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**SYRIAC LOANWORDS IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE PROTOBULGARIAN EPIGRAPHY, OLD AND MIDDLE BULGARIAN MANUSCRIPTS**

**Abstract**: The article deals with one part of the lexemes of eastern origin registered in the Old Slavonic (Bulgarian) and Middle Bulgarian monuments and usually attributed to the so called “Protobulgarian”, “Turkic” or even “Hunnic” lexical layer in the Old Slavonic (Bulgarian). Several words with uncertain meaning testified in the Protobulgarian epigraphy from the 9th century, are also taken into consideration. Our conclusion is that all of these words have Semitic origin – Syriac and Arabic and were introduced into Protobulgarian and Old Slavonic (Bulgarian) not by means of Turkic mediation but as a result of direct contacts between population of the First Bulgarian tsardom and Syriac speaking groups migrated in the mid of the 8th century from the regions of Melitena and Theodosiopolis and settled in the border zones of Thrace.

**Keywords**: Syriac loanwords, Old Slavonic (Bulgarian), Protobulgarian

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