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Article Author: Mathiesen, Robert

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SOME METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS
IN DESCRIBING OLD EAST SLAVIC CYRILLIC MANUSCRIPTS
AND PRINTED BOOKS

ROBERT MATHIESEN

1

A person who has never been challenged to describe with rigorous accuracy even a simple object let alone so complex an object as a book may fail to understand just how difficult the task of bibliographical description is. Humanists, in particular, seem to share this failing: how often have we all made or heard such comments as *He'll never be able to write a real dissertation, but perhaps he can do some kind of bibliographic work*. Scientists are more aware of the difficulty of description in general, and they place a higher value on descriptive work, to judge by the care with which they train their students in it. Here, for example, is how Nathaniel Shaler was trained by Louis Agassiz, the renowned naturalist:

[In Agassiz's laboratory] *I had assigned to me a small pine table with a rusty tin pan upon it... When I sat me down before my tin pan, Agassiz brought me a small fish, placing it before me with the rather stern requirement that I should study it, but should on no account talk to anyone concerning it, nor read anythin relating to fishes, until I had his permission to do so. To my inquiry 'What shall I do?' he said in effect: 'Find out what you can without damaging the specimen; when I think that you have done the work, I will question you.'* In the course of an hour I thought I had compassed the fish: it was rather an unsavory object, giving forth the stench of old alcohol... Many of the scales were loosened so that they fell off. It appeared to me to be a case of a summary report, which I was anxious to make and get on to the next stage of the business. But Agassiz, though always within call, concerned himself no further with me that day, nor the next, nor for a week. At first, this neglect was distressing; but I saw that it was a game, for he was... covertly watching me. So I set my wits to work upon the thing, and in the course of a hundred hours or so thought I had done much - a hundred times as much as seemed possible at the start... Finally, I felt full of the subject and probably expressed it in my bearing; as

(*) The present article follows closely a talk at a conference on *Old Cyrillic Manuscripts and Printed Books: Historical, Contemporary and Methodological Perspectives*, held at St. Andrew's College (Winnipeg, Manitoba) on 28 March 1980. It is a pleasure to record my debt to St. Andrew's College, the University of Manitoba and the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, who made it possible for me to examine the remarkable collections of old Cyrillic manuscripts and printed books at Winnipeg. It is also pleasant to express my thanks to Edward Kasinec and Thomas J. Mathiesen for their kind assistance and comments.

for words about it then, there were none from my master except his cheery 'Good morning'. At length on the seventh day, came the question 'Well?' and my discharge of learning to him as he sat on the edge of my table puffing his cigar. At the end of the hour's telling, he swung off and away, saying 'That is not right'... It was clear that he was playing a game with me to find if I were capable of doing hard, continuous work without the support of a teacher, and this stimulated me to labour. I went at the task anew, discarded my first notes, and in another week of ten hours a day labor I had results which astonished myself and satisfied him... He signified that it would do by placing before me about half a peck of bones, telling me to see what I could make of them, with no further directions to guide me... Two months or more went to this task with no other help than an occasional looking over my grouping with the stereotyped remark 'That is not right'. Finally, the task was done and I was again set upon alcoholic specimens [of several related species of fish]... I shall never forget the sense of power in dealing with things which I felt in beginning the more extended work on a group of animals. I had learned the art of comparing objects, which is the basis of a naturalist's work. At this stage I was allowed to read and to discuss my work with others about me. I did both eagerly, ... becoming especially interested in the system of classification, then most imperfect. [Among the specimens, Shaler found one species which controverted Agassiz's own published scheme of classification.]... I had a malicious pleasure in exhibiting my find to him, expecting to repay in part the humiliation which he had evidently tried to inflict on my conceit. To my question as to how the nondescript should be classified, he said 'My boy, there are now two of us who know that'. This incident... made an end to my novitate. After that, with a suddenness of transition which puzzled me, Agassiz became very communicative...¹

Being a professional in the humanities myself, I cannot be accused of special pleading when I condemn as the very nadir of folly the humanist's traditional scorn of mere descriptive work, and insist that a highly competent description of even a single manuscript or printed book is a substantial and enduring contribution to scholarship — a job for the best minds, not the worst.

Since, however, its difficulty and its value are so widely misunderstood in the humanities, the task of bibliographical description tends to be assigned to the wrong people, and when a right person does undertake it, his work is often undervalued by his colleagues. It is no wonder that there is so much poor bibliography; the real wonder is that there is so much good bibliography as well. There is a vicious circle here which must be broken: in bibliography, as in any branch of scholarship, an abundance of poor work

(1) N.S. SHALER. *The Autobiography of Nathaniel Soutgate Shaler* (Boston-New York 1909), as excerpted by H. PETERSON. *Great Teachers Portrayed by Those Who Studied under Them*. New Brunswick 1946:203-219, and further abridged for this paper.

encourages more poor work and drives good scholars to seek other fields of endeavor. Few, indeed, are the scholars bold enough to attempt the labor of Hercules in the stables of King Augeus.

2

Fortunately, after long neglect, the bibliographical description of Old Cyrillic manuscripts and printed books has once again become a matter of impelling concern to Slavists in many countries. During the last two decades, specialists in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and especially the Soviet Union have published sophisticated and valuable works on the methods of describing manuscripts, as well as several excellent catalogues of manuscripts² In addition, good handlists of older published catalogues of manuscripts have been compiled³ Work on old printed books has taken a different course, producing many catalogues and monographic studies, but few general treatments of method⁴ The reason for this difference may be that the methods for the bibliographical description of old printed books had been treated with much greater sophistication in publications from the first half of the twentieth century than those for the description of old manuscripts⁵ Outside the Slavic lands, the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic

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- (2) Cf. D.OSTROWSKI. Recent Descriptions from The Soviet Union of Early Slavic Manuscripts, *Polata knigopisnaja* 6(1982):2-29; unfortunately, he omits the methodologically most valuable catalogue of N.B.TIXOMIROV. Katalog russkix i slavjanskix pergamenjnyx rukopisej XI-XII vekov, xranjaščixsja v Otdela rukopisej GBL, *Zapiski Otdela rukopisej* 25(1962):143-183, 27(1965):93-148, 30(1968):87-156, 33(1972):213-220.
- (3) A.I.ROGOV. *Svedenijsa o nebol'six sobranijax slavjano-russkix rukopisej v SSSR*. Moskva 1962; N.F.BEL'ČIKOV, Ju.K.BEGUNOV, N.P.ROŽDESTVENSKIJ. *Spravočnik-ukazatel' pečatnyx opisanij slavjano-russkix rukopisej*. Moskva-Leningrad 1963; note also their Western precursor D.DJAPARIDZE. *Medieval Slavic Manuscripts: A Bibliography of Printed Catalogues*. CAMBRIDGE, MA 1957.
- (4) A.S.ZERNOVA. Metodika opisanija staropečatnyx knig kirillovskej pečati. *Trudy [GBL]* 4(1960):204-255; I.V.POZDEEVA. Metodika opisanija ekzemplja rov staropečatnyx izdanij kirillovskogo šrifta, in: *Problemy rukopisnoj i pečatnoj knigi*. Moskva 1976:125-132; V pomošč' sostaviteljam *Svodnogo kataloga staropečatnyx izdanij kirillovskogo i glagoličeskogo šrifta: Metodičeske ukazanija*, 1-3. Moskva 1976-1978. For some of the most valuable catalogues cf. below note 19.
- (5) S.I.MASLOV. Komitet dlja opysu vydan', ščo vyjsly na terytoriji Ukrajin v XVI-XVIII vv. *Bibliolohični visti* 8-9(1925):36-39; S.KLEPIKOV. Do metodolohijj opysuvannja slavjans'kyx starodrukiv XV-XVIII st. *Bibliolohični visti* 18(1928):21-32; S.I.MASLOV. *Vyznačennja dubletiv v diljan ci starodrukiv*. Kyjiv 1930 (Russian translation: *Opređenje dubletov v oblasti staropečatnyx knig*. L'viv 1960).

Studies (formerly the Hilandar Project, Ohio State University)⁶ and the Dutch-Italian journal *Polata knigopisnaja* merit the attention of every worker in the field.

Similar developments can be observed in the study of other areas of Medieval European book culture over the last several decades. There is by now a large quantity of recent scholarly work on the bibliographical description of Latin manuscripts, Greek manuscripts, incunables, sixteenth-century printed books, &c.⁷ Even the much smaller area of Glagolitic manuscripts and printed books has inspired scholarly work of the highest methodological interest and importance⁸

Yet one must state with regret that the workers in each of these branches of bibliographical scholarship have often set their tasks and developed their methods without much knowledge of parallel work in the other branches. There are indeed differences between the various national and supra-national cultures of literacy in Medieval Europe, which moreover, are sharpened with every change in alphabet (Greek, Armenian, Georgian, Glagolitic, Cyrillic, Latin, Ogham, Runic, Hebrew, Arabic &c.), and there are differences of another sort between manuscripts and printed books (with the oldest printed books as a transitional phenomenon), but all these differences are minor in comparison with the differences between the European book from late Antiquity to the early Modern Age and books from other parts of the

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- (6) M.MATEJIĆ. *Hilandar Slavic Codices: A Checklist of the Slavic Manuscripts from the Hilandar Monastery (Mount Athos, Greece) Available on Microfilm at The Ohio State University Libraries* (= OSU Slavic Papers 2) Columbus, OH 1976; M.&P.MATEJIĆ. *Hilandar Room: Slavic Manuscripts on Microfilm, Supplemental Checklist no.1* (= OSU Slavic Papers 5) Columbus, OH 1980.
- (7) In addition to the works on manuscripts cited below, notes 18 and 20, one must mention the *Leges quas procuratores Bibliothecae Vaticanae in codicibus Graecis recensendis sibi constituerunt* and the *Leges quas procuratores Bibliothecae Vaticanae in codicibus Latinis recensendis sibi constituerunt*, reprinted at the beginning of recent catalogues of Greek and Latin manuscripts published for the Vatican Library, and the monumental catalogues by N.R.KER. *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*. Oxford 1957, and *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, 1-2. Oxford 1969-1977. For early printed books, cf. especially the studies cited below, notes 12-14.
- (8) The scholars of the Staroslavenski zavod at Zagreb have set a new standard of excellence for Slavic philology with their editions of Glagolitic manuscripts *Misal po zakonu rimskog dvora*. Zagreb 1971, *Missale glagolitium Hervoiae ducis Spalatensis* (= Codices selecti 34) Graz 1973 and *Breviarium Novi II* (= Codices selecti 61) Graz 1977.

world and other eras. By and large, the bibliographical problems posed by the codex-form book of Medieval Europe are uniform, and thus the best methods for the solution of these problems will also exhibit much uniformity. Having taken due account of the minor differences involved, a specialist in any branch of bibliography can only gain in competence as he becomes more and more familiar with the best work being done in the other branches. The scholar who works with old Cyrillic books has much to learn from his colleagues at work with, say, Greek or Georgian books of the same period, as well as vice versa; and the student of manuscripts cannot afford to be ignorant of the study of early printed books.

In bibliography, as in any branch of scholarship, the current tasks and methods in part have been inherited from our scholarly precursors, but in part also are determined by the material objects to be investigated, i.e. the codex-form books themselves, which impose their own requirements upon us. Of course, these are not two opposed and independent things, between which we have to make an exclusive choice; rather, they are interdependent, so that we must hold their conflicting demands in delicate balance as we work. This keeps us from establishing a single uniform method of bibliographical description, equally binding in every detail on workers in every branch of bibliography; but it does not keep us from putting together a common *tool-kit* of carefully designed methods, from which each of us may take those bibliographical tools best suited to whatever task we have in hand. We may, perhaps, take our motto from St. Paul: *Test everything; hold fast what is good* (1 Thess 5:21).

3

Every single book, viewed physically, has had its own unique history. In addition, throughout its history it has generally had its own structure and its own function, which may also have varied with the passage of time. Apart from certain extreme cases, a book is more than just a jumble of leaves and of texts: it is an arrangement, or *structure*, of leaves and texts, which has been put together with some use, or *function*, in mind.

The bibliographer, therefore, may investigate either the structure and function of a single book at one or another point in its history, or the changes in its structure and function with the passage of time. In other disciplines these two kinds of investigation are termed *synchronic* and *diachronic*³, re-

spectively. Synchronic investigation is logically prior to diachronic investigation.

Two points in the history of every book command our immediate attention as bibliographers. The first is the *moment of publication*, i.e. the moment when the book passes from its makers (scribes or compilers, binder &c.) to its users. Manuscript books do not differ essentially from printed books in this respect: a Medieval European manuscript normally was not made by its first user, but by professional scribes, illuminators, binders &c. The second of the two points is the *moment of investigation*, i.e. the moment when the bibliographer examines the book. These two moments mark the beginning and the temporary end of the given book's history as a usable book, i.e. its *initial state* and its temporary *final state*¹⁰ in that history. What took place prior to its moment of publication is another kind of history, the *history of its manufacture*, which precedes its *history as a usable book*. There is much to be gained, and nothing to be lost, by taking pains always to distinguish between these two periods in the history of any book.

It may happen that the initial state and the final state of a given book do not differ in any way which is of much bibliographical interest, i.e. that the book is in mint condition, at least for the bibliographer's purposes. It may also happen that not only do the initial state and the final state differ from one another, but in addition that both differ from one or more intermediate states in ways that are of considerable bibliographical interest. Clearly, we must be able to investigate each of these states synchronically if we hope eventually to study the history of the book diachronically. Our methods of synchronic investigation, of bibliographic description must be applicable not just to the initial state of a book, or to the final state, but indifferently to any state whatsoever in the history of a book. They must be fundamentally non-historical, without any *necessary* reference either to the history of the book's manufacture or to its history as a usable book. This is not to say that a description of a book's initial state according to these methods might not happen to shed considerable

ce it has spread to many other disciplines. The best discussion, in my opinion, of these concepts is still L.HJELMSLEV. *Principes de grammaire générale*. Copenhagen 1928:46-87,112-127.

(10) Note that the term *state* is used here as in linguistics (cf. HJELMSLEV, note 9), not as has become customary in bibliography (cf. F.BOWERS. *Principles of Bibliographical Description* [Princeton, NJ 1949]:37-77).

light on the history of its manufacture, or that such a description of its final state might not happen to do the same for its history as a usable book, but only that one must have methods which can be applied in their fullness even in the rare extreme cases where little or nothing *can* be known about a particular book's history of manufacture or its history as a usable book.

It may seem paradoxical, but it is true, that only such fundamentally non-historical methods of synchronic bibliographical description can provide a trustworthy basis for any solid diachronic work on the history of a book from the moment of its publication to the moment of its investigation. This is because the only way we have of investigating that history is through minute comparison of each state of the book (from its first intermediate state to its final state) with the preceding state (from its initial state to its last intermediate state), and because such a minute comparison of two states is possible only if they have been described by the same methods¹¹ This is why synchronic investigation is logically prior to diachronic investigation, as already noted.

4

Twentieth-century bibliographers have long occupied themselves with various individual components of a full synchronic description of the codex-form book: formats, watermarks, the formulary of collation, bindings, the classification of hands and of printing types &c. What has largely been missing, however, is any thorough discussion of the relationship between the various components of a full synchronic description, of the place which each component naturally occupies in any such description. If, as claimed above, a book is a structure of leaves and texts, then an ideal synchronic description of it should bring that structure to light in a clear and elegant fashion, and this is possible only if the description itself has been given an appropriate structure.

It must be said at once that no sweeping revision of the current traditions of bibliographical description will be required. Although there has been little principled discussion of the ideal structure of a synchronic description of the codex-form book, the practices which have gradually taken shape during the last century are on the whole very sound, and the biblio-

(11) Only in rare cases is there ample documentary evidence, apart from the evidence in the book itself, which sheds much light on the history of a particular medieval book.

graphers who have shaped them appear to have implicitly understood much of what will be explicitly considered here.

Suppose that we have before us a medieval codex-form book, either manuscript or printed; and suppose for the moment that it is in mint condition, so that we need not be concerned with differences between its initial and its final state. Since it has the form of a *codex* (and not of *volumen*, or some other), it contains a certain number of leaves placed and fastened together in a certain way. Moreover, each of these leaves is of a certain material and a certain size, and may in some cases have been ruled to a certain pattern. This much is the minimum: even a blank book can be described in these terms. Our book, however, contains text on its leaves. Each of these texts can be identified and described in the abstract, in terms of its author, title, translator, language, redaction, internal structure (division into chapters &c.) and so forth. In many cases it will also be possible and desirable to identify and describe the entire contents of the books (or its major parts), taken as a whole, in such abstract terms. Finally, one can describe in very concrete terms how these texts have been laid out on the pages of the particular codex-form book under investigation: the size and shape of the text area, and its location on the page, the number of columns and lines of text on a page, the place and structural use of ornaments (in particular, of head- and tailpieces and illustrations), the palaeographic or palaeotypic characteristics of the letters in which the texts have been written or printed, the inks and coloring matters used, and so forth. One may also observe that certain parts of the book differ from one another with respect to certain features of this sort, and the exact boundaries of each such part may often be specified.

These are the three most general kinds of bibliographical information which can be given about any book, when it is viewed synchronically: information about its *form* apart from its texts, information about its *texts* apart from its form, and information about the *relationship* between its form and its texts. Our task is to determine how these three kinds of information may best be combined in a synchronic description of a codex-form book.

One problem must be faced at the outset: there is more than one way to manufacture a codex-form book. In the case of some books, especially manuscripts, the blank codex is made first, and then the texts are added to it; in the case of other books, especially printed ones, the texts are chosen and arranged first, and then the codex is manufactured as the book is made; but in many cases the book is made in one or another way intermediate between these two extremes.

Because of the great variety of ways to manufacture a book, there is no constant *temporal* priority of any one of the three kinds of bibliographical information over the others: whatever constant priorities of this sort can be found will be *logical*, not temporal. It is the inner logic of an ideal synchronic description, not some non-existent ideal process by which a book is manufactured, that is our concern here. Some of the bitterest metho-

dological disputes between bibliographers working on different kinds of books (e.g. manuscripts, incunables, sixteenth-century imprints) have arisen because they have sought to devise an invariable method of bibliographical description on the basis of the highly variable processes by which books have been manufactured, rather than on the invariable inner logic of an ideal synchronic description¹²

Clearly, the first of the three kinds of bibliographical information is logically prior to the third kind: one cannot give an account of how the texts in a book are arranged on its leaves until one has taken some account of the leaves themselves, of how they are arranged in relation to one another. It is, after all, a particular kind of arrangement of leaves which de defines the codex-form book, completely apart from any texts which it may contain. Such a book need not contain any texts at all, i.e. it may be a blank book. An arrangement of texts in the abstract may be a book, but it is not any particular form, such as the codex form, of a book; it could readily have been inscribed on rolls or incised on slabs of stone. For these same reasons, moreover, there is no logical dependence of any sort between the first and the second kinds of bibliographical information, between information about the leaves by themselves and information about the texts by themselves. The only logical connection between these two things is through the concrete arrangement of these texts on the leaves of a particular book.

This highly rarefied line of argument leads to a sensible and almost self-evident conclusion, viz. that an ideal synchronic description of a codex-form book logically begins with an account of the concrete arrangement, or structure, of the leaves by themselves (i.e. an account of the book as if it were blank), and then proceeds to an account of the concrete arrangement of the texts on the leaves, in natural conjunction with an account of the texts by themselves. Thus the three kinds of bibliographical information combine to yield an ideal synchronic description in two parts: the first (which may be called the *formal* part of the description) treats the codex-form book as if it were blank; the second (which may be called the *textual* part of the description) treats the book in terms of the texts which it contains. If a codex-form book is truly blank, its synchronic description will

(12) Cf. the divergent views on collation formulae held by BOWERS (note 10): 193-254, 332-339, 457-462, 487-499 and by C.F. BÜHLER. Incunabula, in: *Standards of Bibliographical Description. The A.S.W. Rosenbach Lectures in Bibliography for 1947*. Philadelphia 1949:1-60.

contain only the formal part. If two or more books have different forms, but contain the same texts in the same arrangements, the textual parts of their descriptions will largely be the same, although the formal parts will have little in common.

5

Let us now assign each of the individual components of an ideal synchronic description of a codex-form book either to the formal part or to the textual part of the description, and let us arrange the components of each part in a reasonable and coherent order¹³

Prefatory note specifying which state of the given book is being described and the provenance of that state.

I. THE FORMAL PART

A. The Collation Formula

i.e. the number of leaves and their arrangement into gatherings, together with the original foliation or pagination and the original signatures (in comparison with the original register) if present¹⁴. This provides the bibliographical 'coordinates' of the book, in terms of which the exact location of everything else in the book is specified; therefore, it comes first in the description.

B. The Material(s) of the Leaves

e.g. parchment of a particular grade and thickness, or paper of a particular kind with particular watermarks &c.

C. The Format(s) of the Gatherings

i.e. the pattern of folding and cutting the sheets of paper (with reference to chain lines and watermarks) and of assembling the resultant leaves into gatherings, or the pattern of flesh and hair sides of parchment; also the scheme(s) of ruling and pricking, if any.

D. The Dimensions of the Leaves and any damage to them.

E. The Binding if any.

II. THE TEXTUAL PART

A. The Layout of the Text on the Page

i.e. the number of columns and of lines per column, the dimensions of the text area, the use and placement of initials, headpieces and tailpieces and other ornaments &c.

(13) In addition to the methodological literature cited notes 2,4-5,7,12,14-15,18,20, one may consult K.HAEBLER. *Handbuch der Inkunabelkunde*. Leipzig 1925 (translated with authorial revisions as *The Study of Incunabula*. New York 1933) and M.B.STILLWELL. *Incunabula and Americana 1450-1800: A Key to Bibliographical Study*. New York 1931, for the various individual components of a bibliographical description.

(14) On collation formulae cf. especially R.B.McKERRROW. *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students*. Oxford 1927 (corrected 1928):155-163; W.W.GREG. A Formulary of Collation, *The Library* 14(1934):365-382 (reprinted in his *Collected Papers*. Oxford 1966) and the references in note 12.

B. The Palaeographic or Palaeotypic Analysis of the Letters and the Orthography

For printed letters, specify at least the twenty-line measure and, if possible, the number assigned by HAEBLER¹⁵ to each font. For handwritten letters, a more sophisticated analysis may be necessary¹⁶.

C. The Linguistic Analysis of the Language(s)

D. The Description of the Ornamental Materials

E. The Analysis of the Ink(s) and Coloring Matters

F. The Contents of the Book

1. The identification of each text, its Author(s), editor(s), Translator(s), Language(s) &c.
2. The arrangement or structure of these texts in relation to one another.
3. The exact location of each text in the book.

These three sets of facts can generally be combined to give a single, rather elaborate 'table of contents' for the book, with each text identified in sequence, its structural relations to other texts shown by appropriate devices (such as those used in making outlines), and its exact location given in terms of the formal makeup of the book (as described in the formal part of the description). Such a 'table of contents' belongs almost at the very end of the synchronic description, since it draws on all of the above investigations.

This outline, of course, is not meant to serve as a model for the description of books in a catalogue or an enumerative bibliography, where one must take diachronic matters into account as well as synchronic matters (cf. section 6). For such purposes, moreover, one may have to abridge one's descriptions, and perhaps also rearrange their parts, with an eye to the convenience of one's prospective readers. The natural place for full synchronic descriptions of books, along the lines outlined above, would seem to be in monographic studies of small numbers of books, where there is plenty of room for the descriptive or analytic bibliographer to investigate each book at some length both synchronically and diachronically¹⁷

6

As arduous and as complicated a job as it is to make such a synchronic description of a book, its completion does not mean the end of the bibliogra-

(15) K.HAEBLER. *Typenrepertorium der Wiegendrucke*, 1-5 (= Sammlung bibliothekswissenschaftlicher Arbeiten 19-20,22-23,27,29-30,39,40) Halle/S. 1905, Leipzig-New York 1908, Leipzig 1909-1910,1922,1924. Cf. L.CONDIT. *Studies in Roman Printing Types of the Fifteenth Century*. Chicago 1933 and *A Provisional Index to Roman Printing Types of the Fifteenth Century*. Chicago 1935.

(16) Cf. below note 20.

(17) For the difference between enumerative bibliography and descriptive and analytical bibliography cf. F.BOWERS. *Bibliography, Pure Bibliography, and Literary Studies*, *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 46(1952):186-208.

pher's labors. There remain several other tasks, viz. a synchronic description of at least one other state of the book (if it is not in mint condition) and two kinds of diachronic investigation, the one treating the history of the book's manufacture and the other treating its history as a usable book. I shall restrict myself to a few remarks on these subjects.

Having described one state of the book fully, the bibliographer may describe its other state(s) by comparison, merely noting the differences between them. If the state of the book at its moment of publication has been chosen for the full description, then one's account of the differences which characterize each successive state is at the same time a convenient skeleton around which one can organize one's account of the book's history as a usable book. Organized in this way, the available information about the additions, corrections, deletions and rearrangements in its texts and its leaves, about the damage, mending and rebinding which it has undergone, and about the sequence of owners which it has had, can easily be treated in a coherent and revealing fashion. In addition, if the state of the book at its moment of publication has been chosen for the full description, one can reconstruct and present the history of the book's manufacture with greater ease than would be possible if one had made another choice. Such considerations strongly favor the choice of the book's initial state as the state best meriting a full synchronic description.

This choice, however, has one great disadvantage: the initial state of most books is not directly observable, but must be reconstructed from what can be observed, and especially from the state at the moment of investigation. For some kinds of bibliographical work, therefore, where the recording of the bibliographical evidence itself is more important than any inferences which might be drawn from it, one may prefer to give a full synchronic description of a book in its state at the moment of investigation (its temporary final state). This is essentially a pragmatic question, not a theoretical one; it must suffice merely to have mentioned it here.

If one has chosen to reconstruct the initial state of a book, one may do so not only on the basis of its directly observable state at the moment of investigation, but also on the basis of comparison with other books. Among these other books, the most important will be other copies of the same edition (if it is a printed book under investigation), but they are not the only ones useful in this connection. Comparison with other editions, and also with other books from the same manufactory, and other books with

the same or similar contents, can also be well worth making. The last kind of comparison, in particular, seems to me to promise much: the *typology* of books on various subjects, or containing various classes of texts, is just beginning to be investigated, but already its potential value has become apparent¹⁸

Another promising line of investigation seems to be the study of patterns of circulation and degrees of availability of various types of books at various times and places. A central concept here is that of a book's *rarity*. In their crudest form, investigations of rarity have in the past been of greater interest to booksellers than to bibliographers; and those bibliographers who have been interested in the matter have had their researches hindered by the absence of a good typology of books, so that their investigations of rarity have had to operate with individual editions rather than with types of books. Nevertheless, as the study of bibliographical typology progresses, one may hope for interesting results from studies of rarity also.

The final task of the bibliographer studying a given book is closely connected with the above two lines of investigation. Having traced the history of the manufacture of his book, and its history as a usable book up to the moment of his investigations, he may then attempt to project and to shape its future. Any recommendations which he can make concerning its use henceforth and its preservation will by no means be the least valuable part of his work.

7

Most of my remarks up to this point have been of a very general character, equally applicable to medieval books from any part of Europe. What then are the most urgent tasks facing bibliographers in the subfield of old East Slavic Cyrillic manuscripts and printed books, once the methodological problems have been treated? In my opinion, there are three such tasks. The first is that of compiling and publishing inventories of the manuscript and

(18) R.DEVREESSE. *Introduction à l'étude des manuscrits grecs*. Paris 1954: 101-277 is particularly valuable in this connection. Cf. also T.J.MATHIESEN. *Towards a Corpus of Ancient Greek Music Theory: A New Catalogue raisonné Planned for RISM, Fontes artis musicae* 25(1978):119-134. A valuable start on the typological study of Cyrillic manuscripts has been made by the contributors to the *Metodičeskoe posobie/Metodičeskije rekomendacii po opisaniju slavjano-russkix rukopisej dlja Svodnogo kataloga rukopisej, xranjaščixsja v SSSR, 1-2*. Moskva 1973-1976.

printed books themselves, whether by provenance or by present location. Although much has been done, there is still much to do¹⁹ The second is that of metrical methods of palaeographic and palaeotypic analysis. This is a matter of great difficulty, but also great importance. At present the metrical methods of palaeotypic analysis are more advanced than those of palaeographic analysis, but also the problems of the latter are much more difficult than those of the former, since the handwritings of scribes are more protean than the fonts of a compositor. In each case, however, much remains to be done²⁰ The third is that of the typological study of old Cyrillic manuscripts and printed books. It is here, and especially in the last two of these three fields of work, that the greatest challenge to the rising generation of bibliographers, as well as the most important results of bibliography in the early twenty first century, may be found.

(19) For manuscripts, the basic works are now *Svodnyj katalog slavjano-russkix rukopisej, xranjaščijsja v SSSR, XI-XIII vv.* Moskva 1984; N.B.ŠE-LAMANOVA. Predvaritel'nyj spisok slavjano-russkix rukopisej XI-XIV vv. xranjaščijsja v SSSR, *Arxeografičeskij ežegodnik za 1985 god:177-272* with index by L.P.ŽUKOVSKAJA. Pamjatniki ruskoj i slavjanskoj pis'menosti XI-XIV vv. v knigoxraniliščax SSSR, *Sovetskoe slavjanovedenie* 1969/1:57-71, and A.A.TURILOV. *Predvaritel'nyj spisok slavjano-russkix rukopisnyx knig XV v., xranjaščijsja v SSSR.* Moskva 1986. For early printed books, there is the ambitious, but as yet incomplete, description by individual presses *Opisanie staropečatnyx izdanij kirillovskogo šrifta, 1+* Moskva 1979+, as well as area catalogues, the most important of which are G.Ja.GOLENČENKO. *Bibliografičeskij spisok beloruskix staropečatnyx izdanij XVI-XVIII vv.* Minsk 1961; A.S.ZERNOVA. *Knigi kirillovskij pečati, izdannye v Moskve v XVI-XVII vekax. Svodnyj katalog.* Moskva 1958; A.S.ZERNOVA, T.N.KAMENEVA. *Svodnyj katalog ruskoj knigi kirillovskoj pečati XVIII veka.* Moskva 1968; A.P.ZAPAS'KO, Ja.D. ISAJEVIČ. *Katalog starodrukiv, vydanyx na Ukrajinu, 1-3.* L'viv 1981-1984. (Catalogues of individual collections are excluded from this list.)

(20) For metrical methods of palaeotypic analysis, cf. above, note 15. Metrical methods of palaeographic analysis are still in their infancy, and individual palaeographers interested in their development are not always aware of one another's work. The first publication along such lines seems to have been I.M.KAMANIN. *Metričeskij metod v paleografii i rezul'taty ego priloženija k izučeniju južno-russkago ustava i polustava XVI-XVIII vv. Trudy XIII arxeologičeskogo s'ezda v Ekaterinosla ve 1905, II.* Moskva 1907-1908:Materialy 207-209. The most valuable later contributions include J.MALLON. *Paléographie romaine* (= *Scripturae monumenta et studia* 3) Madrid 1952; J.ÉRIGOIN. Pour une étude des centres de copie byzantins, *Scriptorium* 12(1958):208-227, 13(1959):177-209, plates 17-20; A.D.CROWN. Samaritan Majuscule Palaeography, Eleventh to Twentieth Century, *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library of Manchester* 60(1977-1978):434-461, 61(1978-1979):15-41.