The first part (‘Situation’) places before the reader a rapid account of the political history, the non-literary and the literary sources, and an explanation of the terms ‘Jew’, ‘Judaism’, ‘Hellenism’, and ‘Judea’. The second part (‘La diaspora’) deals with the Dispersion in Egypt, Cyrenaica, Syria, Babylonia and Asia Minor and contains most welcome comments on the Greek cities which played a major role in the history of the Jewish diaspora. The third part (‘La terre nationale’) resumes elements of history during the Ptolemaic and Seleucid ages and pays special attention to the vicissitudes of the Tobiads, the Maccabean revolt, the Hasmonean kingdom and its crises which eventually led to the loss of national freedom. Many readers will hail the comprehensive inventory of Greek cities in Palestine, including those founded or rebuilt by Herod the Great and his successors, as well as the account of their role in the first Jewish revolt. This part concludes with a useful chapter on this insurrection and the parties involved in it. The fourth and last part (‘La synagogue’) treats the synagogue and the rise of rabbinic Judaism and its institutions.

Scholars and students who have a thorough command of the French language will without any doubt appreciate this book as an outstanding introduction to the Hellenistic world and contemporaneous Jewish history. Another volume on intertestamental Jewish literature will be published in due time.

A. S. van der Woude


This is the first volume in a series of the literature of Early Bulgaria. While to many of our readers that will seem a trifle esoteric, it is very important for us. Here we find a collection of biblical apocrypha (most translations from the Greek) as well as prayers and other related works which are found together in old Bulgarian manuscripts. That these appear together is significant: these documents were read regularly during the course of the year in churches and monasteries in Greek and Church Slavonic of which Old Bulgarian is one of the earliest dialects. Contamination between these and related documents has occurred and it is necessary that critical editions indicating these influences be made.

For Apocrypha of the ‘Old Testament’ we find here such important items as III Baruch, Paraleipomena Jeremiae, and the Vision of Isaiah (elsewhere called the Ascension of Isaiah, chaps. VI-XI). In each of these particular works the Slavonic translation is the only surviving witness to one of the best manuscripts for the reconstruction of a critical edition of that work. In other cases, i.e. II Enoch and Apocalypse of Abraham, the Slavic is our only witness. A third class of document is texts from the
Chronological and Historical Paleja which is later but preserves many earlier apocryphal texts and traditions. The only criticism which one can bring to this work is that published editions of Russian manuscripts which are significant witnesses to the original versions of these Slavic Apocrypha are not included in it).

This translation into modern Bulgarian, followed by a good bibliography of the publications on these works, is based upon not only the few manuscripts published but also the rich collection of unpublished manuscripts of the Cyril and Methodius Library in Sofia, and it is well done. The volume is well printed and inexpensive. It is to be hoped that this book will be quickly translated into a western European language so that non-Slavists can use the material presented here in their work on Apocrypha.

While a translation of this book would be an asset to every apocryphal scholar, the basic work on Slavic Apocrypha and its contribution to apocryphal studies in general is still in its infancy. We have only a small bibliography of some ‘Old Testament’ Apocrypha written by JACIMIRSKIJ, one of the greatest Slavic bibliographers in 1921), and the first two volumes of such a bibliography on New Testament Apocrypha which is good but still incomplete3). Many of the manuscript collections, especially those in the Soviet Union, still remain undescribed and hence an undiscovered treasure for scholars. We also have the valuable studies of Émile TURDEANU on several of these works in their Slavic dress4). Critical editions which are vital for reconstructing these works and their Greek exemplars are almost non-existent. So far, we have only the now outdated edition of the Slavic Vita Adae et Evae of the great scholar Vatroslav JAGIĆ, the problematic edition of II Enoch by A. VAILLANT5), and III Baruch by the reviewer.

This work of Professor PETKANOVA is valuable and we hope that a translation into English, French, or German will be swiftly made6).

H. E. GAYLORD

1) A good example of this is III Baruch in which only south Slavic manuscripts are used. Two published Russian manuscripts which are important for reconstructing the original Old Bulgarian translation are excluded. The manuscripts used here give a later reworked form which was widespread at least since the thirteenth century in south Slavic areas.

2) A. I. JACIMIRSKIJ, Bibliografìčeskij obzor apokrifov v južnoslavjanskoi i russkoj pis'mennosti I, Petrograd 1921.


4) Some of these are now collected in Apocryphes slaves et roumaines de l’Ancien Testament (Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha V), E. J. Brill, Leiden 1981. It is unfortunate that this is a selective collection; in his other writings one finds important comments. The greatest omission is his work on N.T. Apocrypha, e.g. ‘La Vision de saint Paul’, Die Welt der Slaven 1 (1956), 406-30.