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NIKOLAI LESKOV'S KYIV TEXT

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Abstract. In 1849, eighteen-year-old Nikolai Leskov moved to Kyiv, where he would spend the next ten years of his life. Some thirty-four years later, he wrote a vivid memoir titled *Pecherskie antiki* (1883) in which he recounted Kyiv's architecture, culture, and inhabitants. This article examines Leskov's text — set in Kyiv and about Kyiv — beyond its autobiographical relevance. When viewed through the prism of historical and mythopoetic images of Kyiv circulating prior to and during Leskov's stay in the city, the memoir reveals a hierarchy of signs, images, and archetypes. This hierarchy, as well as the role of Kyiv in its formation and proliferation, has been studied and theorized by scholars of Ukrainian literature, who termed this cultural phenomenon the Kyiv Text. Some of the attributes of the Kyiv Text are the oppositions of high/low, sacred/profane, form/amorphousness. Having a lifelong fascination with Kyiv, Leskov contributed to the literary tradition of the Kyiv Text through exploring additional oppositions, such as change/tradition and official/popular. His memoir *Pecherskie antiki* thus offers new historical and cultural insights into the Kyiv Text.

Keywords: Nikolai Leskov, the Kyiv Text, city as text, memoir genre.

Throughout his literary career Nikolai Leskov embarked on numerous journeys across the Russian Empire and beyond its borders. Yet his very first trip from his native Oryol Province to Kyiv played a pivotal role in his subsequent decision to become a writer. When eighteen-year-old Leskov reached Kyiv in 1849, he was struck by the city's architectural splendor, the multiethnic and multilingual populace, and the cultural and intellectual diversity. The extent to which Kyiv and Kyivans influenced Leskov's development was expressed by the author himself, when he claimed that time spent in Kyiv was his "school of life," the higher education he never received. (Leskov, 1957, p. 380). Each of Leskov's major biographers treated his Kyivan period in detail.¹ Similarly, literary scholars have addressed those of Leskov's works which are heavily influenced by his Ukrainian experience.² Among these immensely colorful and curious texts set in Ukraine, the reader finds one example of memoirs, written in 1883, titled *Pecherskie antiki* (*The Antiques of Pechersk*, hereafter, "Antiques"). Scholars have approached this text from a number of perspectives, such as memory studies and urban history (Соболевська, 2013; Жужгина, 2019; Евдокимова, 2000). This article proposes to view Leskov's mem-

oir as a contribution to the literary representation of Kyiv as a semiosphere — a semiotic mechanism that reflects and generates culture.³ When studied carefully, Leskov's "Antiques" reveals an intricate inner structure that prioritizes certain linguistic, topographic, and, most importantly, archetypal notions over others. This article addresses the historical and mythopoetic images of Kyiv that were circulating prior to and during Leskov's stay in the city. It questions how Leskov's "Antiques" utilized and transformed notions — such as Kyiv's sacredness, geography, and cultural heterogeneity — prevalent in the emerging literary tradition. In this way, the article proposes to view Leskov's memoir as a text composed in the frame of a tradition of Kyiv's literary representations, i.e., the Kyiv Text.

The Kyiv Text: History & Theory

Starting with the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century, Kyiv repeatedly found itself at the mercy of ever-shifting imperial politics. The state's disposition toward the city shifted depending on the ruler and the officials that were assigned to oversee the Southern region of the Russian Empire. For example, Catherine II familiarized herself with the region by traveling to and through Kyiv on multiple occasions and chronicling her experiences.⁴ She also made Kyiv the center of the Little Russia governorate, a decision that was presumably influenced by the city's strong association with the empire's foundational myth. However, Catherine did not fully embrace Kyiv as the center of the Orthodox faith, but rather sought to cultivate its infrastructure to the extent befitting a governorate center. In keeping with her Enlightenment ideas, Catherine aimed to secularize the city, to reduce the count of monasteries and their respective properties, and even to get rid of the historic neighborhood of Podil (Булкина, 2010, С. 54–55). All in all, during her reign, Catherine carried out a strong policy of cultural assimilation in Kyiv and its respective region. Yet not all of Catherine's successors saw eye to eye with her when it came to deciding Kyiv's future in light of its past.

The reign of Nicholas I (1825–1855), the end of which coincides with Leskov's time in Kyiv, reveals an attempt to "elevate" Kyiv to its historical status as the religious cradle of the Russian Empire. While Nicholas I continued Catherine's efforts to depolonize Kyiv, for him this endeavor meant replacing strong Catholic influences with Orthodox values. For this reason, in 1834 Nicholas I opened the Imperial

University of Saint Volodymyr, the aim and the name of which reinforced his strong religious rhetoric. As literary scholar Inna Bulkina writes, "In the era of Nicholas [I], Kyiv becomes an actual ideological space: with the establishment of the Russian university, Kyiv is transformed into 'the stronghold of the true Orthodox faith' in the primordially Russian region reclaimed from the Poles, a move which is also reflected by Russian literature" (Булкина, 2010, С. 54–55). Bulkina connects the ideological, political, and intellectual transformation of Kyiv with corresponding developments in the realm of literature. One might ask: Why does literature "take note," so to speak, of the physical transformations of the surroundings in which it flourishes? This question can be answered using literary scholar and semiotician Juri Lotman's seminal concept of the semiosphere, which suggests that (any) space, by virtue of its hosting of cultural and communicative activity, can be treated and read as a text insofar as it participates in the generating of semiosis. Developing the notion of the city as text, philologist Vladimir Toporov coined the term "the Petersburg Text" (Топоров, 1995).⁵ Similarly, scholars of literary representations of Kyiv have proposed the term "the Kyiv Text" (Гундорова, 2000; Гундорова, 2013; Поліщук, 2021; Шама, 2000).

In order to look at Leskov's memoir directly, it is necessary to mark the boundaries of the Kyiv Text as a concept that evolved over time, and that simultaneously influenced — and was influenced by — the historical and cultural processes which unfolded within its geographic borders. Literary scholar and culturologist Yaroslav Polishchuk explains that because of the ever-shifting value systems imposed on Kyiv, over time the city acquired layers of meanings, symbols, and mythologies. To represent the process of this layering, Polishchuk refers to Tadeusz Ślawek's metaphor of city as a palimpsest:

"The metaphor of the palimpsest, used by the Polish researcher Tadeusz Ślawek, works best to define the city. He notes that in this palimpsest the factors overlap according to the law of addition: 'marble sheet on a marble sheet', 'steel plate on steel plate', 'stone on stone'. And this layering of elements can be interpreted in two ways: in the aesthetic sense as the city's advantage and endless possibilities for its expansion, and in the philosophical sense — as a call for a necessary

reduction, liberation from the authority of accumulation, and elimination of layers, that allows one to see what is essential and prominent, what is connected with the origins” (Поліщук, 2021).

Polishchuk emphasizes that in the process of creating the image of the city, some symbols, traditions, and topoi are privileged over others; those elements which are not foregrounded in this process are either reduced or altogether eliminated. Thus arises the question: What is *essential*, *prominent*, and *connected-with-origins*, when it comes to the Kyiv Text?

Following the historical and cultural metamorphoses imposed on the city from the mid-1700s to the mid-1800s, philologist Olena Burago proposes a conceptual structure of Kyiv: “The Kyiv Text is a super-text that consists of the totality of texts which have a common object of description in reality, and that forms an open system marked by semantic and linguistic integrity” (Бураго, 2016, С. 40). Burago provides several systemic features that are founded on the historical and religious role of Kyiv as the epicenter of spiritual activity, and that contribute to the continuity and integrity of the Kyiv Text:

“The image of Kyiv soaring in the heights is sufficient as an illustration of the idea that *Kyiv is a shrine*. Here the ambivalences and oppositions of the Kyiv Text emerge: high and low, vertical and horizontal, space and chaos, form and amorphousness, etc.” (Бураго, 2016, С. 38).

Thus, the oppositions that appear as a result of Kyiv’s marked sacredness — whether perspectival, structural, or metaphysical — coexist and flourish within its space. Leskov engages these oppositions in his memoir, drawing from them and layering onto them oppositions of his own.

The Origins of *The Antiques of Pechersk*

Leskov wrote the “Antiques” in 1883 for the historical-ethnographical journal *Kievskaiia starina*. Prior to the memoir’s publication, he exchanged correspondence with the journal’s editor, Feofan Lebedintsev. In the first letter, dated September 7, 1882, Leskov informs Lebedintsev that he has commenced work on the project:

“I will write to you soon and will certainly

send you a small but well-conceived piece (about a sheet of paper), that is cheerful and has a historical connection to Kyiv. It will be called ‘The Tsar’s Nemolyak’, or, if ‘our pious fool, the stiff Censorship’ does not like it, then you can name it ‘Elder Malafei and His Adolescent Servant.’ This is [...] something that, perhaps, will prompt a smile in the reader, and that is enough for our fellow storyteller...” (Лесков, 1957, С. 522).

A month later, on October 14, 1882, Leskov updates Lebedintsev on the status of the piece: “I’m doing some work for you and will finish it soon. It will be something akin to my reminiscences about the Kyivan eccentrics of the 1850s. I will call it ‘The Miracle Workers of Pechersk’” (Лесков, 1957, С. 522). After mentioning the updated title, Leskov briefly outlines the key characters and their personal features: “All these people are alive in their features and are very funny” (Лесков, 1957, С. 523). Leskov provided the most essential characterization of the text in the letter from November 12, 1882:

“With all my lack of time, I am trying to finish an interesting article for you. Of course, it will not be history, but rather some fables, maybe quite unimportant in their value, but nonetheless alive, and without that, as Gogol said, ‘the reader quickly falls asleep’ ... The ‘Eccentrics’ are written in such a way that the text can be conveniently and effectively divided into two parts. The tone is everywhere cheerful, without any pretense at all, except for my organic hatred of Bibikov’s impudence” (Лесков, 1957, С. 522).

In his final letter to Lebedintsev, Leskov tellingly informs him—and advises his future readers—to not read the forthcoming memoir as a historical document. He also signals that the memoir should not be read as an autobiography. Although Leskov notes that there are autobiographical elements, he draws attention to *antiki* — “eccentrics” — and emphasizes that their merit lies not in their intrinsic importance, but in their intrigue and entertainment.⁶

Like many of Leskov’s works, the “Antiques” does not follow one dominant plot line or a linear chronology.⁷ Instead, its episodic structure shifts from one character to another, documenting certain events from their lives. The recurrence of certain characters

throughout the text allows the reader to distinguish them as protagonists. The first such protagonist is Kesar' Stepanovich Berlinskii, a retired military officer and talented storyteller. In Berlinskii's case, his talent derives from his ability to make things up, rather than to recount events as they really happened. Berlinskii appears in a number of episodes throughout the memoir, always in the role of an intermediary between the general population of Pechersk and the officials, gaining himself the status of a local hero. Another important character that receives his own plot strand is the dogmatic Old Believer Malafei Pimych. Accompanied by his young servant Giezii, he travels to Kyiv to practice his faith near the religious shrines of Kyiv, albeit in hiding, so as to avoid persecution from state officials. A few additional historical characters appear briefly in the narrative. These include writer and historian Viktor Askochenskii, who is portrayed in an ironic light due to his "invincible audacity"; the journalist and editor of the first Kyivan newspaper that was independent from state affairs (*Kievskii telegraf*) — Alfred von Junc; and the Orthodox priest Evfim Botvinskii, whose questionable morals are redeemed by his kind heart, as is typical in Leskov's works.⁸ Leskov unites his gallery of characters through location — Pechersk of the mid-nineteenth century — and this geographical unity provides the first major clue for reading "Antiques" as a Kyiv Text.

According to Bulkina, transportation difficulties split Kyiv of the nineteenth century into three distinct parts: "the Upper City" — Pechersk; 'the Old City' — the neighborhood of St. Michael's Monastery, Saint Sophia Cathedral and Saint Andrew's Church located on the border of the 'Old City' and Podil; and the third part — 'the Lower City', Podil" (Булкина, 2010, С. 42–43). Leskov's autobiographic writings reveal that he had access to each of these distinct parts. In the opening lines of the "Antiques", he explains that upon moving to Kyiv he resided in the Old City but gravitated toward Pechersk. Leskov's decision to focus his memoir fully on Pechersk is curious (and even mysterious) given that he had open access to every intellectual circle, church, monastery, and library. His familial connection with Sergei Petrovich Alferiev — the renowned physician and the Dean of the School of Medicine in the Imperial University of Saint Volodymyr — afforded him entrance into any social gathering. Why did Leskov choose to describe Pechersk instead of the university where he audited classes, or other enlightened in-

tellectual circles of Kyiv? I propose that Leskov made this choice based on a variety of factors. First, Pechersk had a particular allure of mythology connected to the sacred Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, which allowed Leskov to embed his memoir into the canvas of established epic and sacral traditions. Second, its residents practiced a heroic — albeit at times comical — resistance to bureaucratic reforms carried out by Kyiv's General Governor Dmitrii Bibikov, an official whom Leskov utterly despised. Finally, and as a consequence of the previous point, Leskov sought to preserve the memory of the bygone life in Pechersk, which was irrevocably lost as Bibikov's reforms came into effect.

Leskov's Kyiv Text

The nineteenth-century Pechersk was a space imbued with sacral and epic elements. First and foremost, Pechersk housed the holy Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra — the religious heart of the city which stands to this day. Throughout the centuries the district attracted a multitude of devout pilgrims and curious visitors from all regions of the empire. Pechersk's ample religious tradition — in conjunction with its captivating terrain — produced a particular cultural richness, allowing Leskov to elaborate on its emerging symbolism.⁹

"In the terrain on which Kyiv is located, Leskov's contemporaries saw one of the foundations of the city's cultural identity. Kyiv's sublimity is notable for its aspiration upwards; the soil, cut by deep ravines — the former rivers — makes the passage of time evident. The diversity of the population speaks of an 'uncontrollable flow of peoples'" (Евдокимова, 2000).

Against this magnificent backdrop the reader encounters the legendary figure of Kesar' Berlinskii, who is portrayed neither as a righteous man, nor as a charlatan. Leskov employs the opposition of sacred and profane to create a man who performs good deeds but is not quite the wonder-worker that his fellow townspeople believe him to be. Capitalizing on Berlinskii's first name being eponymous with the title of the Emperor of Rome (Latin: *Caesar*), Leskov writes: "At the bazaar everyone knew Berlinskii and obeyed him, not only out of fear, but also out of conscience, because rumors loudly glorified the 'Caesar of Pechersk' and painted him in a very attractive heroic-folkloric genre" (Лесков, 1958, С. 140). According to Leskov, Ber-

linskii was akin to a religious intercessor between the impoverished and marginalized residents of Pechersk and the city officials who sought to displace them from the vast hills above the Dnipro River. Thus, Kesar' is a figure neatly split between the sacred and profane — a figure specific to Pechersk in his synergy of saintly and warrior-like qualities, his desire to be of service to others, and his uncontrollable urge to exaggerate his tales at every given opportunity.

If Kesar' is a native of Pechersk and a figure that could only appear in this sacred space, then the Old Believer Malafei Pimych and his young servant Giezii are transitory figures who epitomize the religious pilgrims. These two zealots are characterized by the narrator as “oddballs of the first degree” (Лесков, 1958, С. 164). Kesar' gives them another oxymoronic characteristic: “Wonderful people and fools” (Лесков, 1958, С. 167). These evaluations cultivate a sharp differentiation between devout (even somewhat *urodivye*) Old Believers and the pragmatic Kesar'. Incidentally, Leskov also differentiates the pious sectarians geographically by employing the spatial particularity of Pechersk. In an elaborate description, the narrator provides directions to elder Malafei's abode:

“In order to reach this, literally speaking, prayer stable, one had to go through one courtyard, then another, and then turn into yet another courtyard. Then, one had to climb into a back street and from there go through a blocked door into a firewood nook. In this nook there was also a through passage to a special little courtyard, which was blocked by a tall heap of manure appearing as a bloated navel, behind which nothing was visible on all sides. The pile was so tall that it covered a tall mulberry or mountain ash tree sticking out of its middle almost to the very branches. The hut had three windows, all of which looked out on the aforementioned heap of manure, or, to put it better, the *dunghill*. The hut had a wooden hallway, above the doors of which the new tenants immediately hoisted a small cast copper cross of the type called ‘korsunchiki’” (Лесков, 1958, С. 167–68).

That a place of worship (albeit a cattle-shed, *molitvennyi khlev*) is accessed only upon passing a tall heap of manure is a potentially scandalous gesture, because it erases the boundaries between high spirituality and scatology.¹⁰ Yet according to Burago, this

overlap of high and low permeates the Kyiv Text. The root of this opposition can be traced to the account of Christ's birth as documented in the Gospel of Luke: Leskov counts on his reader to remember Christ being born in a cattle-shed and placed in a manger. The Old Believers, with whom Leskov sympathized in his earlier years, thus represent the purity of the original faith and even the hope of remedying the Schism of the 1650s.

The most significant episode from the Old Believer plot line features Kyiv's populace anticipating the visit of Tsar Nicholas I for the opening of the first bridge across Dnipro to connect the opposing banks. Elder Malafei predicts that when traversing the newly built bridge, the Tsar will stop in the middle and cross himself with the “correct” two-fingered cross, thus reconciling the divided Church. The crowd gathers around the bridge to witness the momentous occasion, but when the Tsar appears, he does not cross himself at all, leaving Malafei dumbfounded. And yet the anticipation of reconciliation within the Church is particularly fitting when set in Kyiv — the place in which the Christianization of Kyivan Rus' started under the guidance of Prince Volodymyr (now a canonized saint in both Ukrainian and Russian Orthodox Churches.)

In addition to the oppositions born out of Pechersk's religious significance, further oppositions emerge through the district's resistance to General Governor Dmitrii Bibikov's reforms. Bibikov was appointed as the head of the Kyiv General Governorate in 1837 and served in this role until 1852. Whether his efforts as general governor were ultimately effective is for historians to determine. Among Leskov's circles, however, they were widely unpopular. Bibikov's reforms aimed to realize Nicholas I's vision of Kyiv as the religious and intellectual cradle of the empire. This project was carried out at the expense of Pechersk's centuries-old architecture and the idyllic rhythm of life, both of which are romanticized by Leskov in “Antiques”. In the memoir, Bibikov's chief cause for eliciting the antagonism of Pechersk's inhabitants is *bibikovskie doski*. The narrator explains that when he moved to Kyiv, he saw a multitude of Pechersk structures bearing wooden planks with the dates before which they must be demolished:

“On each such plank there was a stern inscription: ‘To demolish in such and such a year.’ There was an extremely large number of these unfortu-

nate houses doomed to be destroyed. When I arrived in Kyiv and went to inspect it, the ‘Bibikov planks’ brought me unexpected sadness and despondency. [...] It may turn out that all this was necessary, but nevertheless it smacked of some unpleasantly unceremonious and rude autocracy. [...] The Old city and Pechersk were especially generously decorated with ‘Bibikov planks’, since it was here that the capital ‘transformation’ planned by Bibikov was to be carried out” (Лесков, 1958, С. 136).

While Bibikov’s policies prohibited the repair of houses that were “sentenced” to destruction, the inhabitants of Pechersk came up with an ingenious solution to combat his heartless bureaucracy. Leskov describes a police warden, Ivan Dionisovich, whose talent lay in his ability to make new wooden planks appear aged and weathered:

“The job, which the warden Ivan Dionisovich performed artistically — but which he kept silent about — belonged to the antiquarian kind: he knew the secret of how to ‘age’ new planks in order to ‘hem’ rotten roofs with them at night. And he did it in such a manner that no eye could distinguish the new patches of his masterful preparation from the old ones” (Лесков, 1958, С. 165).

The paradox thus lies not only in the fact that resistance against the official orders comes from a police warden tasked with executing them, but also in the preference of old to new to the extent of forcing the “old” appearance onto new wooden planks. Here we see a set of additional oppositions play themselves out: official/popular on the one hand, and new/old on the other. The residents of Pechersk meet Bibikov’s reforms with distrust. Unwilling to accept their fate as external changes are imposed on them, they prefer to live in decrepit houses and to deceive the officials by imitating old wooden planks. The opposition between official and popular generates another layer of conflict; whereas the official represents the impending, inevitable, and irrevocable (new) reforms, the popular represents the traditional way of life with its “remnants of the past” — *antiques* or *eccentrics* — that have no space in the new order of things. This latter opposition is intensified when considered through the prism of the memoir genre.

Memory of the past dominates the present throughout Leskov’s text. While several scholars have noted the prevalence of memory as a structural and aesthetic principle of the “Antiques”,¹¹ they have not explicitly linked it to the Kyiv Text tradition. It should be noted that throughout his adult life, Leskov returned to Kyiv on several occasions, yet when writing about Kyiv, he chose to focus on his very first encounter with the city. As such, for Leskov, Kyiv of the 1840s–1850s had reached the fullest manifestation of its unique character. As any writer, Leskov had a choice to make — to privilege one image of the city over others. Here, Polishchuk’s definition of the city as a palimpsest provides a useful lens for understanding the relationship between the city and fiction:

“When applied to fiction, the metaphor of palimpsest is especially expressive. After all, every significant work of art about the city can be interpreted as an author’s attempt to reinterpret the image, which has been repeatedly registered in culture. At the same time, the writer arbitrarily or involuntarily reaches those symbolic layers and meanings that do not lie on the surface, but are more or less forgotten, as they reveal the city’s past, its tradition, which inevitably consists of a combination of different factors” (Поліщук, 2021).

According to Polishchuk, the writer searches for attributes that are beneath Kyiv’s surface — the bygone and forgotten — in order to reinterpret the city anew. The theme of the return to the past is further developed by Oleg Shama, who claims that the city’s sacred past permeates the present, offering “if not sacred, then at least positive” cultural value (Шамма, 2000, С. 27–30). Yet according to Shama, sacredness is not the sole theme of Kyiv as a metatext: “The two main plots of the Kyiv metatext are its sacredness and its eschatology. The same city, and therefore the same attributes of the city can be both sacred and infernal” (Шамма, 2000, С. 27–30). Thus, in the Kyiv Text, the sacred is simultaneously profane, while that which is alive in literature is irrevocably lost in real life. This is why Leskov’s most righteous characters at times act as charlatans; the Old Believer zealots turn out to be the most naïve dreamers; the new wooden planks are artificially aged so as to push them closer to the brink of extinction.

Leskov's "Antiques" unfold against the historical backdrop of imperial aspirations for the city on the one hand, and the cultural backdrop of sacred tradition on the other. At times, however, it is difficult to distinguish between the two. Prioritizing certain images and symbols over others, the memoir seeks to reimagine the city's past according to Leskov's lived experience. Yet it constructs this experience in agreement with contradictions of the Kyiv Text literary tradition: high/low, order/chaos, form/amorphousness, new/old, and official/popular. The first characteristic within each of these binary oppositions manifests the present, which Leskov deems to be impersonal, calculating, and soulless: "Now, when you happen to be in

Kyiv, more and more often you hear only something about banks and how to estimate a person's value in money" (Лесков, 1958, С. 136). Opposed to this preoccupation with monetary matters is the picturesque Pechersk of Leskov's youth, with its own imperfect saints and goodhearted sinners. The Pechersk of Leskov's youth is full of life in "Antiques," but in reality has sunk deep into nonexistence. Pronouncing Pechersk dead on the first page of the memoir — "I pity [...] Pechersk, deprived of life" — Leskov soon betrays his apocalyptic tone to revive the long-gone Pechersk of his youth (Лесков, 1958, С. 134). Leskov's ability to tap into the past from the present, to bring ruin back to life, reflects his distinct contribution to the tradition of the Kyiv Text.

Примітки:

- 1 Andrei Leskov, *Zhizn' Nikolaia Leskova po ego lichnym, semeinym i nesemeinym zapisiam i pamiatiam v dvukh tomakh*, (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1984). Hugh McLean, *Nikolai Leskov: The Man and His Art*, (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1977). Maya Kucherskaia, *Leskov: Proziiovannyi geni*, (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 2021).
- 2 These include the short stories "Vladychnyi sud," "Arkhieieiskie ob'ezdy" (1879), "Putimets" (1883), "Starinnye psikhopaty" (1885), "Figura" (1889), "Administrativnaia gratsiia" (1893), and "Zaiachii remiz" (1894).
- 3 The term *semiosphere* was coined by Juri Lotman to describe "a synchronic semiotic space that extends to the boundaries of the whole of a culture, is a condition for the functioning of separate semiotic structures and simultaneously their progeny" (Лотман, 1996, С. 4).
- 4 Catherine even had a special "travel guide" of the Little Russia governorate (Malorossiiskaia guberniia) created for her that was later published and widely circulated.
- 5 When describing the key features of the Petersburg Text, Toporov writes: "And the ghostly, mirage Petersburg (the 'fantastic fiction', 'nighttime dream'). Petersburg's text (or the text about it) — a kind of 'dream about a dream' — nonetheless belongs to those oversaturated realities that are inconceivable without the whole behind them and are therefore already inseparable from the myth and the entire realm of the symbolic. [...] The Petersburg text, which is not just a mirror of the city that enhances its effect, but a device through which the transition *a realibus ad realiora* — the transubstantiation of material reality into spiritual values — is made, clearly retains traces of its extratextual substratum and, in turn, requires from its consumer the ability to restore ('verify') links with that which is outside the text, the non-textual for each node of the Petersburg Text. The text, therefore, teaches the reader the rules for going beyond its own limits. Both the Petersburg Text and those to whom it revealed itself as reality unexhausted by the material-objective level, live by this connection with the extratextual" (Топоров, 1995, С. 259).
- 6 "Antiki" (*antiques*) is metaphorically used for certain (representative) inhabitants of Pechersk. The use of the term in the original Russian title is a very interesting choice. Vladimir Dal', for example, notes that in the commercial context, in the language of merchants or traders "antiki" is used to denote first-rate, first-grade goods. Thus, the semantic content of "antik(i)" includes not just object(s), relic(s), survival(s) of ancient or former times, but also rare or unique and valuable things, particularly things that are aesthetically pleasing, or are works of art. Leskov uses it jokingly as a metaphor for characters, although at times the humor is ambivalent.
- 7 As Halyna Sobolevs'ka writes, "Leskov's leading compositional technique is not to group events around the center, but to tape them together: not a traditional plot, but a series of sketches" (Соболевська, 2013, С. 100).
- 8 Leskov mentions Botvinskii during the preparatory stage of the memoir in a letter to his friend, historian Filipp Ternovskii: "In the 'Antiques' the character of the priest Botvinskii should turn out pretty well — a wondrous mass, a mixture of vulgarity [*poshlost'*], rowdiness and some kind of heroic kindness."

- 9 Bulkina writes: “The cultural and literary complex of Kyiv has distinct features. For a long time ‘Kyivan’ texts described not so much the real urban space, but the fabled and symbolic *Old Kyivan* (epic-fairy tale) space” (Булкина, 2010, С. 9).
- 10 The opposition of high and low is present all throughout the memoir. Consider, for example, the anecdote from ch. X-XIV, which features Bibikov’s mother-in-law who is suffering from severe toothache. Berlinskii convinces his nephew, who is a doctor, to treat the ailing woman, yet the two men need to devise a plan to access the woman’s upper row of teeth in order to treat the troubled tooth. Berlinskii comes up with a clever plan to physically flip the woman upside down to grant access for his nephew to treat the tooth. This flip — or, in Berlinskii’s words *poverton* — is a physical manifestation of the transposition of high into low, or, in this case, of top into bottom.
- 11 For example, Sobolevs’ka writes, “In the work the author contrasts the image of the modern city of the “banking era” and the poetic image of pre-reform Kyiv” (Соболевська, 2013, С. 101). Evdokimova in her study of Leskov’s memoir also makes note of the use of memory: “Reminiscences are the predominant state in Kyiv. The city encourages the remembrance of its beginning, about its connection with the collective history. But memory is realized through the personal effort of the one who remembers”. Tamara Zhuzhgina ascribes the dominant intrigue of the text to the cognitive dissonance of the old and the new: “The primary intrigue of ‘The Antiques of Pechersk’ is built on cognitive dissonance—the contrasting opposition of the patriarchal, pre-reform Kyiv of Bibikov’s governorship to the new Kyiv of the ‘banking period’” (Жужгина).

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Абрамян Ані Еріківна**Київський текст Миколи Лескова**

Анотація. 1849 року вісімнадцятирічній Микола Лесков переїхав до Києва, де провів наступні десять років свого життя. Через 34 роки він написав мемуари «Печерські антики» (1883), у яких розповів про архітектуру, культуру та мешканців Києва. Ця стаття вивчає текст Лескова — дія якого відбувається у Києві — поза його автобіографічною актуальністю. За розгляду через призму історичних та міфопоетичних образів Києва, що існували до та під час перебування Лескова в місті, мемуари розкривають ієрархію знаків, образів та архетипів. Цю ієрархію, а також роль Києва в її формуванні та розповсюдженні теоретизували та вивчали дослідники української літератури, які назвали цей культурний феномен Київським текстом. Деякі з атрибутів Київського тексту — це опозиції високе/низьке, сакральне/профанне, та форма/аморфність. Будучи на все життя захопленим Києвом, Лесков зробив свій внесок у літературну традицію Київського тексту дослідженням додаткових опозицій, таких як перетворення/традиція та офіційне/популярне. Таким чином, його мемуари «Печерські антики» надають нового історичного та культурного внеску в розуміння Київського тексту.

Ключові слова: Микола Лесков, Київський текст, місто як текст, мемуарний жанр.