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Aramaic

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LAST MODIFIED: 27 APRIL 2017
DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780199840731-0149

Introduction

Aramaic has been recorded for the past three thousand years. It began as a local language in Syria, before expanding to be written and then spoken throughout the Near East for more than a millennium. Later, after the Arab conquests, Aramaic gave way to Arabic in the whole region, except for some small pockets in northern Syria and Iraq and southern Turkey, where it was spoken until the late 20th century. Long-term political developments in the region, as well as the crises of the early 21st century, have made its future very uncertain, and the last native speakers of a number of dialects have already died. Aramaic is a Semitic language and, more specifically, a member of the Northwest Semitic branch of the tree. It is thus related rather closely to Hebrew, and somewhat more distantly related to Arabic. Over the course of its long history, however, it has long been in contact with these languages and others, and has left a deep imprint within Hebrew and Arabic, as well as within unrelated languages such as Persian. From early in its history, there are monumental and other inscriptions in Aramaic. From the Achaemenid Empire, in which Aramaic was the official language of communication, letters, contracts, and belles-lettres have been preserved, especially in the dry climate of Egypt. The literary texts include eastern texts such as the proverbs of Ahiqar, an Aramaic translation of Darius's great inscription from Bīsotūn, a massive administrative customs text that reveals details of the sea-borne trade for the year 475 BCE, and a story about Hor bar Punesh. There are Aramaic passages in the Bible, from isolated words in Genesis to a single sentence in Jeremiah, to four chapters in Ezra and six in Daniel. The imperial use of Aramaic masked dialectal differences, but following the breakup of the Persian empire, a broad diversity of dialects flourished across the region. Thousands of epigraphic texts remain from this time, as well as examples of what was once clearly a rich and flourishing literature. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls, for example, a few dozen Aramaic texts have been identified, pointing to a much larger library of such texts that has been lost. The literatures of many of the religious groups that flourished in the Near East in Roman and Byzantine times were written in Aramaic. These texts continue to be studied and recited, and thus some dialects of Aramaic, such as Syriac, Mandaic, and Samaritan Aramaic, as well as Jewish texts in dialects from the east (Babylonia) and west (Palestine), continue to live on as liturgical languages.

Comprehensive Resources

There are few resources that cover all dialects of Aramaic. Rosenthal 1967 is a textbook for classroom use that contains samples of all the major dialects, along with glossaries, that can be used profitably; it reflects the state of the field fifty years ago. The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon is a massive and highly ambitious database that should be consulted regularly by anyone studying Aramaic.

Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon.

As of January, 2015, the CAL has "a database of approximately 3 million lexically parsed words," which can be searched in many ways. It digitizes critical editions of texts as they are published, and also contains lexicon (with references to other published dictionaries) and a bibliography.

Rosenthal, Franz. *An Aramaic Handbook*. 4 vols. Porta Linguarum Orientalium 10. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 1967.

This four-volume work contains text specimens of Aramaic dialects from Old Aramaic through Modern dialects, east, west, and central. Each chapter was written by a specialist, and contains texts, translations, and glossaries. Many need to be updated in light of subsequent discoveries and research, but this is still the broadest selection of texts available.

Overviews

The dizzying number of dialects, the massive amounts of time and space in the history of Aramaic, and the numerous other languages that affected and were affected by Aramaic make the task of synthesizing all that is known quite a daunting task. This has been taken up recently in Gzella 2015 to good results. Another recent project by multiple authors, Weninger, et al. 2011, provides excellent studies of many of the dialects by specialists in each field. Nearly eighty years ago, a young Franz Rosenthal wrote an essay (published as Rosenthal 1939) that won the Lidzbarski Medal and Prize from the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft (although because he was a Jew, he never received the prize money). Yehezkel Kutscher wrote a number of excellent overviews of Aramaic; Kutscher 1970 is one of the most detailed from a linguistic perspective. Sergey Loesov works on modern Semitic dialects as much as ancient ones, and Loesov 2009 offers a corrective to depictions that give slight attention to the post-medieval dialects.

Gzella, Holger. *A Cultural History of Aramaic: From the Beginnings to the Advent of Islam*. Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section 1: The Near and Middle East 111. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2015.

Aims to be "a comprehensive yet readable account of the linguistic evolution of Aramaic and its socio-cultural underpinnings" (p. 1). This work provides a full discussion of all Aramaic literature from the first attestations through classical Syriac literature. The bibliography is large, although not comprehensive, and this is now the place to begin all research. Although the book is more of a linguistic history than a cultural history, it is attuned to questions of language contact (although not systematically), diglossia, and regional differences.

Kutscher, Eduard Yehezkel. "Aramaic." In *Current Trends in Linguistics*. Vol. 6, *Linguistics in South West Asia and North Africa*. Edited by T. A. Sebeok, 347–412. The Hague: Mouton, 1970.

This is both an overview of the history of Aramaic and a mine of linguistic insights into the language overall and many of its dialects.

Loesov, Sergey. "Арамейские языки" ["Aramaic Language"]. In Языки мира: Семитские языки. I. Аккадский язык. Северозападносемитские языки [*Languages of the World: Semitic languages*. Vol. 1, *Akkadian and North West Semitic Languages*]. 414–496. Moscow: Academia, 2009.

Loesov ranges across the entire history of the language. He utilizes later dialects in the reconstruction of earlier dialects more than most Western scholars. In Russian.

Rosenthal, Franz. *Die aramaistische Forschung seit Th. Nöldekes Veröffentlichungen*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1939.

As H. L. Ginsberg wrote in his review of Rosenthal's book (JAOS 62 [1942], 229–238), "His work is consequently an excellent introduction to the study of those fields of Aramaic studies in which he is strong, which means most."

Weninger, Stefan, in collaboration with Geoffrey Khan, Michael P. Streck, and Janet C. E. Watson, ed. *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*. Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft 36. Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter, 2011.

A state-of-the-art handbook on Semitics, the book has two hundred pages on Aramaic (in addition to much information about Aramaic in other chapters, as well): Old Aramaic (Fales), Imperial Aramaic (two chapters, Gzella and Folmer), Late Imperial Aramaic (Gzella), Jewish Palestinian Aramaic (Sokoloff), Samaritan Aramaic (Tal), Christian Palestinian Aramaic (Morgenstern), Syriac (two chapters, Healey and Chatonnet), Jewish Babylonian Aramaic (Sokoloff), Mandaic (Burtea), Western Neo-Aramaic (Arnold), Ṭuroyo and Mlaḥsô (Jastrow),

North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic (Khan), Neo-Mandaic (Häberl), Language Contact between Aramaic Dialects and Iranian (Kapeliuk), Aramaic-Arabic Language Contact (Weninger).

Definitions of Aramaic and Its Unity

Historical linguists argue for various ways of classifying Aramaic within the Northwest Semitic branch of the Semitic family. Garr 1985 studies all of the NWS dialects from 1000 to 586 BCE synchronically, eschewing diachronic analysis and yielding important results about the relationship between Aramaic and its neighbors in the Iron Age. Hetzron 1976 is a methodologically oriented paper that concludes that Canaanite and Arabic are more closely to each other than either is related to Aramaic, and that these three families split off from "Central Semitic." Huehnergard 1995 is an influential article that isolates six features said to characterize Proto-Aramaic. Loesov 2012 argues that eastern and western dialects of Aramaic are visible already in the 9th century BCE and continue unbroken from then to Modern Aramaic.

Garr, W. Randall. *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000–586 B.C.E.* **Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.**

Garr situates the Northwest Semitic dialects of the first half of the first millennium BCE on a synchronic dialect continuum. This is an invaluable resource for comparing the various languages of the Iron Age Levant, although it does not attempt to account historically for the data.

Hetzron, Robert. "Two Principles of Genetic Reconstruction." *Lingua* **38 (1976): 89–108.**

Focusing on methodological principles, Hetzron argues for the "principle of archaic heterogeneity" and the importance of shared innovations for subgrouping. He concludes with a new family tree of the Semitic languages, situating Aramaic within "Central Semitic," a branch of West Semitic alongside South Semitic, and which in turns breaks into "Arabo-Canaanite" and "Aramaic."

Huehnergard, John. "What is Aramaic?" *ARAM* **7 (1995): 261–282.**

According to Huehnergard, there are six shared innovations that are found across the Aramaic dialects, and which therefore should be reconstructed for Proto-Aramaic: the lexemes בר "son" and חד "one," the postpositive definite article ‑א, the ending –*awh(u)* for the 3mp suffix on plurals, the feminine plural ending –*ān*, and the loss of the *nifʿal*. (Though article is dated 1995, it did not appear until 1998.)

Loesov, Sergey. "A New Attempt at Reconstructing Proto-Aramaic." *Babel und Bibel* **6 (2012): 421–456.**

First of two parts. Part II appears in *Proceedings of the 14th Italian Meeting of Afroasiatic Linguistics* (Alexandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2013), pp. 91–106. Argues for Proto-East Aramaic in the Fekherye inscription already, based on syntactic features such as the jussive *l*-prefix, the non-passive *qtīl l-/qāttīl* construction, and the masculine plural definite ending –*ē*, among others. Loesov firmly rejects the notion that Imperial Aramaic was a spoken language that erased earlier dialectal differences, and relegates the apparent uniformity to the level of written communication alone.

Periodization, Dialects, and Dialectology

Kaufman 1974 is a fundamental work that provides both studies of individual words in the various Aramaic dialects and constructs a compelling picture of the rise of the eastern and western Aramaic dialects. Fitzmyer 1979 proposed dividing the history into five chronological phases: (1) Old Aramaic, until 700 BCE; (2) Official Aramaic, *c.* 700 to 200 BCE; (3) Middle Aramaic, 200 BCE to 200 CE, which sees the emergence of "real local dialects," including Nabatean, Qumran, Murabbaʿat, Palestinian, Palmyrene, Edessan, and Hatran; (4) Late Aramaic, roughly 200 to 700 CE; (5) Modern Aramaic, still spoken in various areas of northern Syria, Iran, Iraq, and related regions. Within the Late Aramaic dialects there is a broad division into Western Aramaic, including Galilean/Jewish Palestinian

Aramaic, Samaritan Aramaic, and Christian Palestinian Aramaic, and Eastern Aramaic, including Syriac, Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, and Mandaic. This scheme is based entirely on chronology, rather than an inductive division based on linguistic facts. Good overviews are provided in Kaufman 1992 and, with more details, Sokoloff 2012. An ambitious but somewhat unwieldy alternative scheme to divide the dialects differently is provided in Beyer 1984–2004. Pat-El 2012 argues for the importance of syntax in classifying the Aramaic dialects, a subfield that has been relatively neglected.

Beyer, Klaus. *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer: Samt den Inschriften aus Palästina, dem Testament Levis aus der Kairoer Genisa, der Fastenrolle und den alten talmudischen Zitaten.* **Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984–2004.**

Vol. 1 (1984): Following an overview of the language and its development, there is a textbook-style presentation of texts, followed by a grammar and glossary. The Ergänzungsband (1994) and Volume 2 (2004) contain additional texts and readings and more on the classification and development of Aramaic. Chapter 2 of Volume 1 was translated as: *The Aramaic Language: Its Distribution and Subdivisions* (tr. John Healey; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986). Beyer's terminology is idiosyncratic and inelegant, which has prevented his taxonomy from having the influence that it ought to have.

Fitzmyer, Joseph A. "The Phases of the Aramaic Language." In *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays*. **By Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 57–84. SBL Monograph Series 25. Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1979.**

Fitzmyer's influential division of Aramaic based on chronology is a helpful first step, but the focus on chronology is often misleading and some of the dates are unhelpful. Certain corpora straddle these lines, and Syriac and JBA continue beyond 700 CE.

Kaufman, Stephen A. *The Akkadian Influences on Aramaic*. **Assyriological Studies 19. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974.**

A major study covering all premodern Aramaic dialects, important both for the lexical details treated and for the diachronic and dialectological conclusions reached.

Kaufman, Stephen A. "Languages (Aramaic)." In *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. **Vol. 4. Edited by David Noel Freedman, 173–178. New York: Doubleday, 1992.**

This article, in a major reference work, concisely summarizes the history of Aramaic, from its rise to modern times, focusing on the linguistic features that set each dialect apart.

Pat-El, Na'ama. *Studies in the Historical Syntax of Aramaic*. **Perspectives on Linguistics and Ancient Languages 1. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2012.**

In three sections of the only book-length study of historical syntax in Aramaic, Pat-El focuses on adverbial subordination, nominal modifiers (in particular demonstratives), and the presentation of direct speech; he provides in-depth descriptions and cleverly argued analyses. The book is marred by errors of fact and idiosyncratic interpretations, but is important for the methods applied to Aramaic.

Sokoloff, Michael. "Outline of Aramaic Diachrony." In *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew*. **Edited by Cynthia Miller-Naudé and Ziony Zevit, 379–405. Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 8. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012.**

Sokoloff summarizes what is known about the various dialects of Aramaic, including salient linguistic features of each dialect, allowing the reader to get a good sense of what is variable within the language.

Ancient Aramaic Literature in Translation

Aramaic literature in the first millennium BCE was rich and varied. Translations of many of the texts, with bibliographies, can be found in Hallo 1997–2002, while samples and a historical discussion can be found in Kottsieper 2009.

Hallo, W. W., ed. *The Context of Scripture*. 3 vols. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1997–2002.

This three-volume work contains up-to-date translations of texts from across the Near East, with bibliographical references and a focus on texts that are relevant to the Bible and its world. Fortunately, this is defined very broadly, and each volume has Aramaic texts of different genres.

Kottsieper, Ingo. "Aramaic Literature." In *From an Antique Land: An Introduction to Ancient Near Eastern Literature*. Edited by C. S. Ehrlich, 393–444. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009.

A wide-ranging overview of Aramaic literature; Kottsieper provides examples of the various genres, and is inevitably selective in his presentation. His historical and literary interpretations are sometimes idiosyncratic.

Old and Imperial Aramaic Language and Texts

The corpus of Old Aramaic texts is not very large, numbering only a few dozen texts. From the 7th century, there begin to also be Aramaic texts from Mesopotamia. Then from the 5th century, with Aramaic ensconced as the lingua franca of the massive Persian bureaucracy, the corpus grows somewhat, and includes, as already discussed, a greater variety of genres. The standard handbook is Donner and Röllig 1966–1969. The English-language book Gibson 1975 is useful, although not as complete or authoritative. The large lexicon of all Northwest Semitic inscriptions in Hoftijzer and Jongeling 1995 includes, of course, all Old and Imperial Aramaic (as well as some later Aramaic material), as seen in Schwiderski 2004–2008.

Donner, Herbert, und Wolfgang Röllig. *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften*. 3 vols. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 1966–1969.

First published in the 1960s, KAI consists of three volumes: (1) Texts; (2) Commentary; (3) Glossaries, Indexes, and Plates. Having the photos and a full commentary, as well as wordlists, makes this immensely useful for research. The fifth edition of Volume 1 (2002) added more than forty new texts, but without new editions of the other volumes, this is of more limited value than it could be.

Gibson, J. C. L. *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*. Vol. 2, *Aramaic Inscriptions: Including Inscriptions in the Dialect of Zenjirli*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Despite being plagued by the lack of photographs and too-brief textual commentaries and bibliographies, this is a useful book, covering Aramaic texts through the end of the Achaemenid period (*c.* 333 BCE).

Hoftijzer, Jacob, and Karel Jongeling. *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions*. Handbuch der Orientalistik, Erste Abteilung: Nahe und der Mittlere Osten 21.1–2. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1995.

Based on an earlier French lexicon (C. F. Jean and J. Hoftijzer, *Dictionnaire des inscriptions sémitiques de l'ouest* [Leiden: Brill, 1965]), this excellent lexicon collects all words attested in NWS epigraphic (but not literary) texts from prior to 300 CE and provides rich semantic and dialectological information, as well as copious bibliography to scholarly literature.

Schwiderski, Dirk. *Die alt- und reichsaramäischen Inschriften*. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2004–2008.

Includes all texts through the Persian and into the Hellenistic periods. The concordance, which includes brief lexical glosses and information about the dates at which lexemes are attested, is very useful. Volume 1: *Konkordanz*; Volume 2: *Texte und Bibliographie*.

Old Aramaic Language and Texts

The best study of a single Old Aramaic text, which is therefore an excellent entry point into the world of Old Aramaic more generally, is Fitzmyer 1995. There are at least two, and probably three, dialects within Old Aramaic: the dialect of Zincirli/ancient Sam'āl, the dialect found in the Tell Fekherye inscription, and "standard" or "central" Old Aramaic. Degen 1969 is an attempt at an overview of all the texts, although the dialectal picture has become much clearer due to new texts and studies since then; Gzella 2014 provides a concise and more up-to-date description. The dialect picture is also discussed in Loesov 2012 (cited under Definitions of Aramaic and Its Unity). Tropper 1993 is a grammar and edition of the Samālian texts (although more have been published since), and Hug 1993 provides an edition and grammar of the slightly later texts, from the 7th and 6th centuries.

Degen, Rainer. *Altaramäische Grammatik der Inschriften des 10.-8. Jh. v. Chr*. Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 38.3. Wiesbaden, Germany: Steiner, 1969.

A useful reference work, covering all the texts known by the late 1960s; there have been very important finds since then, so this has to be supplemented for a complete picture.

Fitzmyer, Joseph F. *The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire*. Biblica et Orientalia 19A. Rev. ed. Rome: Biblical Institute, 1995.

Fitzmyer takes the student through everything involved in studying an ancient text, from the material reading through the philological, historical, and literary issues raised by one long Old Aramaic text.

Gzella, Holger. "Language and Script." In *The Aramaeans in Ancient Syria*. Edited by Herbert Niehr, 71–107. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2014.

Gzella here provides an up-to-date sketch of the grammar of Old Aramaic, emphasizing the variety found among the different texts, along with discussion of the scripts used throughout the region.

Hug, Volker. *Altaramäische Grammatik der Texte des 7. und 6. Jh.s. v. Chr*. HSAO 4. Heidelberg, Germany: Heidelberger Orientverlag, 1993.

This volume includes the texts with running grammatical and philological commentary, a concise grammar, and glossaries of all the texts.

Tropper, Josef. *Die Inschriften von Zincirli: Neue Edition und vergleichende Grammatik des phonizischen, sam alischen und aramaischen Textkorpus*. Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palastinas und Mesopotamiens 6. Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag, 1993.

An invaluable study; Tropper covers all the texts found at Zincirli then known (in Phoenician, Samālian, and "Aramaic"). The volume also includes a map, photographs, and a lexicon. Tropper argues that Samālian was a living language, more conservative than standard Old Aramaic and also tinged with local features.

Imperial Aramaic Language and Texts

While Aramaic had been a lingua franca under the Assyrian empire already (as seen in the story of the Rab-Shaqeh in 2 Kings 18), our corpus grows under the Achaemenid empire and its adoption of Aramaic as the official language of correspondence. The uniformity evident in the texts also increases. They are far from uniform (see below, "Middle Aramaic dialects"), but the commonalities are great enough to allow for cogent discussions of "Imperial Aramaic" as a cohesive entity. Porten and Yardeni 1986–1999 is meant for students, but is the best collection of IA texts, including hand copies, transcriptions, and translations, along with bibliographies for each (but no commentaries). Muraoka and Porten 2003 is a full and convenient reference grammar for the corpus, despite some problems, ranging from the misleading title to questionable use of comparative data. A shorter presentation of the grammar can be found in Muraoka 2012. Greenfield 1978 demonstrates the existence of multiple dialects in Old and especially Imperial Aramaic, a theme picked up and studied thoroughly and systematically by Folmer 1995. The corpus of Imperial Aramaic continues to grow with new publications; Dušek's volume of texts (Dušek 2007), written in Samaria but found in Wadi ed-Daliyeh, is an excellent edition of some fragmentary but fascinating texts with both linguistic and historical import.

Dušek, Jan. *Les manuscrits araméens du Wadi Daliyeh et la Samarie vers 450–332 av. J.-C.* CHANE 30. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2007.

A very thorough new edition of some fascinating but quite fragmentary texts originating from Samaria and found at Wadi ed-Daliyeh, including excellent philological and historical discussions.

Folmer, M. L. *The Aramaic Language in the Achaemenid Period*. OLA 68. Leuven, Belgium: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1995.

Folmer sifts all the texts from the Persian period carefully, looking for variety in the grammar, and she finds a lot of it. This is not organized as a grammar, but it contains much of the information and analysis missing from Muraoka and Porten 2003. The two works, if used together, provide a very full picture of the Aramaic of the Achaemenid period.

Greenfield, Jonas C. "The Dialects of Early Aramaic." *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 37 (1978): 93–99.

Greenfield collects data to show that the variation in grammar evident in Old Aramaic does not disappear in the period of the Persian Empire; in these texts, too (despite being found overwhelmingly in Egypt), there is variation reflective of disparate geographical origins. It should be noted that the collected essays of Greenfield, one of the most erudite and perceptive scholars of Semitics of the past century, are a treasure trove of analyses and insights into Aramaic of all types. Reprinted in *'Al Kanfei Yonah: Collected Studies of Jonas C. Greenfield on Semitic Philology*, edited by Shalom M. Paul, Michael E. Stone, and Avital Pinnick Jerusalem: Magnes, 2001), pp. 160–166.

Muraoka, Takamitsu. *An Introduction to Egyptian Aramaic*. Lehrbücher orientalischer Sprachen III.1. Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag, 2012.

A concise presentation of the grammar of the same corpus treated in Muraoka and Porten 2003.

Muraoka, Takamitsu, and Bezalel Porten. *A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic*. 2d ed. Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section 1: The Near and Middle East, 32. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2003.

This reference grammar is well organized and quite clear, although it suffers from methodological shortcomings (including the notion of "Egyptian"—as opposed to Imperial—Aramaic). First edition: 1998.

Porten, Bezalel, and Ada Yardeni. *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt: Newly Copied, Edited and Translated into English*. 4 vols. Texts and Studies for Students. Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of the History of the Jewish People, 1986–1999.

Volume 1: *Letters*; Volume 2: *Contracts*; Volume 3: *Literature, Accounts, Lists*; Volume 4: *Ostraca and Assorted Inscriptions*. Mostly new collations, and in some instances—most notably, the Customs Account in Volume 3—entirely new texts. That text was discovered by Yardeni as the underwriting on the palimpsest containing Ahiqar.

Biblical Aramaic

Since the Aramaic documents in the biblical book of Ezra (chapters 4–7) are from this period as well, Biblical Aramaic (which includes also the somewhat later texts of Daniel 2–7) is also included in this section. For Biblical Aramaic, the grammar by Rosenthal, now in its seventh edition (Rosenthal 2006), and the grammar Qimron 2002 (in Hebrew), provide full descriptions with glossaries. Neither is particularly strong on syntax. Volume 5 of Koehler and Baumgartner 1994–2000 is an excellent lexicon of the Aramaic in the Bible. There are many detailed studies of this dialect, because of its biblical affiliation; references to literature can be found in Qimron 2002 and Koehler and Baumgartner 1994–2000.

Koehler, Ludwig, and Walter Baumgartner. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. **5 vols. Translated by M. E. J. Richardson. Revised by Walter Baumgartner, and Johann Jakob Stamm. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1994–2000.**

A standard lexicon of the Hebrew Bible, the last volume covers Biblical Aramaic, and contains bibliographical references.

Qimron, Elisha. *Biblical Aramaic*. **Jerusalem: Bialik, 2002.**

A complete grammar, which includes the entire (limited) corpus of Biblical Aramaic texts, as preserved in the Aleppo Codes, and also samples of Babylonian vocalization on sections of Daniel. The book also includes lists of every attested verbal form and a glossary of the entire corpus. In Hebrew.

Rosenthal, Franz. *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*. **7th expanded ed. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 2006.**

Originally published in 1961. Rosenthal has long been the standard English-language grammar of BA, providing a full grammar of the corpus, with diachronic considerations, a glossary, and other lexical information. The seventh edition includes an index of index of biblical citations, compiled by Daniel M. Gurtner.

Texts in Other Scripts: P. Amherst 63 and the Uruk Incantation

For the history of the language, texts written in other scripts are very useful, as other scripts may be more revealing than the Aramaic script, and the scribes may not be able to utilize historical spellings or other practices that obscure what the language actually sounded like. P. Amherst 63 is a very long Aramaic text in Demotic script, stretching across twenty-three columns, apparently transcribed by a scribe in the early 3rd century. This text, which was among the collection of Lord Amherst of Hackney at the end of the 19th century and is now in the Morgan Library in New York, is enigmatic in nature but very revealing linguistically, as the non-Aramaic scribe wrote what he heard and thereby revealed more than usual regarding Aramaic phonology. Unfortunately, aspects of the writing system utilized are still not certainly understood. Richard Steiner and Charles Nims and the the Dutch team of Jan Wesselius and Sven Vleeming both published sections of the text in the 1980s, although they did not agree on some of the fundamentals of how to read it. A full edition of the text has never been published. Steiner 1997 is a provisional translation of the entire text with references to the literature until that time. The Uruk incantation (Geller 1997–2000) is a 2nd-century cuneiform text from Mesopotamia.

Geller, Mark J. "The Aramaic Incantation in Cuneiform Script (AO-6489=TCL 6,58)." *Jaarbericht ex Oriente Lux* **35–36 (1997–2000): 127–146.**

A full new edition of the incantation from Uruk. Geller shows that the text bears the hallmarks of later Eastern Aramaic, including the loss of the opposition between the determined and undetermined states and the masculine plural ending –ē.

Steiner, Richard C. "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script." In *Context of Scripture*. Vol. 1, *Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*. Edited by William H. Hallo, 309–327. Leiden, The Netherlands, and New York: Brill, 1997.

A full but tentative translation of the entire papyrus, including references to biblical parallels, and bibliography.

Aramaic Scripts

After the development of a distinctively Aramaic script type in the Iron Age, the use of Aramaic writing throughout the Persian Empire made the Aramaic script into the most widespread writing tradition in the Near East. After the breakup of the empire, the script traditions fragmented, developing differently in different regions, such as Mesopotamia, Syria, Arabia, and the Levant, among others. These developments are traced in Naveh 1971–1976. Later trends, in the Middle Aramaic dialects, are discussed in Byrne 2006. One branch gave rise to the Nabatean script in evidence at Petra and elsewhere, and this in turn gave rise to the Arabic script and its various branches, as shown in great detail in Gruendler 1993.

Byrne, Ryan. "Asia, Ancient Southwest: Scripts, Middle Aramaic." In *Encyclopedia of Language & Linguistics*. Vol. 1. 2d ed. Edited by Keith Brown, 505–509. Boston: Elvesier, 2006.

A good survey, with references, of the scripts used for Aramaic texts in the last centuries BCE.

Gruendler, Beatrice. *The Development of the Arabic Scripts: From the Nabatean Era to the First Islamic Century*. Harvard Semitic Studies 43. Atlanta: Scholars, 1993.

The origins of the Arabic script were long thought to have been in Nabatean cursive, although there were occasional voices suggesting Syriac as an alternative. Gruendler's careful analysis investigates the forms of letters and how they are written together in the Nabatean texts and early Arabic texts to show the continuity that it present there.

Naveh, Joseph. *The Development of the Aramaic Script*. Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities 5.1. (1971–1976): 1–69.

This was the doctoral dissertation of Naveh, one of the master paleographers of the 20th century. He describes carefully the script in evidence at Elephantine and how it develops over the following centuries.

Middle Aramaic: General

Middle Aramaic, in Fitzmyer's classification, includes the texts and dialects from the breakup of the Persian Empire through *c.* 200 CE. Collections of texts with translations are Healey 2009, which surveys texts of all dialects and regions with good philological and historical notes; Harrington and Fitzmyer 1978, which has very little in the way of commentary but includes many texts, including literary texts, from the area of ancient Palestine; and Beyer 1998, which collects the texts from Parthia-era Mesopotamia and is essential for study of these brief texts.

Beyer, Klaus. *Die aramäischen Inschriften aus Assur, Hatra und dem übrigen Ostmesopotamien (datiert 44 v.Chr. bis 238 n.Chr.)*. Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998.

Beyer's corpus of texts, printed in a specially designed font, is an invaluable resource for the language and history of the eastern regions within the Near East, despite the mostly short and often formulaic nature of these texts. Beyer translates the PNs in the corpus, which gives further insight into the religion of the people mentioned. Additions to this text are published in "Die aramäischen Inschriften aus Assur, Hatra und dem übrigen Ostmesopotamien (datiert 44 v. Chr. bis 238 n. Chr.): Nachträge." *Die Welt des Orients* 43 (2013): 25–62.

Harrington, Daniel J., and Joseph F. Fitzmyer. *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts (Second Century B.C. - Second Century A.D.)*. Biblica et Orientalia 34. Rome: Biblical Institute, 1978.

A collection of texts whose publications were in scattered locations, conveniently brought under one roof with good translations. This volume has essentially no comments on the texts and therefore needs to be supplemented for learning purposes.

Healey, John F. *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*. Vol. 4, *Aramaic Inscriptions and Documents from Roman Times*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Formally a continuation of the three-volume series by Gibson (see Gibson 1975, cited under Old and Imperial Aramaic Language and Texts), Healey's volume has the same advantages plus a long historical introduction on the cultures of Judeam Nabataea, Palmyra, Edessa, and Hatra, and sober, full commentaries. Approximately one-fifth of the texts are illustrated with either a photograph or a hand copy.

Middle Aramiac: Specific Corpora

The corpora of Middle Aramaic has long included large numbers of Palmyrene texts, as discussed in Hillers and Cussini 1996; Nabatean texts, as seen in Cantineau 1930–1932 and Healey 1993; and Old Syriac texts, as explained in Healey and Drijvers 1999. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has given us also a sizable library of Jewish Aramaic texts, mostly fragmentary to some degree, as seen in Schattner-Rieser 2004. One of the largest Aramaic text from Qumran, the Genesis Apocryphon, has a full commentary in Fitzmyer 2004 which also includes a brief grammar of Qumran Aramaic (and see Muraoka 2011, cited under Middle Aramaic Dialects).

Cantineau, Jean. *Le Nabatéen*. 2 vols. Paris: Librairie Ernest Leroux, 1930–1932.

The first volume is a grammar, with sections on the script, phonology, morphology, and comments on syntax; the second volume is a selection of texts from various locations, with translations and notes and a good glossary. This is still a valuable work by a scholar who worked in various branches of Semitic as well as general linguistics.

Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1 (1Q20)*. 3d ed. Biblica et Orientalia 18/B. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2004.

Following a long introduction to all aspects of the text, and of Qumran Aramaic grammar overall, the text is presented with translation and extensive notes and references. Fitzmyer also includes a thirty-five-page discussion of the grammar of Qumran Aramaic, exemplified by the Apocryphon, and a glossary. First edition 1966; second edition 1971.

Healey, John F. *The Nabataean Tomb Inscriptions of Mada'in Salih*. JSS Suppl. 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

The site of Madā'in Ṣaliḥ in northeastern Saudi Arabia preserves hundreds of Nabatean texts. Healey publishes here the tomb inscriptions from the first century CE, with extensive philological and historical notes, prefaced by a lengthy introduction about the Nabateans, including their language and script. He includes five texts from other sites for comparative purposes.

Healey, John F., and H. J. W. Drijvers. *The Old Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrhoene: Texts, Translations and Commentary*. **Handbuch der Orientalistik, Section 1: The Near & Middle East 42. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1999.**

This volume contains all the known Old Syriac inscriptions from Edessa and the area around Osthoene in northern Mesopotamia from the first three centuries CE, the number of which has substantially increased over the last decades. The texts are given in estrangelo script and are accompanied by a philological and historical commentary. Originals are presented in photographs and line drawings. The volume contains chapters on the script of these inscriptions, on the language, and on the history and culture of Edessa.

Hillers, Delbert R., and Eleonora Cussini. *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts*. **Publications of the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.**

Collects 2,832 Palmyrene texts that had been scattered in hundreds of publications. These include many funerary and other dedicatory inscriptions, but also things like the Tariff text (bilingual, 150 lines of Aramaic), important for economic history of the eastern Roman Empire. Also includes a full glossary for the corpus.

Schattner-Rieser, Ursula. *L'araméen des manuscrits de la mer Morte*. **Vol. 1,** *Grammaire*. **Instruments pour l'étude des langues de l'Orient ancien 5. Lausanne: Éditions du Zèbre, 2004.**

See also *Textes araméens de la mer Morte* (Langues et cultures anciennes 5; Brussels: Safran, 2005). In these two volumes, Schattner-Rieser provides quite convenient editions of the Aramaic texts, vocalized according to the Masoretic tradition of Biblical Aramaic, with facing French translations. In her grammar, she discusses phonology, morphology, particles, a brief note on the lexicon, and syntax. Despite some flaws in the data and the analysis, these are eminently useful books.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Dictionary of Judean Aramaic*. **Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 2003.**

Based on the concordances in Yardeni 2000, Sokoloff's slim dictionary covers the epigraphic material in Judean Aramaic, but excludes literary material from Qumran or the Targumim.

Yardeni, Ada. *A Textbook of Aramaic, Hebrew, and Nabatean Documentary Texts from the Judean Desert and Related Material*. **2 vols. Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2000.**

Yardeni is among the foremost paleographers in the world, and this book shows why. It collects all the Semitic texts from the Judean Desert and vicinity. The reading of these texts is often quite difficult because of the cursive writing employed, and Yardeni's full study of the script enables her to present quite certain material interpretations of the texts. Besides drawings and transcriptions, the book also includes translations and charts of script forms.

Middle Aramaic Dialects

The diachronic and synchronic relationships between the Middle Aramaic dialects have long interested Semitists, as discussed in Rosenthal 1936, but discoveries in the Judean Desert in the second half of the 20th century both reinvigorated this study and cast many old data in new light. The literature on Qumran Aramaic is quite large. There are now very good reference works available, including Muraoka 2011, a comprehensive grammar, and Cook 2015, an excellent dictionary in—both with many references to earlier literature. The two dialectological articles Kutscher 1965 and Kutscher 1961, on the publications of the Genesis Apocryphon and the Aramaic letters of Bar Koseba, respectively, put the study of these dialects on more solid ground and set it in new directions. Morgenstern 1999 shows how the Qumran texts affect our understanding of other neighboring dialects, as well.

Cook, Edward M. "Qumran Aramaic and Aramaic Dialectology." In *Studies in Qumran Aramaic*. **Edited by Takamitsu Muraoka, 1–21. Abr-Nahrain Supplement 3. Louvain, Belgium: Peeters, 1992.**

Situating the Aramaic of the Qumran texts in a synchronic map of the Near East, Cook surveys a large number of diagnostic features to reach conclusions about when QA fits. This is a very valuable survey for its collection of features and comments on each dialect.

Cook, Edward M. *Dictionary of Qumran Aramaic*. **Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015.**

Because of the small quantity of Qumran Aramaic texts, this excellent lexicon is also a full concordance. It includes new textual readings, with references to earlier literature, and also novel interpretations and linguistic insights.

Koller, Aaron. "Four Dimensions of Linguistic Variation: Aramaic Dialects in and around Qumran." In *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Context: Integrating the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Study of Ancient Texts, Languages, and Cultures*. **Edited by Armin Lange, Emanuel Tov, and Matthias Weigold, in association with Bennie H. Reynolds III, 199–213. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2011.**

This study emphasizes the variety of Aramaic dialects in the world around Qumran, and argues that we need to grapple with a number of variables in analyzing the language of a text: diachronic change, geography—both because neighboring dialect s affects each other, and because local dialects sometimes preserve older features—as well as linguistic differences between genres.

Kutscher, Yehezkel. "לשונן של האיגרות העבריות והארמיות של בר כוסבה ובני דורו. מאמר ראשון: האיגרות הארמיות**."** *Lešonénu* **25 (1961): 117–133.**

The letters from Bar Koseba, discovered by Yigael Yadin, are here edited by Kustcher with a full philological commentary that also emphasizes the points of similarity and difference between these texts and other known Aramaic texts from the early centuries CE. Reprinted in מחקרים בעברית ובארמית, edited by Zeev Ben-Hayyim, Aharon Dotan, Gad Ben-Ami Sarfatti, with the assistance of Moshe Bar-Asher (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1977), pp. 36–53.

Kutscher, Yehezkel. "The Language of the Genesis Apocryphon." In *Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. **2d ed. Edited by Chaim Rabin and Yigael Yadin, 1–35. Scripta Hierosolymitana 4. Jerusalem: Magnes, 1965.**

First written 1958. Kutscher situatesd the then-newly-discovered Genesis Apocryphon among the known Aramaic dialects, arguing for a 1st-century date on linguistic grounds. He also argued that the consonantal text of Onqelos was comparable to the Apocryphon, and therefore plausibly also from that time and from Palestine.

Morgenstern, Moshe. "The History of the Aramaic Dialects in the Light of Discoveries from the Judaean Desert: The Case of Nabataean." *Eretz Israel* **26 (1999): 134*–142*.**

This paper is a sophisticated analysis of Nabatean, identifying elements that are known already from Imperial Aramaic, others that are features that developed within Aramaic, and features that show the influence of Arabic (particularly in the lexicon).

Muraoka, Takamitsu. *A Grammar of Qumran Aramaic*. **Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement 38. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2011.**

A reference grammar, covering all the Aramaic texts from Qumran, with occasional comparative references as well. Despite the title, the grammar draws from texts from sites other than Qumran (e.g., Wadi Murabba'at, Masada). Unfortunately, there is no index of citations.

Rosenthal, Franz. *Die Sprache der palmyrenischen Inschriften und ihre Stellung innerhalb des Aramäischen*. **Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatisch-Ägyptischen Gesellschaft 41.1. Leipzig: Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1936.**

Originating as Rosenthal's doctoral dissertation, this short monograph (112 pages, including indexes) focuses on the phonology and morphology of the Palmyrene texts.

Wise, Michael O. "Accidents and Accidence: A Scribal View of Linguistic Dating of the Aramaic Scrolls from Qumran." In *Studies in Qumran Aramaic*. **Edited by Takamitsu Muraoka, 124–167. Abr-Nahrain Supplement 3. Louvain, Belgium: Peeters, 1992.**

Wise argues that linguistic dating of texts is impossible ("In short, linguistic dating of the Aramaic DSS is an exercise in futility") because of the ways scribes in ancient times worked. A very valuable study both for the methodological strictures and for the insights about scribal practices.

Late Aramaic: General

The Late Aramaic dialects are conventionally divided into eastern and western, with three major dialects in each group: Christian Palestinian Aramaic, Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, and Samaritan Aramaic in the west, and Syriac, Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, and Mandaic in the east. Boyarin 1981 was instrumental in demonstrating that this division was not a near "family tree," where east and west divided and then each subdivided, but that there was synchronic influence between dialects as well. On the other hand, there is also clear continuity within each branch, and diachronic studies such as Bar-Asher Siegal 2014 show that the features that develop in the eastern Late Aramaic dialects continue to develop down to the eastern Neo-Aramaic dialects.

Bar-Asher Siegal, Elitzur. "From a Non-Argument-Dative to an Argument-Dative: The Character and Origin of the *qṭīl lī* **Construction in Syriac and Jewish Babylonian Aramaic."** *Folia Orientalia* **51 (2014): 59–101.**

Bar-Asher Siegal studies a distinctive verbal construction in eastern Aramaic, derived from the passive participle and a datival pronoun. This paper is important both for its diachronic findings—tracing the feature from early eastern Aramaic, through Syriac and JBA, and down to eastern Neo-Aramaic dialects—and for its analysis of the relationship between the eastern Late Aramaic dialects and Iranian languages.

Boyarin, Daniel. "An Inquiry into the Formation of the Middle Aramaic Dialects." In *Bono Homini Donum: Essays in Historical Linguistics in Memory of J. A. Kerns*. **Edited by Yoël L. Arbeitman and Allan R. Bomhard, 613–649. Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science, Series IV, Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 16. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1981.**

This seminal study emphasizes the features that spread through the Late Aramaic dialects areally, in addition to the diachronic divergences that led to their separation.

Christian Palestinian Aramaic

This dialect was spoken by the Christian community in Byzantine-era Palestine. Epigraphic texts from the 5th–8th centuries reflect the stage of the language when it was still spoken, but there are only brief texts from this period; the bulk of the manuscripts come from the 10th–13th centuries, when CPA was a liturgical language only. Much of the literature is translated from the Greek, and it is difficult to know what in the grammar reflects living Aramaic usage and what is the influence of the Greek Vorlage. The dialect first became known to Western scholars only in the late 19th century; Nöldeke wrote a grammar of the dialect based on one text, and Schulthess wrote a lexicon and a grammar. These have been superseded by modern studies of the texts, grammar, and lexicon. Bar-Asher 1977 studies the corpus and divides the texts into the earlier and later periods, and provides detailed grammatical data on each part of the corpus. Morgenstern 2011 is an excellent overview of the dialect and texts. Müller-Kessler and Sokoloff 1996–1999 published good modern

editions of the most important manuscripts in CPA, with translations and philological commentaries. Müller-Kessler 1991 is a thorough study of phonology and morphology, while Sokoloff 2014 is a reliable and thorough dictionary of the dialect with comparative notes. Bar-Asher 1993 compares CPA to its contemporary Palestinian dialects, and finds that CPA and Samaritan Aramaic share many innovative features that set them apart from JPA.

Bar-Asher, Moshe. "Palestinian Syriac Studies: Source-Texts, Traditions and Grammatical Problems." PhD diss., Hebrew University, 1977.

Bar-Asher's dissertation did much to put the study of CPA on solid ground by identifying which texts could be relied upon for reconstructing the grammar.

Bar-Asher, Moshe. "Palestinian Syriac and Samaritan Aramaic: A Comparative Study." In *Studies in Bible and Exegesis 3: Moshe Goshen-Gottstein Memorial Volume*. Edited by Moshe Bar-Asher, Moshe Garsiel, Devora Dimant, and Yeshayahu Maori, 53–68. Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 1993.

Bar-Asher here argues that linguistically CPA and Samaritan Aramaic are very similar, nearly identical, and that the division of these into different dialects relies more on the different scripts and religions identities than on linguistic data. Reprinted as Chapter 24 in Bar-Asher's *Leshonot Rishonim: Studies in the Language of the Bible, the Dead Sea Scrolls and Aramaic* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2012).

Morgenstern, Matthew (Moshe). "Christian Palestinian Aramaic." In *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*. Edited by Stefan Weninger, in collaboration with Geoffrey Khan, Michael P. Streck, and Janet C. E. Watson, 629–637. Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft 36. Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter, 2011.

Provides a concise but very informative sketch of the available sources, primary modern works, and the basics of the grammar of this dialect.

Müller-Kessler, Christa. *Grammatik des Christlich-Palästinisch-Aramäischen, Teil 1: Schriftlehre, Lautlehre, Formenlehre*. Texte und Studien zur Orientalistik 6/1. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1991.

A thorough grammar, based on re-checking all the manuscripts of the CPA texts, presenting the morphology thoroughly and clearly (vol. 2 on syntax has not yet appeared). This grammar, as the other publications by Müller-Kessler, utilizes a specially-designed font for CPA, making it something of a challenge for scholars of other disciplines—or even of other Aramaic dialects—to use.

Müller-Kessler, Christa, and Michael Sokoloff. *A Corpus of Christian Palestinian Aramaic*. 5 vols. Groningen, The Netherlands: Styx, 1996–1999.

The five volumes provide reliable editions of the most important CPA texts: 1: The CPA Old Testament and Apocrypha; 2A: The CPA New Testament Version: Gospels; 2B: The CPA New Testament Version: Acts of the Apostles and Epistles; 3: The Forty Martyrs of the Sinai Desert, Eulogios the Stone Cutter, and Anastasia; 5: The Catechism of Jerusalem in the CPA Version. The texts are published based on the manuscripts, with facing translations and philological notes.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Dictionary of Christian Palestinian Aramaic*. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 234. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2014.

This is an authoritative lexicon that contains comparative data as well.

Jewish Palestinian Aramaic

The dialect of the Palestinian Talmud and the midrashic literature from Eretz Israel, as well as classical piyyutim (liturgical poems) and other literature, JPA still does not have a reliable grammar or critical editions of many of the texts. The grammar Dalman 1905 is serviceable, but is based on unreliable manuscripts and mixes in data from other texts in other dialects. Levias's posthumously published grammar (Levias 1986) is better, and Sokoloff's introduction to that volume is quite valuable. Kutscher's studies (collected and translated by Sokoloff in Kutscher 1976) showed the way forward, identifying two manuscripts of Genesis Rabbah whose linguistic traditions were reliable, and offering studies of a few details in the grammar. Sokoloff 2002 is a thorough, modern dictionary of the dialect, based on the manuscripts chosen by the Academy of the Hebrew Language as the most reliable for each text. Sokoloff and Yahalom 1999 publish piyyutim in JPA, mostly from the Cairo Genizah, most of which reflect JPA.

Dalman, Gustaf. *Grammatik des Jüdisch-Palästinischen Aramäisch nach den Idiomen des palästinischen Talmud und Midrasch, des Onkelostargum (Cod. Socini 84) und der Jerusalemischen Targume zum Pentateuch.* **Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1905.**

Dalman included only Palestinian Aramaic sources in his grammar and generally had excellent judgment when it came to linguistic matters, so this grammar (which has no section on syntax) is insightful. Since it is based on unreliable manuscripts, however, it often does not reflect the linguistic reality as now known.

Kutscher, E. Y. *Studies in Galilean Aramaic.* **Bar Ilan Studies in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures. Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1976.**

Translated from the Hebrew and annotated with additional notes from the author's "handcopy" (iv), this short book contains a programmatic introduction, an assessment of two manuscripts of Bereshit Rabbah (Vatican Ebr. 30 and Ebr. 60), and a series of short studies of phenomena, ranging from the phonological to the syntactic, in Galilean Aramaic. Kutscher's contributions, especially on the methodological front, set the stage for continuing work on the grammar of this dialect.

Levias, Caspar. דקדוק הארמית הגלילית לשפת התלמוד הירושלמי והמדרשים. **Introduction by Michael Sokoloff. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1986.**

Levias' grammar was written a few years before his death in 1934, but published more than fifty years later. Because it relies almost implicitly on the printed editions of the Yerushalmi and Midrashim, and does not take the Palestinian Targumim into account, it provides a grammar full of mistakes. It includes the most extensive discussion of JPA syntax available. Sokoloff's introduction provides a corrective to some of the points in the grammar and offers a brief overview of the modern study of Galilean Aramaic.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period.* **2d ed. Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 2002.**

The first of Sokoloff's dictionaries of Aramaic dialects, *DJPA* (as it is abbreviated) is based on manuscript readings and offers thorough, linguistically sensitive definitions. Sokoloff provides (here and elsewhere) information from other dialects about lexemes, but no etymologies. First published 1990.

Sokoloff, Michael, and Joseph Yahalom. *Jewish Palestinian Aramaic Poetry from Late Antiquity: Critical Edition with Introduction and Commentary.* **Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1999.**

A critical edition of Byzantine-era poems, with translations into Hebrew and paleographical and philological commentary, as well as comments on the exegetical and narrative traditions reflected in them. Not all the poems are actually in good Palestinian Aramaic, and this collection cannot be used as an authoritative source for that dialect. In Hebrew.

Samaritan

This dialect represents that Aramaic written by the Samaritans, mostly between the fourth and tenth centuries CE, with a few texts from earlier and a few from later. The most important texts have been published in Ben-Hayyim 1965, Ben-Hayyim 1988, and Tal 1980–1983. Kutscher 1968, a review of Ben-Hayyim 1965, is quite helpful in introducing the study of Samaritan Aramaic within the study of Aramaic more generally (although it is, of course, out of date in some respects). The most important Samaritan text other than the Bible and its translation into Aramaic is Memar Marqah. An edition was published in Macdonald 1963, which remains the only full English version, but it is a very problematic edition. Ben-Hayyim published an authoritative edition in 1988, but included only a Hebrew translation. Ben-Hayyim's student Abraham Tal published a critical edition of the Samaritan Targum of the Pentateuch, as seen in Tal 1980–1983, a fundamental text in studying Samaritan Aramaic, and also contributed a lexicon of the dialect, as explained in Tal 2000. The grammar of the language in Macuch 1982 is useful, and Stadel 2013, a study of the morphosyntax, is a very valuable contribution to the study not only of Samaritan Aramaic, but also of the Late Aramaic dialects more generally. Tal 2013 is a reliable overview of the entire dialect.

Ben-Hayyim, Ze'ev. עברית וארמית נוסח שומרון. Vol. 3.2. Academy of the Hebrew Language, Sources and Studies 6. Jerusalem: Academy of the Hebrew Language, 1965.

This volume of Ben-Hayyim's monumental five-volume work on Samaritan languages and texts includes many Samaritan Aramaic texts with transcription based on Samaritan reading traditions, many with translation into modern Hebrew, and full commentary. It thus serves as both a linguistic and literary mine of information.

Ben-Hayyim, Ze'ev, ed. and trans. *Tībåt Mårqe: A Collection of Samaritan Midrashim*. Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1988.

A full edition of this 4th-century text, in Samaritan Aramaic and with a translation into Modern Hebrew. Ben-Hayyim shows that this was not a unified text, but one that had various sources and had grown over generations, and only the first and second parts of the book are written in pure Samaritan Aramaic. In Hebrew.

Kutscher, Yehezkel. "הארמית של השומרונים." *Tarbiz* 37 (1968): 379–419.

A review article on Ben-Hayyim 1965, Kutscher here expands the scope of the inquiry, providing more comments on Samaritan Aramaic's position within the Aramaic dialects and the importance of the Samaritan materials for Aramaic studies more broadly. Reprinted in Kutscher's מחקרים בעברית ובארמית, edited by Ze'ev Ben-Hayyim, Ahron Dotan, and Gad Ben-'Ammi Sarfatti, with the assistance of Moshe Bar-Asher (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1977), pp. 256–278.

MacDonald, John. *Memar Marqah: The Teachings of Marqah*. 2 vols. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 84. Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1963.

This edition (Volume 1: introduction and text; Volume 2: translation) is the only full version with a translation into a Western language, but the text presented is based on less reliable manuscripts.

Macuch, Rudolph. *Grammatik des samaritanischen Aramäisch*. Studia Samaritana 4. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1982.

A reliable grammar of this dialect, focusing on phonology and morphology and relying on the critical editions of texts that had come out prior to its publication.

Stadel, Christian. תחביר הצורות של הארמית השומרונית. Jerusalem: Bialik, 2013.

After an introduction about Samaritan Aramaic and the history of its research, Stadel moves to various topics in morphosyntax: independent and suffixed pronouns, definiteness and genitive constructions, and the use of various verbal forms, among others. His constant comparisons to other Aramaic dialects, especially Late Aramaic, make this an important work for all the dialects from Late Antiquity.

Tal, Abraham. *The Samaritan Targum of the Pentateuch.* **3 vols. Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1980–1983.**

A critical edition of this most ancient and most important Samaritan Aramaic text; together with the work of Ben-Hayyim, Tal has given scholars of Samaritan Aramaic a reliable foundation on which to stand.

Tal, Abraham. *A Dictionary of Samaritan Aramaic.* **2 vols. Handbuch der Orientalistik 50. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2000.**

This is the best lexicon available, and is based on critical editions of the texts. There are numerous problems, however, ranging from the trivial to the substantive, and it must be used with caution. See the review by Michael Sokoloff in *Aramaic Studies* 1.1 (2003): 67–107.

Tal, Abraham. *Samaritan Aramaic.* **Lehrbücher orientalischer Sprachen 3.2. Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag, 2013.**

In keeping with the format of this series, Tal provides here a thorough but concise grammar of Samaritan Aramaic.

Syriac

The vernacular of Edessa, a city now in southeastern Turkey, Syriac became the language of the eastern Christian community from the 4th through the 8th centuries. The *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage* (Brock, et al. 2011) is the first full reference work on everything Syriac; it contains articles by leading scholars on all aspects of language, text, history, and religion. Gorgias Press, founded and run by George Kiraz, is a major publisher of old and new works on Syriac, and its site should be consulted for very rich offerings of both. Brock 2006 is a very handy and authoritative overview of the language and literature, with many directions for further reading and research. By one count, 90 percent of the extant Aramaic literature is in Syriac, and the corpus is truly vast. The Bible was translated into Syriac already by the 3rd century; this edition, known as the Pešiṭta, is published in a modern critical edition by Brill. The fullest and most reliable lexicon is still Brockelmann's *Lexicon Syriacum* (1928; see Brockelmann 2009, an edition recently translated and revised by Sokoloff). The best grammar is found in Nöldeke 1904, also from the late 19th century (first published 1989), which can be supplemented with some more recent studies, especially on syntax, such as those in Goldenberg 1983 and Joosten 1996. Muraoka's grammar (Muraoka 2005) is user-friendly and quite thorough, although it is not as thorough as Nöldeke's and does not incorporate many of the results of later research. Butts 2016 provides a contact linguistic analysis of the emergence of Syriac. The earliest Syriac inscriptions are in a dialect somewhat different from what became the standard dialect; this corpus, called "Old Syriac," is treated in Drijvers and Healey 1999. The website syri.ac, maintained by the University of Oklahoma, contains many links to helpful online resources, as well as bibliographies on various aspects of Syriac studies prepared by Sebastian Brock.

Brock, Sebastian P. *An Introduction to Syriac Studies.* **Gorgias Handbooks 4. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2006.**

Brock is among the world's leading Syriacists, and this short book covers a lot of ground with a lot of authority. Besides orienting the reader to various fields within Syriac studies, Brock also explains the use of Syriac studies for other fields.

Brock, Sebastian P., Aaron Michael Butts, George Anton Kiraz, and Lucas Van Rompay, eds. *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage.* **Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2011.**

A comprehensive and authoritative reference book for all things Syriac.

Brockelmann, Carl. *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin: Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's Lexicon Syriacum.* **Translated and revised by Michael Sokoloff. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009.**

Sokoloff provides English, rather than Latin, definitions; He reordered nouns by their forms rather than by their purported verbal roots, checked tens of thousands of textual references for accuracy, and added additional references. He removed Brockelmann's etymologies,

which were valuable if sometimes imprecise, and includes only comparative notes to other Aramaic dialects, and brief references to other languages on occasion.

Butts, Aaron. *Language Change in the Wake of Empire: Syriac in Its Greco-Roman Context*. **Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 11. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2016.**

This is the most linguistically sophisticated treatment of the beginnings of Syriac. Butts discusses the many Greek loanwords in Syriac, but also more subtle and more fundamental aspects of Greek's influence on Syriac.

Drijvers, Han J. W., and John F. Healey. *The Old Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrhoene: Texts, Translations and Commentary*. **Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section 1: The Near and Middle East 42. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1999.**

Both an edition of the texts and a grammar, this is an excellent entry point into Old Syriac, which is in turn very important for situating Syriac within the Aramaic dialects and understanding its later development.

Goldenberg, Gideon. "On Syriac Sentence Structure." In *Arameans, Aramaic and the Aramaic Literary Tradition*. **Edited by Michael Sokoloff, 97–140. Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 1983.**

Goldenberg, one of the great Semitists of the late 20th century, provides a concise and incisive description of the syntax of nonverbal clauses. Reprinted in Goldenberg's *Studies in Semitic Linguistics: Selected Writings* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1998), 525–568.

Joosten, Jan. *The Syriac Language of the Peshitta and Old Syriac Versions of Matthew: Syntactic Structure, Inner-Syriac Developments and Translation Technique*. **Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 22. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1996.**

This is a very valuable book, providing the most thorough and details description of Syriac syntax (although Joosten's theories regarding the history of Gospel translations have not convinced many specialists).

Muraoka, Takamitsu. *Classical Syriac*: *A Basic Grammar with a Chrestomathy*. **With a select bibliography by S. P. Brock. Porta Linguarum Orientalium, Neue Serie 19. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 2005.**

A very usable grammar with texts in Estrangela and sixty pages of texts. The bibliography by Brock makes this a helpful entry point into Syriac language and literature.

Nöldeke, Theodor. *Kurzgefasste syrische Grammatik Compendious Syriac Grammar*. **Translated by James A. Crichton. London: Williams and Norgate, 1904.**

Nöldeke's grammar (first published 1989) has never been superseded. He was careful to base his descriptions and analyses on prose passages from the classical period, before Arabic became the spoken language in the region.

Peshiṭta Institute of the University of Leiden, ed. *The Old Testament in Syriac: According to the Peshiṭta Version*. **6 vols in 15. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1972–2013.**

An authoritative text, decades in the making, presenting the Syriac translation of the Bible in a large and attractive format.

Jewish Babylonian Aramaic

Despite the long-standing intense interest among Aramaists and other scholars in the Babylonian Talmud, the study of the dialect has long languished. There are deep methodological problems in studying JBA, including the relationship between the text of the Talmud and the dialect spoken by the Jews in the 3rd–7th centuries in Babylonia. These questions have come more to the fore in recent years with further publication of "magic bowls," or bowls with magical incantations written within, which are now known in all eastern Aramaic dialects (Mandaic and Syriac as well). Morgenstern 2011 provides a thorough history of research into the dialect of JBA, and since he was responsible for publishing some of the bowls and republishing others in more reliable editions, the references in his book are a good place to start. Morgenstern's dissertation (Morgenstern 2002) studies the Aramaic used by the later Babylonian Geonim, after Arabic had become the spoken language. The lexicon in Sokoloff 2002 is monumental, encompassing not only the Aramaic of the Talmud, but also all other texts written in JBA, including the bowls, Anan, and post-Talmudic "Geonic" literature. Bar-Asher Siegal 2013, a grammar, is a very sophisticated presentation of the language of JBA, based on manuscripts and with an eye toward the rigor that linguists employ in describing other languages. It has superseded older grammars. Bar-Asher Siegal and Morgenstern have debated important methodological issues in the study of JBA; whereas Morgenstern searches for the most reliable manuscripts and would like to build the grammar on their basis, Bar-Asher Siegal argues that for a *linguistic* study, rather than a *philological* one, no manuscript can be deemed reliable, and each feature of the dialect has to be studied through the manuscripts and across related dialects. Also salutary in recent years have been the studies that showed the dialectal differences within the Babylonian Talmud. Wajsberg 2007, building on older studies of the author's, discusses "dialectal" Aramaic in the Talmud, and Breuer 2007 studies the tractates whose dialect has long been known to be different, providing a thorough description of the differences and an explanation for their presence.

Bar-Asher Siegal, Elitzur. *Introduction to the Grammar of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*. **Lehrbücher orientalischer Sprachen LOS 3.3. Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag, 2013.**

This book is based on original philological research in the manuscripts of the Bavli and original linguistic research on the grammatical structures (morphological and especially syntactic) found there. This is the best grammar of the dialect available, and will remain so until there are qualitative advances in the field of JBA.

Breuer, Yochanan. "The Babylonian Aramaic in Tractate Karetot According to MS Oxford." *Aramaic Studies* **5 (2007): 1–45.**

A number of tractates have long been known to reflect a different dialect of Aramaic than "standard JBA." Breuer's very careful study makes those differences precise, and locates the dialect of these tractates (exemplified by Karetot) in the Geonic academies where Aramaic was a scholastic, rather than a living spoken, language.

Morgenstern, Matthew. "ארמית בבלית יהודית בתשובות הגאונים." PhD diss., Hebrew University, 2002.

In his dissertation (Jewish Babylonian Aramaic in Geonic responsa), Morgenstern showszed that Geonic Aramaic differed systematically from the standard JBA found in most of the Babylonian Talmud. It is likely that this is due to Talmudic JBA being a spoken language, while Geonic JBA was exclusively literary, existing after the rise of Arabic in the region.

Morgenstern, Matthew. *Studies in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic Based on Early Eastern Manuscripts*. **Harvard Semitic Studies 62. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011.**

Morgenstern provides a full history of research into JBA, then argues (against earlier great scholars such as Morag) that the Yemenite traditions of Babylonian Aramaic are not a solid foundation for scholarly research. His last chapter is a model study of a syntactic study of the dialect, a description of the marking of direct objects.

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

Relying on the manuscripts of each tractate chosen by the Academy of the Hebrew Language as the most linguistically reliable, as well as all other JBA texts, the lexicon provides comparative information as well as authoritative definitions and copious references. The inclusion of thorough indexes makes this even more useful for students of texts. Copublished by Johns Hopkins University Press.

Wajsberg, Eljaqim. "ארמית דיאלקטית במילון החדש לארמית הבבלית היהודית." In *Sha'arei Lashon: Studies in Hebrew, Aramaic and Jewish Languages Presented to Moshe Bar-Asher*. Vol. 2, *Rabbinic Hebrew and Aramaic*. **Edited by A. Maman, S. Fassberg, and Y. Breuer, 393–407. Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2007.**

In a series of articles, Wajsberg showed that within the Babylonian Talmud there is not only one dialect. He shows that certain words and syntactic constructions are found only in citations from early Sages, or Sages from outside of Babylonia, or are otherwise "dialectal."

Mandaic

While Syriac and JBA have long been well studied, Mandaic has not benefited from the same attention in modern times. The dictionary Drower and Macuch 1963 is flawed, although often useful; Morgenstern 2009 describes how that dictionary came to be and some of its flaws. Morgenstern is preparing a new lexicon, which involves studying many new manuscripts and correcting many hundreds of readings and interpretations found in the older lexicon in preparation for the actual lexical work. Macuch 1965 aims to be a comprehensive discussion of Mandaic throughout its history, but suffers from refusing to include one corpus of texts, and for its cursory treatment of Neo-Mandaic. For Neo-Mandaic, see section on Neo-Aramaic.

Drower, E. S., and Rudolph Macuch. *Mandaic Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1963.

Lady Drower collected many Mandaic manuscripts on her own, and began making word lists with glossaries. With the help of Macuch, this was turned into a dictionary, but a very incomplete and inexact one—although still useful.

Macuch, Rudolph. *Handbook of Classical and Modern Mandaic*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1965.

A large book, into which Macuch poured much erudition and much effort; this is a helpful but very problematic text.

Morgenstern, Matthew. "The Present State of Mandaic Lexicography I: The Mandaic Dictionary." *Aramaic Studies* 7 (2009): 113–130.

This article introduces a new dictionary project that is underway and promises to revolutionize Mandaic studies, including dozens of texts that have never been studied by modern scholars and putting the study of the dialect on a firm basis. For bibliography and updates on the project, see Prof. Morgenstern's website.

Targum: Texts and Language

Some of the best-known texts in Aramaic are the "Targumim," the Jewish translations of Scripture into Aramaic. For the many issues involved in studying these texts, see the *Oxford Bibliographies* article "Targum." Targum Onqelos to the Torah and Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, as discussed in Tal 1975, were composed in Jewish Literary Aramaic, a Middle Aramaic dialect, while the Palestinian Targums to the Torah were composed in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, which began at the start of the Late Aramaic period. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and many of the Writings Targums were composed in Late Jewish Literary Aramaic, a high-register language (perhaps only written) evidenced at the end of the Late Aramaic period. The dialect used for Onqelos and Jonathan has long been a problem, as seen in Tal 1975. Some have tried to fit it into a dialect map, or explain it as reflecting two strata, the consonantal text and the vocalization; other have seen it is a trans-local dialect. Greenfield 1974 was seminal in showing that the language of the Targumim was not the spoken language anywhere, but rather a literary language. Sperber's edition of Onqelos (Sperber 1959–1973) is the most reliable one available. There is no scholarly grammar of Onqelos available, but Dodi 1981 provides a serviceable basis. The glossary in Cook 2008 is up-to-date and helpful, and specific studies such as Garr 1991 show that the grammar of Onqelos is consistent and historically derivable. For the rest of the Targumim, the only dictionary available in English is Jastrow 2005 (first published 1903), a

linguistically and philologically problematic, but very useful, work. The later Palestinian Targumim have been published in various editions; Díez-Macho's edition of Neofiti (Díez Macho 1968–1979) is the fullest version, and Golomb 1985 is a grammar of this text. The fragments of Palestinian Targum found in the Cairo Genizah were published in Kahle and then in Klein 1986, and discussed linguistically in Fassberg 1990, with references to other publications. The later Targumim are also in a literary dialect, as established in Cook 1986 and Kaufman 2013; this dialect is called "Late Jewish Literary Aramaic" in CAL.

Cook, Edward M. *A Glossary of Targum Onkelos according to Alexander Sperber's Edition.* **Studies in the Aramaic Interpretation of Scripture 6. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2008.**

The glossary is somewhat bare-bones, but very useful for anyone reading Onqelos.

Cook, Edward M. "Rewriting the Bible: The Text and Language of the Pseudo-Jonathan Targum." PhD diss., UCLA, 1986.

This dissertation, unfortunately never published, established that the language of the expansive Targum on the Pentateuch was of a later date, and reflected a literary rather than a spoken dialect.

Díez Macho, Alejandro. *Neophyti 1: Targum Palestinense ms. de la Biblioteca Vaticana.* **6 vols. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1968–1979.**

A full and very clear edition of a complete manuscript from the beginning of the 16th century. The MS had been miscatalogued as Onqelos, but Díez-Macho (or, according to oral lore, Sperber) realized that it was something different. Its publication was a major impetus to reinvigorated study of the Targumim.

Dodi, Amos. "דקדוק תרגום אונקלוס: על-פי כתבי-יד מן הגניזה**." PhD diss., Bar Ilan University, 1981.**

Dodi's dissertation provides the only grammar based on the Geniza fragments of Onqelos, and is thus the most reliable source for the grammar of this text. He also studies the different traditions of the grammar of Onqelos.

Fassberg, Steven E. *A Grammar of the Palestinian Targum Fragments from the Cairo Genizah.* **Harvard Semitic Studies 38. Atlanta: Scholars, 1990.**

This grammar is highly comparative, making it not only an excellent resource for Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, of which the Genizah texts of the Targum are, but also an entry point into Aramaic dialectology.

Garr, W. Randall. "*ay >a in Targum Onqelos." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* **111 (1991): 712–719.**

Garr shows that the vocalization of Onqelos participates systematically in a sound change that is widespread in Babylonian Aramaic. This has important implications for the understanding of Onqelos as a real dialect, and its place within the Aramaic dialects.

Golomb, David M. *A Grammar of Targum Neofiti.* **Harvard Semitic Mongraphs 34. Chico, CA: Scholars, 1985.**

Golomb presents a fully synchronic, noncomparative description of the language of Neofiti. There is no discussion of phonology, and the syntax is treated cursorily, but the discussion of morphology is quite thorough.

Greenfield, Jonas C. "Standard Literary Aramaic." In *Actes du Premier Congrés International de Linguistique Sémitique et Chamito-Sémitique, Paris 16–19 juillet 1969.* **Edited by André Caqot and David Cohen, 280–289. The Hague: Mouton, 1974.**

Greenfield suggested the term "Standard Literary Aramaic" to capture the claim that Qumran Aramaic was not a vernacular anywhere, but was instead a form of the same literary dialect found in Onqelos and Jonathan, and was written all across the Near East. With the term "Jewish Literary Aramaic," this perspective has been adopted by CAL and many Aramaists.

Jastrow, Marcus. *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli, and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*. 2 vols. Reprint ed. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005.

A classic dictionary, now more than a century old (first published 1903), that is often criticized for including words in both Hebrew and Aramaic, across multiple dialects. This makes it linguistically problematic, but very useful for students of texts that in fact include all these dialects.

Kaufman, Stephen A. "Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Late Jewish Literary Aramaic." *Aramaic Studies* 11 (2013): 1–26.

Cook and Kaufman both show that the "Targum Pseudo-Jonathan" and many of the Targumim of the Writings are a literary dialect that borrows from earlier dialects of Targumic Aramaic. Originally published in Hebrew in *Studies in Bible and Exegesis 3: Moshe Goshen-Gottstein Memorial Volume*, edited by Moshe Bar-Asher, Moshe Garsiel, Devora Dimant, and Yeshayahu Maori (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1993), pp. 363–382 (the lecture on which this was based was given in 1986).

Klein, Michael K. *Genizah Manuscripts of Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch*. 2 vols. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1986.

Klein was one of the major scholars of Targum in the late 20th century, producing both acute studies of how Targum works (i.e., translation techniques) and high-quality editions of important Targum manuscripts. Volume 1 has a 51-page introduction and then a transcription and translation of 230 pieces of Targum, coming from 38 manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah. Volume 2 has notes, a glossary, and beautiful plates.

Sperber, Alexander. *The Bible in Aramaic Based on Old Manuscripts and Texts*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1959–1973.

Four volumes covering: Onqelos to the Torah, Jonathan to the Former and Latter Prophets, and the Targumim to the Writings. This is the most reliable edition of the Targumim, although for individual books there have been later critical editions published.

Tal, Abraham. *Leshon ha-Targum li-Neviim rishonim u-maamadah bi-khelal nive ha-Aramit*. Tel Aviv, Israel: Universitat Tel Aviv, 1975.

Tal surveys all the words in Targum Jonathan to the Prophets that have dialectal implications. This is a thorough lexical introduction to the Middle Aramaic dialects.

Neo-Aramaic

The study of the modern Aramaic dialects has been resurgent in recent decades. Jastrow 1997 is still the best entry point and survey of the dialects, but the articles in *Semitic Languages: An International Handbook* (Weninger, et al. 2011, cited under Overviews) are more up-to-date. The division of the modern Aramaic dialects into linguistic groups is complex. There are four linguistic groups: Western Aramaic (centered around Maʿlula), which stands alone to some extent; Central Aramaic (Ṭuroyo/Mlaḥsô) and the North Eastern Neo-Aramaic dialects, which are somewhat closely related; and Eastern Aramaic (Modern Mandaic). The relationships between many dialects in these four groups are studied carefully in Kim 2008. The North Eastern Neo-Aramaic (NENA) dialects have been the most intensively studied, in part because the speakers of those dialects have suffered the most in recent decades, which has linguistic implications in addition to humanitarian implications. Khan 2007 is an excellent introduction to the NENA dialects and their study. Polotsky 1961 is a seminal article that spurred much of the recent study of the Neo-Aramaic dialects. One of the fascinating points is that

dialects divide not only along geographical lines, but also religious lines: Jewish and Christian dialects differ in each region. Many of the dialects have been studied in individual grammars; perhaps the fullest one is Khan's grammar of the dialect of Barwar (Khan 2008). The dictionary Sabar 2002 covers many of the Jewish dialects. Neo-Mandaic, of which there are only a few hundred speakers left, has been studied most notably in Häberl 2009 and Mutzafi 2014. The use of modern Aramaic for reconstruction of ancient Aramaic has been explored in a few articles, such as Fassberg 2000. All of the modern Aramaic dialects are in serious danger of extinction within a generation; some have died since a modern grammar has been written. Many of the dialects can be heard in recordings posted in the Semitisches Tonarchiv, while The North Eastern Neo-Aramaic Database Project provides a wealth of data.

Cohen, Eran. *The Syntax of Neo-Aramaic: the Jewish Dialect of Zakho*. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2012.

Cohen provides the fullest treatment of the syntax of a Neo-Aramaic dialect.

Fassberg, Steven E. "A Contribution of Western Neo-Aramaic to Aramaic Lexicology: RHṬ/RWṬ and RHˁ." *Journal of Semitic Studies* 45 (2000): 277–291.

In this paper, Fassberg utilizes data from Neo-Aramaic dialects in order to elucidate historical and semantic issues in ancient dialects.

Häberl, Charles. *The Neo-Mandaic Dialect of Khorramshahr*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 2009.

Häberl's grammar contains a thorough discussion of the Neo-Mandaic language generally, with a good history of research, and then a complete description of one Neo-Mandaic dialect, concluding with a collection of texts with transcriptions and translations, as well as a glossary.

Jastrow, Otto. "The Neo-Aramaic Languages." In *The Semitic Languages*. Edited by R. Hetzron, 334–377. London: Routledge, 1997.

An authoritative overview and detailed survey of the various dialects, written before the recent explosion in data, by one of the pioneers of the resurgent field.

Khan, Geoffrey. "The North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic Dialects." *Journal of Semitic Studies* 52 (2007): 1–20.

This article surveys the Neo-Aramaic dialects generally, and then focuses on the NENA dialects. It provides an introduction to the various dialects, emphasizing their differences, and shows that they sometimes contain archaic features that are typologically earlier than earlier-attested literary languages.

Khan, Geoffrey. *The Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Barwar*. 3 vols. Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section One: The Near and Middle East 96. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2008.

This three-volume work is the fullest treatment of a modern Aramaic dialect, and includes a full grammar including syntax (Volume 1, pp. 1–1027), a lexicon of the dialect (Volume 2, pp. 1029–1429), and dozens of transcribed and translated texts (Volume 3, pp. 1493–2175).

Kim, Ronald. "'Stammbaum' or Continuum? The Subgrouping of Modern Aramaic Dialects Reconsidered." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 128 (2008): 505–531.

Kim's sophisticated analysis showed that a conventional Stammbaum model cannot account for the various isoglosses that exist among the various dialects, and a more complex historical picture of the interactions between the different dialects over the previous millennium is necessary.

Mutzafi, Hezy. *Comparative Lexical Studies in Neo-Mandaic*. **Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 73. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2014.**

Based on fieldwork conducted with native speakers of Neo-Mandaic in New York and Australia, Mutzafi focuses on the lexicon of this dialect, with an eye toward diachronic comparisons and the synchronic shape of Neo-Mandaic.

The North Eastern Neo-Aramaic Database Project.

The North Eastern Neo-Aramaic Database Project, housed at the University of Cambridge, has recordings, dialect maps, and grammatical data for dozens of NENA dialects.

Polotsky, Hans J. "Studies in Modern Syriac." *Journal of Semitic Studies* **6 (1961): 1–32.**

This pathbreaking study set the modern study of the Neo-Aramaic dialects on solid scholarly ground, especially with regard to the tense system. It was written when the Soviet academic world and Western scholarly circles were officially separated, but Polotsky managed to bring Soviet research into English-language scholarship.

Sabar, Yona. *A Jewish Neo-Aramaic Dictionary: Dialects of Amidya, Dihok, Nerwa and Zakho, Northwestern Iraq: Based on Old and New Manuscripts, Oral and Written Bible Translations, Folkloric Texts, and Diverse Spoken Registers, with an Introduction to Grammar and Semantics, and an Index of Talmudic Words which Have Reflexes in Jewish Neo-Aramaic*. **Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 2002.**

Sabar is a native speaker of Aramaic, from the town of Zakho, in the Kurdish region of Iraq. His seventy-page introduction to this volume is quite valuable, and the dictionary itself is easy to use and contains etymological notes as well as clear definitions of all words attested in the Jewish dialects.

Semitisches Tonarchiv.

The Semitisches Tonarchiv has sound files for some Neo-Aramaic dialects, in some cases recorded from the last generations of speakers before the extinction of that dialect.

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