

“A LOYAL BUSINESS PARTNER” – A STORY TOLD IN THE JEWISH NEO-ARAMAIC DIALECT OF ZAKHO

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The following story was recorded on July 24, 2003 at the home of Simḥa Mizraḥi, aged 75, in Jerusalem. Simḥa was born in Jerusalem to Aramaic-speaking parents, but lived for a number of years with her grandparents, who came to Jerusalem from Zakho in 1921. Simḥa is fluent in Hebrew, Palestinian Arabic, and Neo-Aramaic. The first two languages leave clear marks on her Neo-Aramaic.¹ Samples of Simḥa’s speech have been published in *Fs. Muraoka*.² The following selection also contains two previously noted features of her idiolect: 1) the use of *wēwāle*, *wēwāla*, etc. as past copula, a phenomenon that appears to be unknown to other speakers of Jewish Zakho;³ and 2) the 3 pl. form of the old active participle of verbs III-y with final -i

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1 As expected, the influence of Israeli Hebrew is considerable and can be seen throughout the text, e.g., Simḥa’s repeated use of *šutāf* ‘partner’ (Section 1) despite mention of the Aramaic (<Arabic) form *šrika*. The influence of Palestinian Arabic can be seen in *ma‘alēš* “never mind!” (I), *balad* “Old City (of Jerusalem)” (I and II), *numra dīt tēlefon* “telephone number” (IV and VI), *‘ayyān* “ill” (VI), *koppaniyye* “neighborhood” (VII; see n. 47 below), *jā rur* “drawer” (VII), *ḥarīr* “silk” (VIII), and the calques *māxīn tēlifon/mxēle tēlifon* “to telephone” (VI; Arabic *ḍrb telefon*), *bas r ma* “after” (VI; Arabic *ba’d ma*).

2 S. E. Fassberg, “A family history told in the Jewish Neo-Aramaic dialect of Zakho,” in *Hamlet on a Hill: Semitic and Greek Studies Presented to Professor T. Muraoka on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (eds. M. F. J. Baasten and W. Th. Van Peursen; Leuven, 2003) 191–213.

3 As reported to me by Yona Sabar. *wēle* serves in Simḥa’s speech only as a presentative that includes the 3rd person copula: *Čarli wēle go Hēfa* “Charly is in Haifa” (Section IV); *ha wēla numra dīt tēlifon dīdī* “Here is my telephone number” (IV); *wēla ksūta go warāqa* “It is written on the piece of paper” (VII). On this form see C. Meehan and J. Alon, “The boy whose tunic stuck to him: A folktale in the Jewish Neo-Aramaic dialect of Zakho (Iraqi Kurdistan),” *IOS* 9 (1979) 179 n. 22. The presentative *wal* (see Y. Sabar, *A Jewish Neo-Aramaic Dictionary*

(*gbi*, *gbīwa* in Section II) on the analogy of the strong verb alongside a form with *-e* (*gmaxēwa* Section II), a feature that is also unattested among other Zakho speakers but known from a speaker of the nearby town of Gzira.⁴ Additional features of verbs III-y are noteworthy in Simḥa's speech. She pronounces final *-e* in the m.s. imperative (*trēle* in Section VII) alongside expected final *-i* (*gri* in Section VII),⁵ and she says *-yax* (*xazyaxlu* in Section II; *gdaryaxwa* and *maḥkyaxla* in Section VII) instead of expected *-ax* as the 1 pl. suffix on the active participle.⁶ The system of transcription basically follows that used by Yona Sabar.⁷

Section I: Simḥa's Father and His Business Partner Before 1948

ubābi wēwāle-, *dammid wēwāle zōra wēwāle šutāf. inšēli māto gimri šutāf.* (SEF: šrik?) *šrik ze ba'aravī. širika⁸ štāwe. ma'alē š. wēwāle šutāf go der 'armel.⁹ māto¹⁰ la-kī'pan gēzē -, qam xazēle uxa -, la wēwāle mišilmāna. 'armani wēwāle. kesēwa gmesēwa xiṭte ugrisa ta Kurdnāye go dikkāna dēni. ubābi muḥkēle 'imme. pišle šutāf dīde. pišle šutāf dīde. xarāye 'arbi utmanya pišla ḥarba.¹¹ šutāf qam 'ariqla. ubābi lā-zille bižr ab 'il balad uhāl xlišla ḥarb. xlišla ḥarb ē-za¹² 'axnan yalunke zōre waxni.*

[Wiesbaden, 2002] 154) occurs in *'āni wal gēzēlu min 'Amērika* "they saw from America" (II); *wal kxazyān* "and I see" (III); *wal g mran ta xorasti* "I say to my friend" (III); *wal go ' bbi wal g mīš' l* "in my bosom is stirring" (III); *'āna wal g mīš' nna 'ē 'ulbe* "I am putting aside this box" (IV).

⁴ Noted by Sabar in *Dictionary*, 51 (§6.10). See A. Nakano, *Conversational Texts in Eastern Neo-Aramaic (Gzira Dialect)* (Tokyo, 1973) 58.

⁵ Note the f.s. with *-e*: *māḥkēlāli* (Section VII). See also *tmāni* "eighty" for *tmāne* (n. 52 below). The final *i* in *tmāni* is probably on analogy with the endings of the other tens (60, 70, 90, etc.).

⁶ Simḥa seems to have inserted (the historical) *y* on analogy with the feminine forms with *y*: 1 f.s. *xazyān* (cf. *kxazyān* Section III), 2 f.s. *xazyat* (*maḥkyat* IV), and 3 f.s. *xazyā*. For the expected forms, see R. D. Hoberman, *The Syntax and Semantics of Verb Morphology in Modern Aramaic: A Jewish Dialect of Iraqi Kurdistan* (New Haven, Connecticut, 1989) 197.

⁷ As set forth in Y. Sabar, "LeI-Huza: Story and history in a cycle of lamentations for the ninth of Ab in the Jewish-Neo-Aramaic dialect of Zakho," *JSS* 22 (1976) 144.

⁸ See Sabar, *Dictionary*, 304.

⁹ In Section IV Simḥa pronounces it *'armal*. Cf. *'arman* in Sabar, *Dictionary*, 101. Note the fluctuation in her pronunciation between *'armāni* "Armenian" (Section I) and *'ermenī* (Section V).

¹⁰ Cf. *mātof* in Section II.

¹¹ Cf. *ḥarb* in the next line and in Sabar, *Dictionary*, 168. *ḥarba*, an Aramaized form of the Arabic *ḥarb*, is also attested in Sections II and V.

¹² From *'ē-zā(ya)* "this time." See Sabar, *Dictionary*, 156.

Translation

And my father was-, when he was young, he was a partner. I forgot how they say partner. (SEF: *širika?*) *širika* is in Arabic. Let it be *širika*! Never mind. He was a partner (whose store was located) in the Monastery of the Armenians.¹³ I don't know how he met -, he met him and one -, he was not a Moslem. He was an Armenian. He would come and bring wheat and groats to the Kurdish Jews¹⁴ in our store. And my father spoke with him. He became his partner. He became his partner. Finally, (in) '48 the war took place. The partner fled. And my father no longer went to the Old City until the war ended.¹⁵ The war¹⁶ ended, at this time we were little children.¹⁷

Section II: Party in Ramallah

gı̄bax xazyaxlu dukāne. Ramal l a la kīʔax mayla. ukullu -, balad la ktaxraxwa māʔof wēwāla. uʔāna -, dammit psixla balad, ʔāna wēwāli gurta. wēwāli gurta. ʔumri wēwāle ʔisri uʔlāha šinne, ʔisri uʔarba šinne.¹⁸ mirri wil l a ʔāna bāzan. uxa xorasti gʔāglāwa¹⁹ go pošta. dammit pošta pišla mnoš gyāna uBezək pišle mnoš gyāne, ʔuzlu msibā rapsa go Ramal l a. go xa bet kafē , xa qa hwači. xa qa hwači. šimmut day duksa-la xa mağārid, mağārid did -, šimme mayle? ʔōd ganūwa gdarēwa go mağāra – ‘Ali Bāba! utāma biž ʔarzan wēwāla min kullu. ugbīwa ʔaziwa umfarjīwa. ulāzim huzāye yawīwa pāre ta mišilmāne. qay? xlišla ḥarba. ʔe-za gbi ʔaxli. qamāye wēwālu kpīne. ʔē-za ʔatta gar gmaxlilu, kudax ʔatta gmaxlilu kulle waʔda. ʔaz qam ʔozilan msibā, mosélulan ṭrumbēl uqam nablilan. zillan ʔil go dē msibā. ubižr ab min xa xamši nāše, ʔarbi uxamša nāše wē wālan go ṭrumbēl. dammid imṭēlan ʔil dē mağāra did ‘Ali Bāba, xāyi ṭālox! ma squlta wēwāla! bohrāyi ʔaxxa ušamʕe unūra gmaxēwa lgūda smōqa ukurkmāna. mani xızıya min danya ʔawāye? ʔāni wal gʔzēlu min ʔAmérika. ʔaxnan -, hēš ʔAme rika la sēla ṭalēni. umfōrijlan umʕōjublan.

¹³ I.e., the Monastery and Church of St. James (Jacob) in the Armenian Quarter of the Old City. The partner's store was located across the way from the monastery.

¹⁴ Lit., "Kurds." The term is used in Israel to refer to Jews from Kurdistan.

¹⁵ She means until the end of the Six Day War in 1967 and the reunification of Jerusalem.

¹⁶ The War of Independence in 1948.

¹⁷ Simḥa was actually 20 years old and not a child when the war ended.

¹⁸ In 1967 Simḥa was 39 years old. She seems to have confused 1967 with 1948.

¹⁹ Cf. *jǧ lli* in Section IV.

Translation

We want to see places. Ramallah, we don't know what it is. And all –, the Old City we didn't remember how it was. And I –, when the city opened up,²⁰ I was married. My age was 23 years old, 24 years. I said, "Indeed I am going!" And a friend of mine was working in the postal service. When the postal service became separate and *Bezeq*²¹ became separate, they made a big party in Ramallah, in a café, a coffee house, a coffee house. The name of that place is a cave of, a cave of –, what's his name? The one who would steal and put in a cave –, Ali Baba! And there it was cheaper than all (others). And they wanted to go and see. And the Jews had to give money to the Moslems. Why? The war ended. Now they wanted to eat. Before they were hungry. At this time now²² they feed them, just as now they feed them (the Arabs) all the time.²³ So they made us a party, they brought us a bus and they took us. We went to that party. And we were more than about 50, 45 people in that bus. When we reached that cave of Ali Baba, (may) my life (be) for yours! How beautiful it was! The light here. And candles and fire were lighting up the wall, red and yellow.²⁴ Who has seen such things? They learned from America. We –, America had not yet reached us. And we saw and were amazed.

Section III: A Stranger at the Party Stares at Simḥa

utūlan kutxa mirre, "āhat šimmax 'Ester-ile, Šar'ābi? 'ēha-la duksax, 'āhat. 'u 'ēha duksax. kutxa hullūle duksa dīde. wax tīwe, wal kxazyān xa wēle menōxe 'ibbi. mišilmāna-le! kalba bir keša'!²⁵ mā gmenxut 'ibbi? wal gimran ta xorasti, gimrāna, "walax! 'ōha gmēnix 'ibbi r āba. 'āna qēman 'āzan. gimra, "'ēka bāzat? ṭrimbēl sa'a 'i'ā bāse. 'ēka bāzat 'atta? byatwat 'il warya? kullu mišilmāne qarqindāye." mirrila, "az qay gmēnix 'ibbi?" gimra, "la-k'an." gimra, "baqranne." gimrāle,

²⁰ I.e., after Israelis could travel to it once again following the 1967 war.

²¹ *Bezeq* is the Israeli national telephone company. It was split off from the national postal service in 1984.

²² *Simḥa* seems to mean "then."

²³ *Simḥa*'s intent is that the Arabs were hungry after the war because of the difficult economic situation in the occupied territories and they had to be provided with food and money. One way of earning money was to open restaurants in order to attract Israelis.

²⁴ She explains that candles and lights were placed behind different colored glass in the wall of the cave.

²⁵ Yona Sabar and Hezy Mutzafi inform me that they know this word from other Zakho speakers, however, its origin is unclear.

"*msāmiḥli, ḥuts min kavōd didox, bale ʔēnox r āba ruwwe-lu. ma wit menōxe ʔibbit xawirsi?*" *gēmūr*, "*la-kīʔin.*" *gēmūr*, "*xa mundi go libbi wal go ʔibbi wal gimtāʔil.*" *gimrāle*, "*šud gimtāʔil go libbox, la go libbēni!*"

Translation

And we sat down. Each one asked, "You, is your name Esther, Sharabi? This is your place, you (sit here), and this is the your place. (To) each one they assigned a place. We are seated and suddenly I see that one (person) is staring at me. He is a Moslem! Son of an evil one! Why are you staring at me? I say to my friend, I say, "Hey!²⁶ He is staring at me a lot." I am getting up to go. She says, "Where will you go? The bus (only) at nine o'clock comes. Where will you go now? Will you sit outside? All Moslems (are) atheists." I said to her, "Then why is he staring at me?" She says, "I don't know." She says, "I'll ask him!" She says to him, "Excuse me, no offense,²⁷ but your eyes are very large. Why are you staring at my friend?" He says, "I don't know." He says, "Something in my heart and in my bosom is stirring."²⁸ She says to him, "It should stir in your heart and not in our heart!"

Section IV: The Stranger Reveals Himself to Be Her Father's Former Partner

ʔaz gēmūrra, "kīʔat²⁹ mayle šimmi? gimrāle, "laʔ. "gēmūr, "ʔāna –, šimmi Kayūf-ile." *ʔāna –, dammid šmeʔli Kayūf, pišli biḡxāka. murrīla, "ʔEster, xalaš. la maḥkyat ʔimme. ʔō Kayūf xōr bābi-le, xōr bābi-le."* *gimra, "ma gimrat?" murrīla, "sē mbaqraxle."* *murrāle, "msāmiḥli, ʔāšat –, damm d m ʔrēla, šimme murrēlan, murrāle³⁰ ʔāšat ʔil-ʔasāmi! ... ʔana baṭalleʔ ʔal hādi mārʔa uʔiši fi ʔibbi ʔam bilʔab."* *ʔaz murrāle, "ma ʔam bilʔab fi ʔibbak? ʔilʔab fi l-ʔibbak la fi ʔibna!" gēmūr ʔāla, "kīʔat, ʔāna kxašwin ʔēha –, bāba –, šimma Mōše-le."* *murrāle, "mēka kīʔit?" gēmūr, "ʔamōya –, šimme Čarli-le."* *gimra, "la-kīʔit. Šamūʔel-ile."* *gēmūr, "naxōn. ʔamōya –, šimme Šamūʔel-ile. Čarli wēle go Ḥēfa."* *gimra, "mēka kīʔit?" gēmūr, "ʔāna jǧilli ʔimmud Mōše go der ʔarmal. gmesinwāle xiṭte uḡirsa usaʔāre ukulle mundi ta dikkāna. ubāba –, ʔtle kǧli ʔamāne.*

²⁶ See Sabar, *Dictionary*, 154.

²⁷ Lit. "apart from your honor."

²⁸ Lit., "playing."

²⁹ Simḥa says *kīʔit* on the tape for expected 2 f.s. *kīʔat*, attested later in this section.

³⁰ The following exchange between Esther and Kayūf is in Arabic.

ha ʿisri šinne ʿāna wal gimṭāšinna ʿē ʿulbe. lāzīm ʿamrītūli ʿēka-le skīna yān ʿāsīn kisle yān yawītūli numra dt tēlīfon³¹ maḥkin ʿimme yān kudax gbētun. marūle, 'Kayūf!' ha wēla numra d t tēlīfon dīdi. ʿāwa –, ʿiswāle r āba pāre. ʿiswāle te lifon. ʿaxnan –, lās wālan pāre. lās wālan tēlīfon.

Translation

Then he says to her, “Do you know what my name is?” She says to him, “No.” He says, “I –, my name is Kayuf.³² I –, when I heard Kayuf, I began to laugh. I said to her, “Esther, enough. Don’t talk to him. That Kayuf is my father’s friend, my father’s friend.” She says, “What are you saying?” I said to her, “Go, let’s ask him.” She said to him, “Pardon me, may live –,” when he said to her, his name he said to us, she said, “May you have children bearing your name!³³ ... (He said,) “I am looking at this woman and something in my bosom is stirring.”³⁴ Then she said, “What (do you mean) it stirs in your bosom? It should stir in your bosom and not in our bosom!” He says to her, “You know, I think that she –, her father, the name is Moshe (Moses).” She said to him, “From where do you know (this)?” He says, “Her uncle –, his name is Charly.” She said, “You don’t know. It is Samuel.” She says, “Correct. Her uncle’s name is Samuel. Charly is in Haifa.” She says, “From where do you know (this)?” He says, “I worked with Moshe in the Monastery of the Armenians. I used to bring him grain and groats and barley and everything to the store. And her father –, he has with me a deposit in trust. Behold twenty years I am putting aside this box. You must tell me where he is living and either I will come to him or you should give me the telephone number so that I can talk with him or just as you like. Tell him, ‘Kayuf!’ Here is my telephone number.” He –, he had a lot of money. He had a telephone. We –, we didn’t have money. We didn’t have a telephone.

Section V: Simḥa’s Father Learns of Chance Meeting with Former Partner

sēli ʿaw lēle laswa-bi biṣr ab ʿāzanwa lbēsa. yalunket dīd, ugōri, kullu wēlu go bēsa. sēli hayya bē bābi. sēla ʿimmi xawīrsi ʿEster. gēm r –, bābi gēmīr, “xer ʿinšal l a!

³¹ Cf. Sabar, *Dictionary*, 310, *telefon*.

³² Aḥmad Kayūf, originally from the village of ʿUsifiyya

³³ Lit., “May the names live!”

³⁴ Lit., “play” (Arabic *ʿb* = Neo-Aramaic *ʿl* in previous section)

mā sēlax bīpalgız lēle? qam šoqattu yalunke!" murri, "kīʔit bābi. lēbox mhēm nut mani xzēli ʔıdyo. ba-xāyi ʔālox," m rrii. murri, "Kayūf kīʔitte?" "Wī! ʔilāha manixle!" ʔısrı šınne lēn³⁵ xızya dīde, mun yōmid ʔarba." murri, "bābi, ʔakān ʔamrannox msolımlē ʔıllōx, bımhēm nut ʔılli?" gēmır, "bımhēm nın ubımhēm nın!" gēmır, "ʔāwa bır bābe-ıle!" gēmır, "lēwe dwıqa mun ʔımındı ʔılla mun bır bābe." gēmır, "kašēr b r kašēr-ıle. ʔomnām mıšılmāna-le. qamāye mıšılmāna –, la gımrıwa, "drūzi" u(la) gımrıwa, "ʔərmeni." gımrıwa, "mıšılmāna." ʔē-za qam maḥkyanna ʔāle ḥıkkōsa. šnēle mgıxka bābi.

Translation

I came that night. I wasn't able any more to go home. My children and my husband, all of them are at home. I came quickly to my father's house. My friend Esther came with me. He says –, my father says, "I hope all is well! Why have you come in the middle of the night? You have left the children!" I said, "You know, father. You can't believe whom I saw today. (May) my life (be) for yours!" I said. I said, "Do you know Kayuf?" (He said) "Oh! May he rest in peace! Twenty years I haven't seen him, since the time of the war." I said, "Father, if I tell you that he sends you greetings, will you believe me?" He says, "I will believe and I will believe!" He says, "He is the son of his father!" He says, "He is not taken for anything except the son of his father."³⁶ He says, "He is a worthy son of a worthy (man)."³⁷ True, he is a Moslem. Formerly, Moslem –, they didn't used to say³⁸ "Druze" and (didn't) used to say "Armenian." They used to say "Moslem."³⁹ Then I told him the story. He fainted from laughter, my father.

Section VI: The Partners are Reunited

gēmır, "hallı numra dt tēlifoŋ ʔatta bāzin. murri, "bābi. ʔatta la gpasxılox darga." uqamēni ʔıswa xa ḥammam. šımme wēwāla Yōḥanan ʔEzra .ʔāni –, ʔıswālu tēlifoŋ. kud gbēwa mtalfinwa, kesēwa gyawēwa xa qıruš ugımtalfinwa. ʔılbınhe gēmır, ʔāna šınsı

³⁵ For *lēw n*, as attested in Section VI.

³⁶ I.e., one can see (lit., "he is held") that he is truly the son of his father.

³⁷ Lit., "kosher son of kosher he is."

³⁸ I.e., call them.

³⁹ The Druze and Armenians were formerly designated by the general term "Moslem."

la sēla. kulle lēle lēwin ṭwīʿa. ʿatta qēmīn ʿāzīn māxīn tēlīfon ṭāle. zille mxēle tēlīfon ṭāle. ʿāwa šmeʿle ḥiṣṣit bābi ubābi šmeʿle ḥiṣṣe. kutru tūlu piṣlu bībxāya. lēbe ʾō maḥke ulēbe ʾō xit-ṣi maḥke. ʿē-za gimranne bābi, “ ʿāwa –, ʿāhit gbāxit.” gēmīr, “ʿāwa biṣ ʿazīza-le min xāye dīdi. biṣ ʿazīza-le,” gēmīr. “ʿiṣra šinne dūt wēwāli ʿimme, la xzēli b āš ʿilla ʿimme. uqūruš dīde piṣle treʿ.” mirre⁴⁰ ṭāle, “ʿāhit bāsūt kisli yān ʿāna bāsīn kislox.” bābi mirrēle, “ʿāna xapča ʿayyān wēna. lēbi ʿāzīn. ʿāhit, ʿisālox kisli! ʿāhit, mē(s)it-ṣi kulla miṣpaḥā dīdox! basīr xa šapsa sēlu biṣr ab min ʿisri gūre. ʿāni palge yalunke dīde, palge xaswāse, palge ʿamtāse,⁴¹ xā- pal(ge) xalwāse. jillu ʿala millu⁴² qam mesēlu. sēlu. yimmi ʿuzla xamiṣta. ʿuzla yaprax. ʿuzla maldūm. ʿuzla šikle šikle upīsa udehna uqālya ukasyāsa. mād did gibit! xa šufra min –, mʿaxxa hāl hodaʿā ḥadašā. xillu štēlu. basīr ma xillu uštēlu, nšīqlu. qabil inšēli ʿamrannox dammit sēlu, piṣlu binšāqa xawxīt ubībxāya binšāqa ubībxāya binšāqa ubībxāya.

Translation

He says, “Give me the telephone number now I will go.” I said, “Father, they are not going to open up the door to you.” And in front of our house was a Turkish bath. Its name was Yoḥanan ʿEzra. They –, they had a telephone. Whoever wanted to telephone, would come and give one piastre and would telephone. The next morning he says, “Sleep didn’t come to me. All night I didn’t fall asleep. Now I am going to get up, go, telephone him.” He went, gave him a call. He heard my father’s voice and my father heard his voice. The two of them sat crying. That one is unable to speak and that one too is unable to speak. At this time I say to my father, “He –, you are crying.” He says, “He is dearer than my life, he is dearer. The ten years that I was with him, only because of him did things go well. And his piastre became two.” He said to him, “You will come to me or I will come to you.” My father said to him, “I am a bit ill. I cannot go. You, come to me! You, bring also your entire family!” After one week more than twenty people came. They (were) half his children, half his sisters, half his maternal aunts, approximately half his maternal uncles. Young and

⁴⁰ Simḥa says *m rra* on the tape.

⁴¹ Simḥa originally says *ʿamatāse*, but upon hearing the tape, she corrects it to *ʿamtāse*.

⁴² Cf. Sabar, *Dictionary*, 209 s.v. -ṣ: “*m-* indicates a ‘doublet’(=the real noun but with its first consonant replaced with *m-*) to indicate ‘all kinds of, and the like’, e.g., *julle-mulle* ‘all kinds of clothes...’” When asked the meaning and origin of the expression *jillu ʿala millu*, Simḥa responded that it means “the whole kit and caboodle” and it is Arabic from *jill* “age” (classical and colloquial *jil*) and *mill* “kind” (classical *milla* “community”), lit., “his age and his kind.” Simḥa appears to have given the Neo-Aramaic expression an Arabic etymology.

old he brought. They came. My mother made *xamušta*.⁴³ She made stuffed grape leaves. She made *maldum*.⁴⁴ She made all sorts, and meat, and meat fat (and fried), and *qalya*, and chicken.⁴⁵ Whatever you want! A never ending table!⁴⁶ They ate and they drank. After they ate, drank, they kissed. Before I forgot to tell you, when they came, they started kissing one another and crying, kissing, crying, kissing, and crying.

Section VII: The Partner Gives Simḥa's Father the Box Deposited with Him

kšāqil xa ʿulbe qč̄in dō tranzistor didox-ila. gēmurre, "Mūsa." gēm̄ir, "ʿēha ʿamānit didox-ila min ʿarbi utmanya." bābi gēm̄ir, "wil l a ʾō šanduq kīʾinne. ʾē ʿulbe wē wāla go jā rur. gdaryaxwa pāre gāwa. gēm̄ir, "axxa mā dit ʾis̄in didox-ilu."... qam pasixla ʿulbe. kxāze gāwa pāre did waʿdit br̄itim! ʾatta gbēlu mxalōpe! pišla mdina t ʾisraʿēl. ʾis̄wa šekel, ʾis̄wa selaʿ. lire –, qam (m)xalp̄ilu. bank ʾisraʿēl. "ʾatta lāz̄im kaswit ksāwa ta –, "zillan qam (m)xalpaxlu. gx̄iklu ʾillēni. gimri, "ʿēha mēkala?" "qam maḥkyaxla ḥikkōsa." gēm̄ir, "ʿē ḥikkōsa gbēla ksāwa riž warāqa uxāt̄im ʾilla vaʿad dit kompaniyye."⁴⁷ "de qu ʾō xmāra, ʾrēle bē ʾurxa." ʾulan ksūlan ksāwa. qam maḥkyaxla ʾāle did Kayūf uʿēka wēwāla bet ḥarōšit uzillan kis vaʿad. qam xat̄imle xa –, bale vaʿad la kxāt̄im bala qar –, damm d qam qarēla gēm̄ir, "xamša ʾaḥū z ʾalēni, la –, ta koppaniyye." bābi mirre, "byaw̄innox." ʾis̄wa tāma ʾis̄ra lire, tmanya lire. la gtaxran bidyūk ʾidyo. zillan ʾil bank ʾēka wēwāle binyan m̄itspe... ʾis̄wa tāma bank ʾisraʿēl. sēlan go bank ʾisraʿēl. ʾis̄ra gūre ḥmillu qamēni. gēm̄ir, "qay babōxun la sēle? mirran, "babēni ʿayyān-ile. mēse warāqa min ḥakim! ʾē-za ʾāna biš pir pišik wēli min xaswāsi umun ʾamōyi. mirr̄ile, "marri, 'gōzit ʾimman gx̄ka.' la gbit yawitta, mar, 'la gbit!' mirrox, 'warāqa,' mosēlan warāqa. mirrox, 'xat̄ima did vaʿad,' mosēlan x tm d vaʿad. mirrox, 'ʿulbe.' qam mesaxle ʿulbe ʾālox. mad xit gbit? hallan ʾr̄imbēl! bāsax mesaxle bābi-ši ʾaxxa. gēm̄ir, "ḥmōlun mbaqrax mnahēl." sēli qam mnahēl ḥaqirri. gēm̄ir, "māḥkēlāli." mirri, "mā maḥkyannox? wal čhēli min maḥkōye! qri!" gēm̄ir, "laʾ. ʾāna mēnx̄in, ʾāhat maḥkyat." ʾāna muḥkēli kulla ḥikkōsa.

43 Sour soup containing dumplings and vegetables.

44 Sabar, *Dictionary*, 219: "dish of of tomatoes, eggplant, and meat."

45 *Ibid.*, 279: "fried and heavily salted meat (preserved for winter)."

46 *Lit.*, "a table from –, from here until further announcement."

47 From Jerusalem Arabic *kubbanīyye* (< Italian *compagnia*), which is reserved for a Jewish-built quarter before 1948. See M. Piamanta, "Jerusalem Sub-standard Arabic: Linguistic Analysis of an Idiolect," *JSAI* 1 (1979) 268. Simḥa pronounces the two additional occurrences of this word *koppaniyye*. The pronunciation with *m* might be the influence of the English form (and other European forms) with *m*.

qam maḥkyanna ṭāle, "wēla ksūta go warāqa." gēmür, " ḥaqq. ḥaqq. ḥaqq." qam yawīlan pāre. dan ṛisra lire hullan xamša lire. ulá-kī'an, ṛisri qirūše-ile. lá-ktaxran bīdyúk kma wēwālu. ṛilāha la mdāgilli! mosēlan ṛisri qirūše. qam yawaxlu ta va'ad hakhilā, ta 'aniyī m dt koppaniyye. xamša lire bābi qam šaqillu, qam darēlu go kništa. umın daw yōma bābi la qam našēla ṭāli hāl mutle. gēmür, "āhat qam masyatte xōri haxí ne'emān dīdi but sōf. ġzi! ṛāni gumri mišilmāne. xāzit, ṛis minnu ne'emānīm.

Translation

He takes a box (which is) the size of that radio⁴⁸ of yours. He says to him, "Musa (Moses)." He says, "This is your deposit in trust from '48." My father says, "Indeed I know that chest. This box was in a drawer. We used to put money in it." He says, "Whatever (money) there is, is yours." ... He opened the box. He sees in it money from the time of the British. Now they must be exchanged! It became the State of Israel. There was a *shekel*, there was a *sela*.⁴⁹ *Lire* –, they changed them. The Bank of Israel. "Now you must write a letter to –, " we went and exchanged them. They laughed at us. They say, "Where is this from?" "We told the story." He says, "This story must be written down on paper and the neighborhood committee sign it." "Well then, get up, set that donkey on this path!"⁵⁰ We sat down, we wrote a letter and told him (the story) of Kayuf and where the factory was and we went to the (neighborhood) committee. It signed a –, but the committee doesn't sign without read -. When he read it, he says, "Five percent for us, for –, for the neighborhood." My father said, "I will give you." There was there (in the box) ten lira, eight lira. I don't remember exactly today. We went to the bank where the Mişpe Building⁵¹ was... There was the Bank of Israel. We came into the Bank of Israel. Ten men stood before us. He says, "Why didn't your father come?" We said, "Our father is sick." "Bring a letter from a doctor!" At this time I am a bit quicker than my sisters and than my paternal uncle. I said to him, "Tell me! You are making fun of us. You don't want to give it? Say you don't want to." You said, 'A piece of paper.' We brought a piece of paper. You said, 'The signature of the committee.' We brought the signature of the

⁴⁸ She points to the tape recorder.

⁴⁹ These were not names of coins during the Mandate Period, but rather during the biblical (*sheqel*) and rabbinic (*sela*) periods.

⁵⁰ I could not find a discussion of this Neo-Aramaic (or Arabic?) saying, nor is it familiar to Yona Sabar. However, it is known to Mr. Aḥiya Shiloni, who immigrated to Jerusalem in 1934 from Čalla, Turkey (modern day Çukurca).

⁵¹ On Jaffa St. across from the Russian Compound.

committee. You said, 'The box.' We brought you the box. What else do you want? Give us a car. We will go, we will bring my father here also." He says, "Wait! Let's ask the manager." I came before the manager so he could question me. He says, "Tell it to me." I said, "What should I tell you? I am tired of talking. Read!" He says, "No. I look, you talk." I told the whole story. I told it to him, "It is written on the piece of paper." He says, "True. True. True." They gave us the money. Of these ten lira he gave us five lira. And I don't know, there are 20 piastres. I don't remember exactly how many there were. God shouldn't make me lie! We brought 20 piastres. We gave them to the neighborhood committee, to the poor of the neighborhood. Five lira my father took, he gave them to the synagogue. And from that day my father did not forget me for it until he died. He says, "You brought me my most loyal friend in the end." See! They say they are Moslems, but . you see, some of them are loyal.

Section VIII: Kayūf is Still Alive Today

uKayūf hāl ʔdyo xay. ʔdyo bir tmāni⁵² ucʔa-le, ʔiʔi. uku(d) naqla gımtalʔin ʔalēni bit ʔēza, bit Pesah bit Roš haŠanā gmāxe te lefon ʔalēni. "ʔid saʔid! ʔid mabrūk!" udammid gurra brāti, (m)šudırrele telifon ʔāse. la-sēle qay r āba pira-le. mšudırre matanā. ma mšudırre-la matanā? sdinim mun ʔarir. dammid gyatwi ʔllu gnapli Parʔa. ʔōʔe-lu. ʔōʔe-lu. brāti gxıkla. mitla mun gxıka dammid qam xazyālu. mirri, "mā gıbat? bani ʔādā m⁵³ bir ʔōqada šinne. mšadır ʔātax. ʔoha-le ʔıkkōsa did bābi.

Translation

And Kayuf until today is alive. Today he is 89, 90 (years old). And every time he telephones us at a holiday, at Passover, at the New Year he makes a phone call to us. "Happy Holiday! Blessed Holiday!" And when my daughter married, I called him⁵⁴ that he should come. He didn't come because he is very old. He sent a present. What present did he send her? Silk sheets. When they sit on them, they fall to the ground. They are slippery. They are slippery. My daughter laughed. She died of laughter when she saw them. I said, "What do you want? The human being is such and such many years old. He should send (them) to you." This is the story of my father.

⁵² For expected *tmāne*. See Sabar, *Dictionary*, 310.

⁵³ See Sabar, *Dictionary*, 111.

⁵⁴ Lit., "I sent him a telephone."

