

# Cataloguing the Slavonic Manuscript Collection of the Plovdiv Public Library – MARC21\* Template

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**Abstract.** The paper presents a standardised scheme for describing the whole Slavonic Manuscript Collection kept at the Plovdiv Public Library and its adaptation to the MARC 21 Format for Bibliographic Data. A template for cataloguing is introduced, which has been tested on 58 fragments. So far all 137 bibliographic records have been processed and another 40 manuscripts from the XIX century are yet to be catalogued. This will present the Slavonic Manuscript Collection of the Plovdiv Public Library in its entirety.

**Keywords:** medieval manuscripts description, literary heritage, Plovdiv Library, codicology, MARC21 Bibliographic, machine-readable library cataloguing, database, NALIS.

## 1 Introduction

The unification of information in the field of Slavonic Manuscript Collection ensures the relation between the constructed conceptual apparatus for description, research, publication and translation of the medieval Slavonic texts and the keywords and concepts used in the bibliographic description. An essential condition for the construction of a steady and compatible model for studying, preservation and popularisation of the medieval manuscript culture is the standardisation of the bibliographic description and of the methodology used for cataloguing the manuscript monuments that are kept in Bulgarian libraries.

In 2013 a catalogue was compiled of the Slavonic manuscripts (12th–18th c.) of the Ivan Vazov Public Library in Plovdiv (PPL). It reveals the codicological and basic

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\* MARC 21 ('Machine-Readable Cataloguing') is a US library standard established world-wide and recently translated to Bulgarian as well (the parts used most by librarians in their everyday work). The Bulgarian translations are freely available on the NALIS website (<http://www.nalis.bg/>) under the Library Standards Section, where an Online Multilingual Dictionary of MARC 21 Terms can be found too. All these works are approved by the US Library of Congress and published on its MARC21 website under Translations (<http://www.loc.gov/marc/translations.html#bulgarian>).

palaeographic characteristics of the manuscript monuments [1] in the use of a uniform standardised scheme for bibliographic description<sup>1</sup>. A structural array of bibliographic data for the objects was generated as a preparation for their inclusion into a platform for digital content management. The descriptive part of the catalogue construction which consisted of working in the repository ended in January 2013. The software platform was chosen in the middle of the same year and the discussion of the MARC21 based template for description began.

By the autumn of 2014 the first phase of the automated catalogue construction ended: the development of catalogue descriptions and digital copies of 58 manuscripts. These were fragments on paper and parchment with a volume of no more than 60 folia. Among them were the distinguished: 7(234) Kyustendil palimpsest, end of 12th c., 25(62) the Apostle of Slepcha (fragment), second half of 12th c., 59(213) the Kicevski triodion, second half of 13th c., 84(40) Breviary, 1592, 105(222) Plovdiv collection, first half of 15th c., 119(137) the Damaskin from Sliven, first half of 17<sup>th</sup> c., etc. Thus, this significant collection became accessible for the general public through the NALIS Union Catalogue.<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 1. PPL, Slavonic Manuscript Collection

<sup>1</sup> The elements of description include: 1. *Sequential number*; 2. *Title*; 2.1. *Individual title*; 3. *Dating*; 4. *Orthography*; 5. *Script*: 5.1. Local (geographic) peculiarities; 5.2. Ruling of columns; 5.3. Ruling of lines; 5.4. Hands; 5.5. Inks; 5.6. Text segmentation; 5.7. Diacritics; 6. *Contents*; 7. *Scribe's note*; 7.1. Colophon; 8. *Codicological description*: 8.1.1. Number of folia; 8.1.2. Number of quires; 8.1.3. Dimensions; 8.1.4. Size of text area; 8.1.5. Number of the section in the codex; 8.1.6. Missing folia; 8.2. Overall condition; 8.2.1. Restoration; 8.3. Medium; 8.3.1. Watermark; 8.4. Binding; 8.4.1. Medium; 8.4.2. Appearance; 8.4.3. Technique applied and ornaments; 8.4.4. Original/modern binding; 9. *Decoration*; 10. *History*: 10.1. Origins; 10.2. Previous owner and location; 11. *Acquisition*; 12. *Literature*; 12.1. Previous descriptions and call numbers; 12.2. Editions; 12.3. References; 13. *Notes*.

<sup>2</sup> The collection can be viewed at URL:

[http://digtool.nalis.bg:8881/R/P8BHTNALK38VLEGJ9LM726TS6TE35KG7X1TI7C44I362B413AJ-00566?func=collections-result&collection\\_id=1356](http://digtool.nalis.bg:8881/R/P8BHTNALK38VLEGJ9LM726TS6TE35KG7X1TI7C44I362B413AJ-00566?func=collections-result&collection_id=1356)

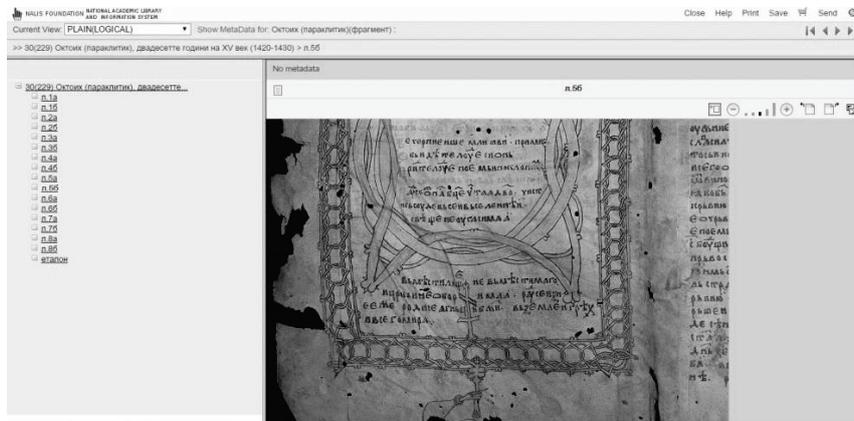


Fig. 2. Octoechos, twenties of 15th c., PPL

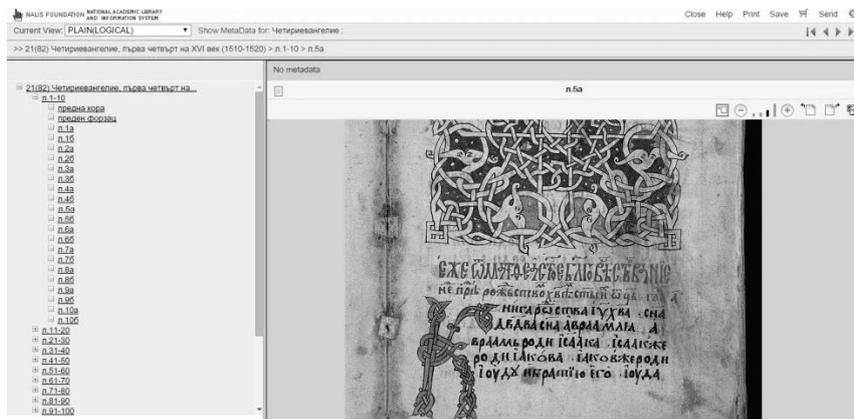


Fig. 3. Tetraevangelia, first quarter of 16th c., PPL

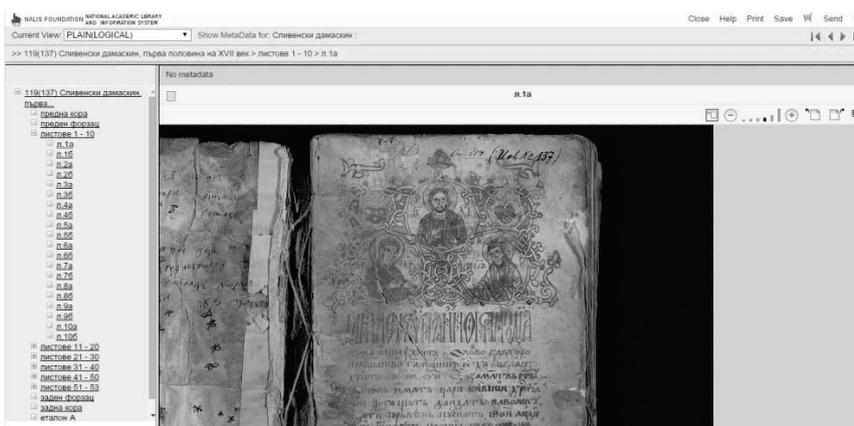


Fig. 4. Damaskin from Sliven, first half of 17th c., PPL

The second phase of the electronic processing of the included items started at the beginning of 2015. The aim was to present the Slavonic manuscript heritage kept in Plovdiv in its entirety.

## **2 The Machine-Readable Catalogue of the PPL Slavonic Manuscripts Collection and the adaptation of the Cataloguing Scheme to MARC 21**

The idea of adopting a scheme for cataloguing manuscripts in the MARC21 Format for Bibliographic Data is not new. The first attempts in this direction were made at the Central Library of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in 2005 in regard to the cataloguing of its collection of microfilmed manuscripts gathered from various foreign libraries. A template was created then and successfully applied to the bilingual description – in both Bulgarian and English – of these extremely valuable items. This template had a different purpose and so the emphasis was rather on the parameters of the microfilms than on the codicological features of the manuscripts themselves [2].

The work on the first MARC21 template for cataloguing Slavonic manuscripts began at the end of May 2013. The template was tested with 58 fragments from the PPL Slavonic Manuscripts Collection. The results were satisfactory and so the work with it continues today. All 137 bibliographic records have been processed. Another 40 manuscripts from 19th c. are yet to be catalogued. Thus the Slavonic Manuscript Collection will be presented in its entirety.

The template is based on the standardised cataloguing scheme. It has been created in conformity with:

- The logic of both MARC21 and AACR 2 (Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2 edition);
- The peculiarities of the ALEPH 500 Library Information System and the additional services it offers;
- The specifics of the manuscripts as a type of material.

In order to preserve all the elements of the standardised cataloguing scheme used to describe the PPL manuscript collection, and to integrate it as a whole in the MARC21 Bibliographic, the MARC21 fields have been grouped by their meaning. All the fields that are related to an area of bibliographic description or to a kernel of thematically selected information (i.e., each of the points in the scheme above) have been put into a single MARC21 field to ensure a quick orientation in the record. This approach ensures much easier indexing and thus more adequate search and retrieval.

There are several options in the application of this approach:

- Several elements of the base scheme can be placed in several sub-fields of one field. For example, the main elements of description, such as 1. Sequential number; 2.1. Individual title; 3. Dating and 8.3. Medium, can be placed in a field tag 245 Ti-

tle Statement and indicators 10 in a subfield coded \$b Remainder of title; \$a Title; \$f Inclusive dates; \$h Medium respectively.

- Various elements of the base scheme can be placed in one subfield of one field. For example, 9. Decoration and 13. Notes can be catalogued in a field tag 500\_\_\$a.
- One basic element of the base scheme can be placed in several sub-fields of more than one field. For example, the whole codicological description (with the exception of 8.1.6. Missing folia, that goes to tag 583\_\_\$x, or 5 characteristics in total), is inserted in only one field 300 (Physical Description).
- One basic element of the base scheme can be placed in different subfields of one field. For example, the whole information related to 5. Script goes to different subfields of a field tag 340.
- One basic element of the base scheme can be placed in one subfield. For example, the whole information related to the binding is placed in the subfields of the 563 field (Binding Information).
- Use of a leading word. For example, when multiple important characteristics of the manuscript need to be clearly distinguished, a distinctive leading word in one subfield is used, introduced with a drop-down menu. The aim is to achieve standardisation and to have an opportunity for outputs to other formats in the future. Thus we distinguish the following characteristics of the manuscript:

**Table 1.**

<b>Fields and subfields</b>	<b>Leading word</b>
300__\$f	Folia Quires Dimensions Size of the text area The sections in the codex
340__\$k	Diacritics Hands Ruling of columns Ruling of lines Text segmentation
563__\$a	Binding Medium Appearance Technique applied and ornaments Original/modern binding

There are areas of description in the template which are typical for the MARC21 format but cannot be found in the Cataloguing Scheme of the PPL Slavonic Collection. These are *the Leader, the Directory and the Variable control fields – The 00X fields*. There are also fields from level *01X–09X – Numbers and Codes – General Information*. All of them are necessary for primary sorting and filtering of bibliographic data and for speeding up the search.

Certain fields were added in order to enrich the information of the original Cataloguing Scheme. For example, the field tag *856 Electronic Location and Access*, which allows for a direct link to documents on the Internet.

Along with the MARC21 standard fields, the template has specific fields that are associated with the application software ALEPH500 and have a functional role. These are the field tags DB – Data Base, SYSID – System ID, FMT – Record format, KDF – with values for library statistics, and STA – necessary for the organization of logical data-bases.

The template looks as follows:

**Table 2.**

Cataloguing Scheme	Fields (tag + indicators)	Subfields (codes)
	DB	
	SYSID	
	FMT	BK
	LDR	~~~~~ntm^a22^~~~~~a^4500
	006	t~~~~~000^0^
	007	tz
	008	~~~~~nuuuuuuuubu^    ~~~~~ ^ 00^0^chu^d
	040	\$\$a BGPLVPL
	0410	\$\$a \$\$h
	043	\$\$a \$\$2
	044	\$\$a
2.	130	\$\$a \$\$p \$\$l \$\$s \$\$h
1. → 24510\$b 2.1. → 24510\$a 3. → 24510\$f 8.3. → 24510\$h	24510	\$\$a \$\$b \$\$c \$\$k \$\$h \$\$f \$\$g
	260	\$\$a \$\$c
8.1.1. → 300__ \$a in combination with \$f 8.1.2. → 300__\$ in combination with \$f 8.1.3. → 300__\$c 8.1.4. → 300__\$ in combination with \$f 8.1.5. → 300__\$ in combination with \$f	300	\$\$a \$\$b \$\$c \$\$e \$\$f \$\$g
	336	\$\$a \$\$2
5. → 340__\$n 5.1. → 340__\$n 5.2. → 340__\$k 5.3. → 340__\$k	340	\$\$c \$\$k \$\$n

5.4. →340__ \$k 5.5. → 340__ \$c 5.6. → 340__ \$k 5.7. → 340__ \$k		
9. → 500__ \$a 13. → 500__ \$a	500	\$\$a
	501	\$\$a
	510	\$\$a \$\$c \$\$u
	515	\$\$a
6. → 5202__ \$a 7. → 5202__ \$a 7.1. → 5202__ \$a	5202	\$\$a \$\$c
	530	\$\$a
	533	\$\$a \$\$b \$\$c \$\$d \$\$e \$\$n
11.	541	\$\$a \$\$c \$\$d \$\$f
10.1.	542	\$\$a \$\$c \$\$j \$\$p
	544	\$\$a \$\$n
	545	\$\$a
4. →546__ \$b	546	\$\$a \$\$b
	555	\$\$a \$\$b
10.2.	561	\$\$a
8.3.1.	562	\$\$a
8.4. → 563__ \$a 8.4.1. → 563__ \$a 8.4.2. → 563__ \$a 8.4.3. → 563__ \$a 8.4.4. → 563__ \$a	563	\$\$a
	580	\$\$a
12.1. → 581__ \$a 12.2. → 581__ \$a 12.3. → 581__ \$a	581	\$\$a \$\$z
8.1.6. →583__ \$x 8.2. → 583__ \$l 8.2.1. → 583__ \$a	583	\$\$a \$\$c \$\$i \$\$j \$\$l \$\$x
	730	\$\$a
	856	\$\$u \$\$z
	KDF	\$\$a
	STA	\$\$a RNBP

The first column contains the codes from the Cataloguing Scheme, and the second – their corresponding MARC21 codes. The arrows show the instances where the functions of a certain Cataloguing Scheme code are assumed by a MARC21 subfield. Some tags from the third column are compiled by default with data that are only valid for this collection, but they can always be replaced with more appropriate tags in other instances.

When the template was tested, it turned out that 9 of the fields have remained unused. These are the fields with tags 510, 515, 530, 533, 545, 555, 580, 730 and 856. Practice will show whether or not they should remain in the template, but they provide additional opportunities for more informative records.

### **3 Conclusion and future work**

The full text capture of the other objects in the collection remains an upcoming task. Twelve new manuscripts are currently available – as part of the digitisation programme for the first half of the year. By the end of 2015 the digital library will be enriched with 18 new manuscripts. Thus the total number of available Slavic manuscripts from the collection of the Plovdiv National Library will become 88.

The finalisation of the project, or the preparation of digital images for the last 49 objects, is going to require specialised technical equipment. An agreement for cooperation was signed with the Prof. Ivan Dujčev Centre for Slavo-Byzantine Studies and the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia at the end of 2013 in the field of protection and promotion of the Bulgarian manuscript heritage. The document restates the long-standing fruitful interactions between the two institutions. In its practical part, the agreement ensures the provision of a mobile photographic unit equipped with high-quality digital photographic equipment, available the Centre. The project is also going to use the high expertise of our co-workers from the Centre for Slavo-Byzantine Studies in the field of digitisation of manuscript monuments.

The next step is cataloguing Slavic manuscripts from the nineteenth century.

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