The Neo-Aramaic dialects are modern vernacular forms of Aramaic, which has a documented history in the Middle East of over 3,000 years. Due to upheavals in the Middle East over the last one hundred years, thousands of speakers of Neo-Aramaic dialects have been forced to migrate from their homes or have perished in massacres. As a result, the dialects are now highly endangered. The dialects exhibit a remarkable diversity of structures. Moreover, the considerable depth of attestation of Aramaic from earlier periods provides evidence for the pathways of change. For these reasons the research of Neo-Aramaic is of importance for more general fields of linguistics, in particular language typology and historical linguistics. The papers in this volume represent the full range of research that is currently being carried out on Neo-Aramaic dialects. They advance the field in numerous ways. In order to allow linguists who are not specialists in Neo-Aramaic to benefit from the papers, the examples are fully glossed.

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Cover image: Women in the village of Harbole, south-eastern Turkey (photograph taken by Brunot Poizat in 1978 before the village's destruction).

Cover design: Anna Gatti
A CORPUS-BASED SWADESH WORD LIST FOR LITERARY CHRISTIAN URMI (NEW ALPHABET TEXTS)

Alexey Lyavdansky

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to compile a basic word list for the literary Neo-Aramaic dialect of the Christians of Urmi and establish their etymologies. This study is intended as a starting point for a comparison of the lexicon in all dialects of the North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic (NENA) subgroup. Literary Christian Urmi is chosen for this study because it is attested in a very large corpus of texts.

Research of Neo-Aramaic in recent decades has produced descriptions of many dialects, especially within the NENA dialect subgroup. We are now, therefore, in a good position to attempt to understand the genealogical relationships between the dialects.

Hoberman (1988) has suggested a reconstruction of the proto-NENA pronominal system. One of the conclusions of Hoberman’s study was that the dialects of Northern Iraqi Kurdistan share some morphological innovations, which may help to single them out as a cohesive subgroup. Fox (1994) attempts to explore relationships within NENA according to selected phonological, morphological and lexical features. The outcome of Fox’s study was the identification of three major

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1 HSE University, Moscow. The research has been supported by RFBR grant No. 17-04-00472.
2 For a bibliography of these dialect descriptions see: Napiorkowska (2015, 583–594). There are 137 NENA dialects listed in (https://nena.ames.cam.ac.uk/dialects/ Date of Access 28.01.2018).

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clusters of isoglosses, which, however, need to be checked with a broader range of data.\(^3\)

In this paper I shall present a Swadesh list of 110 basic words (following the version of Kassian et al. 2010) that are attested in a corpus of literary Christian Urmi.

The corpus used for this purpose consists of a collection of books and newspapers issued in the Latinised alphabet in Soviet Russia and Georgia from 1929 to 1938. This corpus was chosen on the assumption that these textual data provide sufficient documentation needed to create a basic word list. There are certain drawbacks in using literary texts for this purpose, because the language of literature and journalism may not reflect the true usage of a natural spoken language. The lexical features of the literary register, however, usually do not affect the usage within the scope of word lists consisting of 100 or even 200 words. It is important to note, however, that data collected from fieldwork are usually restricted in volume. The currently largest collection of spoken narrative texts of a Neo-Aramaic dialect (Khan 2016) amounts to approximately 70,000 words.

2. The Corpus\(^4\)

The books and newspapers in the Assyrian new alphabet (Novij Alfavit, henceforth NA) were published in Moscow and Tbilisi from 1929 to 1938. This project was an integral part of the Latinisation campaign in the Soviet Union (Smith 1998, 121–42). After 1938 the publication of Assyrian books and the newspaper in NA ceased because most of the authors, editors and translators had been condemned to death by the Stalinist regime.

It is important to note that the books dated 1929–1931 were printed using the earlier variety of the Assyrian new alphabet, which is basically Cyrillic with the admixture of some Latin letters (t, d, j, l). A modified variety of the Assyrian NA was introduced in 1931 and was used later as a standard, with some further changes adopted in 1933. A table of correspondences

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\(^3\) Fox (1994) uses data from a sample of only eleven NENA dialects.

\(^4\) For a detailed discussion of this corpus, see Lyavdansky, (forthcoming).
between the transcription notations used by various scholars and
the graphemes of the Assyrian NA is given in the appendix to this
paper.

The corpus includes 172 books and approximately 270 issues
of the newspaper *Kokhva d Madinkha* with the texts in NA. The
genres of the books are the following: translations of Russian
literary texts (the largest part of the corpus), original literary
fiction in Assyrian Neo-Aramaic, school textbooks, popular
scientific texts, Soviet propagandistic and atheistic literature.
Currently the corpus of digitised texts amounts to approximately
630,000 words from the 46 books. The word ‘digitised’ here
means that the texts are available in the doc/txt formats and
electronically searchable. Recently the morphologically tagged
corpus of the texts in NA has been made available for queries at:
http://neo-aramaic.web-corpora.net/index_en.html.

3. The Method of Presentation of the Results

Two kinds of queries were performed in order to determine
the exponents of the meanings of the basic word list. First, the
meanings of the word list were searched for in the Russian originals
of the translated texts. The corresponding exponent was checked
in the Neo-Aramaic translation. Second, the word count of the
exponents was performed on the basis of the textual database of
approximately 630,000 words. In some cases I searched in the
literature beyond the digitised corpus. I did this, for example,
for anatomical terms such as *foot*. They were found in a school
textbook on natural science. In the case of the words with high
frequency, the word count was made on a sample textual file of
37,000 words.

Each entry in the following list of basic words consists of:

1. the meaning

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5 Most of the texts in this newspaper are printed in Syriac script.
6 The expected volume of the textual corpus after its full digitisation is
more than 2 million words.
7 More than 80 percent of the searchable textual corpus are translations
from Russian into Neo-Aramaic.
2. the exponent
3. the etymological data on the exponent
4. textual examples
5. discussion

For the lexemes with clear Aramaic origin the comparative data are adduced in the following order: Classical Syriac, Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, Classical Mandaic. These three languages are subsumed under the term ‘Middle Eastern Aramaic’ (henceforth MEA).\(^8\)

4. The 110 Swadesh List

The 110 Swadesh word list for the corpus of Neo-Aramaic texts in the New Alphabet is as follows.

(1) **ALL**

\textit{kul, kull-}. > 50\times.  
MEA: \textit{kul, kol} ‘all’ (SL 622); \textit{kullā} (DJBA 559); \textit{kul} (MD 206).

(2) **ASH**

\textit{qiṭma}. 34\times.  
MEA: \textit{qeṭmā} ‘ash’ (SL 1353); \textit{qiṭmā} ‘ash’ (DJBA 1011); \textit{giṭma, gaṭma} ‘ash’ (MD 89).

(3) **BARK**

\textit{qalp̄a}. 16\times.  
MEA: \textit{qlāptā} ‘bark, shell’ (SL 1375); \textit{qlāptā} ‘peel, shell’ (DJBA 1022); \textit{qlapta} ‘shell, hard casing’ (MD 413).

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\(^8\) The term is based on one of the classifications of Aramaic languages which divides the Aramaic languages of the Middle period into Western and Eastern branches (Rosenthal 1939).
çuluxtə. 4×.

< Kurd. çûlik ‘peau, pelure, coquille, écorce’ (DKF 318).

In most of its uses qəlpə refers to objects similar to the bark of the tree: eggshell, nutshell, watermelon rinds, or, metaphorically, the turtle shell. There is only one clear usage of qəlpə in a translated text: Kirvijişi d meşə e lelavati ki axləj qəlpə d ijləni ‘The hares feed at night on tree bark’ (THH 21/1). The other one renders original Russian кора ‘bark’, but the text speaks metaphorically about the turtle shell (THH 10/4).

(4) BELLY
kisə. > 50×.

MEA: karsā ‘belly, stomach’ (SL 655); karsā ‘stomach, rumen, womb’ (DJBA 603); karsə ‘belly, stomach; womb, uterus’ (MD 201). For the loss of the consonant *r in the same position, cf. qənə ‘horn’ < MEA qarnā.9

(5) BIG
gura. > 50×.

< ? Kurd. (K) gir ‘gros, grand’ (DKF 568); gir, gur ‘large, big’ (Chyet 213); Kurd. (S) gewre ‘grand, gros’ (DKF 557). The Kurdish etymology for C. Urmi gura is suggested in (Khan 2016, vol. 3, 169) with a question mark.

(6) BIRD
ţera. > 50×.

MEA: ĭayrā ‘bird’ (SL 528).

9 Cf. the attestations of this word in other NENA dialects: J. Challa kāsa (Fassberg 2010, 282), J. Lishana Deni kāsa (JNAD 180), J. Betanure kāsa (Mutzaфи 2008, 356), C. Tiyari časa (Talay 2008, 100), C. Txuma časa (Talay 2008, 101), C. Qočanəş kisa (Talay 2008, 339).
(7)  TO BITE

qrata. 10 × .

MEA: qrṭ pe. ‘to gnaw, to wound with the beak’ (SL 1405); ṭrq pe. ‘to hit, sting, bite’ (DJBA 519).

njasa. 4 × .

The etymology is uncertain. Cf. ngs pe. ‘to eat’ (DJPA 340; Mutzafi 2004, 234).

(8)  BLACK

kuma. > 50 × .

MEA: kōmā ‘black’ (SL 608); ʾukkāmā ‘black’ (SL 15); ʾukkām ‘black’ (DJBA 88); ʿukma ‘blackness’ (MD 343).

(9)  BLOOD

dimma. > 50 × .

MEA: dmā ‘blood’ (SL 307); dmā ‘blood’ (DJBA 340); dma, adma ‘blood’ (MD 111, 8).

(10)  BONE

garma. > 50 × .

MEA: garma ‘bone’ (SL 261); garma ‘bone’ (DJBA 302); girma (MD 92).

(11)  BREAST (CHEST)

sadra. > 50 × .

Pers. ṣadr ‘breast’ (CPED 783) < Arab. ṣadr ‘Brust’ (AWSG 701).

(12)  TO BURN (intr.)

qjeda. > 50 × .

MEA: yqd ‘to burn’ (intr.) (MD 193); yqd af ‘to burn’ (tr.) (SL 580); yqd af ‘to set on fire’ (DJBA 540).
(13) CLOUD
ajva. > 50×.
MEA: ‘aybā ‘obnubilatio, nubes humidae’ (TS 2824); ‘ēḇā ‘dark cloud, cloudiness’ (DJBA 850); aiba ‘cloud, fog, mist, darkness’ (MD 14).

(14) COLD
qajra. > 50×.
MEA: qrr pe. ‘to be cold, frosty’ (SL 1417); qrr pe. ‘to cool down’ (DJBA 1047).
qarjra. 23×.
MEA: qarrirā ‘cold’ (SL 1409); qarrīr ‘cold’ (DJBA 1043);
qarir (MD 403).

(15) TO COME
təjə. > 50×.
MEA: 'ty ‘to come’ (SL 110); 'ty ‘to come’ (DJBA 176);
ata (MD 41).

(16) TO DIE
mjətə. > 50×.
MEA: mwt ‘to die’ (SL 731); mwt ‘to die’ (DJBA 650); mut ‘to die’ (MD 263).

(17) DOG
kalbə. > 50×.
MEA: kalbā ‘dog’ (SL 622); kalbā ‘dog’ (DJBA 580); kalba ‘dog’ (MD 197).

(18) TO DRINK
štəjə. > 50×.
MEA: šty ‘to drink’ (SL 1614); šty ‘to drink’ (DJBA 1184);
šta ‘to drink’ (MD 476).
(19) **DRY**

\[\text{səruza} \gg 50 \times.\]

The etymology is uncertain. Cf. Arab. *barāz-* ‘champ, vaste plaine sans arbres’ (BK 110; Mutzafi 2008, 340).

(20) **EAR**

\[\text{nətə} \gg 50 \times.\]

Syr. ‘eḏnāṯā, pl. of ‘eḏnā ‘ear’ (SL 10); cf. 17 cent. Telkepe *nhāta* < Syr. ‘eḏnāhāṯā (Mutzafi 2005, 84, n. 5; Mutzafi 2008, 366).

(21) **EARTH**

\[\text{uprə} \gg 50 \times.\]

MEA: ‘a[..]rā ‘dust; earth, soil’ (SL 1124); ‘a[..]rā ‘earth, dust, powder’ (DJBA 875); a[..]pra ‘dust, ashes’ (MD 32).

(22) **TO EAT**

\[\text{xala} \gg 50 \times.\]

MEA: ‘kl ‘to eat’ (SL 41), ‘kl ‘to eat’ (DJBA 129); akl ‘to eat’ (MD 16).

(23) **EGG**

\[\text{bitə} \gg 24 \times.\]

MEA: b[..]ṭā ‘egg’ (SL 143); bay[..]ṭā, b[..]ṭā ‘egg’ (DJBA 204); b[..]ta ‘egg’ (MD 64).

(24) **EYE**

\[\text{ajna} \gg 50 \times.\]

MEA: ‘a[..]nā ‘eye’ (SL 1097); ‘[..]nā ‘eye, sight’ (DJBA 855); a[..]na ‘eye’ (MD 15).

(25) **FAR**

\[\text{rixqa} \gg 50 \times.\]

< MEA: r[..]hq ‘to go away’ (SL 1458); r[..]hq ‘to be far away’ (DJBA 1071); r[..]hq ‘to be far’ (MD 427).
(26) **FAT**

\[ təɾə. \]

\(< \text{MEA: } təɾbə \text{ ‘fat’ (SL 1663f.)}; təɾbə \text{ ‘fat’ (DJBA 1230); tirba \text{ ‘fat of animals’ (MD 486).} \]

(27) **FEATHER**

\[ pəɾə. \]

\(< \text{Pers. } pəɾ, pəɾr \text{ ‘a wing, a feather’ (CPED 239); Kurd. } p’əɾ̄ \text{ ‘feather, wing’ (Chyet 439); Azer. } pəɾ \text{ ‘Flügel’ (ADW 512).} \]

(28) **FIRE**

\[ nəɾə. \]

\(\text{MEA: } nūrā \text{ ‘fire’ (SL 904); nūrā \text{ ‘fire’ (DJBA 738); nura \text{ ‘fire’ (MD 294).} \]

(29) **FISH**

\[ nuna. \]

\(\text{MEA: } nūnā \text{ ‘fish’ (SL 900); nūnā \text{ ‘fish’ (DJBA 737); nuna \text{ ‘fish’ (MD 294).} \]

(30) **TO FLY**

\[ prəxə. \]

\(\text{MEA: } prḥ \text{ pe. ‘to fly’ (SL 1235); prḥ pe. ‘to fly’ (DJBA 930); phr pe. ‘to fly’, pra pe. ‘to fly’ (MD 366, 377).} \]

(31) **FOOT**

\[ pəncə. \]

\(< \text{Pers. } pən \text{ ‘five’ (CPED 256). For this etymology, see Khan (2016, vol. 3, 249). } əqlə iltə əɾma, şəqə u pəncə. \text{ ‘The leg consists of the thigh, the shin and the foot’ (TEK II 74/23).} \]

(32) **FULL**

\[ məjə. \]

\(\text{MEA: } məl ‘to fill up’ (SL 768); məl ‘to be full’ (DJBA 678); mla ‘to fill, be full’ (MD 272). \]
(33) **TO GIVE**

\[ jəvə. > 50 \times. \]

MEA: \( yhb \) ‘to give’ (SL 565); \( yhb \) ‘to give’ (DJBA 526); \( yhb \) ‘to give’ (MD 189).

(34) **TO GO**

\[ zələ. > 50 \times. \]

MEA: \( 'zəl \) ‘to go’ (SL 24); \( 'zəl \) ‘to go, travel’ (DJBA 100); \( azl \) ‘to go, move on’ (MD 12).

(35) **GOOD**

\[ spaj. > 50 \times. \]

< Kurd. \( spehî \) ‘beau, belle, joli’ (DKF 1539).

(36) **GREEN**

\[ qijnə. > 50 \times. \]

The etymology is unclear.

\[ mijlənə. 10 \times. \]

< Pers. \( mīnā \) ‘a blue, blueish green, green colour’ (CPED 1364; Khan 2016, vol. 3, 220).

(37) **HAIR**

\[ kosa. 37 \times. \]

< Syriac \( sawkā \) ‘branch, twig’ (SL 978f.).\(^{10}\)

\[ mьsta. 27 \times. \]

MEA: \( mezṭā \) ‘hair’ (SL 736); \( mazzyā \) ‘(coll.) hair’ (DJBA 652); \( manza \) ‘hair’ (MD 248). In some cases \( mьsta \) is used as nomen unitatis for ‘hair’.

(38) **HAND**

\[ idə. > 50 \times. \]

MEA: \( idā \) ‘hand’ (SL 31); \( ydā \) ‘hand, possession’ (DJBA 523); ‘\( da \) ‘hand’ (MD 341).

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\(^{10}\) See Mutzafi (2006, 89–9).
(39) HEAD

rişə. > 50 ×.

MEA: rēşā ‘head’ (SL 1462); rēşā ‘head, top part’ (DJBA 1078); riša ‘head, top’ (MD 434).

(40) TO HEAR

şmaja. > 50 ×.

MEA: šmʿ ‘to hear, listen to’ (SL 1574); šmʿ ‘to hear’ (DJBA 1158); šma ‘to hear, listen’ (MD 469).

(41) HEART

liwə. > 50 ×.

MEA: lebbā ‘heart’ (SL 666); libbā ‘heart’ (DJBA 623); liba ‘heart’ (MD 234).

(42) HEAVY

jaqura. > 50 ×.

MEA: yqr ‘to be heavy’ (SL 582); yqr ‘to increase in value’ (DJBA 540); MD yqr ‘to honor, respect’.

(43) HORN

qənə. 41 ×.\(^{11}\)

MEA: qarnā ‘horn’ (SL 1412); qarnā ‘horn’ (DJBA 1044); qarna ‘horn’ (MD 403).

(44) I

ənə. > 50 ×.

MEA: enā ‘I’ (SL 58); änā ‘I’ (DJBA 143); ana ‘I’ (MD 24).

(45) TO KILL

qṭala. > 50 ×.

MEA: qṭl ‘to kill’ (SL 1352); qṭl ‘to kill’ (DJBA 1006); gṭl ‘to kill’ (MD 87).

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\(^{11}\) Two attestations were found beyond the digitised corpus: MPX 13/6, VEG 44/17.
(46) KNEE

*birkə*. > 50×.

MEA: *burkā* ‘knee’ (SL 131); *birkā* ‘knee’ (DJBA 206); *burka* ‘knee’ (MD 57).

(47) TO KNOW

*daja*. > 50×.

MEA: *yd* כ ‘to know’ (SL 563); *yd* כ ‘to know’ (DJBA 525); *yda* ‘to know’ (MD 188).

(48) LEAF

*ṭarpa*. 22×.

MEA: *ṭarpā* ‘leaf’ (SL 555); *āṭarpā* ‘leaf’ (DJBA 108); *aṭirpa* ‘leaf’ (MD 13).

(49) TO LIE (a stative situation)

*dməxə*. > 50×.

MEA: *dmk* ‘to sleep’ (SL 310); *dmk* ‘to lie’ (DJBA 343).

(50) LIVER

*çigar*. 2×.12

< Azer. *ciyər*, *qara ciyər* ‘Leber’ (ADW 184).

(51) LONG

*jarīxə*. 51×.

MEA: *arriḵ* ‘long’ (SL 99); *arīḵ* ‘tall, long’ (DJBA 167); *arika* ‘long’ (MD 37).

(52) LOUSE

*qəlmə*. 6×.

MEA: *qalmā* ‘louse’ (SL 1372); *qalmṯā* ‘vermin’ (DJBA 1021).

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12 The only attestation is MXM 63/25, which is currently outside the digitised corpus.
(53) **MAN (MALE)**

\[\text{urzə. } \geq 50 \times.\]

The etymology is uncertain. For the suggestion to derive it from Sanskrit \(vṛśān\) ‘big, strong, male, ox’, see Nöldeke (1868, 385).\(^{13}\)

\[\text{gorə. It is not yet clear, perhaps gorə should be included as a synonym, but it refers to ‘husband’ in most cases.}\]

(54) **MAN (HUMAN BEING)**

\[\text{nəşə. } \geq 50 \times.\]

MEA: \(nāšā \ ‘man, human beings’ \) (SL 65); \(înāšā \ ‘man’ \) (DJBA 120); \((a)naša \ ‘human being’ \) (MD 24).

\[\text{barnəşə. } \geq 50 \times.\]

The ratio of the usage of \(nəşə\) to \(barnəşə\) is 10:1. Therefore, \(nəşə\) is the main exponent of the meaning in question.

(55) **MANY**

\[\text{rəba. } \geq 50 \times.\]

MEA: \(rābā \ ‘great, large’ \) (SL 1425).

(56) **MEAT**

\[\text{bəsra. } \geq 50 \times.\]

MEA: \(besrā \ ‘flesh, meat’ \) (SL 167); \(bīsrā \ ‘flesh, meat’ \) (DJBA 207); \(bīsrā \ ‘flesh, meat’ \) (MD 62).

(57) **MOON**

\[\text{sara. } \geq 50 \times.\]

MEA: \(sahrā \ ‘moon’ \) (SL 974); \(sehrā \ ‘moon’ \) (DJBA 800); \(sira \ ‘moon’ \) (MD 329).

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\(^{13}\) The etymological note of Yona Sabar on this word (\(K < \text{Sanskrit } vṛśā\)) may be interpreted that the author in fact proposes a Kurdish etymon derived from O.Ind. \(vṛśān\) (JNAD 91).
(58) **MOUNTAIN**

\(\text{ṭura.} \ > 50 \times .\)

MEA: \(\text{ṭūrā} \) ‘mountain’ (SL 521); \(\text{ṭūrā} \) ‘mountain’ (DJBA 498); \(\text{ṭura} \) ‘mountain, hill’ (MD 178).

(59) **MOUTH**

\(\text{pumma.} \ > 50 \times .\)

MEA: \(\text{pūmā} \) ‘mouth’ (SL 1165); \(\text{pūmā} \) ‘mouth’ (DJBA 889); \(\text{puma} \) ‘mouth’ (MD 368).

(60) **NAIL**

\(\text{ṭupurta.} \ 14 \times .\)

MEA: \(\text{ṭēprā} \) ‘nail, claw, talon’ (SL 548); \(\text{ṭūprā} \) ‘fingernail, toenail’ (DJBA 498); \(\text{ṭupra} \) ‘claw, nail’ (MD 178).

(61) **NAME**

\(\text{šimma.} \ > 50 \times .\)

MEA: \(\text{šmā} \) ‘name’ (SL 1569); \(\text{šmā} \) ‘name’ (DJBA 1153); \(\text{šuma} \) ‘name, reputation’ (MD 454).

(62) **NEAR**

\(\text{qurea.} \ 10 \times .\)

MEA: \(\text{qrīb} \) ‘to approach to, be near’ (SL 1400); \(\text{qrīb} \) ‘to come near, bring near’ (DJBA 1037); \(\text{qrīb} \) ‘to approach, draw near’ (MD 415).

(63) **NECK**

\(\text{qḍālā.} \ > 50 \times .\)

MEA: \(\text{qḍālā} \) ‘neck’ (SL 1317); \(\text{qḍālā} \) ‘neck’ (DJBA 984).

(64) **NEW**

\(\text{xətə.} \ > 50 \times .\)

MEA: \(\text{ḥaṭā} \) ‘new’ (SL 418); \(\text{ḥādaṭ} \) ‘new’ (DJBA 433); \(\text{ḥadta} \) ‘new’ (MD 116).
(65) NIGHT
leli. \(> 50\times\).
MEA: lelyā ‘night’ (SL 691); lelyā ‘night’ (DJBA 626); lilia ‘night’ (MD 236).

(66) NOSE
nəxijrə. 34\(\times\).
MEA: nḥīrā ‘nasus’ (TS 2340); nḥīrā ‘nostril’ (DJBA 741); nḥira ‘nose’ (MD 291).

(67) NOT
la, le. \(> 50\times\).
MEA: lā ‘no’ (SL 665); lā ‘no’ (DJBA 613); lā ‘no, not’ (MD 227).

(68) ONE
xə. \(> 50\times\).
MEA: ḥaḏ ‘one’ (SL 413); ḥaḏ ‘one’ (DJBA 430); had ‘one, single’ (MD 116).

(69) RAIN
mtəra. \(> 50\times\).
MEA: metrā ‘rain’ (SL 749); miṭrā ‘rain’ (DJBA 665); miṭra ‘rain’ (MD 266).

(70) RED
smuqə. \(> 50\times\).
MEA: summāqā ‘red’ (SL 981); summāq ‘red object, redness’ (DJBA 794); s(u)maq(a) ‘red, ruddy’ (MD 322).

(71) ROAD
urxə. \(> 50\times\).
MEA: ‘urḥā ‘road’ (SL 21).
(72) **ROOT**

*bqra*. 17×.

MEA: ‘eqqārā ‘root’ (SL 1132).

(73) **ROUND**

*glula*. 32×.

MEA: *glālā ‘round’* (SL 238);14 *glālā ‘stone-shaped object’* (DJBA 288); *glala 1 ‘stone, rock, hailstone’, glala 2 ‘something round, ball’* (MD 91).

(74) **SALT**

*milxæa*. 40×.

MEA: *melḥā ‘salt’* (SL 767); *milḥā ‘salt’* (DJBA 667); *miḥla ‘salt’* (MD 266).

(75) **SAND**

*sîla*. 44×.

< Kurd. *seylak ‘sable’* DKF 1495; *sēl DKF 1498; sēlak DKF 1498; sēlax DKF 1498; sēleh DKF 1498; sēlix DKF 1498; sīlewan DKF 1524; ṣīlik DKF 1524. The mixed source background of DKF (Sorani-Kurmanji) suggests that the words in question are mostly used by Sorani speakers. The corresponding Kurmanji terms with the basic meaning ‘sand’ would be *xīz* (Chyet 665) and *qūm* (Chyet 498). Therefore, C. Urmi *sîla* must have been borrowed from Sorani Kurdish.

(76) **TO SAY**

*māra*. > 50×.

MEA: ‘*mr ‘to say’* (SL 57); ’*mr ‘to say, tell’* (DJBA 140); *amr ‘to say, speak’* (MD 23).

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14 Syriac *glultā* pl. *glulē ‘pair of compasses; globe, ball’* is attested only in the lexicon of Bar Bahlul. It may be a borrowing from Modern Aramaic.
(77) TO SEE
xzəjə. > 50×.
MEA: ḥzy ‘to see’ (SL 438); ḥzy ‘to see, look at’ (DJBA 444); hza ‘to see, look’ (MD 138).

(78) SEED
barzarra. 8×.
MEA: bar zarʿā ‘seed’ (SL 180); bazrā, bizrā ‘seed’ (DJBA 195); bazira, bazra ‘seed’ (MD 46).

(79) SHORT
kirjə. > 50×.
MEA: karyā ‘short’ (SL 651).

(80) TO SIT
tjəvə. > 50×.
MEA: ytb ‘to sit’ (SL 587); ytb ‘to sit’ (DJBA 545); ytb ‘to sit, stay’ (MD 193).

(81) SKIN
gilda. > 50×.
MEA: geldā ‘skin, leather’ (SL 233); gildā ‘scab, hide’ (DJBA 280); gilda ‘leather’ (MD 90).

(82) TO SLEEP
dməxə. > 50×.
MEA: dmk ‘to sleep’ (SL 310); dmk ‘to lie’ (DJBA 343).
țləjə >50×.
MEA: tlę etpa. ‘to suffer from sleepiness’ (SL 534); ṭulāčā ‘deep sleep, torpor’ (SL 517); mṭala ‘heavy (sleep)’ (SL 747), mṭalʿānā ‘soporific’ (SL 747).

The character of the Classical Syriac sources that use derivatives of tlę with the meanings relating ‘to sleep’ (Bar Bahlul
dictionary, *The Book of Medicines*) point to a probable Neo-Aramaic background of these terms in these dictionaries of CS.

The verb țlaja has the meaning ‘to fall asleep’ in most of its uses. Nevertheless, the verb țlaja clearly has the meaning ‘to sleep’ in a number of instances: *Lə gəşəqtə l dəhə, в leləvəti Fritjof qujə вьţlajьva* ‘Despite that, at night Fritjof was sound asleep’ (FNA 27/2); *Bopre go otax al qaravat țľjъva b şintə dlə gnəhə.* ‘[At this moment] Bopre was innocently sleeping in the room on the bed’ (PBQ 7/22).

(83) SMALL

*surə.* $> 50 × .

MEA: zāʿorā ‘small’ (SL 390); zʿer ‘small, young’ (DJBA 418).

(84) SMOKE

*tnnə.* $> 50 × .

MEA: *tennānā* ‘smoke’ (SL 1656); *tnn* ‘smoke’ (DJBA 1223).

(85) SNAKE

*xuvi*. 24 × .

MEA: *hewyā* ‘snake’ (SL 424); *hiwyā* ‘snake’ (DJBA 450); *hiuia* ‘serpent, snake’ (MD 142).

(86) TO STAND

*kľaja.* $> 50 × .

MEA: *kly* ‘to impede, prevent’ (SL 624); *kly* ‘to be finished’ (DJBA 582); *kla* ‘to keep enclosed, hold back’ (MD 216).

(87) STAR

*kokvə.* $> 50 × .

MEA: *kawkḇā* ‘star’ (SL 606); *kōkḇā* ‘star’ (DJBA 558); *kokba* ‘star’ (MD 206).
(88) **STONE**

*kipə. > 50×.*

MEA: *kēpā* ‘stone’ (SL 594); *kēpā* ‘stone’ (DJBA 577).

(89) **SUN**

*şimşə. > 50×.*

MEA: *şemşā* ‘sun’ (SL 1576); *şimşā* ‘sun, sunlight’ (DJBA 1136); *şamşā* ‘sun’ (MD 443).

(90) **TO SWIM**

*məxəj sxəvə/sxva. 29×.*

sxəvə < MEA: *şhy* ‘to wash o.s., bathe’ (SL 992); *şhy* ‘to wash oneself, bathe’ (DJBA 797); *saa* ‘to wash, perform ablutions’ (MD 308). The periphrastic verb is modelled after Kurmanji *ajnê kirin* (Chyet 3) or Sorani *mele kirin* (DKF 972).

(91) **TAIL**

*ţuprə. 27×.*

There is no clear etymology. Possibly related to MEA: *teprə/ţuprə* ‘nail, claw’.¹⁵

(92) **THAT (ms.)**

*av. > 50×.*

MEA: *haw* ‘that one’ (SL 333).

(93) **THIN**

*nəqijdə. 20×.*

Cf. MEA *nqd*: *naqdā* ‘clean; (gramm.) tenuis’ (SL), *naqdonā* ‘delicate’ (SL 945); *nquṭtā* ‘dot’ (DJBA 772).

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¹⁵ For references, see no. 60.
(94) THIS (ms.)
əhə. > 50×.
For the etymology of this see Khan (2016, vol. 1, 239) and also Militarev (2014, 172).

(95) TONGUE
lišəna. > 50×.
MEA: leššānā ‘tongue’ (SL 698); liššānā ‘tongue’ (DJBA 627); lišana ‘tongue’ (MD 237).

(96) TOOTH
kikə. > 50×.
MEA: kakkā ‘molar tooth’ (SL 621). On this word, see Mutzafi (2014, 113).

(97) TREE
iļəna. > 50×.
MEA: ‘ilānā ‘tree’ (SL 35).

(98) TWO
tre. > 50×.
MEA: trēn ‘two’ (SL 1666); trē(n) ‘two’ (DJBA 1233); trin ‘two’ (MD 490)

(99) WARM
şəxijnə. > 50×.
MEA: šhn ‘to be inflamed’, pa. ‘to warm, heat’ (SL 1544); šhn ‘be inflamed, heat’ (DJBA 1128); šhn ‘to become hot’ (MD 451).

(100) WATER
mija. > 50×.
MEA: mayyā ‘water’ (SL 750); mayyā ‘water’ (DJBA 662); mai ‘water’ (MD 242).
(101) WE
\[\text{əxnən}. \quad > 50 \times.\]
MEA: ʰnant, ʰnhnt ‘we’ (SL 472, 60); ʰnan ‘we’ (DJBA 145); anin, an’n ‘we’ (MD 27).

(102) WHAT?
\[\text{mudij, mu}. \quad > 50 \times.\]
MEA: ṁā ‘what?’ (SL 700), dēn ‘then’ (SL 296), see Nöldeke (1868, 82).

(103) WHITE
\[\text{xvara}. \quad > 50 \times.\]
MEA: ḥewwārā ‘white’ (SL 432); ḥiwwār ‘white’ (DJBA 450); hiuara ‘white’ (MD 142).

(104) WIND
\[\text{poxə}. \quad > 50 \times.\]
MEA: pwh pe. ‘to blow, to breathe’ (SL 1160), pāwhā ‘odour, smell’ (SL 1161); pwh pe. ‘to breathe, blow up’ (DJBA 888).

(105) WHO?
\[\text{mən, mənij}. \quad > 50 \times.\]
MEA: man ‘who?’ (SL 778); man ‘who’ (DJBA 636); man ‘who’ (MD 246).

(106) WOMAN
\[\text{vəxtə}. \quad > 50 \times.\]
There is no clear etymology. For the discussion of the possible origin of this word see Khan (1999, 146–147).
5. Conclusions

The digitised corpus for literary Christian Urmi of approximately 630,000 words has been shown to be sufficient to establish the basic 110 word list with 117 exponents. More than 70 percent of the entries (87/117) have more than 50 attestations in the corpus.

There are seven meanings that have two exponents: BARK (qəlpə, çułuxtə), TO BITE (qraţa, njasa), COLD (qajra, qarvjra), GREEN (qijnə, mijlənə), HAIR (kosə, mьsta), MAN (nəşə, barməşə); TO SLEEP (dməxə, ţlaja). In the cases of COLD and GREEN the problem may be solved by statistical data: the exponents qajra for

16 One of the attestations of this word was found in the text MPX 90/28, which is not yet digitised.
COLD and qijnə for GREEN have considerably more attestations in the corpus than the alternative exponents qarəjra and mijlənə. On the other hand, bare statistical data do not help in the case of BARK (see the discussion of no. 3).

More than 90 percent of the meanings (94/110) have exponents with reliable Middle Eastern Aramaic etymologies. Four meanings have exponents that originate from Persian (sadrə ‘breast’ < Pers. șadr; pərrə ‘feather’ < Pers. șar; pəncə ‘foot’ < Pers. șar; zərdə ‘yellow’ < Pers. șar). The exponents of two meanings have Kurdish etymologies (spaj ‘good’ < Kurd. șepeh; silə ‘sand’ < Kurd. sel). One meaning is expressed by a word originating from Azeri Turkish (cigar ‘liver’ < Azer. ciyər). Three meanings have each two exponents with different etymologies: BARK (qalpa MEA; çuluxtə < Kurd. çulik), BITE (qraţa MEA, njasa—of uncertain etymology), GREEN (qijnə—of uncertain etymology; mijlənə < Pers. minā). A special case is the meaning TO SWIM, which is expressed by a compound verb mxəjə saxwə/saxwa. Both members of this construction have Aramaic origin, but this verb is a loan translation from Kurdish (no. 90). Six meanings have exponents with uncertain or unknown etymologies (5. big gurə; 22. dry əruxə; 53. man (male) urzə; 91. tail țuprə; 94. this əhə; 196 woman əxtə).

General Abbreviations

af.  afʿel
C.  Christian
J.  Jewish
K  Kurmanji Kurdish
MEA  Middle Eastern Aramaic
NA  New Alphabet
NENA  North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic
pa.  paʿʿel
pe.  peʿal
S  Sorani Kurdish
Bibliographical Abbreviations

ADW Rahmati, Nemat. 1999. Aserbaidschani sch-deutsches Wörterbuch: unter Berücksichtigung der Besonderheiten des Nord- und Südaserbaid schanischen. Engelschoff: Verlag auf dem Ruffel.

AWSG Wehr, Hans. 1985. Arabisches Wörterbuch für die Schriftsprache der Gegenwart. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

BK de Biberstein-Kazimirski, Albert. 1860. Dictionnaire arabe–français. Paris: Maison-neuve et cie.

Chyet Chyet, Michael L. 2003. Kurdish-English Dictionary. New Haven–London: Yale University Press.

CPED Steingass, Francis J. 1892. A Comprehensive Persian English Dictionary. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited.

DJBA Sokoloff, Michael. 2002. A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods. Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press.

DJPA Sokoloff, Michael. 1992. A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period. Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press.

DKF Bedir Khan, Kamuran A., Joséfa Bertolino and Kendal Nezan. 2017. Dictionnaire Kurde-Français. Paris: Riveneuve.

JNAD Sabar. Yona. 2002. A Jewish Neo-Aramaic Dictionary. Dialects of Amidya, Dihok, Nerwa and Zakho, Northwestern Iraq. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

MD Drower, Ethel S. and Rudolph Macuch. 1962. A Mandaic Dictionary. Oxford: Clarendon.

MXM Marogulov, Qonstantin. 1935. Xrestomatija d sapra juta. Moskva: Ucpedgiz.

MPX Marogulov, Qonstantin. u Petrosov, Dəvid. 1935. Xrestomatija d saprajuta. Qə modrəsa d şuraja. Şəmə I. Moskva: Ucpedgiz.

SL Sokoloff, Michael. 2009. A Syriac Lexicon. Winona Lake & Piscataway: Gorgias Press.

TEK II Tetjurev, Vladimir. 1937. Elm kjeneto. Səmə II. Qə klas rveyta d modrəsa d şuraja. Puşəqə d U. A. Bedrojev. Moskva: Detizdat.

THH Tolstoj, Lev N. 1935. Həqətti but hejvan. Puşəqə d A. Minasov. Moskva: OGIZ-Detgiz.
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TS Payne Smith, Roberth. 1879–1901. *Thesaurus Syriacus*, T. 1–2. Oxford: Clarendon.

VEG Vegin, Sergej. 1933. *Go somi tllajь d’Diqlот. Pușeqə d’Bedrojев*. Moskva: GIXL.

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## Appendix: Correspondences of Transcriptions

| New Alphabet | Kapeliuk\(^\text{17}\) | Khan (2008)\(^\text{18}\) | Khan (2016) |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| a            | a                     | a                     | a           |
| a, b         | b                     | b                     | b           |
| c            | č                     | č, č                  | č, č        |
| č            | ģ                     | j                     | j           |
| d            | d                     | d                     | d           |
| e            | e                     | e                     | e           |
| ə            | ə                     | a                     | a           |
| f            | f                     | f                     | f           |
| g            | g                     | g                     | j           |
| h            | h                     | h                     | h           |
| i            | i                     | i                     | i           |
| j            | y                     | y                     | y           |
| ə            | ə                     | ə                     | i, ə        |
| k            | k                     | k                     | c, č        |
| l            | l                     | l                     | l           |
| m            | m                     | m                     | m           |

\(^{17}\) Marogulov (1976).

\(^{18}\) The transcription in Khan (2008 and 2016) is representative of the transcriptions used in the descriptions of Neo-Aramaic dialects.
| New Alphabet | Kapeliuk\textsuperscript{17} | Khan (2008)\textsuperscript{18} | Khan (2016) |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| n            | n                             | n                             | n           |
| o            | o                             | o                             | o           |
| p            | p                             | p                             | p           |
| q            | q                             | q                             | k           |
| r            | r                             | r                             | r           |
| s            | s                             | s                             | s           |
| š            | š                             | š                             | š           |
| t            | t                             | t                             | t           |
| t̃           | t̃                            | t̃                            | t̃          |
| u            | u                             | u                             | u           |
| v            | v                             | v                             | v           |
| x            | kh                            | x                             | x           |
| z            | z                             | z                             | z           |
| ž            | ž                             | ž                             | ž           |