayî, go, "Çiqa darê palûtê¹⁶ ê *ya'zî* hene, hemû îro ji me ra bine. Axayê min ji faw û nêçîrê zivîfîye, cemidiye, ezê li odê germ kem." (192) Guhdarê e'zîz, dibê, wisa ode germ kirtye, Memo ji şerm û fedî german danê. (193) Dibê yek metre xtya Memo ji e'rdê da çûwe. Awayî gotina ku guhdaran me bihistî, guhdarê e'zîz. Memo ze'f mutefîerî, ze'f maxdûr ma. (194) Çend bendê farsî awêtne Qeretajdîn pê - - e -- nezani, guhdarê e'zîz, vêca ka wê çî şeklî ji birayê xwe Qeretajdîn ra bibêjît, wê çawa jê ra *anlamiş* biket, wê çawa fâbit biçitin *yardimê* bidete birayê xwe, guhdarê e'zîz, (195) em bi dîsa gotinê bibêjin:

Mem zêde bû bi xem û meta-ale
 Çû bal gote bira çî fîa-ale
 Ema bi îşaret û bi fîma
 Pîrsî ji Memê bira bi remz û fî-fîma
 Bi <tûner du k_____ ji mislê-êta>

¹⁶The following is information about the types of fuel burned in stoves in Armenia, which is basically the same region as that inhabited by the Kurds:

*The two basic forms of fuel available in Armenia were wood and dried dung. Wood burned longer and, if well seasoned, did not smoke very much; the villagers preferred it for the ojakh [=oven], but used it sparingly. Dried dung, called *goashgoor* [the form *keşkûr* exists in Kurdish; my note], burned hotter, but initially smoked a great deal and did not last long. ... Pine cones and dried weeds were also gathered and burned in place of scarce wood. Some oil and gas were available, but they were very expensive and were seldom used for fuel. ... Informant 3, from Kharzeet, said that walnuts, which were abundant in his community, were pressed for lamp oil." [Susie Hoogasian Villa & Mary Kilbourne Matossian. *Armenian Village Life Before 1914* (Detroit : Wayne State University Press, 1962). pp 34-51]

Rabe bi kevira cihad û xebe-at
 Zin maye di bin kurkê Memê-ê da-ya
 Memê maye bû xiyal û xemê-ê da.

(196) *Malûm* , dîsa ji *anlamiş* nebi Qeretajdîn, dîsa Memê wiha gote Qeretajdîn:

Go, "Bira, şev nîne, ro-øjê
 Yalt dijminya kê beden <diş xo jê>
 Düşer mufedey xûy ji bedenan davê-êje
 Tu rabe genc û malê zêfîn bisoje

(197) *Makim* , guhdarê e'ziz, zamanê ku ev *kelime* ji Qeretajdîn ra got, Qeretajdîn eser kir ji cigera wî, "Eywah," go, "Bira, em ketine tengastiyê" -- keztyê Zinê, di milê e'bayê da nişa Qeretajdîn da. (198) Qeretajdîn rabi, berê xwe da mala xwe, ka çi dibêje:

Zanî ko qewî xrab e-e efiwal
 Rabi bila ji bezê wî ço-o mal
 Wekî xezeb çûyî li de-erda,
 Zanî ko Sifiyê ligel xebe-er da
 Go, "Rabe Sifi li me bine-yengê
 fro me ligel cewahir û malê xwe cengê
 Bo min, bo te bes e Qur'an û mal nemanê.

(199) Sifiyê go, "Ser bête feraşî-îne
 Mela bixwînit Yasî-îne
 Bi danzde şîran xwîn bibet birî-îne
 Ez agir na, berdeme şaneşîne."
 Tajdîn go, "Sifi mesxe bi dil dilxebe-eran
 Memo û Zin kettye nava kitab û hîrf û tefsê-êran
 Bil ha yekane bo tîlne rabin Memo dane li xence-eran."

(200) Sifiyê go, guhdarê e'ziz,
 Sifi gote, "Tajdî-îne,
 Quranê kerîm¹⁷ ji mal derî-îne

¹⁷On the tape it sounds like "Kelamê qedîm" = 'the old songs'

Memo aşiq e, me'şûqa wî Zî-îne
Tajdîn ji Memo tu zamanan xayîn nî-îne
Qurane kertm li mal derfne,

Bila bitin Memo qurbana Memo landika kuffî-îne."

- (201) Agir girt ber xanûma-anan
Wan kirin gazi û <çima> fîxa-anan
Aqreba û qewm û mile-et hat
Wan kirin ecayîbeke pîr xe-ebat
Aga weku mîrî [or u kû li mîre] xulama-ane
Xalî kirin ev seray û bûsta-ane,
Ev jî ko bi Zîna vê hewa-ane
Memê maye heyîr, gote ya-ane:
(202) "Rabe, tu here heremsera-ayê
Da ez biçime agir û nîda-ayê."
Esbab û tamam û defî-îney
Emlak û cewahir û xezi-îney
Cumle di rîya bira da so-otin
Navê wî heta niha qenci têtê go-otin
Agir berdaye xanûma-ane
Cewab gehîşte mîrê Bota-ane
Hatî hewara şêherê zama-ane
Tajdîn xilas kirîye Zîne û Memê Ala-ane.

(203) Zamanê ku agir berda <derbanê> xwe, <guîm> bi dîwana mîr ket,
guhdarê e'ziz, gol, "Agir girtîye derbanê Qeretajdîn, Nestiran
[end of side one of tape]

[[interruption]] (204) ...ti ji me ji wefa gottîye, guhdarê e'zîz, <sê dan nika vê
bandê> işkal bike, tamam haftîne hewarê, mîr jî hat, Memo jî xwe nexweş êxist bi
evê rojê *ya!* Ew jî rabi pişt têtê mal, ku bêtê hewarê, ama Beko E'wan xwe li salona
odê danê, heyran, mabî guhdarî (205) Zamanê ko Zîne li bin e'bayê derket hat çû
heram- -- e -- oda xwe -- heramserayê¹⁸ # haftîne odê danê, di hewşê danê, Beko
herdu dîtin, (206) "E-e-e!" go, "Memo! Ez Beko me, qey min nedizani Zîne li bin

¹⁸He corrects himself

e'bayê li pişt te bû!" (207) Kuŕo go, "Beko, tu bi xatirê xwedê, lawo, bela xwe ji me wihla ket. Tu çî ji me dixwazî? <Bihne>, lawo, em bigehene miraza xwe." (208) Go, "Te *ezîyet* daye qîza min, fieta ku ji destê min be, e nahêlim, Memo." (209) Ama Memo hate fiiddetê, *demirek* çawa avêt, parasiyeke *Bekir efendî* li wê derê şknan. (210) *Bekir efendî* di vê parasiya şkestî berê xwe da, çû mala xwe. Bila stuyê wî jî şkestiya hingî! (211) Çû mala xwe, heft roja sil bî, guhdarê e'zîz, nehate diwana mîr Sêvdîn. (212) Mîr Sêvdîn jî ze'f ji wî Bekirî! hez kir, -- yanî merfekî direwîn bû, ze'f <mekşeta> wî xweş bû, millet jê hez dikir. (213) Cewab şand, go, "Ca bêjne, Bekir bila bê, heft roja ka ev çima naêtin?" (214) Çû bal wî go, "Mîr Sêvdîn divê bila bête diwanê." "Ko hefe serê mîr Sêvdîn bixu gel mîrantîya wî. Ez naême diwanê, çûnke ez mêrkê go *şereffî* me, ez bêşeref nînim." (215) Kuŕo êca "Çima" go, "lao?" <Bekir? go> "Evî înadîya bo <wey> înadîya mala xwe he(z) ji Zîne dike: wîjdana mîlîni *tafiammûl* naket: fieta ku ew li wê derê bitin, ez naême diwana wî." (216) Çûn jê fê gotin. Mîr hate fiiddetê, "Yo! Ewa çî ye Bekir dibêje?" (217) Gazî Bekir kir, go, "Beko, *eğêr* tu subê <t> nekî serê te lêdim." (218) "Hay hay!" go, "a'xayê min! *Tecrûbe* bike!" go, "Tu, Memo, hûn *satranç* bileyzin, mabeyna # bîst û çar deqîqe <bira> ez <bênim/deynim>. Niv see'tê de go ez vî <we so> bikim. *Eğêr* ku min ne<bêna>, serê mi ji te fê hehal bitin! Hay hay!" go. (220) Mîr hate fiiddetê, 'aciz bî, êdî nego 'Hej xûşka te Zîne diket,' navê jina mîr Sêvdîn jî Zîn bû, navê xûşka wî jî Zîn bû, guhdarê e'zîz! (221) Ka wê -- e -- mîr Sêvdîn çawa gazî bike, guhdarê e'zîz.

(222) Mîr go, "Memê!"

Go, "Can!"

Go, "fro ez dixazim, ez tû em satrancek bileyzin."

(223) " *Mîrim* ," go, "Hay hay! Tu çawa hez bikey! ... Em çawa bileyzin?"

Go, " *Yalnız* ," go, "şandilxaz (şamdilxaz?)"

"Ser çavê *mîrim* !"

(224) Ve mîr bi luxatê xwe stiranê wiha gote, guhdarê e'zîz:

Mîr fêbû, hate şaneşî-îne

Nêzik e serayê nazenî-îne

Rûnişt we gote pêşikaran:

(225) "Hûn gazî ken li bo -- li bo ya-aran

Tenha ji mîr Memê bixwî-înin

Tajdîn li gel bira nexwî-înin

fro li Memê ezê xede-eb (bi)ke-em

- Sûcekî wî heye ezê ede-eb ke-em
 (226) Mîr gote Memê bi kîn û ke-erbê
 "tro me li gel te ceng û fie-erbê
 Rabe were ji mîr miqa-abil
 Bêşik bi te ra ez im mica-adil
 Şertê mi gel te ê serfi-iraz
 Herçî te divêye ji boy di-ixaz."
 (227) Hem sohbet <sûhmet> û hem demê Memê-ê bû-û [boyu?]
 Hem şahî wî hem xemê Memê-ê bû-ûn [bo wan?]
 Wan kîrn tekelim û xeberdan
 Anîne kişik û texta ji de-erdan
 Sê dest birin ji mîr tema-amî
 Mihsid vegefîya ji wî meqa-amî
 (228) Beko binêr çî fiîle ra-akir
 Ew sufa xef bû ji mîr beya-an kir
 Rex û fil û kerkekan ku ha-atin
 Dîn mîr û mu'allimê xwe ma-at in
 Wan dî ku Memo bi pend û ba-azê
 (229) Bekir go, "Te *mîrim* du destê ta-azê"
 Bekir go, " *Mîrim* , leyîz kene dest bi do-oy-orin,
 Ya qenc ew e tu Memê cihan li hev bigo-oîin."
 Mîr rabû hate çiyê Memê-ê ca-y-ar [=car]
 Mem rabû hate çiyê Zîn lê dîyar.

(230) *Efendim* , zamanê ku bi vî şeklî Beko E'wan çî bi wan dane gofîndandinê [sic], heya ku sê dest -- e -- ve Memo ji mîr bir çû, ev car pişta wî li pencerê bû. (231) Wexta ku ewan çî li hev guhurîn (goîin?), çavê Beko E'wan jî fiîle bû. (232) *Efendim* , zamanê ku çî li hev guhurîn, Memo ewha serê xwe kir, dîna xwe daye pencere li jor, yanî şebek jor tê xuyanê. (233) Beko rabî, çû, gote Zînê, go, "Zînê", go, "Mala te bişewite, derkewe li pencerê, hey mala bavê te şewitin. (234) Memo Z- -- e -- mîr Sêvdînê birayê te çîqa xweş kişkê <delal> bileyzin. Bide xatirê xwedê, tu bihnekê naê seyr/seh nakey?" (235) *Efendim* , çû xapan îna, ha dana <te> pencerê. Zamanê ku Zînê wiha lê mêze kir, çavê Memo ma li Zînê, Zînê dît, a-qil ji serê

Memo çû. (236) Memo êdî # ji kişkan bêxeber ma: daîma # fîfza wî, çawê wî ma li kulek û li pencera. (237) Gu[h]darê e'zîz, bêje ka bi stiranê emê çawa ji we fîa bêjin:

Çawê Memo dît nazik û nazenî-îne
 Fîl û feres ji destê xwe dertî-îne
 Çawê Memo ma li kulek û şûşe şebe-ekan
 Evê mabxirabê hespê xwe avête dewsa wan peya-akan
 Mîr bir ji Memê tamam şeş de-estek
 Ji e'sqa Zîné, Memo biye se-erme-y-est [=sermest]

(238) Guhdarê e'zîz, şeş dest mîr tamamî ji Memo bir çû. (239) Ama, mîr ji Memo fîez diket, di vê awayê danê ku şeş dest jê bir çû, mîr dîsa gote, go, "Memo! Daxaza xwe bixwaze!" (240) Ama, di vî *arayî* danê, Beko E'wan dîsa çû, gote Zîné, go, "Mala bavê te bişewite, tu qîz î, tu şerm nakî, tu fedî nakî? Tu here bila hendek xanima mezin bê li wan temaşe ketin." (241) *Efendim*, go, "Subê tê biçî malan <xendivê> te -- e -- dibêje xûşka mîr Sêvdîn e # dihere, şerm e, bila xanima mezin bêtin!" Yanî, jina mîr Sêvdîn. (242) Çû, go, "Xanima mezin, çîqa xweş dileyzin, ew herdu! Tu behnekê seyr bike, tu bi xatirê xwedê! Çîma? Got[în]a min neşkin!" (243) *Malûm*, xapan îna ev dana şûna (şîna) Zîné. Navê wê Jin [=Zîn] e, ama jina mîr Sêvdîn e. (244) We mîr Sêvdîn wiha gote Memo, dîsa, guhdarê e'zîz:

Mîr gote, "Memo, meleyîz di-îlxaz!"
 Mem gote, " *Mîrim*, te çî ye da-axaz?"
 Mîr gote, "Memê, xerez nema-a lê-ye,
 Mexset[la] te çî ye bi keşf û fîa-alê."

(245) Dîsa mîr gotê da:

"Şertê min ewe ew: Tu [bidî min?] Zî-îné."

(246) Guhdarê e'zîz, zamanê ku ev *kelîme* got, mîr Sêvdîn serê xwe fîakir, jina xwe Zîné di pencerêda dît, (247) "Ey!" go, "Qeda bi qelpebextê însanê wî zamanî" go, "însanê şîrê xammêfî daîma wiha bêe'sl e," go. (248) Hêyran, "me çawa kir mezin ji te mêze dikir, ewê jî hat fîeta wê derecê tu ji namûsa mêranê xebera dibêjî. (249) Kufo, niha wa Zîn jina min e, hey mala te neşewite!" Hêyata fîers û fîiddetê (250) mîr Sêvdîn ka wê çî bibêjîtin:

Mîr ... [[interrupted]]

(251) " *Mîrim* ," go, "ya qenc ew e tu û Qeretajdîn lihev werin; Qeretajdîn tu bişîne xeracê salê li ciyekî *başçe* em ê bigirin Memo bi vî çaxî bavêjne zîndanê, fieta ew bê wê ew jî bimire(w). (252) Bi vî şeklî, tu dikarî, *yoksa birden* tu rabî Memo -- e -- vinda bikey qarîşî bibe Qeretajdîn ze'f jê fiêz diketin ve qîre me temama bînitin." (253) "Wellahî," go, "Tu baş dibêjî. *En iyisi* me wisa kir." *Tekrar* hatin, hev hatin # dîsa bîna berê subhîatê xwe kirin. (254) Rabû Qeretajdîn emir kir, go, "Tê herf filanderê xeracê salê." (255) Tajdîn <sanê> xeracê salê; wana girtin, destê Memo girtin, awêtne zîndanê, guhdarê e'ziz. (256) Zîdana kevir¹⁹ e, Zîne ah û fîgan kir, şew nema, rîj nema, çû xwe gehande ewanê ku li binê -- e -- e'rdêda leşma lêdin, du hebê leşemçiyê başê ku wiha *çevik*, *etendim*, suf -- e -- weşart, dîtin fiçeçê wa zêde-zêde dayê. (257) Bi rîj keşîfî kirin -- e -- zîdana Memo fieta mêr bê li oda Zînedâ <de kew ka> çend metrêye. (258) Bi vî şeklî di oda Zînedanê lêdan leqem, çûn gihîştne # zîdanê bal Memo. (259) Wexta gehîştne bal Memo, Memo dîna xwe daye li binê e'rdê xirta-xirta ê tê wi deng ê tê go, "Wellahî ewe hebe-nebe li binê e'rdê danê cenawirek e behna însan kirîye <hat ke>, elbet rîja min wihaye <şakir e> ji enrê xwedê ra, guhdarê e'ziz."²⁰ (260) Wexta ku dîna xwe da hat, "Wesselamû e'lêkum ya Memo" "We e'lêkum essalam bira," go, "Tu kîyî? Tu jî bîna min ketî zîndanê?" (261) Go, "Tu îşê xwe mêze ke!" Heyran Zîne Memo di vê zîndanê danê - awayî gotina riwayeta me bihistî, guhdarê e'ziz -- dibê, Memo # tam # deh mehan wisa xweyî kir, çawa ku <gürüt> ku têda bêxweyî kimê. (262) Deh mehan rabî Beko, rîjokî çû, go, "Kuŕo, wa deh meh e. *Acaba* niha Memo nemirîye?! Ez rabim biçime ser Memo, ka fiwalê wî çiyê, niha mirîye?!" (263) Çû ser derê birê, go, "Memo!" Go, "Çi dibêjî le'în?" Go, "Hâlê te keyfa min?" Go, "<Te bê di bin zêr mêrkê> zîndanê me." (264) Ama # zîndanê Memo wisa ne, heyran, ji derwe *daha fazla* dihatiye xweyî kirinê." (265) Çû bal mîr, go, " *Mîrim* !" Go, "Can!" Go, "Mêrê girtîyan <bi gîre> *beslemiş* dikey, yan girtîyan <bi gîre> ze'îf dibe, dimire?" (266) "Ev çi xeber?" go, "Here, mala te şewite," go, "Memo wisa xweyî tu dikey tu e'yn bê> kurê <kodêran> e." (267) Memo li wê derê dîsanê bi şeytaniya Beko derxistin, avêtin zîdana kevir.

¹⁹This is probably a mistake for Zîdana dar[în] = 'a wooden dungeon,' as Mem is later transferred to a Zîdana kevir = 'a stone dungeon.' Moreover, this would agree with what happens in many other versions.

²⁰[It was my decision to put the closing quotation marks here.

(268) Zîné tu *kere* li zîndana kevir da nedît, guhdarê e'ziz, mabeyna mehekî danê. (269) Ew zaman [?zilam] wisa lê hat, tek hestî-post ma. Tek hestî-post ma, yanzde mehê Qeretajdîn derbaz bî, bî meha danzde, zivîrî hat, cewab dane # Mîr Sêvdîn, go, "Qeretajdîn ji # xeracê salê zivîrî." (270) Beko xwe gehande -- e -- Mîr Sêvdîn, go, " *Mîrim!* " Go, "Çîye?" Go, " *Mîrim* , tu zanî -- e -- Memo fiej î dike, fiej kijan Zîné?" (271) Go, "Ne fiej jinê dike?" "Na," go, "Mîrê min, fiej xûşka ... [taped over] go, "Memo fiej jina te nake, fiej xûşka te Zîné dike." (272) "Hey," go, "Mala te bişewite, ya! Kufo, mabîrab, ewqas jî bêbextî dibe! Te fieta niha çima nedigote me? (273) Me ewqas ezîyet da wî însanê hanê! Kufo, " go, "cewabê bidne Zîné, bila du fieb def û zume hilde, here ji xweîa Zîn -- e -- Memo derfînit!" (274) Cewab dane Zîné, go, "Mîr Sêvdînê birayê te # gotîye 'Bila # du fieb def û zume hilde, min # Zîné da Memo, bila biçit Memo ji xweîa derfînit!' " (275) *Malûm ya! Kêfa Zîné xweş bi!* Râbû, du fieb şande pey [?pêş] du fieb -- e -- *dawûlcî* hatin # ewana bi def û zurnê lê dîlxin # ku herin Memo ji binê birê da derfînin. (276) Beko li wê derê dîsa le'întîyê kir, çû li ser birê sekîni ser zîndanê, go, "Memo!" Go, "Çi dibêjî, le'în?!" (277) Hin go "Memo! Mizgîniya mi li te! Me Zîné da mêr. Ha Zîné wê niha bi def û zume bê li ser derê birê ji te xatîrê xwe bix(w)aze hefe." (278) "E," go, "Le'îni! Heya niha te <bera xweş me [?xwe ji me] na wekî> fieyran xwedê bila bi serfirazî mirazê wan bike. Bila <xweş ma wek ez> binê birêda *zaten* mîrîme." (279) Ama qelbê Memo ma li ser dengê dawûlê. Wextekî dîna xwe daye, dengê dawûlê hajê [?fiejê] li tê, guhdarê e'ziz, bi rîwayet ku me bihîstî, em ji weîa dibêjin, fieta ku dengê dawûlê lêdixe, rûh ji qalip *aynînuş* dibit. (280) Gehîşt ser derê [?devê] birê, Zîné # ji Memoîa go, "Memo!" Go, "Can!" Go, "Ez hatime te derfînim." (281) "Ey," go, "Mala te bişewite! Tu nehatî min derfîni!" (282) We wiha gotêdanê:

"Memo ez hatime te derfînim
Sebra dilê xwe bibînim
Hesreta deh salan bê biînim."

(283) Memo çend bendê farsî avêtin, yanî got, Zîné jê fe'm nekir, *tekrar* wiha gotê:

"Ey," gotê, "Xatûn Zîn, tu nehatî min derfîni,
Tu hatî xatîrê xwe li min bix(w)azî, belê rûfia şîrîn ji qalip
bikesî-îni."

(284) Guhdarê e'zîz, zamanê ku # du heb # awêtin binê birêda Memo ji zîndanê <deynadin> derxistine li ser -- e -- rûyê *dûnyae* # cewab dane Qeretajdîn. (285) Wexta ku Qeretajdîn *görmîş* e şehertîda bû, ama jêfa gotin, go, "Beko bi le'îniya xwe birayê te awêtne zîndanê, lakin Zînê çû teze ji zîndanê da daynin." (286) Ewî dibê bi riwayeta ku me bihistî, heta gehîşte li ser derê zîndanê, sed heb Bekir kuştin, navê wan Bekir hê negehandiye Bekirê # E'wan yanî, Beko E'wan. (287) Qeretajdîn ze'f ji Memo hez [dî]kir, go, "Êda xwedê heçî kesek ku navê wî Beko be, ez lêdim bikujim." (288) *Efendim*, zamanê derxistine li ser derê [?devê] birê, xaliqê aliye emaneta xwe jê stand, yanî teqdir mu'ada wî tamam bî, wefat kir. (289) Birayê wî Qeretajdîn gehîşte, dana di nawa -- e -- tabûtekî dar ser serê xwe gefand. (290) Ewî zilamî <êdan merê berê sû xwar> go, "Heta ku li bedena <badûnê> Memo nê, ez ewî -- e -- cenaze li ser serê xwe nadanim e'rdê." (291) Şew roj girîya û kaliya, Beko E'wan dîsa şeytanîyeye mezin li wê derê kir, fâbî, çû [çol] ba li pîrekê, go, "Pîrê, tu fabe, kerkonekî feş, çend heb qalibê sabûnê sipî bi her li derê <çemê setê> Cizirê, û, *efendim*, ewî kerkonê feş sabûnê bi serda [?serfa] bihesû. (292) *Sayet* Qeretajdîn hate li berde derbaz bî wê *mufteqeqeq diqqeta* wî bikêşe, çûnkî tiştê feş sipî nabe. Wê ew ji te fâ bibêje wiha zamanê ku Qeretajdîn wiha ji te fâ go, tu jî bibê, 'Mala te neşewite, te diye qe mêrkê mirî fabe? Wekî ku ewa feş e, sipî nabe, *âyeyse* ew mirîye ser serê te jî mirîye, fanabe.'

(293) Bi teşîfqa wî evê fâbî wisa <ki pîrê ko kerkutaneke> feş hilda çû li ber setê Cizirê sekînî, du heb sabûnê sipî serda hejandin. (294) *Efendim*, Qeretajdîn hat derbaz bî, *diqqeta* wî kêşa, dîna xwe daye < > pîrekê bê aqil li ber derê -- e -- çem rûniştiye *efendim* sabûnê li ser kerkonê feş dibe fîne.

(295) "Yaw," go, "Pîrê bidî xatirê xwedê, ewa çi heş e ji te? Ewe feş e, sipî nabe, tu sabûnê ser <dibî tîfî>."

(296) "Ê," go, "Madem tu ze'f zana yî, de ka ji xwe binhêre mirîye ser serê te jî mirîye, qe fanabe." *Malûm*, bi emrê xaliqê aliye bî.

(297) "Hâqîqaten," go, "Tu fâst dibêjî."

fîna hat birayê xwe bir çû. Bi e'zîzî defîn kir, bir çû mezela. (298) *Efendim*, Zînê çend gotinê xwe pê fâ gotin. De ka çawa dibêje. (299) Piştê mirina Memo dilê wê ze'f şewitî, ama bi riwayetêkê dibêjin çil rojan, bi riwayetêkê dibêjin çil sae'tan <ser> maye, heqîqîya wê her xwedê dizanîtê, guhdarê e'zîz, (300) lakin Zînê wiha jê fâ digo:

Go, "Memo < rûya > mi şehîd mi ro-ojan,
 Memo li ser *dûnyayê* < ne ve kir û beden > pişko-ojan,
 De'nê Memo têda mirtnê gel me de'nê navro-ojan."

- (301) Zîn go, "< Hûrfiya > mi şehîde berwa-arê,
 Li ser *dûnyayê* ne gote min ya-arê
 Himmet [?Hürmet] da min < moye > mîne mezin de'nê Memo
 çoye neghme de'nê êva-arê."

(302) *Efendim*, zamanê ko min bi vî şeklî çend gotinê xwe jê ra gotin, *malûm*
 , Qeretajdîn < > ji boy Memo gelek *hüzûnlû*, gelek *derîf*, gelek *mahzûn* bf. (303)
 Bi riwayeta ku me bihistî, em ji we ra bêjin, guhdarê e'zîz, Zîné ji emrê xwedê d
 anî, dibe ku zamanê # Zîné jî bir çûn defin biken, ew fiêrdû 'aşîq ba li hev # defin
 kirin, guhdarê e'zîz. (304) Li ser mezelan -- em dibê(n) ziyaretan -- çavê Qeretajdîn bi
 Beko E'wan ket. (305) Ve Qeretajdîn dilî wî ze'f şewitî, ka çî jê ra go:

"< Ra > Beko le'n serê bi < me-esan >
 Jehîriye dene di ta-asan
 Baisê aşîq û meqsed û mira-azan."

(306) Qeretajdîn dibê wisa hate fiiddetê, guhdarê e'zîz, dibê: gehîşte Beko,
 niyeta wî ew bî, minanê rûya < por séwî / pol séwî > li serê da # bine, ama ewî çaxê
 weta [=?wexta] fakir bi fiêrs û fiiddeta wusan e'rdêda dibê parçiyê -- e -- Beko E'wan
 rabû ji hewa ve. (307) Guhdarê e'zîz, dibê ev çaxê *tabî ki* me çawa ku bihiste, em ji
 we ra dibêjin. (308) Ewa ne fiêrfa Qur'anê ku *yanîş* bitin, me çawa bihistî *malûm*,
 em jî ji we ra dibêjin. (309) Dibê ev çaxê xwîna wî wisa dibê pekya çûye ketiye *ara*
 Memo û Zîné an hat derîyeke orta < hevkan > dibê, şîn dibe. *Tabî*, min nedîye,
 guhdarê e'zîz.

(310) Riwayeta Memo û Zîné bi vî şeklî -- e -- *sonda* xudê -- e -- selamê xwe li
 ser temamê guhdara bike, guhdarê e'zîz -- e -- *malûm*, me me'zûr bibinin, (311)
 hikaya Memo û Zîné me çawa bihistî, me wisa ji we ra got -- e -- xwedê selametîya
 me we, Memo û Zîné fiêdîsa wê bi dengê [... ..] daîma in [=hûn] dikarin [... ..] da ji
 xwe ra hildin. (312) Reñime li dê û babê gotî û guhdarê e'zîzê xwe detê ê ku -- e --

goti jê guhdarê e'zîz, em xweş tev dikin bi xatirê we û silam li ser we temama bit <isa>.

[MC-1] [translation]*

< *Tempo: slow and deliberate, pausing(#) often*

(1) Now we are in the province of Van in the quarter of [...]¹, and we will tell the dear listeners to the best of our knowledge: May peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah and his blessings.²

(2) [Memo was the son of the king of Merghebzemin, his father's name was Al-pasha. Al-pasha was the ruler of a kingdom, dear listeners, he was a pasha.

(3) Zîn was the daughter of emirs, that is, the sister of mîr Sêvdîn -- she had no father³ -- she lived with her brother -- the sister of mîr Sêvdîn, in the city of Jezira Bohtan. This nobleman was from the [line of] rulers of Jezira Bohtan.

(4) My lord, see how God's works come together. (5) Work is very hard for mortals⁴, but for God it is so easy, it is nothing, dear listeners.

(6) As is known⁵, once there was one in love in the city of Merghebzemîn, and there was one also in the city of Jezira Bohtan. (7) As is known, dear listeners, by the will of the creator on high, what we have heard⁶ from the nobles, we can offer you in this form, and you may listen to it.

(8) (He says)⁷ one day in his sleep, Memo saw Zîn from Jezira Bohtan. This dream came to Mem like a messenger. (9) In this manner, dear listeners, first we will begin [by telling] how they came together.

* Underlined words are in Turkish in the original

¹ Withheld to protect the identity of the teller.

² This blessing is in Arabic

³ i.e., her father was dead.

⁴ =lit. 'slaves'

⁵ or 'of course' or 'obviously'. This is Turkish malûm/ malûm, from Arabic ma'lûm معلوم.

⁶ =lit. 'the hearing which we have heard'

⁷ Beginning a new thought with an untranslatable 'he says' or 'he said' is very common.

(10) (He said) [it is] evening on the mountains,
Two angels from heaven pass night and day in the diwan,
By order of the creator on high they brought [her] and put [her] down in
the city of Merghebzemin, in the room of Memê Alan.

(11) My lord, when Zîn went to sleep, they put her in Memê Alan's diwan.
[When] Mem wakes up and opens his eyes⁸, he sees a houri from paradise sitting in
hi's diwan ... By God! (12) Mem says, "Lwonder is this a dream or is it real? <Heya t bû
xebitî dîne> by God it is true.

< *Tempo: faster, few pauses* >

(13) He⁹ said, "What person are you? Why have you come to my abode?" She
said, "Strange man, why have you come to my room, to my abode?"

(14) As is known, they asked each other 'Who are you?' [She] said, "I am the
sister of mîr Sêvdtin, my name is Zîn." She asked him 'Who are you?' [He] said, "I am
Memê Alan, the son of the king of Merghebzemin."

(15) As is known, they argued: this one said, "It's my room," that one said, "It's
my room."

(16) "In that case," [he] said, "As long as you say 'I am the sister of mîr Sêvdtin,
as is known, it is reasonable to assume if someone is a pasha, he will have viziers and
ministers, boys -- that is -- servant boys. If you are a princess, as is known, you have
maidservants. (17) You call your maidservant, I'll call my servant boy. If my servant
boy comes, then it is you who have come to my room. (18) If my servant boy doesn't
come, but your maidservant does, then I have trespassed we will beg forgiveness of
one another." He said, "Call [your servant], you have my word."

(19) And this is how Zîn called:

"Oh, Servant of mine named Melek Rihan,
Melek Rihan, bring me a handful of flowers,

⁸=lit. "opened his eyes from sleep"

⁹Heyran, =lit. "amazed, in awe, admiring", apparently can go untranslated.

Today a prince is visiting me¹⁰."

(20) She called three times, dear listeners, [but] no one came. (21) She said, "Melek Rihan has not come, fine fellow, Memo," she said, "You call your servant boy." It was Mem's turn.

(22) This is how Mem called:

"Servant of mine named Bengîn,
My servant who is a very loyal fellow,
Bring me basin and pitcher,
Don't let me miss my two prostrations of morning prayers."

(23) Bengîn was dumbfounded, he was. He said, "My lord," he gave advice, "By God," he said, "I'll tell his father to marry him off. (24) The love of marriage has gone to his head. He has been wasting¹¹ time. He doesn't know what time of night it is. At twelve o'clock who ever heard of missing the two prostrations of morning prayers?"

(25) The servant boy Bengîn answered:

"Memo," Bengîn said, "Memo, you poor thing, don't you see,
It's nighttime, midnight, and no time for washing hands¹²."

(26) When his servant boy answered, Zîn was dumbstruck. "My Lord!" she said, "In truth no one can comprehend your works." (27) She knew that [she was at] the diwan of Memê Alan, [3] as is known, by the will of the creator on high, they had been brought together, in this manner. (28) But, dear listeners, when the prophet Khidir, Khidir Eylas [had] those two fellows -- [remember] the two angels from heaven I mentioned earlier? -- when they brought [Mem and Zîn] together, at that very moment, a ship in the Black Sea got into danger, and requested help from God [and] from those fellows, [so] both of them went to help them. (29) [When] they went there,

¹⁰-lit "is a guest to me."

¹¹ or losing

¹²i.e., the ritual ablutions performed before prayer, according to Islamic practice.

the two of them, Mem and Zîn, remained with each other. Zîn, who knew now that it was his room, yielded to him.

(30) Mem once again called his servant boy Bengîn like this:

"(He said) Bengîn my boy open the door, and see with your own eyes, [What] tomorrow morning will be discussed in the diwan of the nobles, For the sake of God, you are my witness, so don't deny Memê Alan's beloved."

(31) The servant by Bengîn opened the door, [and] saw a houri from paradise who in truth could not be denied. (32) "My Lord!" he says, "the sun is not shining, it is just her radiance." As is known, the beauty of Mem and Zîn is famous, dear listeners. (33) The two of them stayed in the room and chatted. At that moment they exchanged rings and handkerchiefs. (34) After they exchanged them, they were going to bed, [when Mem] said, "By God, you and I have been brought together¹³, but deceit must not come between us. (35) The Quran is between us, the Quran is our witness, may there be no deceit between us. They put a sword between them, dear listeners, and went to sleep. (36) When they had gone to sleep, the prophet Khidir, Khidir Eylas, said, "I have brought these two naive¹⁴ people together: now get up, if they go against God's command, we will burn in hellfire." (37) They came and saw that the two were in truth sleeping once again as [in] a dream. (38) They took Zîn from the city of Merghebzemin and put her in her own room¹⁵. They put her in her own room in Jezira Bohtan. Zîn opened her eyes and looked about: no man, no Mem, there was no one there, but on her finger was a ring with Mem's name written on it. (39) Memo opened his eyes and woke up¹⁶ and looked around, but the houri he had seen was not around. Good heavens! (40) He said, "Who did it? Who did it? My servant boy Bengîn did it! Besides God, Bengîn and me, no one knows about my secret. (41) The

¹³-lit. "have reached each other"

¹⁴According to Khamoian, the expression isanê sirê xammêtt (-lit. "people who have sucked raw milk") means 'rough, crude, unpolished.'

¹⁵-lit. "in the room of Zîn."

¹⁶-lit. "opened up his eyes [from] sleep"

[only] one who saw her was Bengîn. Surely whoever did this was Bengîn!" He called his servant boy Bengîn.

(42) Dear listeners, what did he say to him?

Mem said, "Bengîn, good Bengîn,
Last night I saw you; bring me the lady,
If you don't, get up <ku topê çaw hinde> find a way to save your
head¹⁷."

(43) As is known, dear listeners, just look at God's work! Memo <minane xewnekî wetî>, "The servant boy Bengîn cannot deny it, he saw her with his own eyes!" (44) He knows that the ardor of love had come over Memo. Memo did not know that this had happened by divine command. His sense, up to that point, dear listeners, <had not been asked>. As is known, it is by God's command. (45) The fellow [=Bengîn] ran to Mem's father. Mem's father was Al-Pasha. [Bengîn] said, "Al-Pasha, ha-a-a! This is your son's story; Yes, let me tell [you], I haven't seen it with my own eyes, but this matter has come to pass through God's will! Give me command over the city, my children are small, in the heat¹⁸ of love, Memo wants to chop off my children's ... my head; my children will be wretched and miserable." (46) [Al-Pasha] said, "An order is an order, my boy Bengîn." (47) The servant boy Bengîn sent heralds to go announcing throughout the city that "Everyone who has a daughter whose age is over eleven, [and] those women who(m) we call *widows* who are young in age should sell all they have and dress them up, then let them pass by the palace of the father of ... let them pass by the palace of the son of the king. (48) Whoever Mem gives his apple to, will become his wife¹⁹. (49) _____ Eighty year-old women, out of excitement, put on their kerchiefs, put on their headscarves, sold what they had in the market, and adorned themselves [to look] like girls. (50) Each one said, "If I am lucky, the apple might land on my head, and I could become the wife of Memê"

¹⁷This line is unclear from 'get up' onward. ZK-3 has the following at this point: "... You are my servant, you are always at my doorway, everything -- be it jinn or fairy -- that is inside, must have passed by you. Go and get her! *If you don't, you will see a great tragedy with you own eyes!*"

¹⁸=lit "fire"

¹⁹=lit "he will take her for himself."

Alan, the son of the king of Merghebzemin!" They took them in front of the palace. (51) Mem saw [only] Zin, a houri from paradise, all the rest passed by him like an Arab woman with cracked lips.

(52) Once again he said to Bengin,

Mem said, "Bengin, good Bengin,
The entire group of girls is gathering
You will make them pass by my room, and you will [do something to]
Mem the senseless one,
_____ his girls will fool all of Merghebzemin.

(53) What a pity! Mem paid no attention, dear listeners. (54) He [=Bengin] got up and went and threw himself at Al-pasha, saying, "Today give into my hands the control of the city." (55) "Gladly," he said, "Bengin my boy, if you can find out who my son loves, it is yours to rule." (56) He had the town heralds announce: "To day Al-pasha and his troops wil go out riding. Anyone who wishes to volunteer, may join us."

(57) Some horsemen mounted their steeds and headed for the wilderness. (58) Bengin went and said to Mem, "Memo!" [Mem] said, "Yes?" (59) [Bengin] said, "Memo, your father has gone after your beloved with a troop of soldiers!" **Well!** now Mem was delighted, [and] his sense came back to him. (60) His horse's name is Bor. Let's see, Bor was always in the stable, he has never seen the light of day. That animal was chained up all the time. (61) He (=Mem) put his cloak on over his head, in the heat of passion he did not notice the chains, he did not know that chains were on his [horse's] legs. (62) In this manner he mounted his horse and headed for the wilderness, to catch up with his father's troops, to bring back Memo's beloved. (63) He headed for the horsemen, [and] they all turned back. [But] that poor soul, with the heat of love in his head, did not turn back. (64) Let's say that he went on for quite a bit. All the troops turned back. (65) Bengin's heart was burning with pity, he said, "The creator on high has taken him on this trip, but my lord <merpekê xira[ø/m/b] bîne>, may I lose my head (?). (66) He got on his horse, set out, efendim, went and caught up with Memo. (67) When he reached Mem, he said, "Peace be upon you, Mem." [Mem] turned and said, "And upon you be peace, welcome!"

(68) And he said in song:

"And peace be upon you, o Mem, my soul,
 May Bengîn's head be a sacrifice to his children,
 Just so long as Mem doesn't take to the roads
 _____ may it not be without master."

(69) Mem was angered, he answered as follows:

"He said, _____ fickle luck of the boys,
 You have seen Mem's beloved with your own eyes
 Because of [my] love for Zîn, I have taken to the highway
 Boy, you turn around and go [home] _____"

(70) At the same time that he said that to him in that way, Beko, no – I mean Bengîn the boy was very moved and said, "My Lord, may Lask forgiveness, as is known. <ji biçûkan xeta, ji mezinan êda>. (71) Thus with his horse in chains the whole time, he went on like that for another three or four days. (72) Mem does not know where the city of Jezira Bohtan is; how will he get there, how will Mem find it? (73) Although it seems like a big deal to Memo, it is nothing for the creator on high, dear listeners! (74) The men went on a while, but the chains cut the horse's feet. (75) Bengîn the boy thought to himself, "I'll say to Mem, 'My dear boy, it was not beasts that gave us beasts (?), let's give our beasts a breather, so that we too can eat a piece of bread.' (76) If I say it in that way, Memo will certainly not get angry at me. Why, whatever is [good for] God is [good for] me too. (77) But he didn't say anything to him. They continued on their way. (78) As for the horse with Mem, dear listeners, I have heard it said that the horse was empowered to speak, (79) and this is what he said, dear listeners:

Bor said, "Memo, you don't give greeting, as if drunk,
 Hey, may your house burn down, would you let up a little on my reins,
 Hey, may your house burn down, the fire of passion is in your head,
 there is no sense in your head, the chain has cut my leg, it has
 reached the bone."

(80) Memo said, "Oh my! It is God who has fallen on my soul (?)." (81) He pulled his cloak up over his head, and said, "Until my horse's leg gets better, until white hair grows over the wound, no matter what befalls my soul, I won't get up off the ground for Bor's sake." (82) Dear listeners, the creator on high brings this about quickly. (83) Well, Khidir the prophet, Khidir Eylas, both blessed beings, said, "By the will of the creator on high, this man has fallen on his head (=down), but by God's will perhaps we can cure his ills." (84) At that very moment, when he showed a good deal of magnanimity (or, exerted himself a good deal), Bor's wound healed, and white hair grew over it. (85) Memo raised his head, and took a look: in truth Bor's wound had healed, and white hair had grown over it! (86) They put their heads down (=rested) again for a while; those two blessed beings picked up Bengîn the boy and his horse, and Memo and his horse Bor, and brought them to Jezira Bohtan, where three roads meet.

(87) Well, Mem opened his eyes, and took a look: Good heavens! (88) There was the creaking of trees, the neighing of hack horses, the crowing of roosters, the lowing of shepherds and cowherds, the rushing of a river, because there is a river in Jezira Bohtan. A strange new place. It seemed very strange to Mem; the fellow said, "Bengîn my boy, come on and get up; let's find out what place we are in!" (89) As is known, it is nothing for the creator on high; they got up, and went on a little until they came to a man. (90) Memo greeted him and asked him [where they were]. When he took one look at Memo, dear listeneres, because of Memo's beauty, this man, as when <a sheep?> is beheaded and rolls around in its own blood, in just this way his head rolled around. (91) Bengîn said, "Memo, you asked -- you did the greeting, I'll do the asking," he said, "in truth your beauty is great, people won't be able to endure your beauty, they will go crazy." (92) "All right!" [Mem] said, "Bengîn my boy, let --" [[interruption]] (93) ... they went a little until they came to three roads. The road split into three. (94) Memo hesitated. "I wonder," he said, "which road I should take?" He said, (95) "<I'll let the horse decide> Whichever road he chooses, I'll take that road. (96) Only, he tells this to the horse, i.e. Bor.

" _____ Bor <ke faraşînoy>
<There's a fork in the road> choose the road <for Mem>"

(97) As is known, dear listeners, after he said this to him, then Bor spoke and said:

"Memo, if you don't drive me on with your hands,
 You give me a servant _____
 _____ I'll drive you to the quarter of _____ emirs.
 And Mem, if you drive me on with spurs,
 Give me food (or, a mouthbit) _____
 I'll drive you to _____."

(98) He put Bor's bridle on the _____, and the animal rode on a road, well, and set out, coming straight on. (99) The river of Jezira Bohtan has a ford, dear listeners, one comes to cross that river anywhere, this animal did not go to the place of crossing. Heh! He goes back and forth, not sure how to cross to the side of Jezira Bohtan.

(100) Now we will speak a little about Zîn, dear listeners. (101) When Zîn opened her eyes, she saw that she was not in Mem's room. (102) <The lady was very bewildered>: as is known, a woman's lot is a grave lot. (103) She didn't explain/show it, she got up in the morning, and was very upset. (104) Melek Rihan said, "What's wrong, my Lady, something has come over you today. What is troubling you?" (105) [Zîn] emphatically said, "No!" [Melek Rihan] said, "I am your servant, you must tell me!" (106) As is known, <go çistê was jina> is from God. Hah! The story, dear listeners, as I have told it to you, in the same way she [told it] to Melek Rihan, the daughter of Bekir the Liar, the servant of Zîn sister of mîr Sêvdîn. (107) As is known, dear listeners, she told her the story, only -- uh -- the daughter of Bekir the Liar, Melek Rihan, was a sorceress How was she a sorceress? She threw dice, and when she did, she could see that within forty days, Memo, the man [Zîn] was talking about, would get to Jezira Bohtan. (108) On the thirty ninth day, she went to her mistress and said, "My Lady, today all our young people are going down to the river of Jezira, please give me permission, so that I can go too!" (109) "Certainly!" said [Zîn], "gladly! You go too!" But she went to Zîn's room, and took Mem's ring, which had his name written on it, and his handkerchief, and put them in her pocket. (110) Well, she took some [dirty] clothes, and went and stood by the river of Jezira Bohtan. However, she did not intend to wash the laundry, her intention was this: (111) Wherever a stranger comes

from, she will see Mem, and escape with him, dear listeners. (112) When she came to the bank of the river of Jezira Bohtan, she could see two horsemen visible off in the distance. "Aha!" she said, "By God, that has got to be Memo!" (113) He came, came, came, he came to the ford, to cross over the river, but Melek Rihan caught hold of their reins. (114) When she caught hold of their reins, Memo said, "Bengin my boy, do I have your permission to ask that gentle one a question?" He answered, "You know best, my Lord!" (115) If the creator on high, who causes things to happen, dear listeners, causes something bad to happen, no one dare put them aright: Memo [went up to] the daughter of Bekir Awan. (116) He asked her [a question]: here's what he said:

Mem said, "O gentle one, of lovely form,
Your stature is slender, a young willow,
For the sake of Ali [and] Muhammad, tell me straight out, whose house
should we stay at?²⁰"

(117) Naturally, dear listeners, Melek Rihan picked up on his words, and here's what she said to these [two] men:

She said, "If you are a prince, ride to the gate of mîr Sêvdîn,
If you are a man, ride to the gate of Cheko and Arif, Qeretajdîn,
If you have nothing to say, ride to the gate of Bekir the Liar."

(118) Mem said to her,

He said, "Hey, jinn-shaped, may the Lord of heaven bring your desires
topass,
<Qedera te serê yekê baş bigeñne>
Good evening to you, may you have a good day."

(119) They took their leave of her, dear listeners, and continued on their way. When they continued on their way, Melek Rihan said, "Hey! I didn't ask them; By God, I bet that was Memo!" (120) Melek Rihan ran after him, and asked him:

²⁰=lit. "whose guest should we be?"

"O strange man, I have told you the truth,
 Disclose your identity to me, who are you?"
 <He spoke> thus, "I am Memê Alan,
 This other one is Bengin my boy."

(121) Oh my! <"One of them was Memo, and I let him go!"> Melek Rihan asked him:

"Hey <so much fraud> of the pashas,
 May your house be ruined, why don't you recall the room, and your and
 my oath on the Koran?"

(122) Memo took a look and saw a dirty face and cracked lips. Dumbfounded,
 "If this is so, by God, in my father's kingdom there were millions like this one. (123)
 Oh boy! This means," he said to himself, "I have come to this kingdom for this
 swarthy, dirty one. Bengin lad, the one I saw was this one!" (124) Bengin said, "A pity,
a pity, my Lord!" And they continued on their way. (125) They continued on their way,
 Melek Rihan once again ran after them:

She said, "O stranger, <so much fraud> of the pashas,
 What of your oath and mine on the Koran,
 Here is your handkerchief, we exchanged fingerrings!"

(126) Memo thought for a while, then said, "Except for me, Bengin my boy, and
 this woman, nobody knows about it.!" (127) Zin told her maidservant. Oh my! The
 daughter of Bekir the Liar, dear listeners; it could happen that this is the order of the
 creator on high, men must bow their heads before destiny, dear listeners. (128) Memo
 set [his horse] to galloping with his spurs, and said, "It is our fate from God that we go
 back home!" (129) He turned around and started back when the horse looked and, lo
 and behold! Memo had taken the daughter of Bekir the Liar, and, dear listeners, in the
 version that we heard -- of course, this is not a verse of the Koran -- as I heard it told by
 the nobles, (130) Once again Bor was made to speak and here's what he said:

Bor said, "Memo, you _____ give greeting,
 The one you are talking about is not this one,
 This is the daughter of Bekir the liar, she is fooling you,
 <The Turkish witch is shaking herself.>"

(131) When he heard these words from Bor, Memo [said], "Hey! Strength and life to you!" Seven [kinds of] strength came from the creator on high, so also on earth, dear listeners, I might even say ten, you say <_____>. (132) The gentle one ended up on the ground, but she said to him, "Okay, Memo, so you won't take me. Why did you <drop> me <lo e'hdê we'de bi car min keti bin> if my father and I can help it, you won't achieve your desire." (133) Then they (=Mem and Bengin) continued on their way. Why they continued on their way, Memo said, "My boy, whose house should we stay at?" (134) "My Lord," said [Bengin], "You know best. You are not to be directed in this matter." (135) "In that case," he said, "<Kevirê mêran dani, mêr xerab (ke/ket/kir). Mêrkê mêr mêrê bikuje, vê mêrê biwa şêra jî. Lo mêra xwe dawite ber bextê mêra> (136) Let's go to Qeretajdin's house, let's be his guests. They set out and stopped at Qeretajdin's gate. "Peace be upon you!" "Upon you be peace!" (137) Well, they (=Qeretajdin's servants) took hold of these men's horses and brought them inside. When Qeretajdin beheld Memo, he was awestruck by his beauty, he lost track of where he was! (138) Dear listeners, let Bengin stay there. Let him drink water and eat his food; Bengin was aware of nothing. (139) By God's will, let us focus on Memo and Qeretajdin. (140) These [two] men talked together, they chatted, from morning until evening. (141) Until evening they chatted, roses rained from Memo's words. Tajdin never got tired of them. (142) Dear listeners, what the creator on high had ordained for these persons, that is Memo and Zin, he told the story [from the start] until they became Qeretajdin's guests -- uh -- Memo explained thus to his brother Qeretajdin. (143) When he had explained it, Qeretajdin, who was a smart man, understood that indeed this love was from the creator on high. (144) But just look at the thing! Zin's sister was Qeretajdin's wife. Her name was Sittî. Moreover, Zin was the fiancée of Qeretajdin's brother Çeko. (144) When [Qeretajdin] heard these words from Memo, he decided to help Memo, dear listeners. (145) He said, "Brother, you and I are eternal bloodbrothers, let's make a pact that whatever happens to me, I will spare nothing, my life is <expendable>." (146) They continued their chatting until twelve o'clock at night.

[Interruption]

Allow the enemy five minutes at the well

(147) Of course, dear listeners, he gave him permission, so he went to the private garden, and saw Lady Zîn sitting at the fountain, <ew *ova* ku jî tazîk dawêje jî qudrêê> a nightingale sat over the roses and sang to her, well Zîn was constantly thinking to herself, Memo was in her thoughts. (148) He stood behind her, and said to her:

"Peace be upon you Lady Zîn,
The dreams you are undergoing are not far off, bring them closer."

(149) Zîn lifted her head, she looked at him but did not recognize him, and spoke to him thus:

"You are most unwelcome,
You are like <>
If I were to call the people of Bohtan, <I would raise my masses> to the
heavens."

(150) Memo's feelings were hurt, dear listeners, the fire of passion was going to his head. (151) Again he spoke thus:

"<Such unreliability from the> daughter of princes,
The room, the Koran is my and your witness,
The fingerring on which is written Memê Alan."

(152) Dear listeners, when she lifted her head and saw Memo, all sense left her head, a scream came from deep inside her, and she jumped into Memo's embrace, and for about half an hour they fell down in a swoon right there. (153) The two of them got up, went and frolicked at the fountainhead, then she spoke -- uh -- she said, "Memo, I have bought two bouquets of flowers, one is red, one is yellow; the red ones are in my right hand, the yellow ones in my left hand. (154) I will throw them into the air; you go after the flowers. If you catch the bouquet of red flowers, we will achieve our desire in this world, but if you catch the yellow ones from my left hand, we will achieve our

desire in the next world. (155) Well, in this fashion she threw her flowers; when she threw them, as luck would have it Memo caught the yellow ones. (156) When he caught the yellow ones, Memo was a little disappointed, [she] said to him, "You poor thing, this was only your and my doing; I wonder what the creator on high will decree²¹?" She tried to comfort him. (157) They said good bye to one another, Memo was about to leave the city ... [I mean] the garden, when he noticed a naked, wretched, miserable nightingale sitting on a rosebush, singing to him from the bottom of its heart. (158) My goodness! "Boy," I said, "I thought I was the only one in the world with problems, but this creature is in a worse state than I." (159) The nightingale spoke, saying, "Memo, for God's sake, <tell me that you won't let anything happen to my beloved Zîn!>" (160) Let's see what he tells the nightingale, dear listeners:

Memo said, "Nightingale, good nightingale,
Your love is better than mine,
Zîn's color is brighter than your roses."

(161) He left [the garden] and came to Qeretajdîn's house. Well, that day he was so happy, he chatted with Mem. Mem [said] to Me- ... Tajdîn -- for seven days Qeretajdîn was so wrapped up in talking with Mem that he didn't go the Qeretajd -- uh -- to Mir Sêvdîn's diwan.²² (162) Mir Sêvdîn asked, "I wonder why Qeretajdîn has not been coming to the diwan? <Perhaps he has heard something from us>." (163) As is known, Qeretajdîn was their champion, that is he was <the head of the people's economic section>²³, he was always sympathetic to the people, he was Mir Sêvdîn's top champion.

[[interruption]] (164) "... welcome, I have a guest, I cannot not [come] today, I will come tomorrow." They went and told the mir exactly what he had said. (165) The mir said, "Let them bring their guest to my diwan." (166) Well, he took Memo, and

²¹=lit. 'write'

²²Throughout this sentence the informant keeps getting the names of the characters mixed up. Perhaps he is tired or distracted.

²³=tax collector? Tax collectors are generally detested rather than beloved. In other versions of M&Z Qeretajdîn is sent to collect taxes from a tribe that has been delinquent about paying tribute. Also, the mir may have needed Qeretajdîn to intercede with people coming to the court with complaints.

together with him they went to the mîr's diwan. (167) <After exchanging greetings> [the mîr] saw exactly how right Qeretajdîn had been to praise him; no one can properly describe Memo's way of speaking, Memo's outstanding beauty, dear listeners. (168) Mîr Sêvdîn was as amazed as he was enamored [of Mem]. (169) Memo²⁴ said, "How long have you had this guest?" Qeretajdîn said, "By God," he said, "it's been seven days now." "In that case," [the mîr] said, "let him be my guest for seven days also." (170) Qeretajdîn stopped, "Um," he said, "Okay, you know [best], my mîr."

(171) Well, for seven days he was Mîr Sêvdîn's guest. While he was Mîr Sêvdîn's guest, he and Zîn saw each other every day. (172) Memo's joy knew no bounds, dear listeners! That Memo could receive²⁵ such a thing from the creator on high, to be in Zîn's house, that Mîr Sêvdîn would himself be so fond of Memo as to make him his guest, so that everyday [he and Zîn] could go see each other in the private garden. (173) Whom could he tell about God's gift [to him], lovely listeners?

(174) Of course, dear listeners, [[interruption]] ... to the mountains for hunting. (175) Of course, when they said, 'Memo, tomorrow we are going hunting, all the horsemen should mount [their horses] and head for <their unit>' (176) Dear listeners, formerly hunts were like that, the two [units?] did not go together; imagine two groups, let's say a group on this side, and one on that side, with a point in the middle; from that point they could see each other. (177) In that way they could see who caught what -- uh -- everyone would show his quarry. (178) When they told him [about the hunt], in the morning everyone got up and mounted [their horses], and headed for his place, but Memo pretended to be sick, and stayed in bed. (179) When he stayed in bed, he and Zîn saw each other in Mîr Sêvdîn's room. Take a peach, give a peach, come pleasure, pleasure come! (180) While Mîr Sêvdîn was roaming the mountains, Qeretajdîn came from his unit, and the two of them saw one another; [the mîr] said, "Where is Memo?" (181) "Well, you see," [Qeretajdîn] said, "my Mîr, Memo is sick, he didn't come." (182) "In that case," [the mîr] said, "may I be forbidden to hunt without Memo." So he turned around [and went home]. (183) Everyone turned around and came home; well, with the clatter of horsemen, Sîti went to the doorway of the diwan, and said, "Memo, you poor thing, Mîr Sêvdîn [[interruption]] (184) ... all the servants

²⁴This must be a mistake for 'Mîr Sêvdîn.'

²⁵=lit 'eat'

and attendants tied up their horses, and Beko came to the mir's diwan with Mir Sêvdîn and Qeretajdîn, (185) but, dear listeners, formerly there were no stoves, there were hearths, a reasonable man, aghas and begs -- there was always a warm place beside the hearth -- in other words, in the corner of the room they built a hearth. (186) As for Memo on Mir Sêvdîn's couch²⁶, he threw his cloak over his back, and threw Zin under the cloak; well, they [=Beko and company] said, "Peace be upon you." (187) Memo was about to get up, saying "Upon you peace and the mercy of God and blessings, my Mir." (188) When he was just about to get up, Zin said from behind, "Are you crazy? What are you doing, do you want to ruin my name?" (189) But Beko Awan that Zin was under Mem's cloak in the corner of the room. (190) What's more, dear listeners, on that day it was Beko Awan's turn to look after the room. He was a servant, after all! (191) He gave orders to the other servant, saying, "Today bring me as much oily oak wood as you can find! My master has come back from hunting and is very cold, I will heat up the room." (192) Dear listeners, the room was made very hot indeed, and Memo was in the heat of shame and disgrace. (193) You might say that a meter of sweat flowed from Memo onto the floor. This is the way I heard it told, dear listeners. Memo felt very perplexed, very much wronged. (194) He recited some Persian verses to Qeretajdîn -- uh -- he didn't know [what was happening], dear listeners; how should [Mem] tell his brother Qeretajdîn, how should he make him understand that he should go help his brother, dear listeners. (195) Let's say it like this:

Mem was overcome with worry and concern,
 He went and said, "Brother, what is the situation?"
 But with gestures and signals,
 He asked Mem his brother with hints and signals,
 < _____ >
 Get up with the stones of effort and toil,
 Zin is stuck beneath Mem's cloak
 Mem is stuck with care and worry.

(196) Naturally, Qeretajdîn still did not understand, so Mem spoke thus to
 Qeretajdîn:

²⁶=lit 'mattress'

He said, "Brother, it is daytime, not night,

<__> enmity <_____>

<_____>

You set fire to your treasury and house

(197) Naturally, dear listeners, when he said these words to Qeretajdîn, it affected Qeretajdîn deep inside, "Oh my!" he said, "we are in trouble!" and he showed Zin's braids to Qeretajdîn from the sleeve of the cloak. (198) Qeretajdîn got up, and headed for home; let's see what he said:

He knew that matters were very bad

He got up and hastily went home

Like the wrath of God he ran inside,

He knew he had to speak with Siti.

He said, "Get up Siti, <li me bin-yengê>

Today we [will wage] war on our jewels and wealth,

For me and you the Koran is enough, our wealth won't remain.

(199) Siti said, "<Ser bête feraşîn>

May the mullah recite [the Koranic chapter] Yasin,

With twelve swords may blood be spilt²⁷,

I won't set fire to the palace."

Tajdîn said, "Siti, [this is no time for joking]

Memo and Zin [are in danger of coming before the law]

For this one thing, they may run Memo through with dagger."

(200) Siti said, dear listeners:

Siti said, "Tajdîn,

Take the holy Kuran out of the house,

Memo is in love, his beloved is Zin,

²⁷=lit: 'cut'

- Tajdîn has never betrayed Memo,
 Take the holy Kuran from the house,
 May our child's cradle be a sacrifice to Memo."
 (201) They set fire to the manor,
 They shouted and screamed,
 Relatives and people and folks came,
 They [put much effort into this calamity]
 Aghas and servants of emirs
 Vacated that palace and garden
 [At the gravity of the call for help]
 Mem was astounded, he said to his beloved,
 (202) "You get up and go to the women's quarters,
 So that I may go to the fire and the call for help."
 Clothes and all treasures,
 Property and jewels and goods,
 He burned them all for the sake of his brother,
 Until now his name is still remembered in goodness
 He set fire to his manor
 News reach the emir of Bohtan
 They went to the summons of the city of time,
 Tajdîn rescued Zîn and Memê Alan.

(203) When he set fire to his court, the rumbling reached the Mîr's diwan, dear listeners, they said, "Qeretajdîn's court has caught on fire, no songs ...

[end of side one of tape]

[[interruption]] (204) ... I've told you, dear listeners, <sê dan nika vê bandê îşkal bike>, they all answered the call for help, even the mîr came. Remember that Memo had pretended to be sick that day? He too got up and came to the house, to answer the call for help, but Beko Awan had stayed behind in the parlor, to spy on them. (205) When Zîn came out from beneath the cloak, she went to the harem- -- uh -- to her room -- to the harem (women's quarters): when they came to that room, when they were in the yard, Beko saw the two of them. (206) "Hey-y-y!" he said, "Memo! I am Beko, do you think I didn't know that Zîn was under the cloak, behind you?" (207) The boy said, "Beko, [it must be God's will that this calamity has befallen us! What do

you want from us? You'll see, we will achieve our desire." (208) [Beko] said, "You have made my daughter suffer, as far as it is within my power, I won't let you, Memo." (209) Memo got good and mad, he threw a piece of iron with such force that one of Bekir Efendi's ribs was broken on the spot. (210) Bekir Efendi headed for home with his broken rib. May his neck be broken in addition. (211) He went home, and was mad for seven days, dear listeners, and did not come to mîr Sêvdîn's diwan. (212) Mîr Sêvdîn was very fond of this Bekir, -- true, he was a liar, but his <mekşet> was good, and people liked him (213) He sent word [to Beko], saying, "Tell Bekir to come; why hasn't he come for the last seven days?" (214) [A servant] went to him and said, "Mîr Sêvdîn says that he (=Beko) should come to the diwan." "Go eat Mîr Sêvdîn's head, together with his manliness. I am not coming to the diwan, because I am a man of honor, I am not dishonorable." (215) "Why (won't you come)?" he said. "<Evî inadiya bo wey inadiya mala xwe> is in love with Zîn: my conscience cannot bear it; as long as he is there, I am not coming to his diwan." (216) They went and told him (=mîr Sêvdîn). The mîr was furious, "Hey! What is Bekir talking about?" (217) He summoned Bekir, and said, "Bekir, if you don't come, I will have your head chopped off." (218) "Gladly my Mîr!" he said, "Why don't you test him?" he said, "You and Memo play chess, I'll come in twenty four minutes later. I'll do that for half an hour. (219) If I don't [come], my head is yours! Gladly!" he said. (220) The mîr was furious, he was upset, for [Beko] hadn't said 'He is in love with your sister Zîn': both mîr Sêvdîn's wife and his sister were named Zîn, dear listeners! (221) Let's see how mîr Sêvdîn invites him, dear listeners.

(222) The mîr said, "Mem!"

[Mem] said, "Yes?"

[The mîr] said, "Today I want you and me to play chess."

(223) "My Mîr," [Mem] said, "Gladly! Whatever you wish! ... How should we play?"

[The mîr] said, "Only," he said, "*shamdilkhaz*²⁶ (= Winner take all)."

"Fine with me, my Mîr!"

(224) And the mîr sang the following, dear listeners:

²⁶This means that the winner may ask the loser for whatever he wants, and the loser is obligated to fulfill his request

- The mir got up and went to the manor
 It is near the palace of the gentle one
 He sat down and said to the [leaders]:
- (225) "You summon, summon the lovers
 Only Mem should appear before the mir,
 Tajdin and his brothers should not appear,
 Today I will get angry at Mem,
 He is guilty of something, I will straighten him out."
- (226) The mir said to Mem with hate and spite
 "Today we are at war with you
 Come stand opposite the mir
 There is no doubt that I am in conflict with you
 My conditions for you are those of the victorious one
 Whatever you want for your desire."
- (227) [Both talking and breathing were about Mem]
 Both joy and grief were about Mem,
 They spoke and discussed,
 They brought out the chesspieces and the board
 [Mem] won three complete rounds
 The troublemaker returned at this juncture.
- (228) See what pranks Beko played,
 He revealed to the mir a secret that was hidden from him
 The rook, the bishop, and the [knight?] were going,
 They saw that the mir and his [pieces?] were on their way to check mate,
 They could see that Mem was [about to win]
- (229) Bekir said, "Well, my Mir, two new rounds."
 Bekir said, "My Mir, [you are losing]
 It is best if you and Mem trade places."
 The mir got up and sat in Mem's place
 Mem got up and came to a place where Zîn could be seen.

(230) Well, when Beko Awan had them trade places in this way, up to the third round in which Mem beat the mir, his back was to the window. (231) When they traded places, may Beko Awan's eyes fall out, (232) Well, when they traded places,

when Memo looked up, he saw the window above, that is the opening above was visible. (233) Beko went and said to Zîn, "Zîn!" he said, "For heaven's sake²⁹, come over to the window, for your father's sake³⁰. (234) How well Memo and Z- -- uh -- and Mir Sêvdîn your brother are playing chess. For God's sake, don't you want to watch for a little bit?" (235) Well, she fell for it and went to the window. When Zîn looked out at them, Memo's eye rested on Zîn; when he saw her, his took leave of his senses. (236) From that point on Memo knew nothing about chess: all his concentration and looks were fixed on the window opening. (237) Dear listeners, let's see how we can tell you in song what happened:

When Memo caught sight of one delicate and gentle
 He let go of the bishop and the queen
 He could not take his eyes off the skylight and the window pane
 The poor thing moved his knight instead of his pawn
 The mîr beat Mem exactly six times
 Out of love for Zîn, Memo was oblivious

(238) Dear listeners, six whole times the mîr beat Mem. (239) But the mîr was fond of Memo, and consequently even though he beat him six times, he still said to him, "Memo! Name your wish!" (240) But, in the meantime, Beko Awan once again went to Zîn and said, "For your father's sake, you are a girl; aren't you ashamed of yourself? Go let the lady of the house come watch them for a while." (241) Well, he said, "Tomorrow you will go home and your <xendiv?> will say 'Mir Sêvdîn's sister is goint, what a disgrace! the lady of the house should come!' In other words, Mir Sêvdîn's wife. (242) [She]³¹ went and said, "My Lady, how well they play, the two of them! Come watch them a little, for God's sake! Why not? Don't go against what I say!" (243) Of course, she fell for it and stood in the place where Zîn had stood. Her

²⁹-lit 'may your house burn down.'

³⁰-lit 'may your father's house burn down.'

³¹It is not clear who went. It could be either Zîn #1 or Beko Awan

name is also [Zîn]³², but she is Mîr Sêvdîn's wife. (244) Here is what Mîr Sêvdîn said to Memo, dear listeners:

The mîr said, "Memo, don't play with [your wish]!"
 Memo said, "My mîr, what do you desire?"
 The mîr said, "Mem, I will hold no grudges,
 What is your goal, in plain language?"

(245) [Mem]³³ said to him:

"These are my conditions: You [give me] Zîn."

(246) Dear listeners, when he said these words, Mîr Sêvdîn looked up and saw his wife Zîn in the window. (247) "Oh!" he said, "Look at the insolence of this person" he said, "such crude people are always this unprincipled," he said. (248) "No matter how much we adults take care of you, you have the nerve to go this far in speaking of people's honor. (249) Boy, Zîn is my wife, you scoundrel!" Out of rage and fury, (250) Let's see what Mîr Sêvdîn says:

Mîr ... [(interrupted)]

(251) "My Mîr," he said, "It would be good if you and Qeretajdîn came together [for a meeting]; you send Qeretajdîn to collect taxes in other places for a year, then we will grab Memo and throw him in prison; by the time he [=Qeretajdîn] comes back, he [=Mem] will be dead. (252) You can do it this way, or else all at once you can -- uh -- "lose" Memo, so that Qeretajdîn, who is very fond of him, interferes, and destroys all of us." (253) "By God," [Mîr Sêvdîn] said, "You speak well. It would be best to do it that way [=the way you said]." So they [= Mîr Sêvdîn and Qeretajdîn] met together, and spoke together, as before. (254) [Mîr Sêvdîn] ordered Qeretajdîn, saying, "You will go to such-and-such a place [to collect] taxes for a year." (255) Tajdîn <went to collect?> taxes

³²He says 'jîn' [=woman], but he must mean: 'Zîn.' The word jîn must have been on the tip of his tongue because it occurs later in the sentence.

³³In the original it says 'the mîr,' but this must be a slip of the tongue.

for a year; they grabbed [Mem], they arrested him and threw him in prison, dear listeners. (256) The prison was made out of stone³⁴, Zîn cried and wailed, she didn't let a night and a day pass [before] she went to those who dig tunnels under -- uh -- the ground, and found two good, very skilled ditch diggers, well, who could keep a secret, and paid them very, very well. (257) [In a day they figured out how many meters to dig so that a man could go from Mem's prison to Zîn's room.] (258) In this way they dug a tunnel from Zîn's room and they went until they reached the prison, where Mem was. (259) When they got to where Mem was, Mem noticed a scraping sound coming from under the ground, and thought, "By God, it must be that underground a creature [like a man has come], I am most certainly thankful to God for this day, dear listeners." ³⁵ (260) While he was watching [the ditch digger] came [and said] "Peace be upon you, Memo!" "And upon you peace, brother," [Mem] said, "Who are you? Have you also fallen into prison, like me?" (261) He said, "Just look at your affair!" Zîn took care of Mem -- according to the version we have heard, dear listeners -- while he was in prison for ten whole months, [just as he was supposed to be left uncared for]. (262) After ten months, one day Beko got up and said, "It's been ten months. I wonder if Memo is dead by now?! I'll go visit Memo, to see how he is doing, if he is dead yet!" (263) He went to the opening of the pit, and said, "Memo!" [Mem] said, "What do you say, cursed one?" [Beko] said, "Are you as I want you?" [Mem] said, "[Come down and take a look] at my prison." (264) But Mem's prison was not the way [Beko expected], it was much better kept up than before. (265) [Beko Awan] went to the mîr and said, "My Mir!" [The mîr] said, "Yes?" [Beko Awan] said, "Do you nourish men in prison, or do prisoners weaken and die?" (266) "What are you talking about?" said [the mîr]. "Come on, you wretch," [Beko Awan] said, "[You have cared for Mem like the apple of your eye]." (267) At that point they took Memo out, thanks to Beko's devilry, and threw him into a stone dungeon.

(268) In the stone dungeon not once did he get to see Zîn, dear listeners, within the [next] month. (269) During that time, he became no more than skin and bones. He became no more than skin and bones, and Qeretajdîn had been gone for eleven months. The twelfth month came, and he returned; this news was brought to Mir

³⁴This is probably a mistake for *zîndana dar[in]* = 'a wooden dungeon,' since Mem is later transferred to a stone dungeon. Moreover, this would then coincide with what happens in several other versions.

³⁵I was my decision to put the closing quotation marks here

Sévdîn: 'Qeretajdîn has returned from a year of tax collecting.' (270) Beko went to -- uh -- Mir Sévdîn and said, "My Mir" [Mir Sévdîn said, "What is it?" [Beko Awan] said, "My Mir, do you know -- uh -- whom Memo loves, which Zin he loves?" (271) [Mir Sévdîn] said, "Doesn't he love [my] wife?" "No," [Beko Awan] said, "My Mir, he loves [your] sister -- [[taped over]] he said, "Memo doesn't love your wife, he loves your sister Zin." (272) "Oh my!" [Mir Sévdîn] said, "May your house bum down! Boy, you wretch, how can such dishonesty exist!? Why didn't you tell me before now? (273) We have caused that poor soul such grief! Boy," he said, "send word to Zin to take two [sets of] drums and fifes³⁶ and go release Zin -- uh -- Memo!" (274) They sent word to Zin, saying, "Your brother Mir Sévdîn has said, 'she should take two [sets of] drums and fifes; I have given Zin to Memo, she should go release Memo!' " (275) Naturally, Zin was delighted! She sent two people after two -- uh -- drummers [whol] came, they played their fifes and drums, to come release Memo from the bottom of the pit. (276) Beko once again committed an accursed act, he went to the pit and stood at the head of the dungeon and said, "Memo!" [Mem] said, "What do you say, accursed one?" (277) Then [Beko Awan] said, "I have good news for you! We have given Zin to a man. Zin is about to come with drums and fifes to the opening of the pit to take her leave of you³⁷." (278) "Hey, you accursed one!" [Mem] said, "Until now <bera xweş me [?xwe ji me] na wekî>, may God let them attain their desire. In any case I was going to die at the bottom of the pit. (279) But Memo's heart was crushed by the sound of the drums. When he saw that the sound of the drums was coming towards him, dear listeners, in the version which we heard, which we are telling you, by the time the sound of the drums [reached him], his soul took leave of its shell. (280) When [she?] reached the opening of the pit, Zin said to Memo, "Memo!" He said, "Yes!" [She] said, "I have come to release you." (281) "Hey," he said, "May your house bum down! You have not come to release me!" (282) And this is what he said to her:

"Memo, I have come to release you
To see the comfort³⁸ of my heart

³⁶The instruments played at wedding celebrations

³⁷or, to ask your permission.

³⁸-lit: 'patience'

To [erase] the longing of ten years."

(283) Memo recited some Persian verses, that is he told [her], but Zîn did not understand, so once again he spoke to her as follows:

"Hey," he said, "Lady Zîn, you have not come to release me,
You have come to take your leave of me, to pull out my sweet
soul from its shell."

(284) Dear listeners, when they sent two to the bottom of the pit and took Mem out of the dungeon, bringing him out into the light of day³⁹, they sent word to Qeretajdin. (285) When Qeretajdin had taken a look around town, they told him "Beko in his accursedness had your brother thrown into prison, but Zîn has just gone to release him." (286) According to the version which we have heard, by the time he reached the gate of the prison, he had killed one hundred Bekir, people named Bekir, but he didn't get to Bekirê Awan, that is Beko Awan. (287) Qeretajdin had been very fond of Memo, and said, "I swear by God that I will kill everyone whose name is Beko." (288) Well, when they brought [Mem] to the mouth of the pit, the creator on high claimed that which he had deposited with him, in other words the time allotted to him was up, he passed away. (289) His brother Qeretajdin arrived, and put him into -- uh -- a wooden casket, and went around with it on his head. (290) [That man swore a solemn oath] saying "[Until Mem comes back to life] I will not let this -- uh -- corpse touch the ground." (291) Night and day he wept and mourned; Beko Awan once again performed a dastardly deed, he got up and went to an old woman, and said, "Grandma, go get a black cloth and a few bars of white soap, and go to the banks of the river of Jezira, and, well, rub that black cloth with the soap, (292) if Qeretajdin happens to pass by, it will certainly attract his attention, because black things cannot turn white. He will say something to you about it; when he says something to you, you tell him, "May your house not burn down [=You poor thing], have you ever seen a dead man rise up [from the dead]? Just as this is black and it won't turn white, likewise that corpse on your head is dead, it won't rise again."

³⁹=lit 'the face of the world'.

(293) Encouraged by him, she got up and took a black cloth and went and stood at the bank of the river of Jezirah, rubbing [the cloth] with two pieces of white soap. (294) Well, Qeretajdîn passed by, and she caught his attention; he looked and saw a foolish old woman sitting on the banks of the river, well, going back and forth over a black cloth with soap.

(295) "Oh," he said, "Grandma, for heaven's sake, what do you think you're doing⁴⁰? That [cloth] is black, it won't become white, but you keep going over it with the soap."

(296) "Well," she said, "if you're so smart, just take a look at the corpse on your head: he is dead, he won't rise again." Naturally, this was by order of the creator on high.

(297) "Actually," he said, "you are right."

He brought his brother, and tenderly buried him in the cemetery. (298) Well, Zin said some things to him. Let's see what she had to say. (299) After Memo's death she was very upset, in one version they say she lasted for forty day, in another version they say forty hours; only God can know for sure which is correct, (300) but she said to [Qeretajdîn]:

She said, "May Memo be my witness for the days,
Memo, while on earth, did not open up buttons,
[Whatever time of day that Memo died], for us it will be the noon
hour."

(301) Zin said, "May houris be my witness at the incline,
[On earth I have no beloved]
[I have made an effort], Mem's time has passed, I won't live to see the
evening hour."

(302) Well, when I said these few things to him, naturally Qeretajdîn became very sad very griefstricken, very sorrowful. (303) In the version that we heard, which we are telling you, dear listeners, Zin took her place [in heaven] by God's decree. They took Zin to bury her, and they buried the two lovers side by side, dear listeners. (304)

⁴⁰lit: 'what smartness is this from you?'

At the graveside -- we call it a shrine -- Qeretajdin caught sight of Beko Awan. (305)
And Qeretajdin was so upset, that let's see what he said:

"Accursed Beko, with your head <bi mesan>
Give him poison in bowls
The saboteur of love and purpose and goals."

(306) Qeretajdin got so enraged, dear listeners, that he caught up with Beko, with the intention [of giving him a knock on the head], but at that time he swung with such fury and force that pieces -- uh -- of Beko Awan rose into the air. (307) Dear listeners, what happened next, of course, exactly as we heard it, we will tell it to you. (308) This is not a verse of the Koran, if cannot be wrong, just as we heard it, naturally, we will tell it to you. (309) Then his blood, you might say dripped, getting between Memo and Zin, and a thombush sprung up between them, and grew. Of course, I did not see it, dear listeners.

(310) The telling of Memo and Zin is like that -- uh -- finally may God -- uh -- extend his greeting to all the listeners, dear listeners -- uh -- naturally, you should forgive us, (311) just as we heard the story of Memo and Zin, we have told it to you -- uh -- may God be our protection; the events of Memo and Zin as sung by [...], you can always obtain it at [...]. (312) [God's] mercy on the parents and the listeners who have lent their ears, and that which -- uh -- has been said, dear listeners, may it entertain us; goodbye and greetings to all of you.

