

BORDER HEROISM IN THE LIFE OF ALEKSANDER NEVSKIY

The borderlands are awe-inspiring areas. They receive cultural influences, exchange ideas, learn, adopt, and modify culture and use it as raw material in order to create dynamic culture of its own. In the border districts, on the other hand, emphasizing one's own cultural identity can be manifested in actions that underline the constancy and superiority of one's own identity. Hence the borderlands can also be seen as fields of obstacles, walls, moats, and hostilities, as well as grounds of abrupt contrasts and conflicts.

The *Life of Alexander Nevskiy* is an interesting literary remain, with the help of which one can study the influence of the border district on encountering foreign culture. Alexander Nevskiy (1220 – 1263) was a prince, typical of his time, without nationality and without a country of his own. He was appointed to different principalities to be in charge of the professional defence functions. He was a feudal warrior moving from one place to another without any specific home district, depending on which principality in which part of the Russian lands was offered to him.

Alexander belonged to a family with power. His grandfather Vsevolod III Yur'evich was grand prince of Vladimir and also his father Yaroslav Vsevolodovich became such. It was no wonder that a distinguished princely family wanted to give their sons training in standing in front of the troops in demanding positions. Alexander got together with his elder brother Fedor the responsibility for the defence of Novgorod. The task was not easy, because the Novgorodians were independent and invited and expelled their princes as they wished.

Alexander's task, however, was not to govern Novgorod, the Novgorodians themselves were responsible for that. The task of the prince was to stand in the vanguard in front of the troops, when his territories needed to be defended. The frontier skirmishes were common in feudal era and consequently the main task of the prince was to organize and lead his troops into battles. In these fights Alexander was so successful that he has got an indelible reputation as a skilful warrior.

Central from the point of view of the warrior image of Alexander Nevskiy is that he managed to stop the expansionistic eastward movement of the Germans and Swedes supported by the Pope. For this reason, Alexander Nevskiy is commonly seen as the defender of the freedom and of the orthodox religion of Russia against the Catholic west. The blocking of the western threat has been seen to have climaxed above all to the beginning of the 1240s. Alexander blocked the Swedish expansion in a battle of Neva fought in 1240 along the river Neva near the modern city of St. Petersburg. In 1242, in the Battle of lake Peypus (*Chudskoe ozero*) fought near the city of Pskov, Alexander with his troops beat the army of the German Knights¹.

When debating the relations between the Pope and Russia, it can be said, however, that there was no logical overall plan to beat the East, and Innocent IV was also eagerly searching for cooperation allies among the Russian princes because of the Mongolian danger threatening Europe. To some extent the whole crusade movement can be regarded as a controversial and indefinite balancing between the extreme Catholic and practical politicians, of which the researcher's opinion can easily be onesided, the preserved source material being mostly produced by the Church².

When outlining the 13th century political situation between the East and the West historians have used the *Life of Alexander Nevskiy* as one of the most important sources, due to otherwise poorly-preserved source material. Prevailing opinion among the historians is, that *The Life* was written in the early 1280s in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God (the *Rozhdestvensky* Monastery) in Vladimir in Suzdalia³.

The *Life of Alexander Nevskiy* is an interesting description, with the help of which the image of the heroic defender has been formed. One can ask, however, what does the image of this Russian ideal hero really imply. Above all it is important to understand what kind of source value the *Life of Alexander Nevskiy* has as a historical document. It is essential to get acquainted with the way things were described in the Middle Ages. What one described in medieval writing, and what one wanted to express? What was the language like that was used in describing in the medieval literature? How can a hagiography be used as a historical source? The writing in the Middle Ages was controlled by its own rules, and without knowing these we are about to go astray, if not to be actually trapped. Moreover, it is most important to ask, what was the writer's opinion of the truth. What did the writer actually want to tell, and how did he carry out his intentions?

The *Life of Alexander Nevskiy* has been regarded as a description of the ideal prince, and so it is, probably the most perfect among the descriptions of the Russian princes. It doesn't only describe the actions of the ideal prince, but also gives moral advice, even a concrete example of what one must do in order to be able achieve this ideal. The dispute is of little importance if the *Life of Alexander Nevskiy* was originally meant to be a hagiography or an earthly war story, because likewise in both of them the purpose is the same; to give a model for the actions of the ideal prince⁴.

Stories about the saints were above all intended as religious education to give direction as to what is correct and what is wrong in life. An image of a saint was meant to offer a concrete model of religious ideal to a common human

bothered by sins⁵. The hagiographies tell about history so that its subject becomes transformed into a paragon of good behaviour, constructs ideals, and warns about vice⁶. The purpose of these sacred biographies was to provide the correct model of following Christ. In this way, the main characters of the biographies, the saints, brought into light through their actions the paradigm determined by the society. Hence, a single act of a saint became a religious ritual. Writers of the hagiographies were able to select from a broad selection of ritualised acts the very acts through which the saint who was the object of description was possible to present. The authenticity of saintness of the person being described was sought to show by ritualised acts borrowed mainly from the Bible and other holy scriptures, as well as from other hagiographical materials⁷.

The primary purpose of the saint's life was thus to educate and give guidance. Teaching of the truth of faith through individual examples was directed above all to satisfy social needs. For this reason, esthetication of the content of the text was kept to a minimum so that it would not disturb the clarity of teaching. Another educational characteristic of the hagiographies was the importance of the wholeness and, for this reason, the knowledge of details formed the supporting structure of this whole, the salvation drama taking place in the world. For the above reason, interpretation of the detail information taken too far can provide misleading results because information of the saint's life was carefully selected or actually presented appropriately and understandably in a way that it facilitated receiving the message of Christian virtues⁸.

When reading hagiographies one also has to remember that the reality during Middle Ages was different than what we understand to be reality today because it was harmonic, hierarchical, and determined. Because the reality was determined, a language of symbolic representation which was in agreement with commonly accepted norms was used in describing the reality. These are exactly what are often called clichés. The saints' lives described with the help of these clichés are stereotypical and impersonal.

2. Normativity of writings and the importance of the association – the description of the Battle of Neva as an example

Alexander's victory over the Swedes at the river Neva in 1240 is one of the most important acts described in his *Life*, and it has in a significant way shaped the image of Alexander Nevskiy as the defender of Russia against the western threat. It is problematic in the study of this topic that there is hardly any other sources of the Battle of Neva than the *Life of Alexander*. There are no Swedish sources of this event, and in most cases, the chronicles do not either pay more than a usual amount of attention to the Battle of Neva, unless they have borrowed events from the *Life* in their story⁹. There is, therefore, a reason to examine how the battle description given in the *Life* is actually composed of and what kinds of rhetoric equipment, what kinds of ritualised acts the writer of the *Life* has used. How do these effect the image of Alexander Nevskiy and what kind of value does the *Life* have as an historical source?

The plotline part of the *Life of Alexander* begins with a description of the Battle of Neva. A Roman Catholic king from the land of the midnight, after hearing about Alexander's reputation, boasted that he would conquer Alexander's country. He sent a messenger to Alexander and said: "If you can, resist me. I am already here conquering your land."¹⁰ An equivalent bragging act is found in the Old Testament, where the king of Assyria, Sennacherib, send his messenger to brag about the size of his power and orders the King of Judah, Hezekiah, to submit under his power without objections¹¹. In the *Life*, Alexander's reaction to this treathening was to get angry and go to Church¹². Hezekiah of the Bible, for his part, *rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord*¹³. The third similarity in the plotline was a pep talk to the troops. Both chiefs made spurring speeches to their men when the enemy was threatening¹⁴.

A bragging scene of an envious king appears to have been a popular theme in the medieval war literature because it is a central theme in *Aleksandriya*, which tells about the life of the Macedonian world conqueror, Alexander the Great, as well as in the *Tale of Devgeni* (*Devgenievo Deyanie*), a Slavic translation of favourite Byzantine war story. Both of the above-mentioned works belong among the best known war stories of the 13th century. Alexander the Great had the self-deserved first place of the war stories already since the antiquity, and he was also among the main characters of the war stories in the medieval Europe¹⁵. A Byzantine chivalric hero, Digenes Akrites, whose name translates in Russian to the name *Devgeni*, in turn was the hero of the Greek-speaking Europe and Anatolia. His epic story was born in Byzantium in the 10th century, largely following the model which emphasised chivalric ideals also symbolised by Alexander the Great¹⁶.

Not all are convinced of the medieval origin of *Tale of Devgeni* because the oldest manuscript of the *Tale* dates from as late as the 18th century¹⁷. Although the Russian manuscripts are young, they contain more archaic features than any of the Greek manuscripts of the *Tale*, the oldest of which dates from 15th century¹⁸. The *Life of Alexander Nevskiy* clearly shows that the *Tale of Devgeni* was known already in those days when the *Life* was written, because some clear metaphors have been borrowed from it, as demonstrated later.

In *Aleksandriya*, Dareios, the King of Persia, sent his messenger to Alexander, bragged about his own power, and belittled Alexander's status. Showing off led to a war in which Alexander beat Dareios' troops¹⁹. The same theme is repeated in the *Tale of Devgeni*. It includes an episode where Devgeni received through a messenger a message from tsar Vasili: "Famous Devgeni! I would very much like to see you. Come to visit my domain since your bravery and manliness is known everywhere in the world. And I also love you from all my heart and would like to see you in the flowering of your youth."²⁰

Analogies with the *Life of Alexander* are clear here, especially because the words of King Vasili were poisoned by envy and deceitfulness and his only motive to allure Devgeni to his country was to imprison him²¹.

Devgeni answered proudly like Alexander the Great in *Aleksandriya* to the great king and accepted the challenge for the battle. The plotline of the *Tale of Devgeni* enfolds in a nearly identical way to that of the *Life of Alexander*. Tsar Vasili arrived with his army to the river Euphrates where he founded a camp and set up his large tent²². Similarly, the *Life* relates that the battle ground was located along a river; the king *came to the river Neva*²³. Later, the *Life* places the battle ground more specifically along Neva's tributary, Izhora²⁴.

In this way, the preparation for the battle reflected the typical formula of the medieval war literature, where events following the battle are told in very formulated fashion so that going to war was a long series of events occurring independently from Alexander, and where a large factor of influence is the intent to conquer of a more powerful envious king of the neighbouring country. Therefore, the hero is forced to a test of strength, which he turns to his own advantage. The evolution of battle is very normative, and it was part of the tendencies of the war literature to mention that Alexander Nevskiy started the battle as an underdog, being out-numbered as to the manpower of his troops²⁵.

The description of the enemy camp is very interesting and it reveals the transition sequence of the literary quotations of the *Life*. It is told in the *Tale of Devgeni* how the tsar Vasili set up in his camp an enormous tent, the roof of which was coloured red and decorated with gold²⁶. This luxurious tent symbolised most clearly the wealth and power of the tsar Vasili. In the *Life of Alexander*, the tent-theme continues where it was left in the *Tale of Devgeni*. In the *Life*, the tent of the enemy was finally pulled down. This pulling down was accomplished by one of the brave men of Alexander Nevskiy, Savva: *He charged a big, golden-crowned tent and cut its pole. When the tent fell, Alexander's regiments were very much encouraged*²⁷.

It is natural that Alexander's men were encouraged because the falling down of the tent symbolised the collapse of power and defeat of the great king. Pulling down the enemy tent implies such a clear symbolic message that the famous Soviet film director Sergey Eisenstein joined the tent pulling to the long scene about the battle in the ice of lake Peipus in his film "Aleksander Nevskiy" which he directed in 1938. The tent pulling scene clearly refers to the transition sequence of this literary quotation. The *Tale of Devgeni* must have been model for the *Life of Alexander* because there can not be a tent pulling scene unless the tent hasn't been set up first. In the *Tale of Devgeni* the tent was set up and in the *Life of Alexander* it was finally pulled down. This clearly indicates the more ancient origin of the *Tale of Devgeni*.

In the battle, a similar miracle occurred with Alexander, which in the Bible helped Hezekiah to beat his superior enemy²⁸. In the battle, a group of brave men fought alongside Alexander. The *Life* singles six of them out by name. A similar theme of brave men is found in descriptions of the second book of Samuel in connection with King David's war excursions, and even the formula is exactly the same. The name and the tribe of a hero is told in the Bible, and then his heroic deeds are mentioned briefly,²⁹ just as in the *Life of Alexander*.

In this way, one can notice how the description of the Battle of Neva is based on ready-made models of sentences. The models of these battle descriptions originated from that period's best-known classics of war literature as well as from the Bible, which is the most commonly used model of the saints' lives' associations, since the saint was on the road following Christ (*imitatio Christi*). The newly deceased expert of the medieval Russian literature, Academician D. S. Likhachev has demonstrated how models of Alexander Nevskiy's life have been passed from Galich of southwestern Russia where trends of the war literature were strongly visible also in Galich's Princely Chronicle of the 13th century³⁰. With the help of the rhetorics borrowed from the war descriptions, Alexander Nevskiy was made parallel to the pan-European knighthood ideal of the medieval period. This functioned through analogies borrowed from literature³¹.

Literary examples of the *Life of Alexander* have been sought before. Already at the beginning of the 20th century V. Mansikka brought out the biblical models of the *Life*,³² but it appears that they have not received enough attention among historians. However, such strong literary examples should awaken a question of how natural one can consider the battle description. Alexander's role as the defender of Russia is largely developed in thoughts of generations based on battles described in his *Life* against the Catholic neighbours in the West.

It is surprising to notice how seriously many historians take the information given in the *Life*. One may use as an example A. V. Shishov, who has reconstructed nearly the entire Battle of Neva in light of information from the *Life*³³. Researchers like him attempt to reconstruct actual historical occurrences with the help of the *Life*. This may entirely mislead a researcher unfamiliar with the medieval literature because the text is born to describe a certain ideal image and it has been represented with the help of already familiar sentences, formulas, as well as metaphors. The battle scenes of the *Life* are a clustering of this kind of already present images of the mind because what had already taken place is what was real in the medieval way of thinking³⁴. Therefore, the *Life of Alexander* sets interpretational traps to a researcher who is unable to grasp the world of the medieval description.

3. *The lionhearted intimidators of the children – Alexander as a representative of the militant ideals of the feudal aristocracy*

Galich, the chronicle tradition and literary influences of which were transferred to the *Life of Alexander*, was located closest to the Catholic Central European countries among the Russian principalities. Its neighbouring Slavic states Poland and Hungary had converted to Catholicism in the early 11th century, and along with the cultural interaction

and the rich interrelations, which were strengthened by mixed marriages between the Catholic and the Orthodox, people in Galich got acquainted with western chivalric traditions.³⁵ As to the transfer of the images and transmission of the pictures, the literary heritage of Galich has a central meaning in the development of the character of the warrior description of Alexander Nevskiy. It is well-founded to study closer the relation between the literary tradition in Galich and the *Life of Alexander*, as well as these western influences that the Galichian literature was able to transfer.

*Alexander's warriors were instilled with the spirit of lions, and they decided: "O our honorable prince, it is time for us to sacrifice ourselves for our country!"*³⁶

A passage of the the *Life* above tells about the troops of Alexander preparing for the Battle of Lake Peipus against the Germans. The lion metaphor in the text deserves attention, because a lion is the only wild animal being used as a metaphor in the *Life*. A lion has traditionally represented royalty, it has been regarded as the king of the animals. It was a popular symbol of the strength and bravery already from the times of Antiquity and it has been preserved as such into our days³⁷.

In the *Ipat'evskiy Chronicle*, when describing the year 1251, there is an account about a successful war expedition of prince Daniil against the Lithuanians, and in that connection the achievements of his famous father, Roman, are recalled as follows: *...and he returned to his country with a great honour, following the road of his father, great Roman, who fought against the pagans like a lion, and with whose name the children of the Polovtsians were frightened.*³⁸

What makes this account special, is its analogy with the description of the most famous war hero in the medieval Europe, Richard I the Lionheart (1157–1199) of England. The French Joinville describes the reputation of Richard the Lionheart as follows: *...that when the Saracen children cried, their mothers called out, "Whist! here is King Richard," in order to keep them quiet.*³⁹

It is no coincidence that in the same sentence Roman of Galich is compared with a lion and his frightening reputation among the heathen children is mentioned. There are two possibilities why the metaphore connected with Richard the Lionheart occurs in the *Ipat'evskiy Chronicle*. Either the legend about Richard was also known in Galich or the metaphors of strength and bravery were so common in the oral tradition in Europe, that it was easy to form similar metaphors in both Galich and a century later in France.

A passage from the legend, connected with Richard the Lionheart, has been transferred along with the Galichian writing tradition also to the *Life of Alexander Nevskiy*. The theme of frightening children has been joined to the part where Alexander arrived in Vladimir to claim the post of the grand duke to himself after the death of his father:

*At that time, after the death of his father, Alexander came to the city of Vladimir with a large army. It was a redoubtable arrival and the news of it reached the very mouth of the Volga. And the women of the Moabites began to frighten their children, saying: "Alexander the Prince is coming!"*⁴⁰

The metaphors in the *Life of Alexander* reflect the images of its era. Because Alexander was above all a warrior, he was connected with the images of warriors who were considered the most well-known and the most perfect. Richard the Lionheart represents the most European model in the *Life of Alexander*, because Richard was a popular hero in the folktales not only in England, but also elsewhere in Europe and especially in France, where he spent most of his life and where he was finally also buried⁴¹. It is to be noted that the hero of the chivalric romance is a warrior without nationality; a knight fought for the religion and the cause, not for certain country or nationality⁴².

Although the importance of the Galich as a transferor of the western influences is obvious, it is unfortunately apparent that its culture and literature has not been studied with relevant seriousness. The cultural bonds between Galich and Central Europe and their manifestation both in everyday customs, in the prince's court, and in literature is a theme that would deserve some serious research. Many Russian researchers of the Middle Ages are inclined to emphasize the cultural uniformity of the Russian countries, and so those few historians who have referred to the western contacts of Galich, have passed it over quickly and sometimes even morally disapproving⁴³.

The writer of the *Life of Alexander* has clearly been familiar with the requirements the true knight had to fulfil, because the *Life* repeats in Europe well-known metaphors expressing war honour. Consequently the warrior description of Alexander Nevskiy corresponds to a large extent to the same ideology that the whole Christian Europe expected from its feudal aristocracy.

The literature of the 13th century, especially when telling about laymen, was still strongly based on the folklorism, on the oral tale telling tradition. The researchers of the narration tradition of folklorism have identified certain rules, of which one of the most important is that regularity of the narration helps to understand better the actual message of the story. When the structure of the narration is familiar to the audience, it not only makes it possible to understand the story, but also its interpretation, memorization, and presenting new stories based on this structure. In experiments concerning text understanding, the researchers have discovered that audience perceives better the story with a familiar structure. Hence, recognizing a familiar structure helps to analyze the meaning of the story⁴⁴.

The story of the life and courage of the orthodox grand prince Alexander goes perfectly together with the image of the true hero defending the borderlands, that were also presented by the Frank's Roland, El Cid of Spain, and Digenes Akrites of Byzantium. The *Life of Alexander* is a manifestation of a universal European ideal of an aristocratic warrior in the medieval literature. Alexander operated in the border district and fought heroically against the enemy – the enemy that has been particularly described as an enemy of faith⁴⁵.

The borrowed literary formulae and examples show clearly that to be able to write the *Life of Alexander* no personal participation in the heat of the battle was needed. On the contrary, a layman would hardly be able to use literary models in the way they have been used in the *Life*. The battles mentioned in the hagiography meet very well those requirements that the chivalric warrior cult expected its heroes in the whole Europe. The *Life of Alexander* meets two of the most important requirements of the kighthood: operating in the border district and encountering a different religion in the battlefield.

4. Postscript

Although the figure of Alexander Nevskiy is today above all the manifestation of the Russian national identity, one has to ask if this was the case as far back as in the Middle Ages when the *Life* was written. In the Middle Ages the people did not wage war, the nations did not wage war. Ordinary people cultivated land, hunted, and did many sorts of things of their own, living in barter economy, whereas the chiefs fought. The aristocratic warrior class did not fight for the people, for the nation or for the nationality, but they fought for their own power, because in the Middle Ages the power indicator was in the line with quantity of land property, and as is well known, the one with the power has to struggle continuously to keep his dominating position⁴⁶. Today Alexander Nevskiy represents national identity whereas in the Middle Ages he represented the group identity of a limited social class, the feudal aristocracy.

The redactions of the *Life of Alexander Nevskiy*, written in 16th century establish the image of Alexander as a defender of the nation⁴⁷. This coincides with the event when a number of Russian national saints were canonized to support the policy that favoured the greatness of Moscow. One of the saints that were canonized in 1547 was Alexander Nevskiy, the ancestor of the Moscow princes. With the help of the new redactions of the *Life*, Ivan IV not only strengthened and legitimated his own position, according to which the Russian lands were irrevocably following the road to unification, and how the princes of Moscow were ready to take their stand on the lines laid down by their ancestors. In the 18th century, along with the church reforms by Peter the Great, the cult of Alexander Nevskiy turned to more earthly when his example how to defend Russia against the West was emphasized⁴⁸. This idea has also been cherished by the later times rulers of Soviet Union and Russia of the day⁴⁹.

One of the most essential questions of the Russian national myth has been its position between the East and West, between the Asia and Europe. Alexander Nevskiy can with his image give an identification model to this problem. Utilizing the image of Alexander the model of defending one's own national culture can be shown. It is exciting to notice, however, that the elements of this model have been brought from the border districts, through encountering and interaction and where the nationality, the religion, and the state borders were disregarded.

¹Begunov, Ju. K.: *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo v Russkoy literature XII – XVIII vekov. Knjaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy i ego epokha.* Sankt-Petersburg 1995, 163.

²Korpela, Jukka: *Kiovan Rusj. Keskiajan eurooppalainen suurvalta.* Hämeenlinna 1996, 205, 211 – 212, 214.

³Begunov Yu. K.: *Pamyatnik russkoy literatury XIII veka. "Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli"*. Moskva 1965, 58 – 59.

⁴The *Life of Alexander Nevskiy* is not an entirely typical guidebook of spiritual life because it is written by utilising the genre of war stories. This is the reason why a large number of researchers have at first considered The *Life* as a pure war story into which scenes typical of the hagiographies, such as prayers and references to the Bible, have been added later on. See Børtnes, Josten: *The Literature of Old Russia 988– 17330.* The Cambridge History of Russian Literature. Cambridge University Press 1996, 22; Fennell, John – Stokes, Anthony: *Early Russian Literature.* London 1974, 108; Zenkovsky, Serge A.: *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles and tales.* New York 1974, 224 – 225.

⁵Gurevich, Aron: *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception.* Cambridge University Press. First printed 1988, reprinted 1990, 43, 49, 55.

⁶Lehmijoki, Maiju: *Hagiografiat keskiajan tutkimuksen lähteinä. Työkalut riviin. Näkökulmia yleisen historian tutkimusmenetelmiin.* Ed. Eero Kuparinen. Turku 1997, 233.

⁷Heffernan, Thomas J.: *Sacred Biography: Saints and Their Biographers in the Middle Ages.* Oxford University Press, New York 1988, 5 – 6.

⁸See Korpela, Jukka: *Nestorin kronikka. Kertomus Muinais-Venäjältä.* Kanava no 4 1995, 218.

⁹Novgorod's chronicles have cut the text part of the *Life of Alexander* to follow the normal chronologic style, organised by the year. For this reason, some controversy has emerged over which parts of the text originally belonged to the chronicle's description and which have been added into it later as the Alexander's life became more familiar. See Lind, John H.: *Early Russian-Swedish Rivalry. The Battle on the Neva in 1240 and Birger Magnusson's Second Crusade to Tavastia.* Scandinavian Journal of History, vol. 16, No 4, 1991, 274 – 275.

¹⁰*Tale of the Life and Courage of the Pious and great Prince Alexander* (hereafter referred as *The Life*) in Zenkovsky, Serge A.: *Medieval Russia's Epics, Cronicles, and Tales.* Penguin books 1974, 227. "Аще можешу противитися мне, то се емь уже зде, пленяя землю твою." *Povesti o zhitii i o khrabrosti blagovernago i velikago knyazya Oleksandra* (hereafter referred as *Zhitye*) in Begunov Yu. K.: *Pamyatnik russkoy literatury XIII veka. "Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli"*. Izdatel'stvo "Nauka", Moskva 1965, 188.

¹¹IV Rg 18. Versio Vulgata.

¹²*The Life*, 227. See *Zhitye* 188.

¹³2 Kings 19,1. See IV Rg 19,1. Versio Vulgata.

¹⁴*Zhitye*, 188; compare with II Par 32,6– 8. Versio Vulgata.

¹⁵Cary, George: *The Medieval Alexander.* Cambridge University Press 1956. Reprinted 1967.

¹⁶Moening, Ulrich: Digenes = Alexander? The Relationship between Digenes Akrites and the Byzantine Alexander Romance in their Different Versions. Digenes Akrites. New Approaches to Byzantine Heroic Poetry. Edited by Roderick Beaton and David Ricks. Cambridge 1993.

¹⁷Especially Francis J. Thomson has been very critical of this question. According to him the claim of the *Tale's* 11th or 12th century Russian origin is unsupported by positive evidence, that is to say, the lack of early manuscripts. Thomson, Francis J.: The Nature of the Reception of Christian Byzantine Culture in Russia in the Tenth to the Thirteenth Centuries and Its Implications for Slavic Russian Culture, 113– 115; Made in Russia. A Survey of the Translations Allegedly Made in Kiovan Russia, 348. From The Reception of Byzantine Culture in Medieval Russia. Ashgate, Variorum Collected Studies Series. Aldershot 1999.

¹⁸Graham G.: The Tale og Devgeni. Byzantinoslavica: International Journal of Byzantine Studies, vol. 29, 1968, 51– 74; Tvorogov O. V.: Devgenievo deyanie. "Izbornik" Sbornik proizvedeniy drevney Rusi. Moskva 1969, 714.

¹⁹Aleksandriya. In "Izbornik". Sbornik proizvedeniy literatury drevney Rusi. Moskva 1969, 249– 257.

²⁰Devgenievo deyanie. In "Izbornik" 1969, 191. "Девгении славны, велие желание имам видетися с тобою. А ныне не ленись проидитись к моему царству, зане дерзость и храбрость твоя прослыла по всеи вселенней. И любовь вниде в мя велия: видети хошу юность твою." *Deyanie prezhnnyh vremen hrabryh chelovek* in Kuz'mina, V. D.: Devgenievo deyanie: Deyanie prezhnnykh vremen hrabryh chelovek. Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, Moskva 1962, 154.

²¹Ibid.

²²Devgenievo deyanie, 193.

²³The Life, 227, See Zhitye, 188.

²⁴Zhitye, 190.

²⁵Zhitye, 188.

²⁶Devgenievo deyanie, 193.

²⁷The Life, 229; *Съи наехахъ на шатеръ великий, златоверхий и посече столпь шатерный. Полцы же Олександрови, видевше падение шатерное, возрадовашася.* Zhitye, 190.

²⁸Ibid.; compare with IV Rg 19,35. Versio Vulgata.

²⁹II Sm 21,15– 22; II Sm 23,8– 39. Versio Vulgata.

³⁰Lihachev, D. S.: Galichkaya literaturnaya traditsiya v zhitii Aleksandra Nevskogo. Trudy otdely drevnerusskogo literatury V. Moskva 1947.

³¹Mäki-Petäys, Mari: Nomen est omen. Esimerkkejä Aleksanteri Nevskin pyhimyselämäkerran kielikuvista. With an English Summary: Nomen est omen. Examples of metaphor in Alexander Nevskiy's hagiography. Faravid 22– 23. Jyväskylä 1999.

³²Mansikka, V.: Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskago. Razbor redaktsiy i tekst'. First printed in Leipzig 1913. Leipzig 1984, 18– 25.

³³Shishov, A. V.: Polkovodtsheskoe iskusstvo knyazya Aleksandra Jaroslavicha v Nevskoy bitve. Knjaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy. Pod redaktsiyey Ju. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova. S-Peterburg 1995, 35.

³⁴Le Goff, Jacques: The Medieval Imagination. The University of Chicago Press 1985, 171; compare Likhachev D. S.: Pervye sem'sot let russkoy literatury. "Izbornik" Sbornik proizvedeniy literatury drevney Rusi. Moskva 1969, 15.

³⁵Ks. Vernadsky, George: The Mongols and Russia. Yale University Press, New Haven 1966, 149.

³⁶The Life, 230; *Тако и мужи Олександрови исполнишася духом ратнымъ: бяху бо сердца их аки сердца лвомъ, и реиша: "О, княже нашъ честныи! Ныне приспе время нам положити главы своя за тя".* Zhitye, 191.

³⁷Adrianova-Perets, V. P.: Otcherki poeticheskogo stilya drevney Rusi. Moskva 1947, 87.

³⁸...и придоста со славою на землю свою, наследивши путь отца своего великаго Романа, иже бе изоострился на поганья, яко левъ, имъ же Половци дети страишаху. *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*. Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisej. Tom' vtoroy. Sanktpeterburg 1843, 187.

³⁹Joinville's *Chronicle of the Crusade of St. Lewis* in Memoirs of the Crusades. Translated and introduced by Sir Frank Marzials. Everyman's Library, London 1965, 155.

⁴⁰The Life, 232; *Князь же Олександро прииде во Володимерь по умертвии отца своего, и промчеша весть его и до устья Волгы. И начаши жены моавитъскыя полошати дети своя, ркуще: "Олександро князь едетъ".* Zhitye, 192. The Moabites was a Semitic tribe that lived in Palestine. They derived their name from Moab, the son of Lot. The author of the *Life* believed that tatars belonged to this biblical tribe. Begunov, Yu. K.: Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo. "Izbornik". Sbornik proizvedeniy literatury drevney Rusi. Izdatel'stvo "Hudozhestvennaya literatura", Moskva 1969, 741.

⁴¹The New Encyclopedia Britannica, vol. 15. Publisher Helen Hemingway Benton, Chicago, 827.

⁴²Kostyuhin, E. A.: Aleksandr Makedonskiy v literaturnoy i fol'klornoy traditsii. Moskva 1972, 36– 37; Estlander, Carl Gustaf: Richard Lejonhjerta i historien i poesin. Akademisk afhandling. Helsingfors 1858, 70.

⁴³George Vernadsky emphasizes a basic difference in attitudes of Alexander and Daniil towards their respective church affiliations. According to him *Alexander was an ardent member of the Greek Orthodox Church, which symbolized universal truth for him. In character and personality Daniil was light-hearted and addicted to the habits and notions of Western chivalry, while Alexander was more serious in purpose and had a deeper sense of responsibility toward his country and his people.* Vernadsky 1966, 149.

⁴⁴Siikala, Anna-Leena: Tarina ja Tulkinta: Tutkimus kansankertojista. Mänttä 1984, 23.

⁴⁵The opposite army of the Battle of Neva was of the Roman faith, and the enemy in the battle in the ice of lake Peypus were the knights of God. The Life, 227, 231; See Zhitye, 188, 191.

⁴⁶Klein, Karen W.: The Partisan Voice: A Study of the Political Lyric in France and Germany, 1180–1230. Paris 1971, 132– 146.

⁴⁷Mäki-Petäys, Mari: The Warrior and the Saint. The Image of Alexander Nevskiy as a Model of Imperial Transfer. Russian Imperial Identity, in print.

⁴⁸Begunov, Yu. K.: Drevnerusskie traditsii v proizvedeniyah pervoy chetverti XVIII v. ob Aleksandre Nevskom. Trudy v otdel drevnerusskoy kul'tury XXVI. Leningrad 1971, 73– 82.

⁴⁹Selart Anti: Aleksander Nevski: Märkmeid ühe püha suurvürsti postuumse karjääri kohta. Akadeemia. Eesti Kirjanike Liidu kuukiri Tartus. 12. aastakäik, no 1, 2000, 124 – 148.