

**Title:** Verbless and Existential Clauses in Modern Western Aramaic

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In this talk we discuss several syntactic types of clauses in Modern Western Aramaic:

1. existential/locative clauses with the predicate *ōt̄*.
2. copular clauses with the predicate *ōb*.
3. clauses with *upp-* with an obligatory locative constituent.
4. clauses with the predicate *īl-*.

Previous studies of Modern Western Aramaic, such as Spitaler 1938, Correll 1978, and Arnold 1990, do not describe this domain of the MWA syntax in any detail. The corpus of this research are texts from Maaloula recorded by Werner Arnold (Arnold 1991) and those collected by HSE expeditions since December 2020.

Summarising some of our results:

*ōt̄* regularly expresses the existential meaning:

- (1) *ōt̄*      b=zamōn=e    malk-a      w      hanna malk-a      īl=e      ebr-a  
EXIST in=time=3ms king-FREE    and    this.M king-FREE    have=3m    son-FREE  
'Once upon a time<sup>1</sup> here was a king, and this king had a son'

*ōb* behaves as a copular predicate and can be defined by locative noun phrases:

- (2) w-ōb              žalīl    išher              b̄=payt̄-a  
PST-COP          PN          evening            in=home-FREE  
'Žalīl was at home in the evening'

and possessive noun phrases:

- (3) w-ōb              ġapp=e              karaz  
PST-COP          own=3ms            cherry.tree  
'He had a cherry tree'

*upp-* is an existential-locative predicate:

- (4) w      upp=e              raml-a              naṣṣem  
and    EXIST.in=3ms      sand-FREE      fine  
'There is fine sand in it'

We shall also delineate the ways of further research on these constructions.

## References

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<sup>1</sup> Lit. 'in his time', with a dummy pronoun.

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