

Write a note on Aramaic Language

Aramaic is a Semitic language of the Northern Central, or North-western, group that was originally spoken by the ancient Middle Eastern people known as Aramaeans. It was most closely related to Hebrew, Syriac, and Phoenician and was written in a script derived from the Phoenician alphabet.

Aramaic is thought to have first appeared among the Aramaeans about the late 11th century BCE. By the 8th century BCE it had become accepted by the Assyrians as a second language. It subsequently became the official language of the Achaemenian Persian dynasty (559–330 BCE), though after the conquests of Alexander the Great, Greek displaced it as the official language throughout the former Persian empire.

Aramaic dialects survived into Roman times, however, particularly in Palestine and Syria. Aramaic had replaced Hebrew as the language of the Jews as early as the 6th century BCE. Certain portions of the Bible—i.e., the books of Daniel and Ezra—are written in Aramaic, as are the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds.

East Aramaic includes Syriac, Mandaean, Eastern Neo-Assyrian, and the Aramaic of the Babylonian Talmud. One of the most important of these is Syriac, which was the language of an extensive literature between the 3rd and the 7th century. Mandaean was the dialect of a gnostic sect centred in lower Mesopotamia. East Aramaic is still spoken by a few small groups of Jacobite and Nestorian Christians in the Middle East.

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