

BISMILLA

This is the ending of the BISMILLA Soqotran (Soqotri) folklore tale recorded from Sa'ad al-Keshri from Qalansiya during his study in Aden in 1979-80. The tape-recorded text was transcribed with Sa'ad's help and is presented as it was told orally ? with a few repetitions and slips in the narrator's speech (English gloss and following translation my own).

BISMILLA
(PART 2 - ENDING)

103) we 'ebher bi-s ʔoʔ dekf, 'iz'em ɣa-ne ʃuɣar,

and the well (there is) a ledge in it, the man sat down now on it,

104) 'iz'em di ʃom di-yella we di ɣte, 'af tʃabaɣ.

(he) sat along the day of Alla and the night, until became morning.

105) gidaɣ 'ahdem di yi'emer d-yhen riyho,

servants came to do their water,

106) d-yen d-irhon (d-irohon),

of their goats,

- 107) **d-yon d-irohon we d-yon gamohel.**
of their goats and of their camels.
- 108) **'omar, 'am yistit 'am šuḥar b-kane.**
(he) said, when (they) see [that] a man (is) inside.
- 109) **'omar: 'aḥ , qaqa! reqaḥ t-(h)o!**
(he) said: o, brother! take me out!
- 110) **- Le'! bidik ho, 'ol ta qhon! - (1)**
- No! I am lying, it was not so! (1)
[1. The informant says his story line here is not true - "it was not so".]
- 111) **'iz'em , m-ol 'ad 'iz'em ('iz'om), 'am ye'araḥ,**
(he) sat, when (he) was sitting until (it) come,
- 112) **'am d-ḥte , gidaḥo da ḥa tru gini , giyon (2).**
until the night (has come), two jinns came here.
- 113) **'omor ṭoṭ, 'omor: 'am 'ero bi (?) 'ini 'efe ḥa -**
one (of them) said, (he) said: if someone is here -
- 114) **qala' bi hoben!**
let us throw a stone!
- 115) **- qala' bi hoben?**
let us throw a stone?
- 116) **šūḥar 'eqof, 'ol ḡala', 'eqof.**

the man became silent, didn't speak, kept silent.

117) 'omar: 'aḥ, qaqa, 'inim het na'a šigek?

(he) said: oh, brother, what did you do now?

118) ḥa d-et bi ḥaya? (2)

here in your life?

119) 'omar: ho 'ig'ork firhim d-šoḥon,

(he) said: I made the Sultan's daughter ill,

120) we 'ol tsorif, 'af l-igo talat marrat (3) b-tada'.

and (she) will not recover, until she is beaten three times at her back.

121) 'omar : wa ḥe'r l-irḥad d-raḥad-

(he) said: and today (someone) tried to treat, who treated -

122) we-ol tirefe.

and (she) didn't recover.

123) 'omar : wa (ha)t?

(he) said: and you?

124) 'omar : wu ho 'a'yofk ḥazine d-šoḥon -

(he) said: and I put away a treasury of the Sultan -

125) w-ol tširaqaḥ (tšaqah), 'af l-igdaḥ toḥ qhobš ḥahir,

and (it) will not emerge, until one black sheep will be brought,

126) **suleb d-ol ther (toɣ l-ther) - tʃiraqaḥ hazine!**

will be slaughtered by the door (at one door) - the treasury will emerge!

127) **tʃiqa'e hazine!**

the treasury will appear!

128) **'omar: suwa' ! 'omar: bes, suwa' ! taheyro.**

(he) said: good! (he) said: enough, good! (they two) went away.

129) **'am tʃobaḥ - gidaḥ 'ahdem d-ʃoḥon yi'amer riho.**

when (it) became morning - the servants of the Sultan came to do water.

130) **wa yhe yiteme'en, wa yhe, ʃuḥar, sele yhe 'idhan,**

and he is hearing, and he, the man, picked up his ears,

131) **'inim ye'omer (h)e-š (ye'omer-eš) (4) d-ki na'a giyon.**

what these (two) jinns now do say.

132) ...

133) **'af qariri, 'am tʃabaḥ, gedaḥ li l-ye'omer riho**

Up to tomorrow, when became a morning, (there) came (those) who are doing water,

134) **d-yon gamohil, d-yon 'ileyten, 'imer ḥa d-yon riho.**

of their camels, of their cows, did here their water,

135) **'imer ḥa d-yon de ...**

did here their ...

136) 'imer: 'inim 'igdaḥk d-ḥa b-'obher?

(they) said: what has brought you there into the well?

137) 'omar: ho 'intofk d-'ebher,

(he) said: I was fallen into the well,

138) na'a reqaḥ t-(h)o!

now take me off!

139) 'irqaḥ te-y b-mišiyo.

(they) took him off with a leathern pail.

140) 'omar (h)-ihin: 'ini bile (l)-ḥa (di)-ten bi bilad?

(he) said to them: is there any (one) here in your country?

141) 'ini d-ge'er, 'ini d-hober?

is there who is ill, is there who is suffering?

142) 'omar (5) (h)-i: 'aḥ, 'ini d-ge'er,

(he) said to him: ah, there is who is ill,

143) w-(h)et 'ol mikilhe?

and you - are you a doctor?

144) 'omar: ho mikilhe.

(he) said: I (am) a doctor.

145) 'imir: 'ini d-ge'er - firhim d-ṣoṭhon,

(they) said: there is who is ill - a daughter of the Sultan.

146) ge'ero wa buk se her

she is ill and there she (is) today

147) l-irhad d-rohad - wa 'ol tirofe, 'ol tirofe.

tried to treat who treated - and (she) did not recover, did not recover

148) 'omar : heyya!

(he) said: well (come on)!

149) tahar, gedaḥ mo soḥon, 'amar:

(he) went down, came to the Sultan, said:

150) (ninhi), 'inim ša-k?

Lord, what (is there) with you?

151) 'omar : d-et firhim, 'erimmo raḥadk ho se-hen

(he) said: your daughter, if I cure her

152) (ti-s) wa tirefe - 'inim tof ḥi?

(her) and became healthy - what do you give me?

153) 'uḥof 'a-k - bile d-'ik!

I shall give you - a thing which (you) want!

154) 'omar: 'ik kar 'ibo'al-s!

(he) said: I want to marry her!

155) 'omar: tibo'ol!

(he) said: marry!

156) 'omar (h)-i: ten na'a tšiqah (tšireqah) ther!

(he) said to him: you now go (pl.) outdoor!

157) šeqah ther, 'ige'e-s talat marrat (6) (b)-tada'.

(they) went outdoor, (he) beat her tree times at the back.

158) ḥalalat wa šahadat (7) -

(she) said taḥliil (2) and šahaada (3) -

[2 – i.e., suitable Islamic formulas of lifting the ban]

[3 – i.e., proclaimed her Islamic credo]

159) tirofe firhim d-šoṭhon, ba'al-is.

the Sultan's daughter became healthy, (he) married her.

160) 'omar (h)-i: 'inim 'ak 'ayofk?

(he) said to him: what else did you lose?

161) 'omar: 'ayofk d-yo hazine.

(he) said: I have lost my treasury.

162) 'omar: wa ke šiqoḥo ha-k d-yet hazine –

(he) said: and if your treasury will emerge for you -

163) 'inim ḥi tof?

what will you give me?

- 164) 'omar: we ke šiqoḥo 'inhi d-yo ḥazine –
(he) said: and if my treasury will emerge for me -
- 165) (a)ṭof 'a-k nuṣ min ma'l (8).
I will give you a half of (the) money.
- 166) wa rummo ṣamek ho - t(a)ḥkom!
and when I[will] die -(you) will rule!
- 167) wa tawalle d-ḥakom! (9)
and will succeed the authority!
- 168) 'omar: heyya!
(he) said: well (come on)!
- 169) 'omar: gidaḥin 'inhi ṭoṭ qhobś ḥahir!
(he) said: give (pl.) me one black sheep!
- 170) ḥere min qhobś ḥahir,
(they) looked for a black sheep,
- 171) ḥiṣe-y l-ther - šiqahō ḥazine d-ṣoṭhon.
cut at the door - emerged the treasury of the Sultan.
- 172) 'ima' (de) d-i ṣaḥab di d-yi'amer: diya' bismilla,
(this one) his friend heard that was saying: bismilla is bad,
- 173) 'ima' d-hi qaqa 'inne ba'al firhim d-ṣoṭhon
(he) heard that his brother that (he) married daughter of the Sultan

174) w-asbah di - tegir.

and became a rich man (=merchant).

175) țahar mo d-ye qaqa, 'omar:

(he) went to his brother, said:

176) na'a, het 'ol kisek di mel wa diš 'afiye d-yella,

now, you did not get this money and this favour of Alla

177) kol diš min 'obher!

if not from this well!

178) na'a 'ik (h)-ak tza'a tho

now (I) want you to take me

179) wa tibuleq tho diš di-d-ehe , d-'obher!

and abandon me (into) this one, (this) well!

180) 'omar: 'e qaqa, la'! 'ol 'ibuleq-k (h)o!

(he) said: o, brother, no! I shall not abandon you!

181) dibe țoț min hadam kar yi'arah-k! (10)

let (any) one from the servants lead you!

182) rehe-š țoț d-min 'išta'al (11) buk d-șoțhon,

led one of who were working there by the Sultan,

183) rehe-y d-'ebhor wa qoș 'e-y qeyd.

led him to the well and cut the cord of him.

184) ...

185) 'am 'iken bi-lilhe ḥte, gidaḥo diki na'a 'agi giyon.

when the night (darkness) became, these two men-jinns came.

186) 'omer : 'aḥ qaqa! 'am 'ero bi 'ini 'efe ḥa,

(he) said: ah, brother! that is, there were people there,

187) ber ḥazine d-ṣoṭhon ṣiqoḥo,

since the treasury of the Sultan emerged,

188) wa firhim d-ṣoṭhon titrefe.

and the daughter of the Sultan recovered.

189) loṭ qala'o bi ḥoben?!

let us two throw a stone?!

190) 'omar yhi: ya foroḥ! 'a tqima tho,

(he) said: o, you bastards! don't hurt me,

191) ya 'iyal ḥaram! (12)

oh, children of the sin!

192) 'imir: 'a! 'ini ḥa ḥiyhi!?

(they) said: a! there is a person (human being)!?

193) 'alla kidamo 'ay d-hi 'ebher,

Allah destroyed for him his well,

194) 'af tken ramd 'el-'imed! (13)

until (it) became invisible at all!

195) zika' li-lla kol digdege 'afiro dš^vi-na (14) faḥro!

nothing at all only a red plain this, now (that is) all!

196) we 'osta' qissa.

and the story ended.

197) 'am gidaḥen ḥadam - kise zika' li-lla bile.

when the servants came - (they) found nothing at all.

198) same šuḥar.

the man died.

199) wa 'af ḥa-ne na'a 'oste'.

and up to here now (the speech) is ended.

Notes

- 1 - The informant's "own" words saying his story line here is not true - "it was not so."
- 2 - First the informant used the dual form **gini** but then he had doubts and changed it to plural form **giyon** (< Arab. sg. **jinn** - pl. **jinnah**)
- 3 - Arabic word , in Soqotri it is "ʿed" - a life, but there is a possibility of replacement of the Soqotri word with the Arabic one in the dialect of Qalansiya.
- 4 - Arabic words.
- 5 - In general Soqotri verbs are "intransitive": they demand prepositions to be used to link them with suffix pronouns.
- 6 - The saying is one of the servants.
- 7 - Arabic words.
- 8 - She said "taḥliil" (Arab.) and "šahaada" (Arab.)
- 9 - Arabic word **maal** - "money" or "property".
- 10 - **kar yi'arah-k** < **kar yi'arah ha-k**
- 11 - Arabic word - "a power".
- 12 - Arabic word in dialectal form taken to Soqotri with the shift:
ḡ > ʿ: 'iṣṭaḡal > 'iṣṭaʿal.
- 13 - Arabic dialectal: "yaa 'iyaal ḥaraam" ('iyaal = 'awlaad).
- 14 - Possibly, a Soqotri pronunciation of the Arabic **rumaad 'al-ḡumuud** "dust of oblivion(darkness)" > **ramd 'el-'imeṭ** > **ramd 'el-'imed**.
- 15 - **dši-na** < **diš-na** 'a.

FREE TRANSLATION.

But the well had a small ledge over its water and the man sat down on it. He sat along the day of Alla until His night came. When the night came on, two ginns arrived to the well. One of them said: "May be there are people here - let us throw a stone!"

The man kept silent, he didn't say a word ... The second ginn said: "O, brother, what did you do bad in your life?" "Well," he said: "I made the Sultan's daughter ill. And she will not recover until they beat her three times at her back! Today [one] tried to treat her, who treated - but she didn't recover."

"And you?" he said. "And I put a treasury of the Sultan away! It will not emerge until they bring a black sheep and slaughter it at the door. Only then the treasury will appear!" "Good, it'll be enough," the first ginn said, and they went away. But the man who was sitting in the well picked up his ears and heard all what the ginns said.

In the morning the servants of the Sultan came to make water for His cows and camels. "What has brought you here into the well?" they asked. "I have fallen down," the man said, "now, take me off!" And they took him off from the well by a leathern pail.

"Hai," he said, "is there any thing happened here in your country? Is there anyone ill, anyone suffering?" "Ah," they said, "there is - and are you a doctor?" He said: "Yes, I am a doctor." "The Sultan's daughter is ill," they said, "today [one] tried to treat her who treated - but she didn't recover." "Well," he said, "come on!"

When they came to the Sultan the man said: "Your Majesty, what is now here with you? If I cure your daughter and she recovers - what you will give me?" "You will take any thing you like!" the Sultan said. "I would like to marry her," the man said. "You will!" the Sultan said.

"Now, leave her here and all of you go outdoors!" the man said. When they got out he beat her three times at her back. She said thanks to the Allah - and recovered. So the man married her.

"What else did you lose?" he asked the Sultan. "I've lost my treasury," the Sultan said. "And if your treasury will emerge," the man said, "what you will give me?" "If my treasury emerge," the Sultan said, "I'll give you a half of all the money! And when I'll die - you became a Sultan!"

"Well," the man said, "now, give me a black sheep!" They brought him a black sheep, he slaughtered it outdoors - and the treasury of the Sultan emerged!

His friend heard that his "brother" married Sultan's daughter and became a merchant. He came up to him and said: "Brother, you wouldn't get all this money and all this favour of Alla if not from that well! Now I want you to take me to that well and abandon me in it!" "No!" his friend said, "I will not! Let any one of the servants lead you there!" One of the Sultan's servants led him to the well, put him down into it and cut the cord of him.

When the night came on two ginns arrived . One of them said to the other: "Brother, It means there were people in the well since the treasury of the Sultan emerged and the Sultan's daughter recovered. Let us throw a stone?!" "You bastards!" the man shouted, "don't hurt me, you children of the sin!" "Ah! Here is a man!" the ginns shouted. They made a storm over the well until it fully disappeared with the poor man in it. Now there is nothing at this place, only a red desert valley. And this is now the end.