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BULGARIAN MANUSCRIPTS 10TH – 13TH CENTURIES, PRESERVED IN FOREIGN LIBRARIES: INVENTORY WITH COMPUTER TOOLS

Abstract. From 2021–2022, a project on Bulgarian cultural heritage was carried out: the creation of an annotated inventory in digital form of manuscript books of Bulgarian origin from the 10th to the 14th centuries, preserved in foreign book repositories. The project is coordinated with the UNESCO conventions for the protection of cultural heritage and the creation of a national register of every country, with the perspective of expanding, facilitating and supporting access to the documentary heritage by creating inventories with computer tools. This will contribute to drawing attention to the history of literature, and inform the public about the importance of documentary heritage, its history, restoration and preservation. The project in XML follows TEI guidelines.

Keywords. annotated inventory, XML, TEI, Glagolitic and Cyrillic manuscripts

The project “Bulgarian manuscripts 10th – 13th centuries, preserved in foreign libraries: inventory with computer tools” (1) includes the following tasks:

- Building the architecture of a digital annotated inventory for exposure on the Internet;
- Search and identification of manuscripts by digital copies;
- Analysis of manuscripts and creating of annotations and relevant bibliography;
- Exposition on the website of the project “Virtual history of Bulgarian literature (9th – 21st centuries)”;
- Control of the project results through the indicators of visiting and using the inventory and comments on it.

The project has two stages: (1) search, describe and analyse manuscripts from the 10th to 13th centuries and (2) manuscripts from the 14th century. In this paper, the results of the first stage are presented. The total number of preserved Glagolitic and Cyrillic manuscripts from the 10th to the end of the 13th centuries is about 180-200 (most of them are fragments). The largest number of those are in book repositories and archives in Russia – about 130, but some of them are in two or more repositories. Bulgarian manuscripts with an early chronology are also kept in the Vatican Apostolic Library, Italy (Trento), Poland (Warsaw), St. Catherine’s Monastery on Mount Sinai, Slovenia (Ljubljana), Ukraine (Kyiv and Odesa), France (Paris) and others. The research work needs identification of the sources and actual bibliography as well. The scheme of inventory in XML follows the rules of TEI with some clarifications for Glagolitic and Cyrillic manuscripts.

The routes of reaching the Bulgarian handwritten book to other Slavic and non-Slavic countries have long been known and have been widely studied. Kuyo Kuev (Kuev 1986), Bonyu Angelov (1958; 1976; 1978) Hristo Kodov and Kiril Mirchev (Kodov, Mirchev 1965), Klimentina Ivanova (Ivanova 1981, 1983, 2008), Svetlina Nikolova (Nikolova 1999, 1980), Stefan Kojuharov (2004), and a number of our other researchers have studied and published facts in this direction.

The migration of manuscripts began as early as the end of the 10th – 11th centuries. Sure sources for the penetration of the Bulgarian book among the Eastern Slavs are numerous Russian copies of Bulgarian-origin manuscripts and authors' works already in the earliest period of Slavic writing. Monuments with Russian orthography created based on Bulgarian protographs, testify in an indisputable way to the migration of the literary heritage in Kievan Rus as early as the 10th – 11th centuries.

The second reason that led to the migration of the book (as is well known) was the Ottoman invasion in the 14th century. Lively relations (commercial and in the sphere of Orthodoxy) between the Bulgarian lands, Wallachia and Moldova in the 14th century made it possible for the book to spread in these lands. Last but not least, there were family ties – Ivan Alexander is the son-in-law of the Hungarian-Wallachian voivode Ivan Basarab (1325–1340); Anna, the wife of the ruler Sratsimir is the daughter of Alexander Basarab; prominent church figures are in correspondence with Euthymius of Tarnovo (Nikodimus of Tismana, the Hungarian-Wallachian Metropolitan). Grigoriy Tsamblak undoubtedly contributed a lot to Bulgarian culture and literature in Wallachia and Moldavia, and later in Russia. Many manuscripts were exported from Tarnovo, e.g. Lovech miscellany (dated before 1331), the Tomich Psalter from ca. 1360, the Pope Philip miscellany from 1345, the Ivan Alexander (Lavrentiy) miscellany from 1348, the London Gospel from 1356, the German miscellany from 1359, etc. Some of the manuscripts remain within the borders of today's Romania, and others were transferred to Russia. Polychroniy Sirku (Syрку 1898; 1890) noted that the Russian-Bulgarian literary relations during this period were carried out through the Romanian lands. Others were removed from the Athos monasteries. The famous Vatican copy of the Manasses Chronicle testifies that Bulgarian manuscripts went west after being in the western ends of the Balkan Peninsula, probably towards the Dalmatian-Croatian borders. The fate of the Bdin Collection of c. 1360 (today in Ghent, Belgium) also followed the westward route after being carried north by the Danube River.

The third way of exporting Bulgarian manuscripts is related to the search for ancient examples of Slavic translations due to the reform of the liturgical books in Russia in the 17th c. and with the activities of several travellers later. First of all, this was the mission of Arseniy Sukhanov (1600 – 1668), who was sent on a mission to collect classical examples of the old Bulgarian literary heritage. He travelled to Mount Athos, Constantinople (Tsargrad), from where he brought some manuscripts (Hexameron of John the Exarch, George Hamartolos' Chronicle, Nomocanon, Life of Pancras of Taormina, Pop Philip's collection and Ivan Alexander's collection, etc. Travellers in the 19th c. realised the process of gathering and collecting Old Church Slavonic manuscripts. For example, V. I. Grigorovich (1815 – 1876) undertook a long journey in 1844 – 1845 on the Balkan Peninsula, including the Mount Athos monasteries. His manuscript collection is kept today in two places – in the Odessa State Library and the Russian State Library in Moscow (Viktorov 1879; Svodny catalog 1984; Levshina 2021). Codices Gospel Marianus from the 10th – 11th century, the Ohrid Epistles, the Boyan Gospel (today in the Russian State Library in Moscow), the Grigorovich Prophetologion, etc. are extremely valuable. One cannot miss the Rila Glagolitic folia, 11th c., Paraenesis of Ephrem the Syrian, which was earlier located in the Rila monastery (Library of the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg (signature 24.4.15), and the rest are in the Library of the Rila Monastery (signature 3/6 (14)).

Alexander F. Gilferding (1831 – 1872) also collected valuable manuscripts from the Balkans as he was a consul in Sarajevo, and travelled through Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, and present-day North Macedonia (Svodny catalog 1984). To his collection belongs the so-called Gilferding (Macedonian) Cyrillic folia from the 11th century, which contains a preface to the Theology of John Damascene, or more

likely a work about the translation in Slavonic by Constantine-Kyryl (Vaillant 1948, Mincheva 1995).

Porfiry Uspensky (1804 – 1885) headed a Russian spiritual mission in Jerusalem and made several trips to the Holy Mountain and the St. Catherine Monastery on Sinai. Lord Robert Curzon (died 1873), found the famous London Gospel of 1356 and other Bulgarian manuscripts during his travels to the monasteries of Mount Athos (Cleminson 1988). A large number of Bulgarian manuscripts are preserved in the collections of gatherers who bought them and specially collected them due to their interest in antiquity (A. I. Khludov, M. P. Pogodin, V. M. Undolskiy, etc.) (cf. Popov 1872; Pergamennye rukopisi 1979; Svodny catalog 1984; Christova et al 2009). Often, the manuscripts passed from one collection to another, which, when listing the manuscripts, additionally requires clarification. Last but not least, paleo-Slavic scholars in the 18th and 19th centuries took parts of manuscripts for research, after which they remained in their collections.

Due to the listed circumstances, a specific feature of the Bulgarian manuscripts is that they are not infrequently interspersed in several book repositories, in several countries all over the world. This implies that the annotated inventory must have data collected for all fragments and be specified in advance. A good example is the unique *Codex Suprasliensis* – the earliest voluminous Cyrillic manuscript that has reached us from 10th – 11th c. (285 parchment leaves). Today, parts of the manuscript are kept in three countries – in the National University Library in Ljubljana (Cod. Kopitar 2), in the Zamoyski Collection, the National Library in Warsaw (BO 3.201) and the main collection of the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg (Q.p.I.72). The complete digital edition of the manuscript under a project funded by UNESCO (<http://suprasliensis.obdurodon.org/>) helped to provide easy access to all parts and thus for its deeper study and comparison of the translations with other similar manuscripts – menologies and Triodion panegyrics. In this project architecture following TEI guidelines and experience of the Repertorium initiative (<http://repertorium.obdurodon.org/>). The Repertorium of Old Bulgarian Literature and Letters presents archeographic, paleographic, codicological, textological, and literary-historical data regarding original and translated medieval texts represented in Balkan and other Slavic manuscripts. Another repository is the Zograf electronic research library (<https://www.slav.uni-sofia.bg/zograf/pages/index-en.html>), which includes in an organic collection about 1000 manuscripts (Bulgarian, Greek, Moldavian-Wallachian, etc.) (cf. Pergamentni otkusleci 2019), over 800 medieval and Renaissance charters and documents (Bulgarian, Byzantine, Moldavian-Wallachian and Ottoman), as well as hundreds of rare old printed books of the collection in the monastery “St George”, Mount Athos.

The scheme of the digital annotated inventory is as follows:

General title	Decoration
Title of type/ kind	Writer's name
Individual title	Writing /Glagolitic /Cyrillic
Chronology /Dating	Orthography /Language specific features
Material / Parchment / Paper	
Folia / Pages	Contents
Folia sizes	Colophon
Page layout	Notes
Watermarks	Storage /preservation
Binding	Country
Condition	City

Repository	Selected bibliography with analysis
Signature / Old signatures	Analytical description
History of the manuscript	Electronic copy on the Internet
Bibliography	/Corpora
Editions	

1. Examples 1: Slepche Acts of the Apostles

General title: Acts of the Apostles

Type title: Acts of the Apostles Aprakos Complete

Individual title: Acts of the Apostles of Slepche

Dating: 12th century

Material: Parchment, varying in colour and thickness

Folia: 130 (RNL F.p.I and F.p.Ia); 6 (RSL Mus. 1696); 2 (CB UAN DA/II 25);

9 (NB Plovdiv 62); 1 folio (BRAN 24.4.6)

Folia dimensions: 210 x 215 mm

Page layout: one column, 23–24 lines per page

Watermarks: ---

Binding: New, 19th c.

Condition: Good. Palimpsest – Lower Greek text from the 10th c., Life of St. John Chrysostom

Ink: Dark brown

Decoration: Teratological ornament; Byzantine style initials

Scribe: Ilinskiy believes that it was written by two scribes - East Bulgarian and West Bulgarian characteristics

Writing: Cyrillic. Uncial

Orthography/ Language: Middle Bulgarian

Contents: Acts of the Apostles and epistles for the whole year, divided into weeks and days.

Slavic names of the months

Colophon -----

Notes: -----

History of the manuscript: It was discovered by Viktor Grigorovich in 1844 in the Slepche Monastery. In 1877, Stefan Verkovich exported it to Russia. Its main part is now in St. Petersburg (Russian National Library, F.p.I 101 and 101a; Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 24.4.6), and other, smaller fragments are kept in Plovdiv (National Library "Ivan Vazov", No. 25), in Moscow (Russian State Library, f.87 No. 14) and Kyiv (National Library of Ukraine "Vladimir Vernadsky", DA/P.25)

Editions: Ильинский, Г. Л. Слеченский апостол XII в. Москва, 1912.

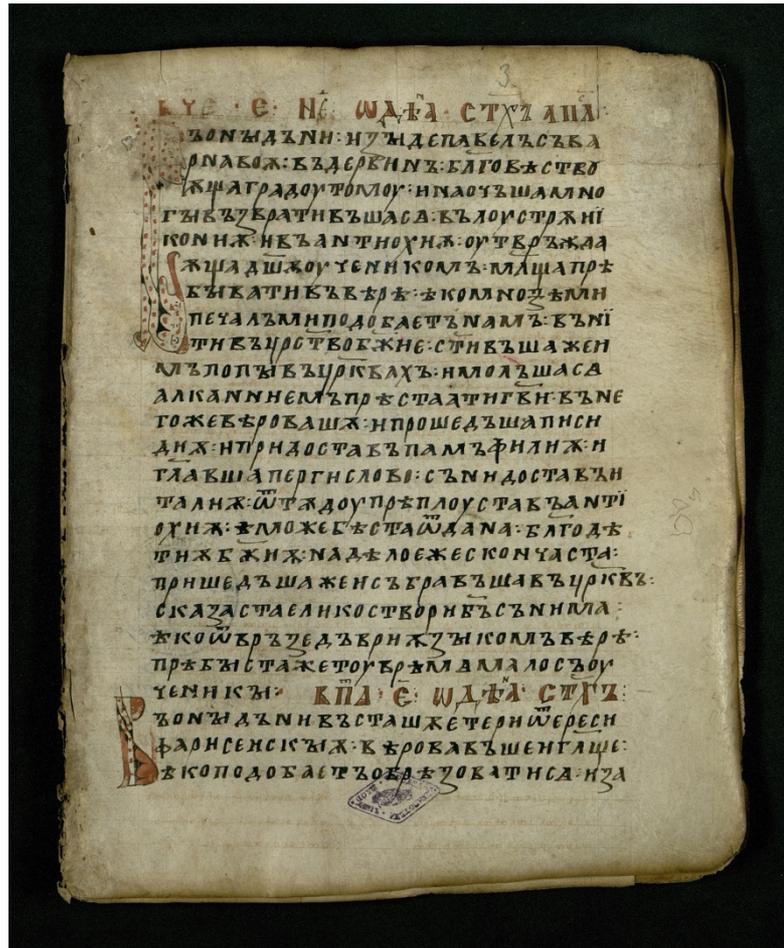
Digital copy (full or partial):

<https://lib-fond.ru/lib-rgb/87/f-87-14/>

http://digilib.nalis.bg/dspviewerb/srv/viewer/bul/dcb56a4b-c919-466b-a1b5-fe58d4528cba?tk=3LVqS8kZRMuhtf5Y1FKMugAAAABjoYxu.KRgsDCkUI9nnJiOz1stopg&citation_url=/xmlui/handle/nls/1908

Country	City	Library	Signature	Old signature
Russia	St Petersburg	Library of RAS	24.4.6	Srezn 53
Russia	St. Petersburg	RNL	F.p.I and F.p.Ia	---
Russia	Moscow	RSL	f. 87, no. 14	Mus. 1696
Ukraine	Kyiv	CL UAN	ДА/II 25	---
Bulgaria	Plovdiv	Ivan Vazov Library	62	25

Table 1. The fragments of Slepche Act of Apostles in five libraries of three countries

Figure 1. Apostol of Slepche, 12th c., Plovdiv Library “Ivan Vazov”, No. 25 (62)

2. Examples 2: Argirov’s Triodion (2)

General title: Triodion

Type title: Triodion and Pentecostarion together

Individual title: Triodion of Argirov

Dating: 12th c. the end – the beginning of 13th c.

Material: Parchment

Folia: 58 (NL “Cyril and Methodius”, Sofia); 1 folio (BRAN 24.4.6)

Folia dimensions: 245 x 195 mm

Page layout: one column, 23–24 lines per page

Watermarks: ---

Binding: No

Condition: Good

Ink: Dark brown

Decoration: Headpieces with interlaced design on ff. 8v and 57r; double contour initials in geometric style

Scribe: one hand

Writing: Cyrillic. Uncial with archaic elements and Glagolitic script on f. 2v. 27-29 lines per page.

Language/orthography: Bulgarian. Two nasal vowels/juses (ж, ѡ); soft lax vowel/jer (ѣ) predominated

Contents: Fragment of Triodion and Pentecostarion together; containing the services for the Friday before Palm Sunday: without beginning, up to the ninth chant of the Passover canon on the first day of the week; on f. 31v, on the text of the Oikos from the Maundy Thursday evening, signs from the Old Byzantine nevmen system are used at random; on f. 43r, in the glory of the verses on Holy Saturday, the musical sign ‘fita’ (Ϡ) is placed in twice.

Colophon: ---

Note: on the marginalia on 15v for the order of the office

History: The manuscript was delivered to the NL Sofia by Stoyan Argirov; f. 29 and f. 34 were donated by Vasil Baldzhiev from Pirdop; the inventory number of the manuscript in NL is from 1940. Kiril Mirchev found the fragments.

Edition: Ст. В. Петров, Хр. Кодов, Аргиров триод. – В: *Старобългарски музикални паметници*. София, 1973, 127–129.

Digital copy:

https://www.europeana.eu/en/item/9200114/BibliographicResource_3000096072565

<http://digital.nationallibrary.bg/DWWebClient/IntegrationViewer.aspx?DWSubSession=3532&v=1796>

Country	City	Library	Signature	Old signature
Republic of North Macedonia	Skopie	Library of MANU	MF-1	---
Bulgaria	Sofia	Archive of Prof. Mirchev	Now lost	---
Bulgaria	Sofia	National Library	993	---

Table 2. Argirov’s Triodion in two libraries, two countries

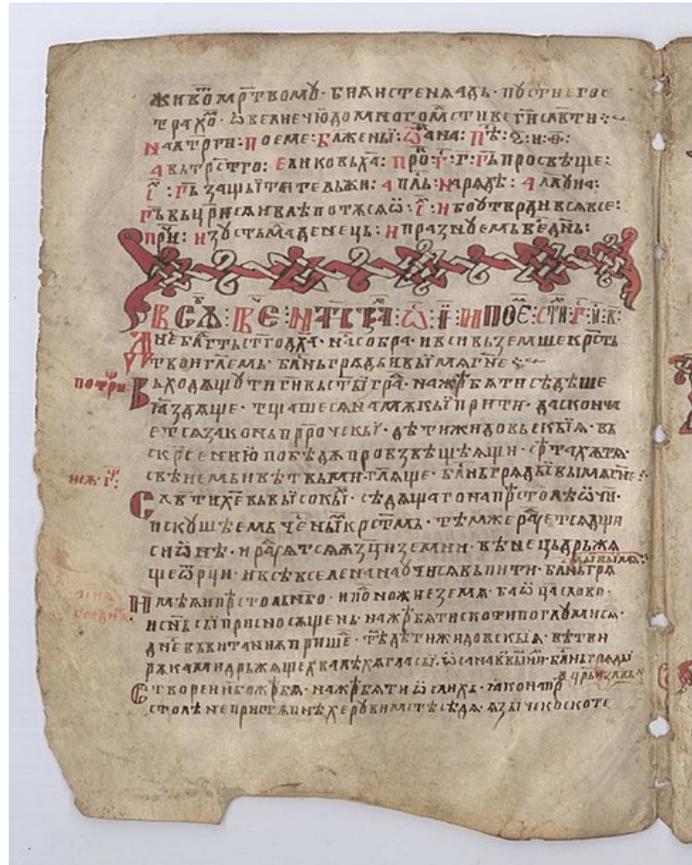


Figure 2. Argirov's Triodion, 13th c., Sofia, “SS. Cyril and Methodius National Library”, No. 933

3. Examples 3: Complicated cases – many fragments in different libraries (3)

- Palimpsest Sinaiticus: Nikon the monk' Pandectae; Prayer-book; Miscellany with mixed content, end of 12th-13th c., St. Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, National Library, St. Petersburg – ff. 119 (Греч.70) + 6 (Q. п.63) + 8 (Q. п.64) + 81 (Sin 34) + 8 (Sin 18/N) (Tarnanidis 1988) – <http://repertorium.obdurodon.org/readFile.php?filename=Sinaiticus34.xml&lg=bg>
- Manoil's Acts of the Apostles, 13th c.: NL Sofia ff. 12 (499) and f. 2 (500); Library of RAS, St Petersburg f. 1 (4.5.23), f. 1 (4.5.24), f. 4 (24.4.7) (Srezn 54), f.1 (Syrku 15), f. 1 (Syrku 16), RSL Moscow, f. 2 (Grigorovich 15/3, old Muz 1697. III) (Pergamennye rukopisi 1979; Christova et al 2009) <http://repertorium.obdurodon.org/rawFile.php?filename=MDManoil.xml>
<https://www.slav.uni-sofia.bg/exist/apps/manap/pages/index.html>
- Triodion of Zheravna, 13th c.: RSL Moscow (Pogod 50 and 53), Library of RAS St Petersburg (Syrku 4.5.14 and 4.5.14a), and (Srezn 32.5.22 and 24.4.10) (Pergamennye rukopisi 1979; Christova et al 2009) –

<https://www.nationallibrary.bg/www/2021/03/04/%d0%b6%d0%b5%d1%80%d0%b0%d0%b2%d0%bd%d0%b5%d0%bd%d1%81%d0%ba%d0%b8%d1%8f%d1%82-%d1%82%d1%80%d0%b8%d0%be%d0%b4/>

The inventory with computer tools of Bulgarian manuscripts is of interest to the modern researcher due to the various natural and cultural-historical factors. The transformation of collections and national libraries, and their history is important. The personal stories of travellers and collectors are another side of this problem, tracing the path of their journeys and searches. The analytical description of manuscripts is a long and laborious process, requiring knowledge in various fields. Today, the quality of modern catalogues and inventories is extremely high, they contain valuable data, but are usually only accessible to specialists. The transformation of these data into a computer-accessible inventory is important both for easier access and for the unification of existing information, in order to avoid the heterogeneity of approaches in the description from different times and from different schools in structuring the analysis. Therefore, the present project aims, on the one hand, to propose a more unified system of manuscript description, easily accessible on the internet, searchable with computer tools, and on the other hand, to consolidate the available information. The project provides where possible, references and hyperlinks to the already digitized manuscripts made freely available for the modern student, reader and scholar to be maximally facilitated. The project will stimulate interest in Palaeo-Slavic studies and will give a new impetus to the study and search of Bulgarian manuscripts, as well as the popularization of the Balkan cultural heritage.

Notes

1. The project was supported by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria, BG05M2OP001-1.001-0001 “Creation and development of “Heritage BG” Centre of Excellence”, Science and Education for Smart Growth Programme (2014-2022).
2. Stojan Argirov (1870-1939) is a Bulgarian specialist in Philology and Library science, Director of the University library in Sofia, and a member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.
3. The links mark descriptions and more detailed studies of the parchment fragments.

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