The new Katalog pamiatnikov drevnerusskoi pis'mennosti
by Daniel Waugh

This welcome volume is intended to fill the gap between two other fundamental reference works which have different purposes: the multi-volume Slovar’ knizhnikov i knizhnosti Drevnei Rusi (SKKDR), and the Svodnyi katalog slaviano-russkikh rukopisnykh knig, khraniashchikhsia v SSSR XI-XIII vv. with its ongoing continuation for the 14th and early 15th centuries. The largest part of the book is a substantially revised version of Oleg Viktorovich Tvorogov’s “Drevnerusskaia knizhnost’ XII-XIV vekov. Katalog pamiatnikov,” published in three installments in TODRL, vols. 56, 57, and 59 between 2004 and 2008, a compilation all the more remarkable for its representing the work of a single individual. To appreciate Tvorogov’s “encyclopedism” of a rather traditional type that may seem out of step in the 21st century, one might start here with Dmitrii Bulanin’s essay on pp. 915-35, which tells us as much about Bulanin’s personal take on such artefacts of the modern age as Wikipedia as it does about Tvorogov’s hugely impressive contributions over the years. Even as Bulanin, in his introduction to this volume, rather discursively explains how the revised edition differs from Tvorogov’s original, he admits that whatever reservations he and others might have about Tvorogov’s organizational scheme, no one has stepped forth with a substitute for it. So, in practical terms, short of waiting for an imagined collective project of the future which might re-do the whole thing from scratch, the most sensible tactic was to work within the given framework. Tvorogov’s starting point was the preliminary listing of Slaviano-Russian manuscripts in the USSR published back in the 1960s. Of course much has changed since then. So for this edition, there are many new entries, new information on dating, some omissions of items no longer considered to be of East Slavic provenance, and a thorough updating of bibliographic references. The bibliography alone here occupies 160 pages.

Even though the collective nature of the editorial revisions is emphasized, left unclear is the organization and delegation of responsibility in that work. Bulanin comes across as slightly apologetic for exercising his authority as the responsible editor, though the tone of his remarks should not surprise those who have read his introspective long essay added to the most recent volume of SKKDR.

What we have then is entries arranged under headings starting with biblical texts and moving through service books, florilegia (whose contents in the most important cases are also analyzed
into separate entries under the appropriate subjects), patristics, hagiography, etc. As Bulanin explains, how to treat florilegia, of themselves in many cases specific genres, is an interesting question. For certain major compilatory works such as synaxaria (prologi), in the future it will still be necessary to do further analytical breakdowns to complete the catalogue all the individual parts they contain. As partial compensation for that, S. A. Davidova provides in an appendix here a listing of the incipits of all the didactic readings of the Prolog in copies of the 13th-15th centuries. Given uncertainties about dating, some flexibility has been allowed to accommodate works which may span the late 14th to early 15th centuries. Another of the challenges posed by the material is how to name each entry—does one use a modern analytical attribution to a particular author, the heading supplied in the original manuscript, the incipit? Well, it all depends... The attributions, of course, as Bulanin and Tvorogov recognize, may be accurate or may be fictitious. Until we know for sure one way or the other, both have to be accepted. The separate works attributed to any given author or genre/subject are listed under that heading, along with references to publication of the text (if there is such), literature on it, and the location in the manuscript(s) which contain it. There are indexes of incipits and manuscripts.

But this is not all. Bulanin has exercised his privilege as responsible editor (and publisher) of the volume to include in it ten substantial essays of his own on the textual history of a number of works (“Iz istorii teksta slavianskogo ‘enkhiridiona’”; “Eshche raz o vyderzhkakh iz sochinenii Grigoriia Bogoslova v Izbornike 1073 g.”; “K sporam o slavianskom perevode ‘Istorii’ Psevdononna”; etc.). I leave it to specialists to comment on them and to point out possible errors of commission or omission in the rest of the book.

This volume will join now the several other fundamental reference works for students of early East Slavic texts. Bulanin surely is right that we are unlikely to see its replacement any time in the foreseeable future, if ever.