

A.S. ZHAMKOTCHIAN: *Vnov' identifikirovannye i neopublikovannye fragmenty arabskix versiy Samaritjanskogo Pyatiknizhija iz sobranija Rossijskoj natsional'noj biblioteki - SPb* (Haroutun Jamgotchian: *The Recently Discovered and Other Unpublished Arabic Fragments of the Samaritan Pentateuch From the Collection of the Russian National Library - SPb*). Moscow, Russian Academy of Sciences: Institute of Oriental Studies 2001. Pp. 213. ISBN 5-89574-121-5.

Jamgotchian's monograph presents the results of an ambitious investigation focused on several unpublished Biblical fragments of the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP) from the collection of the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg.

A short history of the Samaritan community in Antiquity and the early Middle Ages opens the discourse (Chapter 1).

The discovery of some rare epigraphic texts in Europe (Sicily) supports the assumption of an early Samaritan diaspora (Ch. 2).

All the remaining chapters deal with various textual, historical and generally cultural aspects of the SP. This invaluable piece of the truly universal cultural heritage is first presented in the light of Muslim tradition which is represented by the most brilliant scholars of the Arab Middle Ages: Ibn Hazm (d. 1064), Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a (d. 1269), Šihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad b. Yahyā b. Faḍlallāh al-'Umarī (d. 1349), Aḥmad al-Qalqaṣandī (d. 1418) and others (Ch. 3).

The contribution of the SP to European Biblical studies is the subject of Ch. 4. We were pleased to meet among scholars which advanced Samaritan studies in Europe our long-year pen-friend professor R. Macuch, eminent Mandeist and Samaritanist, who had graduated from the Comenius University in Bratislava some five decades ago.

The following three chapters (Ch. 5-7) present the chronology of the Arabic versions of the SP as well as a detailed description of the unpublished St. Petersburg manuscripts of the Arabic versions of the latter.

The final chapter (Ch. 9) constitutes the essential part of the monograph and offers a detailed account of all aspects of this ambitious research project of the highest cultural significance.

The index of authors (150-153), Bibliography (154-163) and Additions (164-206) with Samaritan-Arabic proper name variants and facsimiles of selected samples from some St. Petersburg codices close the monograph.

Jamgotchian's monograph is a valuable contribution to Samaritan and Biblical studies.

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