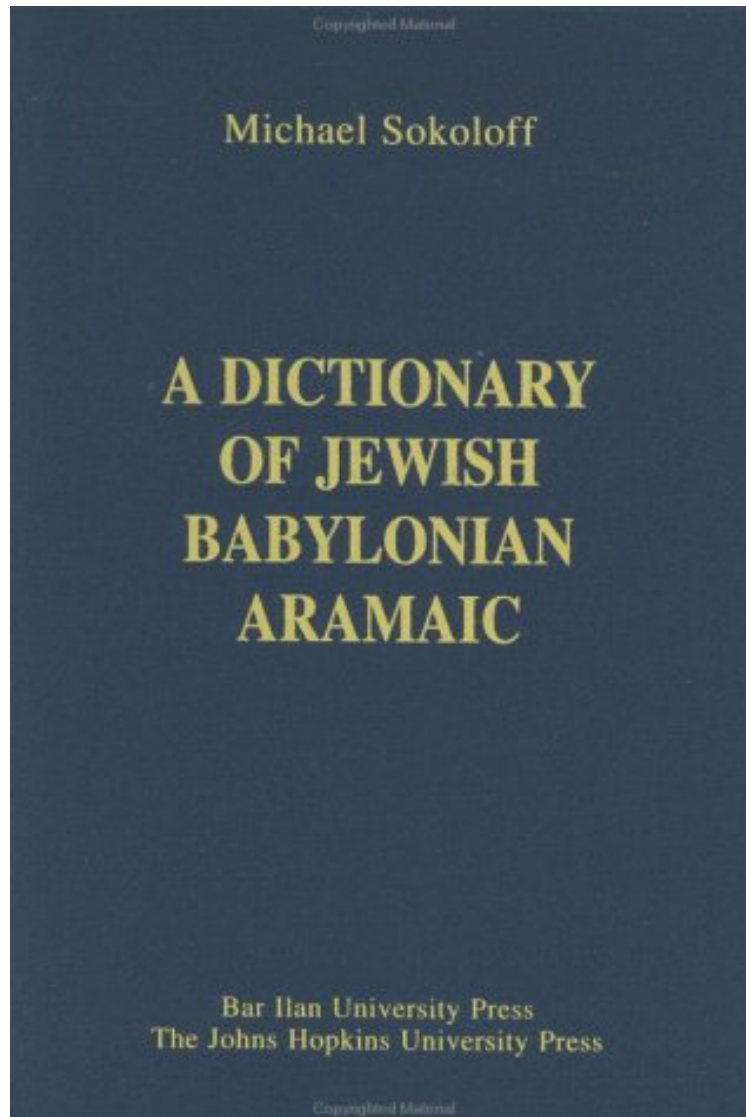


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(Publications of The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project)

A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods (Publications of The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project)

Michael Sokoloff

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Michael Sokoloff : A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods (Publications of The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods (Publications of The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project):

3 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Pretty much all you'll need
By M Jacobson I considered getting this or the Jastrow. Without a doubt this is far better. I use this in conjunction with the green dictionary (Rabbi Melamed).
22 of 22 people found the following review helpful. Very thorough
By Paul Stevenson This excellent dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic is extremely well produced. It has large, clear type and a solid hard-cover binding. There are many cross-references between entries, as well as entries for variant spellings cross-referenced to the appropriate main entry. Headwords of entries are vocalized where possible, but sometimes there is no evidence to show the precise vocalization, so none is indicated. This dictionary covers the following sources, according to the introduction: The Babylonian Talmud, Geonic Literature, Writings of Anan, Magical texts, Babylonian Masora. I have consulted it during my study of the Aramaic of Targums Jonathan and Onkelos, where it has proven quite helpful, although it does not include all the vocabulary of these latter works, which it does not set out to cover. The main work still available that is somewhat comparable to this Sokoloff dictionary is Marcus Jastrow's *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, originally published in 1903. This venerable volume does include the vocabulary of the Targumim; however, its age is showing. On the one hand, it is available in editions far less expensive than Sokoloff's dictionary. On the other hand, modern reprints are of poor, at times illegible, quality, due to multiple generations of photographic reproduction. And of course, Sokoloff's work is able to include the results of the 99 years of research that separate his work from Jastrow's. Sokoloff's research is particularly noticeable (at least to me, with my particular interests) in the area of etymology. He cites many Akkadian sources and many Syriac cognates. Jastrow does not include this important information, which often provides valuable insight into the meaning of words. Sokoloff, like Jastrow, organizes his entries alphabetically according to whole words. I think this system is quite useful, especially for students not yet thoroughly steeped in the details of how to determine roots from derived forms that have thoroughly modified versions of these roots. However, some Semitists decry this, insisting that all entries should be listed strictly by root (as is done, for example, in the classic *Brown-Driver-Briggs A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*). Whichever you prefer, you now know which system Sokoloff uses.

The first new dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic in a century, this towering scholarly achievement provides a complete lexicon of the entire vocabulary used in both literary and epigraphic sources from the Jewish community in Babylon from the third century C.E. to the twelfth century. Author Michael Sokoloff's primary source is, of course, the Babylonian Talmud, one of the most important and influential works in Jewish literature. Unlike the authors of previous dictionaries of this dialect, however, he also uses a variety of other sources, from inscriptions and legal documents to other rabbinical literature. *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic* also differs from earlier lexicographic efforts in its focus on a single dialect. Previous dictionaries have been composite works containing various Aramaic dialects from different periods, blurring distinctions in meaning and nuance. Sokoloff has been able to draw on the most current linguistic and textual scholarship to ensure the complete accuracy of his lexical entries, each of which is divided into six parts: lemma or root, part of speech, English gloss, etymology, semantic features, and bibliographic references. Another important feature in this invaluable reference work is its index of all cited passages, which allows the reader of a given text to easily find the semantics of a particular word. In addition to linguists and specialists in Jewish Aramaic literature, lay readers and students will also find this comprehensive, up-to-date dictionary useful for understanding the Babylonian Talmud.

Sokoloff and his colleagues have produced two monumental volumes, now immediately and undoubtedly the standard works in the field. (Catholic Biblical Quarterly) Truly monumental... There can be no doubt that Sokoloff has produced a lasting work for which generations of Semitists will be thankful. (Alexander Sima Hebrew Studies) A thorough overview of the whole of the surviving lexicon of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, along with its links to other Aramaic dialects of Babylonia. (Alison Salvesen Journal of Jewish Studies) About the Author Michael Sokoloff is a professor of Hebrew and Semitic languages in the Faculty of Jewish Studies at Bar-Ilan University. He is the author of *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* and co-author (with Stephen A. Kaufman) of *A Key-Word-In-Context Concordance to Targum Neofiti*, both available from Johns Hopkins.