

The Life of Alexander Nevskii in the Litsevoi letopisnyi svod

Iconographic and Textual Influences

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One of the major achievements of Rus' culture was the series of chronicles that Rus' monks produced. The earliest extant chronicle compilation is the *Povest' vremennykh let* (*Tale of Bygone Years*), which was compiled probably between the years 1114 and 1116 by the monk Vasilii of the Kievan Caves Monastery. He incorporated an earlier no-longer extant chronicle that was most likely compiled in the 1170s by the monk Nikon of the same monastery. That earlier compilation covered the period from the biblical flood to 1051 and included excerpts from a Byzantine work, the *Chronicle of Gregory Hamartolus*, treaties between the Rus' and the Greeks, and a disquisition on Christianity by a "philosopher". The monk Vasilii added his own narrative that included the so-called "Tale of the Founding of the Kievan Caves Monastery."¹

The *Povest' vremennykh let* became the basis for all subsequent chronicle writing in Rus' including the Novgorodian, Tver', and Riazan' chronicles, as well as northeastern Rus' chronicle writing and, by the end of the fifteenth century, Muscovite

¹ See V. N. Rusinov, "Letopisnye stat'i 1051–1117 gg. v sviazi s problemoi avtorstva i redaktsii 'Povesti vremennykh let'," *Vestnik Nizhegorodskogo universiteta im. N. I. Lobachevskogo. Seriiia Istoriia*, vyp. 1, 2 (2003), 111–147. See also my "Pagan Past and Christian Identity in the Primary Chronicle," in *Historical Narratives and Christian Identity on a European Periphery: Early History Writing in Northern, East Central, and Eastern Europe (c. 1070–1200)*, edited by Ildar H. Garipzanov (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 229–253.

chronicles.² Much of our evidence and most of the narrative framework about the early and later Rus' principalities are from chronicles.

Chronicle writing in Rus' culminated with a monumental work, the *Litsevoi letopisnyi svod* (*Illustrated Chronicle Compilation*).³ Although it is not the first illustrated chronicle in Rus', that honor belonging to the Radziwiłł Chronicle (which has 617 illustrations),⁴ it is the most extensive. It constitutes 10 large volumes, a total of 9745 folios with 17,774 illustrations. The first two volumes cover ancient Israelite, Greek, and Roman history to the A.D. 70s. The third volume covers the Roman and Byzantine empires from the A.D. 70s to the tenth century. Volumes 4 through 10 cover Rus' history from 1114 to 1567. The text of volumes 4 through 10 represent a redaction that is similar to but not identical with the redaction found in the Nikon Chronicle. The project of compiling the *LLS* was not completed. Some illustrations are left uncolored. The various folios remained in stacks unbound until the middle of the seventeenth century. Somewhat ironically, the folios that contained the *Povest' vremennykh let* are no longer extant.

² Ia. S. Lur'e, *Obshcherusskie letopisi XIV–XV vv.* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1976); idem, *Dve istorii Rusi 15 veka. Rannie i posdnie, nezavisimye i ofitsial'nye letopisi ob obrazovanii Moskovskogo gosudarstva* (St. Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1994).

³ See V. V. Morozov, *Litsevoi svod v kontekste otechestvennogo letopisaniia XVI veka* (Moscow: Indrik, 2005).

⁴ *Radzivilloskaia letopis'*, 2 vols., general ed. M.V. Kukushkina ; text ed. O.P. Likhacheva (St. Petersburg: Glagol'; Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1994).

Besides chronicles, another achievement of Rus' culture is illuminated manuscripts.⁵ Most of manuscript illumination in the early and later Rus' principalities was done for religious literature, such as psalters, gospels, lectionaries, and so forth. These artists borrowed directly from the icon painting tradition for their illustrations. As with chronicle writing, a great deal has been written about Rus' icons.⁶ The few examples of illustration of manuscripts with non-specifically religious content, such as the Radziwiłł Chronicle,⁷ do not show such icon painting influence. This article explores the possibility that not only does the *LLS* represent the culmination of the Rus' chronicle writing tradition but also the first and fullest application of icon painting techniques involving theological and religious principles to illustrating the mainly secular literary material of a chronicle. Thus, it confirms the importance of studying text and image together.

The standard view is that the *Litsevoi letopisnyi svod (LLS)* was compiled in the 1560s and 1570s in the Moscow Kremlin. But A. A. Amosov has argued for a beginning date of 1568/9 and an end date not before 1586 (i.e., during the reign of Fedor Ivanovich, 1584–1598). B. M. Kloss has asserted that the “*Litsevoi letopisnyi svod* was compiled between 1568 and 1576 ... in Aleksandrovo sloboda,” where Ivan IV repaired during the

⁵ Olga Popova, *Russian Illuminated Manuscripts*, trans. Kathleen Cook, Vladimir Ivanov, and Lenina Sorokina (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1984).

⁶ See, e.g., Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons*, 2nd ed. (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1999); see also the excellent bibliography in Michael S. Flier, “Holy Images for the Grand Prince,” in *Portraits of Old Russia: Imagined Lives of Ordinary People 1300–1725*, ed. Donald Ostrowski and Marshall T. Poe (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2011), 136–138.

⁷ *Radzivilovskaia letopis*, 2 vols., ed. M. V. Kukushkina (St. Petersburg: Glagol' and Moscow: Isskustvo, 1994).

oprichnina (1565–1572) and that it is a “state chronicle” (*gosudarstvennaia letopis*) compiled at the behest of Ivan IV.⁸ In any event, its compilation seems to have coincided with the end of formal chronicle writing in Muscovite Rus’. We do find a smattering of chronicles from the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as the Piskarevskii, the New Chronicle, Nizhegorod Chronicle, and so forth, but these efforts, with the exception of the *Stepennaia kniga*, tend to be unsustainable localized efforts.

Many questions about the *LLS* remain unanswered and even unaddressed since serious work on it has begun relatively recently. Although the sources of the text have been addressed,⁹ the sources of the illustrations, which take up two-thirds of the total folio space of the 10 volumes, have not. The general assumption seems to be that the illustrators used European models. The present article focuses on the interplay of text and image in the *Life of Alexander Nevskii* as they appear in the *LLS*. I attempt to determine the sources of the artistic style being used as well as to ascertain the significance of the difference between the *LLS* redaction and other redactions of the *Life*. First, some preliminary observations are in order.

The Life of Alexander Nevskii appears in the Laptevskii volume of the *LLS* (RNB, F.IV.233, fols. 898r–940v). The number of folios in that volume covering the *Life of Alexander Nevskii* is 86. The number of illustrations depicting events described in the *Life* is 82, with 4 folios having no illustrations. The number of depictions of Alexander Nevskii is 74.¹⁰ His image does not appear in 24 illustrations; it appears two times in 9

⁸ B. M. Kloss, *Nikonovskii svod i russkie letopisi XVI–XVII vekov* (Moscow: Nauka, 1980), 249.

⁹ Kloss, *Nikonovskii svod*, 206–214; cf. Morozov, *Litsevoi svod*, 87–132.

¹⁰ The image of Alexander Nevskii does appear elsewhere in the *LLS* other than in the part devoted to the *Life*, but I will focus my investigation primarily on the *Life* part.

illustrations, three times in 2 illustrations, and four times in 1 illustration,

Alexander Nevskii is portrayed in a limited number of ways in the *Life of Alexander Nevskii* part of the *LLS*. One can discern ten types of portrayals of Alexander Nevskii as categorized by posture and direction of facing:

1. sitting on a chair or throne facing left (7 times);
2. sitting on a chair or throne facing right (8 times);
3. riding on a horse facing left (11 times);
4. riding on a horse facing right (27 times);
5. standing facing left (3 times);
6. standing facing right (11 times);
7. bowing facing right (2 times);
8. sitting on a throne facing the viewer (4 times);
9. kneeling (1 time); and
10. lying down (1 time).

In all, Alexander Nevskii is pictured sitting 18 times, standing 15 times, riding 38 times, bowing 2 times, kneeling 1 time, and lying down 1 time. The depictions and the number of each type provide an indication of how the chroniclers and thus the artists saw Alexander Nevskii; that is, mostly as a man of action (on horseback), but also to a lesser degree as a person of authority, and less often as a pious individual. At least three artists are at work here, as indicated by differences in the style of representing his figure, whether sitting, standing, or riding.¹¹

The images of Alexander Nevskii in the *LLS* all depict him with a nimbus. These images may be the earliest depictions of Alexander Nevskii as a saint. He was elevated to

¹¹ Compare, e.g., ЛI-906v, ЛI-913v, and ЛI-939v.

saintly status by the Church Council Decision of 1547. The councils of 1547 and 1549 are regarded as having established a number of new Rus' saints, but we have no reliable evidence telling us what the council of 1549 decided, and our sources for the council of 1547 are not in complete agreement. The four known manuscript copies that provide a list of individuals raised to saintly status at the 1547 Council are of metropolitan letters to various eparchies describing the decision of the council.¹² Although a group of names, including that of Alexander Nevskii, is common to all four lists, none of the lists completely coincides with any of the others. In addition, we have the evidence of a commemoration list composed between October 1556 and January 1557 at the behest of Ivan IV. The list includes the names of all Muscovite and *udel* princes that were to be sent to Constantinople for the synodikon being compiled by Patriarch Ioasaf. The first section lists princely saints, including grand princes of Rus'. That section includes the name of Alexander Nevskii.¹³ So, we have confirmation that by the 1550s, Alexander Nevskii was officially considered a saint.

Almost all our other images of Alexander Nevskii as a saint date to the late sixteenth century at the earliest. There are five sixteenth-century images other than those

¹² These are: MDA, no. 362, published in N. M. Karamzin, *Istoriia gosudarstva Rossiiskogo*, 2nd ed., 12 vols. (St. Petersburg: Tip. N. Grecha, 1818–1829) 9 (1823): “Primechaniia,” 26–27; Krasnogorsk Pinega Monastery MS, published in *AAE*, 1: 203–204, no. 213; RBL, Trinity no. 241, fols. 1–2v; and RPB, F.I.356, fols. 441–442, published in G. Kuntsevich, “Podlinnyi spisok o novykh chudotvortsakh k Feodosii, arkhiepiskopa Novograda i Pskova,” *Izvestiia Otdela russkogo iazyka i slovesnosti*, 15 (1910): 252–257.

¹³ S. M. Kashtanov, “Tsarskii sinodik 50-kh godov XVI v.,” *Istoricheskaia genealogiia/Historical Genealogy* 2 (1993): 44–67.

that appear in the *LLS* that have been claimed to represent Alexander Nevskii as a saint. The first of these is the so-called Church Militant icon—“The Blessed Army of the Heavenly Tsar” («Благословенно воинство небесного царя») —which has been dated to the 1550s and was located in the Dormition Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin but is now in the Tret’iakov Gallery.¹⁴ The lead rider of the detachment in the lower register has been claimed by some scholars to represent Alexander Nevskii. If so, that depiction would predate those in the *LLS* by at least a decade. It is unlikely, however, that the lead rider in that icon is Alexander Nevskii. According to the art historian I. A. Kochetkov, who made a study of the question: “The rider on the black horse, galloping at the head of the lower detachment of warriors cannot be identified as Alexander Nevskii. . . . On the icon, the rider is beardless and without shoes. Besides that, he does not have a nimbus” (“Всадник на вороном коне, скачущий во главе нижнего отряда воинов, не может быть определен как Александр Невский. . . . На иконе всадник безбород и безус. Кроме того, он не имеет нимба. . . .”).¹⁵ Saints are usually not depicted in icons as beardless, shoeless, and without a nimbus. Since the Church Militant icon was painted after the 1547 Church Council, if the intent was to portray Alexander Nevskii, the artist would at least have known to provide him with a nimbus.

Being beardless and without shoes or nimbus is not the case of the lead rider in another icon of the end of the sixteenth century, which is also called “The Blessed Army

¹⁴ “Blessed Be the Host of the King of Heaven” <http://ru.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=%D0%A4%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%BB:Blessed_Be_the_Host_of_the_King_of_Heaven%E2%80%A6_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg&filetimestamp=20110220154053>.

¹⁵ I. A. Kochetkov, “K istolkovaniiu ikony ‘Tserkov’ voinstvuiushchaia’ (‘Blagoslovenno voinstvo nebesnogo tsaria’),” *Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoi literatury* 38 (1985): 187.

of the Heavenly Tsar” («Благословенно воинство небесного царя»)¹⁶ It is housed in the Museum of the Moscow Kremlin. This icon seems to be a poor imitation of the earlier Church Militant icon. The lead rider of the lower detachment is given a nimbus and a white horse. Alexander Nevskii is often shown in *LLS* on a white horse (although sometimes a black one) and always with a nimbus. It is not clear whether that rider in the later Church Militant icon is beardless or is wearing shoes. Even if the intent is to identify the lead rider of the lower detachment with Alexander Nevskii, that may be a result of the influence of the *LLS* than any indication who the lead rider of the lower detachment was supposed to be. In any case, that icon does not predate the *LLS*.

Three other icons that have been dated to the sixteenth century depict Alexander in monk's garb. The first of these is a fresco on the eastern side of the northwest column of the Cathedral of the Annunciation in the Moscow kremlin. The image of Alexander is paired with that of John of Damascus.¹⁷ The original presumably dated to 1508, and was done by the icon painter Feodosii. Since the cathedral was damaged by fire in 1547 and the column was repainted, we have no way of telling how closely the present version represents that version. Two other depictions of Alexander as a saint in monk's garb have

¹⁶ “Blessed Is the Host of the King of Heaven from Chudov Monastery”

<http://ru.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=%D0%A4%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%BB:Blessed_is_the_Host_of_the_King_of_Heaven_from_Chudov_Monastery.jpg&filetimestamp=20110527190317>.

¹⁷ See A. I. Rogov, “Aleksandr Nevskii i bor'ba russkogo naroda s nemetskoj feodal'noj agresseie v drevnerusskoj pis'mennosti i iskusstve,” in “*Drang nakh osten*” i istoricheskoe razvitie stran Tsentral'noj, Vostochnoj i Iugo-Vostochnoj Evropy, ed. V. D. Koroliuk, V. M. Turok, N. D. Ratner, and A. I. Rogov (Moscow: Nauka, 1967), figure 1 (between pages 48 and 49).

been dated to the end of the sixteenth century.¹⁸ It would be odd if we had one depiction of Alexander as a saint in monk's garb in 1508 and no other depictions before the end of the sixteenth century. The image on the column of the Annunciation Cathedral is so similar in appearance to those from the end of the sixteenth century that it would seem likely, they would date to around the same time—i.e., toward the end, not the beginning, of the sixteenth century.¹⁹

Another claim for the appearance of the image of Alexander Nevskii as a saint is in the icon of the *Battle between Novgorodians and Suzdalians*, which is extant in 3 versions, all of which have been dated to the late fifteenth century. One is located in the Novgorod Museum, the second in the Russian History Museum, and the third in the Tretyakov Gallery. Four horsemen with nimbi in the lowest panel of the triptych sally forth from the gate. They have been variously identified as the saints Boris, Gleb, George, and Demetrios of Thessalonika or with the saints Vladimir, Alexander Nevskii, George, and an unknown saint, possibly Varlaam Khutynskii. Two considerations tend to exclude Alexander as one of the horsemen. First, there is nothing to identify any of the horsemen with him. Second, Alexander lived in the thirteenth century, 100 years after the

¹⁸ One of these is in the Kostroma historical-architectural and Art Museum. See Begunov, *Pamiatniki*, figure 5 between pages 48 and 49. The other is in the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg. Cited in Iu. K. Begunov, "Ikonografiia sviatogo blagovernogo velikogo kniazia Aleksandra Nevskogo," in *Kniaz' Aleksandr Nevskii i ego epokha. Issledovaniia i materialy*, ed. Iu. K. Begunov and A. N. Kirpichnikov (St. Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1995), 173 and 175 n. 7 (ГРМ, инв. 459).

¹⁹ Cf. Iu. K. Begunov, "Drevnee izobrazhenie Aleksandra Nevskogo," *Byzantinoslavica* 42, no. 1 (1981): 40.

battle, which occurred in 1169. It would be unusual to predate a saint to an earlier century before he was born or died. Similarly it is unlikely any of the horsemen saints was intended to be Varlaam, since he died in 1192, twenty-three years after the battle. Thus, we can tentatively conclude that the images of Alexander Nevskii in the *LLS* are the earliest extant representations of him as a saint.

Multiple Scenes in the Same Frame

One of the more significant aspects of the illustrations in the *LLS* is the presentation of two or three, and sometimes even four scenes within the same frame. Doing so was not unusual in pre-Renaissance art. Since the Renaissance, however, when the principle of the unity of time and space took hold, the placing of two, three, or more scenes in the same frame has become rare, because it violates that unity.

Trying to distinguish the methods of depiction of more than one scene within a single frame has generated a discussion in the scholarship over terminology. Yet, it is more than merely a terminological issue since it gets to the heart of the matter of how an artist represents a literary narrative. Why only one scene in a frame in some places, two in others, three in still others, and so forth? In 1881, the art historian Carl Robert described three methods of rendering literary content in visual form, but he did not suggest specific names for them.²⁰ In 1895, the art historian Franz Wickhoff, apparently independently, delineated the same three methods and named them accordingly:

1. the isolating (*distinguirend*) method, by which he meant a method that isolates one scene for representation that is distinguished from the preceding or succeeding scenes as

²⁰ Carl Robert, *Bild und Lied: Archäologische Beiträge zur Geschichte der griechischen Heldensage* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1881), 52–79.

described in the literary work;

2. the complementary (*completirend*) method by which he meant a method that complements one action by representing another action that precedes or follows it without any of its participants being repeated;

3. the continuous (*continuirende*) method,²¹ by which he meant a method that represents a sequence of scenes in an uninterrupted way.

The art historian Kurt Weitzmann, basing his analysis on the work of both Carl Robert and Franz Wickhoff, disputed Wickhoff's names for the three methods. For Wickhoff's isolating (*distinguirend*) method, Weitzmann substituted the "monoscenic method." He did so because he considered the "double connotation" that Wickhoff defined, of the artist's having "chosen the distinguishing ... moment" as well as the artist's representing "this moment as a single composition of its own without relation to other scenes" is incorrect in regard to the representation of a literary narrative:

"Obviously the painter of the classical period who wanted to represent an epic or dramatic episode by one single composition, usually selected the most decisive moment...."²² According to Weitzmann, the first sense of *distinguirend* is conveyed by the term *isolating* while the second sense is conveyed by the term *isolated*. On the other hand, the term *isolating* in Weitzmann's view "suggests an evolution which does not seem to be supported by historical evidence."²³ The term *monoscenic* has the same

²¹ Franz Wickhoff, introduction, in *Die Wiener Genesis*, ed. Wilhelm Ritter von Hartel and Franz Wickhoff (Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1895), 8–9.

²² Kurt Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex: A Study of the Origin and Method of Text Illustration* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), 34.

²³ Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex*, 35.

problem as *isolated* in that it does not sufficiently convey the meaning of distinguishing one scene from among a continuum of possible scenes. Therefore, I will use the English translation of *isolating* for the type of scene that Robert, Wickhoff, and Weitzmann are describing.

For Wickhoff's complementary (*completirend*) method, Weitzmann substituted the "simultaneous method." He did so because "the general meaning of the word *complementary* does not necessarily carry with it the connotation that the features completing the nucleus of a scene must be taken from different actions."²⁴ In other words, Weitzmann was not contesting Wickhoff's definition of the method as "a method which complements the representation of one action by features of other actions, which precede or follow it, without repeating any of its participants,"²⁵ but merely the sufficiency of the word *completirend* to accurately represent it. Yet, Weitzmann's proposed substitution, *simultaneous*, is not an improvement on Wickhoff's term and in some ways takes us further from the definition. The two scenes do not have to be occurring simultaneously, only complementarily. For that reason, I prefer Wickhoff's term *complementary*.

For Wickhoff's continuous (*continuirende*) method Weitzmann substituted the "cyclic method."²⁶ He did so because for him Wickhoff's "term, which is very suitable indeed for a certain kind of rendering of consecutive scenes coherently, is, however, in our opinion not comprehensive enough to circumscribe the innovation which had taken place in the Hellenistic period with regard to the transformation of a text into pictorial

²⁴ Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex*, 33–34.

²⁵ Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex*, 33.

²⁶ See Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex*, 12–33.

form.”²⁷ Although one may dispute Weitzmann’s claim that this transformation was an innovation of the Hellenistic period, one can grant that his term *cyclic* should not be taken to be “a substitution for [Wickhoff’s] *continuous* but a wider and more general term, to which the latter is subordinated as a special case.”²⁸ Weitzmann’s term *cyclic* carries more the sense of what one finds in the *LLS* where two or more scenes are represented in one frame. The two or three scenes are connected, at least in the artist’s mind, as a unit of meaning. To convey that meaning, the term *cyclic* works quite well.

To gain a better understanding of what Wickhoff and Weitzmann were trying to convey, we can turn to the illustrations in the *LLS*. An example of the *isolating* method in the visual representation of Alexander Nevskii in the *LLS* is fol. Л-927v “And they enthroned him as grand prince with much honor, and there was great joy in Novgorod.” Significantly, the words that accompany the illustration do not appear in the Nikon Chronicle or the earlier redactions of the *Life of Alexander Nevskii*. In the Novgorod I Chronicle is a statement that the Novgorodians were joyful.

Новгород I лет.

Приде Олександръ князь
в Новъгородъ, и ради
быша новгородци.²⁹

Никоновская лет.

и пришедь въ Новъградъ
многіа крамолники
перевѣша,³⁰

ЛЛС (Л-927v)

и посадиша его на
великомъ княженіи со
многую честію, и бысть
радость веліа въ Новѣ-
городѣ.³¹

²⁷ Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex*, 35.

²⁸ Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex*, 35.

²⁹ *Novgorodskaiia pervaiia letopis’*. *Starshogo i mladshogo izvodov*, ed. A. N. Nasonov (Moscow and Leningrad: Akademiia nauk SSSR, 1950), 78, 295.

³⁰ *PSRL*, 10: 125.

³¹ *LLS*, fol. 927v (Laptev).

This passage provides evidence in support of the proposition that the *LLC* version of the *Life of Alexander* is distinguished from other versions, but the question needs to be addressed whether it constitute a separate redaction rather than just a variant (more about this proposition below).³² In volume 10 of *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei*, the readings from the Laptevskii volume of the *LLC* are presented as variants of the Nikon Chronicle redaction of the *Life*. In 1966, Iu. K. Begunov proposed in a footnote of an article on seventeenth-century redactions of the *Life of Alexander Nevskii* that the *LLC* version represents a separate redaction that derived from the Second Redaction of the *Life*.³³ He provided no textual evidence in support of that claim. For a text to be

³² Rozov discussed the general historical context of the writing of the *Life of Alexander* in the *LLC*, but did not provide any specific text critical comparisons with other redactions or suggest that the version of the *Life* in the *LLC* could represent a separate redaction. Nikolai Rozov, “Letopisnyi rasskaz o zhizni i voinskikh podvigakh velikogo kniazia Aleksandra Iaroslavicha v Litsevom letopisnyi svod XVI veka,” in *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo. Tekst i miniatiury Litseвого letopisnogo svoda XVI veka*, ed. L. Dmitriev (Leningrad: Avrora, 1990), 8–11. Rozov also discussed the *LLC*’s illustrations for the *Life of Alexander*. *Ibid.*, 11–12. Begunov was critical of this publication. See Iu. K. Begunov, “Izdanie bez tekstologa i ikusstvoveda,” in *Kniaz’ Aleksandr Nevskii i ego epokha. Issledovaniia i materialy*, ed. Iu. K. Begunov and A .N. Kirpichnikov (St. Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1995), 187–189.

³³ Iu. K. Begunov, “Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo v stankovoi zhivopisi nachala XVII v.,” *TODRL*, 22 (1966): 313, fn. 15. Mansikka published a copy, Uvarov no. 514 (369), of the 16th century that he called “a copy of the second redaction.” V[iljo] Mansikka, *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo. Razbor redaktsii i tekst*, in *Pamiatniki drevnei pis’mennosti i iskusstva*, 180 (1913): 11–14 (second pagination). But that text bears no relationship to the text in the *LLC*.

considered a separate redaction, it must show some systematic reworking of the entire (or large part of the) text, not just scribal editorial corrections or choosing of readings in specific cases from different versions and redactions.³⁴ Though the evidence I provide in this article is far from conclusive, it is suggestive that the *LLC* version of the *Life of Alexander Nevskii* represents a systematic reworking of the text specifically for this chronicle. I will return to this question below.

An example of the *complementary* method of visual representation of literary text occurs in fol. JI-938v “It was then Saturday and the sun was rising when the two hosts clashed. The Germans and Chuds, being in a formation shaped like a pig, thrust through the [Rus’] regiments. And there was an evil and great battle for the Germans and Chuds. There were tremors from the breaking lances and noise of swords clashing, they moved over the frozen water. One could not see the ice for it was covered with blood.” The scene that is being presented in the larger segment of the frame is the scene that the eyewitness is describing in the upper left corner of the frame. The illustrator is depicting the scene that the eyewitness is describing at the same time he is depicting the eyewitness describing the scene, as indicated by the sentence at the beginning of fol. JI-939: “This I heard from an eyewitness, who told me that he saw the regiment of God in the sky

³⁴ For a discussion of what constitutes a *redaction*, see D. S. Likhachev, *Tekstologiya. Na materiale russkoi literatury X–XVII vv.*, 1st ed. (Moscow and Leningrad: Akademiia nauk SSSR, 1962), 116–124; 2nd ed. (Leningrad: Nauka, 1983), 132–139; 3rd ed. (St. Petersburg: Aleteiia, 2001), 133–139. See also Catherine Mary MacRobert, “The Textual Tradition of the Church Slavonic Psalter up to the Fifteenth Century,” in *Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Jože Krašovec (Ljubljana: Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti, 1998) 925, 941, where she defines what constitutes a separate redaction of the Church Slavonic psalter.

coming to the aid of Alexander.” One finds no duplication of individuals in the two scenes.

In the case of the passage on fol. Л-938v, the wording bears discrete similarities both with the wording of the Nikon Chronicle (italicized words) and with that of the First Redaction (underlined words).

First Redaction

Бѣ же тогда день суботный, въсходящю солнцю, съступишася обои. И бысть сѣча зла и трускъ отъ копии ломления и звукъ отъ мечнаго сѣчѣния, яко же морю померзѣшю двигнутися; не бѣ видѣти леду; покры бо ся кровию.

Никоновская лет.

Бѣ же тогда день суботный, и возходящу солнцу съступишася обои *полци*, и *пробишася свиньею* *сквозъ полки* Александъровы, и бысть *ту* сѣча зла, и бѣ аки громъ отъ ломления копейнаго, и отъ звука мечнаго сѣчѣния, и отъ щитовнаго скепания, и кровь аке вода лѣа шеся, и нигдѣ бѣ не видѣти леда, всюду кровь лѣашеся.

ЛЛС (fol. Л-938v)

Бѣ бо тогда день суботный, солнцу восходящю и съступишася обои *плѣцы*, Нѣмцы же и Чюдъ *пробишася свиньею* *сквозъ полки*, и бысть *ту* сѣча зла и велика Нѣмцемъ и Чюди, и *трусъ* отъ *копей* *ломленіе* и звукъ отъ мечнаго сѣчѣніа, яко же морю померзѣшю двигнутися, и не бѣ видѣти леду, покрыло бо есть все кровью.

Here is further evidence toward the proposition that the compilers of the text of the *LLS* created a new redaction of the *Life of Alexander Nevskii*. In the case of the passage on fol. Л-939, however, the wording of the *LLC* is closer to that of the First Redaction of the *Life of Alexander Nevskii* than to that of the Nikon Chronicle.

First Redaction

Се же слышахъ отъ самовидца, иже рече ми, яко видѣхъ полкъ Божий на въздусть, пришедши на помощь

Никоновская лет.

Слышахъ же и сіе отъ самовидца, бывшаго тогда тамо, и повѣдаша ми сице, яко видѣхъ полки Божіа на въздусть,

ЛЛС (fol. Л-939)

Се же слышахъ отъ самовидца, рече ми яко видѣхъ плѣки Божіа на въздусть пришедше на помощь

Александрови.³⁵

пришедше на помощь
Александрю,³⁶

великому князю
Александрю³⁷

Except for the *LLC*'s not including the word *уже* and adding the phrase *великому князю*, the wording of the First Redaction of the *Life* and the *LLC* is virtually identical, and certainly closer than either is to the Nikon Chronicle.

An example of the *cyclic* method of visual representation involving two scenes in the same frame is fol. Л-927 “In the year 6750 (1241/2) Grand Prince Alexander Iaroslavich came to Novgorod, and with him were Archbishop Spiridon and boyars. The Novgorodians met him with crosses at the city gates.” In the upper register, Alexander Nevskii is seen riding (facing right) with Spiridon and the boyars. In the lower register, Alexander Nevskii is seen standing (again facing right) and being greeted at the entrance to Novgorod by the Novgorodians, one of whom is carrying a cross and another, an icon. The boundary between the two scenes is a rocky ridge.

³⁵ Reconstruction of the First Redaction, which is from Donald Ostrowski, “Dressing a Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing: Toward Understanding the Composition of the *Life of Alexander Nevskii*,” in *Centers and Peripheries in the Christian East: Papers from the Second Biennial Conference of the Association for the Study of Eastern Christian History and Culture*, edited by Eugene Clay, Russell Martin, and Barbara Skinner, *Russian History* 40 (2013) (forthcoming). Cf. Iu. K. Begunov, *Pamiatnik russkoi literatury XIII veka “Slovo o pogibeli Russkoi zemli”* (Moscow: Nauka, 1965), 171. My reconstruction of the First Redaction differs on certain particulars from Begunov’s reconstruction. In addition, I posit a pre-First Redaction version in the Laurentian Chronicle as well as a military tale version dating to the end of the 13th century.

³⁶ *PSRL*, 10: 127.

³⁷ *LLS*, fol. 939 (Laptev).

No description of Alexander Nevskii’s coming to Novgorod at this time appears in the First Redaction. Both the Nikon Chronicle version of the *Life of Alexander Nevskii* and the Novgorod I Chronicle describe his coming to Novgorod, but the compilers of the *LLC* were either using another source or adding their own interpolation.

Новгород I лет.	Никоновская лет.	ЛЛС
В лѣто 6749. Прииде князь Александръ в Новъгородъ, ³⁸	Въ лѣто 6750. Иде князь Александръ отъ отца Новугороду, ³⁹	Въ лѣто 6750. Прииде князь великій Александръ съ нимъ же и архіепискомъ Спиридонъ и съ боляры; Новогородцы же срѣтоша его съ кресты во вратѣхъ града, ⁴⁰

This particular example highlights the importance of studying the text along with the illustrations. The compilers of the text seem to have created their own chronicle redaction, such that the illustrators were interacting with that new redaction, not merely providing a variant version of a pre-existing chronicle redaction.

An example of the *cyclic* method involving three scenes in the same frame is fol. Л-930 “After the victory of Grand Prince Alexander Iaroslavich over the king, in the third year, in winter time, the Germans gathering from this side, came to Pskov and defeated the Pskovian host, and placed their namestniks in Pskov.” The viewer sees Alexander Nevskii riding (facing right) away with his soldiers from Pskov after his victory in the upper register. In the lower register, the viewer sees the Germans defeating the Pskovians in battle. In the middle register, the Germans are placing their namestniks

³⁸ *Novgorodskaia pervaiia letopis’*. *Starshogo i mladshogo izvodov*, ed. A. N. Nasonov (Moscow and Leningrad: Akademiia nauk SSSR, 1950), 78, 295.

³⁹ *PSRL*, 10: 125.

⁴⁰ *LLS*, fol. 927 (Laptev).

in Pskov. The boundary between the first scene in the upper register and the two other scenes is a rocky ridge. The boundary between the second and third scenes is part of a rocky ridge and the city wall.

The wording of the text is significant because it suggests that the compilers of the *LLS* created their own synthetic text. To a great extent they relied on the Nikon Chronicle's version (or one similar to it), but when they thought appropriate they reached outside that version to, in this case, the First Redaction of the *Life of Alexander Nevskii* in order to supplement the narrative.

First Redaction	Никоновская лет.	ЛЛС
<p><u>По побѣдѣ же Александровѣ, яко побѣди короля, в третии годѣ, в зимнее время, поиде на землю Немецкую в силѣ велицѣ, да не хвалятся ркуще.... Уже бо бяше взятъ градъ Псковъ, и тиуны у нихъ посажени.</u>⁴¹</p>	<p>Въ лѣто 6751. <i>Собрашася Нѣмцы съ сеѣ страны, и придоша ко Пскову, и полки Псковскіа побѣдиша и намѣстниковъ своихъ посадиша на Псковѣ.</i>⁴²</p>	<p><u>По побѣдѣ же великого князя Алекцандра Ярославича, яко побѣди короля, въ, третье лѣто, въ зимнее время бѣ, собрашася Нѣмци съ сеа стороны, придоша на Псковъ, и Псковскіа плѣки побѣдиша, и намѣстниковъ своихъ посадиша на Псковѣ.</u>⁴³</p>

Here the underlined text shows the identical wording of the *LLC* with the First Redaction whereas the italicized text shows the identical wording of the *LLC* with the Nikon Chronicle in distinction from the First Redaction. The *LLC* compilers combine the “По побѣдѣ же Александровѣ, яко побѣди короля, в третии годѣ, в зимнее время” of the First Redaction with the “Собрашася Нѣмцы съ сеѣ страны, и придоша ко Пскову, и

⁴¹ Reconstruction of the First Redaction from Ostrowski, “Dressing a Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing.”

Cf. Begunov, *Pamiatnik*, 169.

⁴² *PSRL*, 10: 125.

⁴³ *LLS*, fol. 930 (Laptev).

полки Псковскіа побѣдиша намѣстниковѣ совихѣ и посадиша на Псковѣ” of the Nikon Chronicle redaction. The cyclic image of two scenes within the same frame represents that combination.

Artistic Antecedents of *LLS* Miniatures

The style of the illustrations in the *LLS* is quite distinctive and makes them immediately recognizable. At the same time, there is something familiar about them that reminds the viewer of other types of narrative depictions. That apparent familiarity with the style raises the question of what the antecedents of the illustrations were. What models did the illustrators have before them? I looked for antecedents for the distinctive style through a number of cultures going back to antiquity, including Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Medieval and Renaissance Europe. Instead of locating any antecedents I found a uniqueness of the *LLS* images that sets them apart from almost every other kind of artistic representation of literary narrative.

First, let us look at ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman literary representations. In the ancient Egyptian MS. London, Brit. Mus. Book of the Dead of Hunefer is a cyclic scene: 1. Anubis leads Hunefer into Judgment Hall; 2. Anubis weighs Hunefer’s heart; Thoth records the results; and 3. Horus brings Hunefer to the enthroned Osiris.⁴⁴ But the style is more comic strip-like than the cyclic scenes in the *LLS*.

On an ancient Greek cup in the Berlin Museum (Cup II) is a cyclic scene series from the *Odyssey*, chapter 22: 1. Odysseus stabs Leiodes in the back (center), 2. Odysseus about to kill Phemius and Telemachus intervenes (right) 3. Odysseus and

⁴⁴ British Museum, “Page from the Book of the Dead of Hunefer,” <http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/aes/p/page_from_the_book_of_the_dead.aspx>.

Telemachus pardon the minstrel Medon (left).⁴⁵ Again there is next to no similarity in style with the cyclic scenes in the *LLS*.

In the Rome, *olim* Rondinini Coll. Tablet are scenes from the *Odyssey*, chapter 10: 1. Hermes gives Odysseus the moly (lower left); 2. Odysseus threatens Circe (center right); and 3. Odysseus meets his metamorphosed companions (upper).⁴⁶ The use of the city wall to divide scene 1 from scene 2 in the frame is a similarity that this illustration has with some *LLS* illustrations. Beyond that, any similarity ceases.

In the *Vienna Genesis* from sixth-century A.D. Syria, illustrations are present that involve two appearances of the same figure within the same frame, but the *Vienna Genesis* often divides the illustrations horizontally into two frames, thus mitigating the cyclic effect.⁴⁷ A comparison of the *Menologion of Basil II* (late tenth–early eleventh century) with *LLS* shows a similarity of relationship of text with illustration placement on the folio.⁴⁸ The distinguishing characteristics of the *LLS* illustrations (more about these below) are missing in the *Menologion*.

⁴⁵ Berlin, Museum, Cup II: Scenes from Odyssey XXII in Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex*, fig. 7.

⁴⁶ Rome, *olim* Rondanini Coll. Tablet: Scenes from Odyssey X in Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex*, fig. 8.

⁴⁷ *Die Wiener Genesis*, e.g., fol. XV, 30, “The Departure of Joseph” <<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ViennaGenesisPict25JosephsDeparture.jpg?uselang=de>>.

⁴⁸ See, for example Commemoration of earthquake of 740 on p. 142 of the *Menologion of Basil II*, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Menologion_of_Basil_042.jpg>. See also the Baptism of Christ on p. 299 of the *Menologion of Basil II*, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Menologion_of_Basil_040.jpg>.

In the Flemish illustrated *Les très riches heures du Duc de Berry* (early fifteenth century) appear cyclic representations of literary narrative. Among them is “The Garden of Eden: Adam and Eve Expelled from Paradise,” in which 1. Eve is tempted by the serpent; 2. Adam is tempted by Eve; 3. God admonished them; and 4. they are expelled from Paradise.⁴⁹ All scenes are in the same frame, yet the style of the figures and background are too different from those in the *LLS* for one to suggest that work as a model. The Flemish tapestry that was done by the weavers of Tournai (1450–1475), now hanging at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Massachusetts, depicts the Old Testament story of Jehu, Jezebel, and sons of Ahab (2 Kings 9–10).⁵⁰ The richness of the tapestry is similar to *LLS* illustrations, but it is much busier than *LLS* illustrations without a clear boundary between scenes, so it is unlikely to have been a source.

In an illustration found in *Le Livre des Merveilles* (c. 1410), MS. 2810, Paris Bibliotheque Nationale, workers unload goods in the Gulf of Cambay in the Arabian Sea off the northwest coast of India.⁵¹ The style of the depiction of the town is similar to town

⁴⁹ “The Garden of Eden: Adam and Eve Expelled from Paradise,” *Les très riches heures du Duc de Berry* <<http://historymedren.about.com/od/booksofhours/ig/Tr-s-Riches-Heures/The-Garden-of-Eden.htm>>.

⁵⁰ “Jehu and Jezebel,” Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Massachusetts, <<http://www.artbible.info/art/large/798.html>>.

⁵¹ “Trade in the Gulf of Cambay, India,” from the *Le Livre des Merveilles du Monde*, Ms Fr 2810 fol. 86v. <http://www.bridgemanart.com/asset/34704/Boucicaut-Master-fl.1390-1430-and-workshop/Ms-Fr-2810-f.86v-Trade-in-the-Gulf-of-Cambay-Indi?search_context=%7B%22url%22%3A%22%5C%2Fsearch%5C%2Fcollection%5C%2FBIBLIOTHEQUE-NATIONALE-PARIS%5C%2F1235%22%2C%22num_results%22%3A%2279%22%2C%22search_type%22%22>.

representations in the *LLS*, in particular the use of the mode of synecdoche to represent the town as a whole. David Goldfrank refers to this mode as “visual rhetoric.” According to Goldfrank: “As with rhetoric, a visual representation or symbol can be used as metaphor (a dove for the Holy Spirit), simile (the late Roman double-headed eagle for both the Holy Roman Empire and Russia), metonymy (the fish for Jesus from his Greek monogram ΙΧΘΥΣ as son of God and savior), or synecdoche. In an illustrated chronicle, as in a simple cartoon, synecdoche predominates—one tower represents an entire fort or city; a throne, a palace; a few animals, a herd; and seven or eight armored men on horses with a banner, an entire army—but simile is not absent.”⁵² Yet, there the similarity between the illustration in the French manuscript and the illustrations in the *LLS* ends.

The MS. Bodleian 264, *Roman d’Alexandre* with an add-on of the journey of Marco Polo, contains a few illustrations that in certain respects could at first be thought to possibly be precursors to the illustrations in the *LLS*. In the part of the manuscript devoted to Marco Polo, on fol. 218, for example, Marco Polo is seen during his departure from Venice twice, once on the main island that contains the doge’s palace and St. Mark’s Cathedral, and once on a secondary island embarking on a rowboat to take him to a sailing vessel. No divisions between his two appearances occur, as the entire illustration

3A%22supplier_assets%22%2C%22supplier_id%22%3A%221235%22%2C%22item_index%22%3A1%7D>.

⁵² David M. Goldfrank, “Visualizing and Illustrating Early Rus Housing,” in *Picturing Russia*, edited by Valerie A. Kivelson and Joan Neuberger (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 19.

is a panorama of Venice.⁵³ Upon closer examination, one realizes these illustrations could not have been used as a model by the *LLS* artists. What these examples tell us is that there were books with illustrations of texts that had some features in common with the *LLS*, but none of them had similarities sufficient enough to suggest any one or combination of them could have served as a model for the format and characteristics of the artistic style of the *LLS* illustrations.

A German woodcut from Basel in 1520 has a similar cyclic progression as the *LLS* illustrations.⁵⁴ In it appear at least five scenes, of which Judith shows up in four. The woodcut has the raised terrain that *LLS* illustrations do but no mountains or rocky ridges. Three of the scenes use tents as borders, and a fifth scene has soldiers assembling but separated from the other scenes by a palisade. In the upper tent sits the Assyrian king Holofernes while Judith with two armed companions approaches. In the middle tent Judith is seen being entertained by Holofernes. In the tent to the lower left of it and in the foreground is a tent in which Judith is cutting off Holofernes' head while a female servant stands by with a bag for the head to be placed in. Then in the topmost scene at the back of the illustration, Judith and her servant, who is carrying the bag with the head of Holofernes, greets the Israelites who are coming out of a castle. The first three scenes with Judith in them show a downward and background-to-foreground progression, but the last (in terms of time sequence) scene, which is at the top and in the ultimate background of the illustration, is not typical for *LLS* illustrations.

⁵³ Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Bodleian 264, fol. 218. <<http://image.ox.ac.uk/images/bodleian/ms.bodl.264/218r.jpg>>.

⁵⁴ “German woodcut, 1520, Round pavilion at right shows guy ropes, others do not.” <<http://www.currentmiddleages.org/tents/german.htm>>.

A search of earlier Rus' illustrated texts, such as the Radziwiłł Chronicle; saints lives; and Psalters such as the Kievan Psalter of 1397 likewise fails to turn up a likely model or source style of illustration for the *LLS*. Icons, however, are another matter.

Differing Perspectives

Although Robert, Wickhoff, and Weitzmann did not discuss the *LLS*, all three of the methods of representation of a literary text that they defined can be found in the illustrations. Weitzmann attributed the origins of the cyclic method to ancient Greece (as he did most everything), but I could find no ancient Greek or European models for the form of cyclic representation found in the *LLS*. One possibility is that icon painters developed its particular style of cyclic representation solely from icons, including a converging perspective, so-called “icon hills,” half profile for facial representations except for those of saints, and in the case of the *LLS* when a ruler is being enthroned (see below). In other words, the unity of time and space is transformed within the same frame into different times and spaces but still as part of the same narrative. In contrast to the linear perspective that characterized most of European art from the Renaissance on where painting contained a vanishing point somewhere in the background,⁵⁵ in converging (also referred to as Byzantine, inverse, inverted, or reverse) perspective that is used in most icons, the center shifts forward and the lines narrow towards the viewer.

⁵⁵ For a discussion of the mathematics of linear perspective in a historical context, see Kirsti Andersen, *The Geometry of an Art: The History of the Mathematical Theory of Perspective from Alberti to Monge* (New York: Springer Science+Business Media, 2007).

Fol. л -929

And some returned with him to Novgorod, while others remained in the German land, for he was merciful in great measure.



The image above from Laptev codex, fol. 929, is an example of a two-scene cyclic representation as the “others” who “remained in the German land” are shown in the upper center of the image. In the foreground, Alexander Nevskii returns to Novgorod. The front convergence of the lines is enhanced by the inverse pyramid of the accompanying text.

Another influence from icon painting style is the use of icon hills. In icons, the flat ground is often shifted up. This shifting up of the ground results from the converging perspective of making things visible to the viewer. As the result, the shift happens in pieces creating the illusion of hills, but they are understood not to be real hills. In addition, each separate piece of ground is meant to be viewed separately but as also

connected with the other pieces of ground within the same frame.⁵⁶

Nativity of Christ

Novgorod 15th century⁵⁷

*LLS, Khronograficheskii sbornik*⁵⁸



⁵⁶ Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons*, 2nd ed. (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1999), 160.

⁵⁷ Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982), 158. Cf. "Nativity of Christ," http://www.iconsexplained.com/iec/00030_col.htm; and "Nativity of Christ." First half of 15th century. Novgorod school. 57 x 42 cm. Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/54911434@N03/5216688352/>.

⁵⁸ *LLS, Khronograficheskii sbornik* BAN, 17.17.9

In the above comparison of the Nativity of Christ from a fifteenth-century Novgorodian icon with the Nativity scene from the *Khronograficheskiĭ sbornik* of the *LLS*, the same shifting up of perspective creates the same illusion of hills.

Except for the four depictions of Alexander Nevskii sitting on a throne facing the viewer, all the other depictions show faces in half profile. Showing saints facing the viewer while other people's faces are in half profile is common practice in icon painting. The full profile is then usually reserved to depict demons as in *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* icon showing monks ascending to Jesus in Heaven, from St. Catherine's Monastery (twelfth century).⁵⁹ The demons are shown pulling the monks from the ladder. In the "Nativity of Christ" icon shown above, in the lower left corner, a demon in full profile is shown trying to sow doubts in Joseph's mind about how Mary became pregnant.

Another characteristic of iconographic representations of saints is their faces have no expression. In each case in the illustrations of the *LLS*, the face of Alexander Nevskii affects a neutral expression, showing neither joy nor sadness. Yet, here the sequence of such images carries the effect of such facial representation to a different level of appreciation over that of the individual icon. The *LLS* represents a genre that is the closest we have to film at the time. In film, a technique of film editing known as montage often occurs. A dictionary definition of montage is: "A single pictorial composition made by juxtaposing or superimposing many pictures or designs." One of the earliest demonstrations of montage was put together by filmmaker Lev V. Kuleshov (1899–

⁵⁹ "The 12th century *Ladder of Divine Ascent* icon (St. Catherine's Monastery, Sinai Peninsula, Egypt) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Ladder_of_Divine_Ascent_Monastery_of_St_Catherine_Sinai_12th_century.jpg>.

1970). Around 1918, he edited a 17-second film in which the same three shots of the face of pre-Revolutionary film star Ivan I. Mozzhiukhin (1889–1939) is interspersed with three other shots—a bowl of soup, a little girl laid out on a funeral bier, and a seductively attired woman.⁶⁰ The audience that saw the film thought Mozzhiukhin was reacting to each film shot in turn and thus was changing his expression from shot to shot. The filmmaker Vsevolod I. Pudovkin (1893–1953), who claimed he co-created the experiment with Kuleshov, wrote in 1929 that the audience “raved about the acting ... the heavy pensiveness of his mood over the forgotten soup, were touched and moved by the deep sorrow with which he looked on the dead child, and noted the lust with which he observed the woman. But we knew that in all three cases the face was exactly the same.”⁶¹ According to the film historian Michael Russell of the University of Edinburgh: “...Kuleshov deliberately chose footage in which his [the actor’s] face was particularly bland and expressionless. The material itself therefore had little emotional affect for the audience; it consisted only of everyday objects.... It was by combining and juxtaposing this bland material that Kuleshov could evoke an emotional response in the audience, a response which could not be triggered by the material itself but only by its organisation and juxtaposition, in other words by film montage.”⁶² This phenomenon, which has come

⁶⁰ “The Original Kuleshov Experiment.mov,” *YouTube* <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gLBXikghE0>>.

⁶¹ Vsevolod I. Pudovkin, “Naturshchik vmesto aktera,” in *Sobranie sochinenii*, 3 vols., ed. Tat’iana E. Zapasnik and Adi Petrovich (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1974–1976), 1: 184.

⁶² Michael Russell, “The Kuleshov Effect and the Death of the *Auteur*,” *Forum: University of Edinburgh Postgraduate Journal of Culture & the Arts*, 1 (2005) <<http://www.forumjournal.org/site/issue/01/michael-russell>>.

to be called the Kuleshov Effect, indicates that viewers tend to impose their own emotions on the actor. Although the actor's expression had not changed, the viewers perceived it as having done so.

The limited number of positions in which Alexander Nevskii is represented and the neutrality of his facial expression throughout requires viewers to draw on their own reaction to the scene being described. In that sense, the artists were able to create a pattern of understanding, such that the viewer when seeing the full-frontal Alexander seated on a throne experiences one feeling and projects it onto Alexander (as in fol. II-927v: "And they enthroned him as grand prince with much honor, and there was great joy in Novgorod"). When seeing Alexander riding or standing and facing left or right in other contexts, viewers experience another feeling according to the context, and they project that feeling on the image of Alexander Nevskii differently. For example in fol. II-927 ("In the year 6750 (1241/2) Grand Prince Alexander Nevskii came to Novgorod. With him [was] Archbishop Spiridon with boyars. The Novgorodians met him at the city gates with crosses"), the viewer sees Alexander in the upper register on horseback riding to Novgorod and in the lower register standing in front of the city gates being greeted by the Novgorodians. The facial expression of Alexander does not change between the two images, so the viewer must project an interpretation that Alexander was experiencing a different emotion while traveling to Novgorod from that which he felt while being greeted by the Novgorodians.

In the comparison below, I place *Christ Enthroned*, a Novgorodian icon of the late fifteenth century,⁶³ next to the image from the *LLS* of the enthronement of Alexander Nevskii (Laptev codex, fol. 927v).

⁶³ Christ enthroned, late 15th century, Novgorod; cf. *Christ Enthroned*, 16th century

Comparison of Christ Enthroned with Alexander Nevskii enthroned in *LLS*



A comparison of the placement of the feet on the stool, the cushion that each is sitting on, the gesture with two fingers of each figure's right hand, the holding of an object with the left hand, and the nimbus on each speaks of some kind of influence of a Christ Enthroned icon (perhaps not this one in particular) on the representation of Alexander Nevskii enthroned in the *LLS*.

In answer to the question that I posed above concerning antecedents or models for the illustrations in the *LLS*, the best possibilities that I have found are in Byzantine icons.

State Hermitage Expedition, Novgorod Region, 1960.



Fig. 137 Vat.reg.gr.1, f. 155v. Moses receiving the laws

in the manuscript Vat.reg.gr.1, fol. 155v of Moses
/ of the characteristics that the images in the *LLS* share
enes in the same frame (as Moses first takes off his
eives the laws with barefeet), half profile (although

As I think I have been able to demonstrate, the influence of icon painting on illustrations in the *LLS* is strong. The question I wish to raise is, can the particular motifs of icon painting explain all the motifs that we find in the illustrations of the *LLS*? Or, do we need to resort to outside influence from European art to explain how the illustrators of

the *LLS* attained the idiosyncratic style of their illustrations? Although one can find a specific artistic motif in one or more works of European art that predate the *LLS*, one can also find those motifs in Rus' icon painting. My tentative conclusion, which is more a hypothesis to be tested through further research, is that the illustrators of the *LLS* drew solely on the icon painting tradition and transformed that tradition in innovative ways for the secular subject matter of the *LLS*'s content. In addition, I have proposed that sufficient textual evidence exists to suggest that the compilers created a separate redaction of the *Life of Alexander Nevskii* specifically for the *LLS*.