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Akkadian Words in Modern Assyrian

The ancient Assyrian language is classified as Akkadian; it was the language of the Assyrians and Babylonians, written in Cuneiform. To facilitate administrative tasks of the Assyrian Empire Aramaic was made the second official language in 752 B.C.

The Empire chancelleries adopted a simple standard form of the Aramaic for correspondence. In the heart of the Empire "Aramaic docketts" were attached to the cuneiform tablets. Such docketts gave brief indication of names and dates and a summary of the contents which were useful to merchants. This is classified as "Official Aramaic". Many Assyrian tablets have been found with Aramaic inscribed on them. Assyrian scribes are often depicted in pairs. One writing in Akkadian on a cuneiform tablet, the other writing in Aramaic on a parchment or papyrus sheet.

Among several bronze lion-weights found at Nineveh some had both the Akkadian and Aramaic text inscribed on them. They bore the names of the Assyrian kings at the time of use, including Shalmaneser III (858-824), Sargon (721-705), Sennacherib (704-681). The Official Aramaic later became accepted as the standard form of literary communication by the Aramaic speaking people in various part of the Empire. It is called Assyrian Aramaic (or, less commonly, Imperial Aramaic).

According to the Old Testament, in 701 B.C. when officials of Sennacherib appeared before the walls of Jerusalem, and the Rab-Shakeh spoke in Hebrew to the officers of King Hezekiah, they begged him to speak rather in Aramaic, for they understood this official tongue and did not want the populace to hear the humiliating demand for submission made in Hebrew. In later centuries Aramaic replaced Hebrew even in Israel. During their exile years in Babylon the Jews adopted the Square Assyrian script which was commonly known to them as Ketav Ashuri or the Assyrian text. The law demands that a Torah scroll be written with the "ketav Ashuri" so called after its place of origin.

In time Aramaic became spoken in Mesopotamia also and gradually replacing the Akkadian language. The transition was made possible because the two language shared similarities. Also because the 22 letters Aramaic alphabet was much easier to master than the 600 or so signs of the cuneiform. The evidence of side by side existence of the two languages in 4th century B.C. is an Aramaic document from Uruk which has been written in cuneiform. In Babylon The Akkadian writing disappeared by 140 B.C. except amongst a few priests who employed it for religious purposes. However it continued to be used for astronomical texts down to the time of Christ.

Most old languages for different reasons have gone through drastic changes from time to time. For example the Old English language has changed greatly from what it was at 9th century A.D. Present day English reader will have difficulty reading and understanding the Lord's prayer as written at that time as seen below.

"Feder Ure bu be eart on hefonum, si bin nama gehalgod. To becume bin rice. Gewurbe Oin willa on Eoroan swa swa on heoronum. ..."

The contemporary Assyrians use thousands of word in their daily conversation which are clearly Akkadian. Syriac, another name for the Christian Assyrian language, was perhaps in use as a literary language in northern Mesopotamia before the Christian era but only a few written examples of it have survived from the first century A.D. It developed as a literary language of some importance in Edessa after a Christian school succeeded a pagan learning center. Gradually it was accepted as the ecclesiastical and cultural language of the Aramaic speaking Christians of the region. Currently there are two slightly different dialects of the Syriac language called Eastern and Western. It should be noted that the spoken Modern Assyrian (Eastern or Western) is older than the literary liturgical language of the Church (the Edessan dialect). For example, in Akkadian the word for weapons is *keke* (literally: teeth, because weapons were cutting instruments), in liturgical Syriac the word for weapons is *zaineh*, while in modern Eastern Assyrian it is *cheke*, the same as in Akkadian.

Some differences in pronunciation between the ancient and the present day Assyrian words may be due to mispronunciation of the Cuneiform signs by translators. Some of the signs can be vocalized in more than one way. It should be noted that while the ancient Assyrian words universally ended in "U" the contemporary Eastern Assyrian words in their basic form end in "A". The vowel "A" of Eastern dialect in all cases is pronounced as "O" in the western Assyrian/Syriac speech of today.

This list consist mainly of single words without their usual derivatives and inflected forms such as verb tense, adjectives, adverbs, plural and gender forms and others. With the addition of these variations and additional new words this list can grow into thousands of entries.

This concordance was compiled by Peter BetBasoo and Wm Warda from the glossaries contained in the following books.

"State Archives of Assyria, Volume III: Court Poetry and Literary Miscellanea", by Alasdair Livingstone, Helsinki University Press.

Samuel A.B. Mercer, "Assyrian Grammar with Chrestomathy and Glossary" Frederick Ungar Publishing, New York, 1961

Samuel A.B. Mercer, "Assyrian Grammar" London 1921

The Eastern Assyrian Dictionary used to verify the pronunciation and the meaning of the contemporary Assyrian words is : Orhaham's Dictionary of the stabilized and enriched Assyrian Language and English, Chicago Ill. 1943

Common Vocabulary in ancient Assyrian and Modern Assyrian

| Akkadian | Modern Eastern Assyrian | Modern Western Assyrian | Meaning |
|------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| abalu | labuli | | to carry, to take |
| abatu | evada | | to do |
| abi | abi or babi | babi | my father |
| abu | aba or baba | abo | father |
| abu-kku-nu | babokhun or abokun | | your father (plural) |
| adannu | dana | edono | appointed time, deadline |
| addu | addeya | eddo | now |
| agappu | gulpa | gefo | wing |
| agrabu | agriba | aqrebo | scorpion |
| aharru | kharraya | haroyo | to be the last |
| akalu | kalla | okhel | to eat |
| akhu | akhuna | aho | brother |
| akhatu | khatta | hotho | sister |
| ammtu | amta | amtho | handmaid, female servant |
| anutee | annee | hani | these |
| arba'u | arba | arb'o | four |
| ardikhalu | ardikhla | ardikhlo | builder, architect |
| arkhu | yarkha | yarho | month |
| asu | asya | osio | physician |
| assuritu | assuraita , atturaita, suraita | ashuraito, othuraito, suraito | assyrian female |
| atta | att | hat | you |
| attunu | ahtune | hatu | you plural |
| bakhu | bakha | bokhe | to weep |
| banu | bnaya or bnna | bone | to build |
| baraqu | braqa | barqo | flash |
| bararu | barra | | glimer, to shine |
| battibatti | batvatti | | neighbourhood, households |
| beldababi | baldvavi | b'eldbobo | adverseries, enemies |
| bibbu | bibva | | drainage |
| birinni | billan | | between us |
| birgu | birqa | | lightning |
| birku | birka | barko | knee |
| bishu | bisha | bisho | evil |
| bi itu | baita | baito | house |
| buru | beera | biro | water well |
| buhur | buhra (h =kh) | | first born |
| daianu | daiana | | judge |
| daianutu | daianuta | daiono | judgeship |
| dammu | demma | admo | blood |
| dannu | dannana | | strong, mighty |
| daqqu | daqqa | | tiny |
| darasu | doosh | | push away |
| dimtu | dimeta | | tear |

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------------------|
| dinu | dyana | | to judge |
| dishpu | doosha | daosho | honey |
| ebbubu | abbueba or shabeba | | flute |
| eberu | ebara | 'boro | to cross |
| egirtu | egarta | egartho | letter |
| eglu | khagla | haqlo | field |
| ekallu | hakla | hajklo | palace |
| ekaku | khaka | hjoko | to scratch |
| elippu | elppa | elfo | ship |
| elle | all | aal | on upon |
| elu | elul | 'eloyo | high |
| elulu | ellul | | to be high |
| emeru | khemara | hmoro | ass, donkey |
| enu | eina | aino | eye |
| enzu | ezza | ezo | goat |
| epiru | epra | afro | dust |
| esru | esra | asro | ten |
| etteru | attera | atiro | one who has in abundance, rich |
| ettiru | nettara | notar | to protect |
| gamkhu | gamkha | qamho | flour |
| gammalu | gumla | gamlo | camel |
| gamru | gmira | | complete |
| gappu | gulpa | | wing |
| garabu | garbanta | qaribo | to come near |
| garru | garra or gyarra | | to dig out |
| garnu | garna | qarno | horn |
| gashtu | gishta | qeshto | bow |
| gattu | gatta | | hand, handle |
| gir-ba-an-nu | gur-ba-an-na | qorbono | offering |
| gishru | gishra | geshro | bridge |
| gushu | gishya | | cold |
| hadatu | kudata | hothotho | renewal, to be new |
| hadutu | khaduta | | joy |
| haddu | khdda | | to rejoice |
| hamsu (hamshu) | hmsha | hamsho | five |
| haru | gyara | | to dig out |
| harurtu | harhirta | | throat, larynx |
| hassinu | hassina | | ax |
| hashalu | hshalla | | crush |
| hatanu | khitna | hathno | son in law |
| hatu | khtta | htoyo | to sin |
| hittitu | khtteeta | htitho | sin, crime |
| hugu | hoga | | ladder's rung |
| iddu | idda | ido | side , hand |
| idu | yeda | yod'o | to know |
| iggu=ditch | gyara | | to dig |
| ikkaru | akkara | akoro | farmer, gardner |
| illidu | yalidda | yaludo | child |
| ilippu | elppa | | ship |

| | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------|------------------------------------|
| ilutu | elayoota | | highness, divinity |
| imkhas | mkhaya | mahyo | to hit or stirke |
| immati | imman | ema | when |
| imnu | yamina | iamino | right hand |
| imaru | khmara | | donley |
| inbu | anbee | enbe | grapes |
| insabtu | esagta | | ring |
| inu | ina | | eye |
| isu | gasa | qaiso | wood |
| isku | eshka | shako | testicle |
| ittimalu | timmal | athmel | yesterday |
| kabadu | kavda | | liver |
| kakkabu | kikhwa | kokbo | star |
| kakkishu | kaksha | | rat |
| kakku | kacha | | weapon |
| kalbannatu | kalbanita | | axe |
| kalbatu | kalibta | kalbtho | bitch |
| kalbu | kalba | kalbo | dog |
| kallatu | kalta | kaltho | daughter-in-law |
| kalu | kuli | kole | all |
| kalu | kla | | to stand, to hold back |
| kalmatu (feminine) | galma (male) | | louse, a wingless parasitic insect |
| kapapu | kyapa | | to bend, to bow |
| karabu | grava (communion) | | to bless |
| karmu | karma | karmo | vineyard, orchard |
| karru | kraya | karryo | to be short |
| karsu | kersa | karso | belly, abdomen |
| kasaru | asarra | | to bind, tie |
| kashtu | keshta | | bow |
| kaspu | kispa | | silver |
| habu | habbib | | to love |
| hallu | halla | | vinegar |
| hammatu | hammta | | female |
| khanugu | khannig | hnoqo | to strangle |
| hashlu | hshala | | to crush |
| hasinu | hasina | | ax |
| hattanu | hitna | | son-in-law |
| hatu | htama | hthomo | to end |
| huturu | hutra | | scepter |
| kiddatu | khaduta | | joy, happiness |
| kima | kimad | | according to, as much as |
| kinnatu | kinnuta | kinotho | justice |
| kinnu | kinna | kino | just |
| kinnutu | kinnuta | | justice |
| kinnu | kinna | | nest |
| kirmu | karma | karmo | orchard, garden |
| kistu | kaissa | | wood |
| kudurru | kuduri - khadervanee | | boundry |
| kullu | kulli | kole | all |

| | | | |
|-----------|----------------|----------|--------------------------|
| kurru | kurra | | furnace |
| kussi | kursi | kursio | chair |
| kussitu | kusitta | | hat, garment hood |
| kutallu | gdalla | qdolo | back of the neck |
| la | la | lo | no |
| labashu | lebasha | lbosho | to cloth |
| lagattu | lgatta | | to pick, pluck |
| libbi | libbi | lebi | my heart |
| libbu | libba | lebo | heart |
| lishannu | lishanna | leshono | toungue, langauge |
| lumu | loma | | bad luck, ill faith |
| ma-alku | malka=king | malko | prince |
| ma-alke | malke=kings | malke | princes |
| maalkatu | malikta | malektho | queen |
| maanu | maaney | manyo | who |
| magaru | myaguri | myaqar | to favour, obey, respect |
| maglutu | magluta | | broiled |
| makharu | makhara | | architect, surveyor |
| makhasu | mkhaya | | to smite |
| malu | mala | mole | to fill |
| mamitu | momita | | oath |
| manu | mnaya | bnoyo | to count, count |
| mannu | maney | | who |
| manzaltu | mozalta | mazlo | orbit, position of star |
| marsu | mirya | | sick |
| marsutu | mrayta | | sickness |
| mashmashu | shamasha | shamosho | deacon |
| mashu | manshuyee | | to forget |
| mashu | machuhi | | to find |
| massu'u | msaya | | to clean - to wipe |
| mashtitu | shtaita | shtoyo | a drink |
| mattati | matvati | | lands, villages |
| matu | myata | maoto | to die |
| matu | mata | motho | land, country |
| meshu | meshaya | | to clean - to wahsh |
| messu | msayya | | to wash cloths |
| migru | miugra | miaqro | favorite, honorable |
| milku | milka | | counsel |
| minna | minna or binna | menyo | what |
| minu | minyana | menyono | number |
| mishikhtu | mshukhta | | measurement |
| mittu | mitta | mitho | the dead |
| mu | mia | maye | water |
| mudutu | dayta | ida'tho | knowledge |
| murru | mora | | myrah |
| muskenu | meskeena | meskeno | destitute |
| mutanu | mota | | death |
| mutu | mota | | death |
| naasharu | nishra | nishra | eagle |

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| nabu | nabuyee | | to speak (in prophecy) to utter |
| naggaru | najar | nagoro | carpenter |
| nakharu | nukhra | nekhroyo | foreign |
| nakhu | nakha | | to rest |
| namaru | nora | | mirror |
| napahu | npakha | nfoho | to blow |
| napishtu | napsha | | life, breath of life |
| naptu | nupta | | naptha |
| narrati | naravati | nahre | rivers |
| narkabtu | markabta | markabtho | chariot |
| narru | narra | nahro | river |
| nassaru | nattar | | to guard |
| nashagu | nshaga | nshoqo | to kiss |
| nihtu (f) | nyehta | | peaceful, at rest |
| nihu (m) | nikha | | restful, peaceful |
| nirru | nirra | | yoke |
| nishi | nashi | noshe | people |
| nishu | nasha | nosho | person |
| nash-nakhar | nasha-nakhraya | nosho nekhroyo | foreigner |
| nunu | nuna | nuno | fish |
| nuarmu | armunta | | pomegranate |
| nuru | nura | nuro | light, fire |
| pagru | pagra | faghro | corpse, body |
| pakadu | pgada | | to appoint, to command |
| parasu | prasha | frosho | to separate |
| paraku | prakha | | to fly |
| pashahu | pshakha | | to be at rest |
| parzillu | prizla | | iron |
| pasharu | pshara | fshoro | to dissolve |
| patu | ptakha | | to open |
| pillakku | pillga | | spindle |
| pirru/pillu | pilla | filo | elephant |
| pitu | ptakha | | to open |
| pu | puma | | mouth |
| putu | patta | fotho | face |
| qabaru | qbara (soft b) | qboro | to bury |
| qalalu | qaloola | qalilo | small, tiny, light-weight |
| qalati | galiatee | | alkali |
| qannu or qinnu | qinna | qeno | nest |
| qarabu | qravtana | | war, soldier, enemy |
| qarnu | qarna | | horn |
| qastu | qishta | | bow |
| qatu | qatta | | hand (handle) |
| qemku | qemha | | flour |
| qeribu | qerbune | | to draw near |
| raatu | rehtta | | water course |
| rabshag | rubshaga | | cup-bearer or chief butler |
| rabu | raba | rabo | great, large |
| rakabu | rekaba | | to ride |

| | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|----------|--|
| raqadu | reqada | rqodo | to dance |
| re'u | raya | re'yo | shepherd |
| re' utu | ra' uta | | shephership |
| remu | rekhma | rahme | mercy |
| reshu | resha | risho | head, beginning |
| rikku | raikha | riho | smell |
| rimmu | rimma | | wild bull, buffalo |
| ruaqu | ragga | | to be distant, to escape |
| rubbo | rub | | chief, leader |
| ruku | rikgga | | distant, far |
| rukhtu | rvikta | | extensive |
| rupsu | rupsha, rupshta | | shoulder, shovel |
| sabiru (male) | shibirta (fem) | | bracelet |
| sadaru | sedra | | list, to order |
| sagu | syaga | sloqo | climb, to go high |
| saharu | sura | z'uro | small |
| salmu | salma | salmo | image |
| salu | saluee | slutho | to pray |
| samamu | shmayya | shmayo | heaven, sky |
| sammu | smugga | semoqo | red |
| sananu | sanyana | | rival, hater |
| sanu | tanee | | to repeat, tell |
| saptu | sipta | saptho | lip, edge |
| sarahu | srakha | | to utter cries of mourning, uncontrolled anger |
| sarapu | srapa | | to burn, refined silver |
| sebu (shebu) | shavva | shau'o | seven |
| seheru | sura | | small, to be young |
| shaggalu | tgalla | | to weigh |
| shakhanu | shkhana | shahino | to be warm |
| shalamu | shlama | | peace, greeting |
| shalamu | shlama | shlomo | to be well |
| shalatu | shultana | sheltono | to rule |
| shalmish | b' shlama | | peacefully |
| shaluhu | shalukee | | to strip off |
| shamanu | tmany | tmanyo | eight |
| shamatu | shameta | | birth mark, brand |
| shamshi | shimsha | shemsho | the sun |
| shamu | shmaya | shmayo | heaven |
| shanati (female) | sheeni (male) | shne | years |
| shapahu | shpaha | | spread, scatter, spill |
| shatu | shta | | to drink |
| shatu | sheeta | shtoyo | year |
| shebabbi | shbabbi | shbobe | neighbors |
| shebu | shavva | | seven |
| shedu | shedda | shido | demon, evil spirit |
| shemu | shma | shma' | to hear |
| shinesar | teryesar | tra'sar | twelve |
| shuptu | shopa | | place, dwelling, seat |
| shulmu | shlama | | peace |

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|---------------------|
| shumu | shema | eshmo | name |
| shutapu | shotappa | | partner, partaker |
| siamu | syamma | | insegna, writing |
| siaqu | eeqa | iqa | narrow, tight |
| sibutu | saibuta | sobutho | old age |
| simmiltu | simmalta | | ladder |
| sippu | sippa | | edge, treshold |
| sipru | sipra | | writing |
| siru | bisra | basro | meat |
| sissu | suissa | sessyo | horse |
| sittu | shintu | shantho | sleep |
| sulamu | shulama | | completion |
| sumelu | simmala | semolo | left |
| sumu | shimma | | name |
| surru | sharee | | to begin |
| turu | tora | taoro | bull |
| taaru | dyarra | d'oro | to return |
| tabaku | tpakha | | to pour out, shed |
| tabtu | tobta | tubtho | goodness, kindness |
| tabu | tava | tobo | good, pleasant |
| tahumu | tekhuma | thumo | boundry |
| talmidu | talmidda | talmidho | student, apprentice |
| tamaru | tamer | | bury |
| tamati | yamti | | seas |
| tamtu | yamta | yamo | sea |
| tamitu | mamita | | oath |
| tamu | mami | | to swear |
| taniku | tannukee | | to sigh |
| tapahu | tpakha | | to pour out |
| taradu | trrada | | to send, expel |
| targmanu | targemana | targmono | translator |
| targmon | targmanna | | dargoman |
| taru | dyara | | return |
| tayartu | dyarta | | to return |
| tegal | tgalla | | to weigh |
| temuru | tamuree | | to bury |
| tesliti | sluti | | my prayer |
| teslitu | sluta | | prayer |
| tibnu | tuyna | | straw |
| tillu | tilla | | hill, mound |
| tinuru | tanura | tanoro | oven |
| tishu | tishaa | tisho | nine |
| u = oo | oo | oo | and |
| ummanu | ummana | | artist |
| ummu | yema | | mother |
| umu | uma | | day |
| umushu | umait | | daily |
| urhu | urkha | urho | road, way |
| uru | ura | | stall |

| | | | |
|-------------------|----------|------|------------------------|
| wabalu | labuli | | to take, to carry away |
| zakhiru (male) | zkhura | | small |
| zakhirtu (female) | zkhurata | | small |
| zamaru | zmara | | to sing |
| zammeru | zammara | | singer (male) |
| zammertu | zammarta | | singer (female) |
| zeru | zerra | | seed |
| zeru | zarra | | descendant |
| zekhru | dekhra | | male |
| zingnu | digna | | beard |
| zuprinu | zapaana | | safran |
| zuzu | zuza | zuze | money |

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