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THE GREAT BELL TOWER OF KYIV CAVES LAVRA AS A SPATIAL LANDMARK IN THE WORKS OF THE ORTHODOX TRAVELLERS (the 19th – early 20th centuries)

ВЕЛИКА ДЗВІНИЦЯ КИЄВО-ПЕЧЕРСЬКОЇ ЛАВРИ ЯК ПРОСТОРОВИЙ ОРІЄНТИР У ТВОРАХ ПРАВОСЛАВНИХ МАНДРІВНИКІВ (XIX – початок XX ст.)

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The purpose of the publication is to examine mentions of the Great Bell Tower in works by Orthodox visitors to Kyiv, focusing on their reactions upon seeing it from afar. By analyzing these accounts, we can gain insight into the bell tower's significance as a landmark and its impact on visitors' perceptions of Kyiv. **Methods.** It was taken into account that publications issued within the Russian Empire were subject to censorship, so authors and editorial boards had to adapt to this. This research adheres to principles of historical authenticity and impartiality, objectivity and historicism, employing a range of analytical approaches. To establish the historical context, the study utilizes methods of source discovery and evaluation, comparative historical analysis, and synthesis of information. These techniques allow for a comprehensive examination of the subject matter within its broader historical framework. **Scientific novelty.** This article is the first to comprehensively examine the works of Orthodox travelers who mentioned their distant sightings of the Great Lavra Bell Tower. **Conclusions.** When combining reports from different periods and diverse viewpoints – clergy, laypeople, local travellers, and visitors from other provinces – collectively, they evoke the essence of the Lavra bell tower. Descriptions primarily feature elements visible from a distance: its prominence against Kyiv's skyline and the scenic view of its golden dome. They then shift to the spiritual aspect that motivates pilgrims, and the architectural design of its towers, noting both height and shape. Many accounts mention spotting the tower from considerable distances, such as 37–42 km west of the Dnipro river or 48 km away from a train. Sources describe the emotional impact on people first glimpsing the brilliant golden domes and crosses radiating in sunlight from afar. Examples include individuals leaning towards the tower in reverence or praying softly as they passed nearby. The tower was a constant presence, visible both upon arrival to and departure from Kyiv. It served as a connection between the city and travellers, becoming an unparalleled ornament and symbol of Kyiv. Visitors and pilgrims alike admired its tall, slender form and the radiance of its domes. The image of the Kyiv Caves Lavra became inextricably linked with its magnificent bell tower, which itself was an astonishing sight due to its height, massiveness, and incredible design. Seeking out the Lavra bell tower became a custom for religious people and a point of interest for travellers. These powerful yet often straightforward descriptions from various observers brought the tower to life. The Kyiv Lavra bell tower evolved into a remarkable emblem of the city's spiritual and historical leadership, a ceremonial beacon for those seeking sanctification, and a constant source of attraction and wonder for all who knew of it. It is possible to argue that the Great Bell Tower was not only an architectural and spatial, but also a spiritual landmark for visitors to Kyiv.

Key words: Kyiv Caves Lavra in the 19th – early 20th centuries; landmark; traveller; pilgrim; journey; skyline; bell tower; symbolic beacon.

Мета статті – дослідити згадки про Велику дзвіницю у творах православних відвідувачів Києва, зосереджуючись на їхніх реакціях при першому погляді на неї здалеку. Аналізуючи ці описи, ми можемо зрозуміти значення дзвіниці як орієнтира та її вплив на сприйняття Києва серед відвідувачів. **Методологія.** Враховано, що публікації, видані в Російській імперії, підлягали цензурі, тому автори та редакції мусили пристосовуватися до цього. Це дослідження базується на принципах історичної достовірності та неупередженості, об'єктивності та історизму, застосовано низку аналітичних підходів. Для встановлення історичного контексту в роботі використано методи виявлення та оцінки джерел, порівняльно-історичного аналізу та синтезу інформації. Все це дає змогу всебічно розглянути предмет дослідження в його ширшому історичному контексті. **Наукова новизна.** У статті вперше всебічно розглядаються твори православних мандрівників, які згадували

про те, як здалеку побачили Велику лаврську дзвіницю. **Висновки.** Якщо поєднати повідомлення з різних періодів та різноманітних поглядів – духовенства, мирян, місцевих мандрівників та відвідувачів з інших губерній – вони разом передають сутність Лаврської дзвіниці. Описи переважно зосереджуються на елементах, видимих здалеку: її спрямованість до київського неба та мальовничий вигляд її золотого купола. Потім мандрівники переходять до духовного аспекту, що мотивує паломників, та архітектурного дизайну її веж, відзначаючи як висоту, так і форму. У багатьох описах згадується про те, що дзвіницю було видно зі значних відстаней, наприклад, з 37–42 км на захід від Дніпра або з 48 км від потяга. Джерела містять згадки про емоційний вплив на людей, які вперше побачили блискучі золоті куполи та хрести, що сяяли на сонці здалеку. Прикладами є ті, хто схилявся до дзвіниці з благоговінням або тихо молився, проходячи поруч. Дзвіниця була постійно присутньою, видимою як при прибутті до Києва, так і при від'їзді з нього. Вона була сполучною ланкою між містом і мандрівниками, ставши неперевершеною прикрасою та символом Києва. Відвідувачі та паломники однаково захоплювалися її високою, стрункою формою та сяйвом її куполів. Образ Києво-Печерської лаври став нерозривно пов'язаний з її величною дзвіницею, яка сама по собі була дивовижним видовищем завдяки висоті, масивності та неймовірному дизайну. Пошук Великої лаврської дзвіниці став звичаєм для прочан та об'єктом інтересу для мандрівників. Ці потужні, але часто прості описи різних спостерігачів надають дзвіниці додаткових життєвих рис. Києво-Печерська дзвіниця перетворилася на визначний символ духовного та історичного лідерства міста, церемоніальний маяк для тих, хто шукав святості, та постійне джерело замилювання й подиву для просторовим, але й духовним орієнтиром для відвідувачів Києва.

Ключові слова: Києво-Печерська лавра у XIX – на початку XX ст., орієнтир, мандрівник, паломник, подорож, силует міста, дзвіниця, символічний маяк.

Problem statement. Urban environments contain significant elements known as landmarks. These landmarks serve as reference points, guiding individuals through the cityscape. We can define landmarks as external reference points that assist in navigation, whether in familiar or unfamiliar settings. H. Bala identified six distinct categories of landmarks: those related to historical city memory, urban landscapes and squares, tall structures such as skyscrapers, elements of daily city life and usage, personal memories and perceptions, and circulation patterns within the city. These various types of landmarks play crucial roles in how people perceive, remember, and move through urban spaces¹.

The Great Bell Tower of Kyiv Caves Lavra, one of the most important centres of Orthodox spirituality, stands at a height of 98 m, including the cross². It stood out significantly against the backdrop of other buildings of the 19th – early 20th c., a period when not only pilgrims but also excursionists of various faiths, including foreigners, increasingly came to Kyiv, although a permit from the Kyiv fortress commandant became necessary to visit the bell tower³. Various types of pilgrimages existed – religious, antiquarian, and landscape-driven, among others. However, they all centred on a relatively consistent set of objects, primarily religious and historical in nature. The main focus was on churches and monasteries associated with Old Rus. Additionally, several sites within or just outside the city limits were connected to Kyiv's earliest history. Among the principal attractions, the Caves Monastery complex stood out as particularly significant⁴. From this perspective, the study of the bell tower of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra is relevant and important.

Analysis of recent research and publications. A. Kizlova has drawn attention to how organized groups visited the Great Bell Tower in the late 19th – early 20th c.⁵ However, most studies dedicated to the Great Lavra Bell Tower⁶ focus on its essence as an architectural monument.

The aim of this paper is to trace the main features of mentions of the Great Bell Tower in works by the Orthodox visitors to Kyiv, who described their reactions to this tower seen from

¹ Bala H. Landmarks in urban space as signs. *Current urban studies*. 2016. № 4. P. 409.

² Katchanovsky I., Kohut Z., Nebesio B., Yurkevich M. Historical dictionary of Ukraine (2nd ed.). Lanham, Toronto, Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2013. P. 307.

³ Бублик В. Путеводитель по Киеву и его окрестностям: с адресным отделом, планом и фототип. г. Киева. Киев: Кульженко, 1894. С. 56–57.

⁴ Bilenky S. Imperial Urbanism in the Borderlands: Kyiv, 1800–1905. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018. P. 41.

⁵ Кізлова А. Велика дзвіниця й організовані групи, що відвідували Києво-Печерську Успенську лавру (кінець XIX – поч. XX ст.). *Історико-краєзнавчі дослідження: традиції та інновації: Мат. IV Міжнар. наук. конф. (Суми, 28–29 листопада 2019 р.)*. Суми: Цьома, 2019. Ч. 1. С. 45–49.

⁶ Горіна А., Рехліцький О. Історія та особливості архітектури великої лаврської дзвіниці. *Архітектурний вісник КНУБА*. 2017. Вип. 11–12. С. 305–309; Дрофань Л. Сходження до вершини: Про реставрацію Лаврської дзвіниці. *Сучасні проблеми дослідження, реставрації та збереження культурної спадщини*. 2012. № 8. С. 247–256; Матеріали до бібліографії Києво-Печерської лаври: Науково-допоміжний бібліографічний покажчик / Упор. Марченко О. Київ, 2006. С. 171–173; Рутковська О. З історії реставрації Великої лаврської дзвіниці. Нові відомості про іконопис куполу. *Відлуння віків*. 2011. Вип. 1–2 (14–15). С. 53–57; Сіткарьова О. Архітектурний ансамбль Печерського містечка у Києві наприкінці XVII – на поч. XVIII ст. *Сучасні проблеми дослідження, реставрації та збереження культурної спадщини*. 2017. № 12–13. С. 251–265.

afar. This study seeks to analyse how travellers and observers portrayed their impressions of this iconic structure as it came into view, often serving as their first glimpse of the city.

By examining these accounts, it is possible to gain insight into the bell tower's significance as a landmark and its impact on visitors' perceptions of Kyiv.

Presentation of the main material. Metropolitan Platon (Levshin)⁷, in his account from June 2, 1804 described first seeing the Lavra's bell tower from about 20 versts (approximately 21 km) away. Even in the dim evening light, the tower appeared as a tall column, dominating the skyline. As travellers approached the Dnipro, the entire Lavra complex came into view, described as "raising its majestic head above everything else" on a high hill opposite the river crossing⁸. The text illustrates how the Great Bell Tower frames the experience of beholding Kyiv from a distance, making it a key point of recognition for the city. The evening theme generates a certain mood, influencing the architecture in a way that is slightly dark.

This account aligns closely with that of Dmytro Bantysh-Kamensky, a Junker of the Moscow Archive of the College of Foreign Affairs⁹. In his "Journey to Moldova...", D. Bantysh-Kamensky noted that on July, 4th, 1808, the Great Lavra Bell Tower was visible from even further away – 29 versts (approximately 31 km) beyond Brovary¹⁰. This consistency in different sources underscores the exceptional height and prominence of the bell tower. It is noteworthy that the author already mentions the bell tower when describing his departure from Kyiv. He was probably looking at the city while he saw the bell tower. D. Bantysh-Kamensky noted that the bells of the Lavra could be heard as far as the St. Nicholas Monastery¹¹, arousing the mystery of the audibility of the Lavra and the exhibition of how the Lavra's acoustic presence and its impact stretched from visual to hearing landmarks of Kyiv and its environs.

Pavel Svinyin, a Moscow official and amateur historian, wrote about his journey to Kyiv in "Pechersk Lavra and Caves" (1815)¹². He described the challenging terrain of "gloomy pine forests and sandy ravines" that stretched for about 19 km from Brovary¹³. The sudden appearance of the golden cross of the Lavra bell tower through the clouds marked a dramatic moment in his travels, inspiring rapid enthusiasm among his fellow travellers, who shouted to each other "Ky-iv!"¹⁴. The narrative of P. Svinyin underscores the bell tower's role as a beacon to pilgrims and tourists, outlining its clear visibility from a great distance and its emotional connection with the observers.

That same year, Aleksey Levshin, a nobleman and student from Kharkiv University¹⁵, offered a more poetic description in his "Letters from Little Russia". A. Levshin portrayed the Lavra and its bell tower as "a terrifying giant colossus"¹⁶, emphasizing its imposing presence on the landscape. He painted a vivid picture of Kyiv's dramatic setting, with the city rising on a steep, 50-sazhen high hill covered in shrubs. A. Levshin noted the huge bell tower crowning the hill, along with golden-domed churches that dazzled the eyes. Interestingly, he juxtaposed the grandeur of the Lavra complex with "poor huts scattered in the bushes"¹⁷, highlighting the socio-economic diversity of the area. The use of vivid imagery, such as the "terrifying giant colossus" and the "dazzling" golden domes, demonstrates the strong impression the Lavra made on visitors. The use of such strong, evocative language suggests that A. Levshin was deeply impressed by the structure's size and dominance over the landscape. His portrayal goes beyond mere physical description, conveying the emotional impact the bell tower had on him as a visitor.

Two years later, in 1817, Prince, governor in Volodymyr Ivan Dolgorukov¹⁸ provided an account that focused on the journey to Kyiv and the anticipation of seeing the Lavra. He described a "ridge of majestic mountains with rocks"¹⁹ stretching almost to Kyiv along the Dnipro²⁰, praising the beauty of the surroundings. I. Dolgorukov noted similarities in the landscape to

⁷ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі: соціальні взаємодії братії при шанованих святинях Києво-Печерської Успенської лаври (1786 р. – перші десятиліття ХХ ст.). Київ: Гранма, 2019. С. 594.

⁸ Снегирев М. Жизнь московского митрополита Платона. Путешествие высокопреосвященнейшего Платона, митрополита Московского, в Киев и по другим российским городам в 1804 г., собственною рукою с замечаниями его писанное. (1856). Москва: Тип-я Ведомостей Московской городской полиции. Ч. 2. Приложение.

⁹ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 594.

¹⁰ Б[антыш]-К[аменский] Д. Путешествие в Молдавию, Валахию и Сербию. Москва: А. Решетников. Москва, 1810. С. 183.

¹¹ Там само. С. 155.

¹² Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 595.

¹³ [Свинин П.]. Печерская Лавра и пещеры. Отечественные записки. 1818. № 1. С. 1–2; Свинин П. Печерская лавра и пещеры. Сын отечества. 1816. № 36. С. 123–124.

¹⁴ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 595.

¹⁵ Левшин А. Письма из Малороссии. Харьков: В Унив. Тип-и, 1816. С. 85.

¹⁶ Там само. С. 89.

¹⁷ Там само.

¹⁸ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 596.

¹⁹ Долгорукий И. Путешествие в Киев в 1817 г. Москва: Имп. О-во истории и древностей рос. при Моск. ун-те, 1870. С. 105.

²⁰ Там само. С. 105.

P. Svinin's account, mentioning a sandy forest similar to the one leading to Kyiv from Brovary (Долгоруков, 1870, с. 105). His description of tantalizing glimpses of the Lavra, which seemed close but then disappeared with each turn of the road²¹, builds a sense of anticipation and perhaps spiritual journey.

Fyodor Vigel described his approach to Kyiv, where he hadn't been for 21 years, in July 1823, on his way to assume the duties of vice-governor of Bessarabia²²: "I was troubled by a boil on my side during the journey. In my sleep, I must have turned awkwardly somehow, as an extremely sharp pain woke me up early on the 17th. I soon forgot about it: on the distant horizon, through the branches of trees, something flashed before me. I was approaching the last station, Brovary, and this was the Pechersk dome of the bell tower, a beacon of Orthodox faith, to which tens of thousands of pilgrims, upon seeing it from afar, bow and cross themselves annually. Very rarely have I cried from sadness, almost never from joy: but here, tears came from nowhere. A feeling both native, religious, and patriotic was aroused in me by this momentary gleam, which soon disappeared behind the trees"²³. This text reflects the author's deep emotional connection to Kyiv, a city he had not visited in 21 years. As a man, he did not respond with any observable emotions including joy, which is why the way he saw the bell tower remains all the more special. He also explains that the tower is a symbol of homecoming and being reconnected with his roots for a long time, which is a crop of immense religious importance.

Officer and writer Petr Habbe, returning from a special mission in Volhynia in 1826²⁴, described seeing Kyiv from afar: "The first welcoming sight for me was the bell tower of the Caves Lavra; it was already visible 25 versts away, rising above the forest. As we drew closer to the city, it moved to the right, like a subject of a phantasmagoria; but as we approached from Kyiv to Vasylykiv, the view became even more captivating: then the bell tower, running into the forest, seemed to hurry to hide from the ungrateful one who decided to leave the beautiful capital of Vladimir. The peaks of St. Michael Golden Domed Monastery and the dome of St. Sophia also appeared little by little, as well as other crosses of the churches of the blessed city; but scattered over a large area, they did not produce a great effect"²⁵. This extract offers a fascinating depiction of the landscape and the view of the city as the visitor came closer, which was however with the bell tower appearing through the trees and "disappearing" in the forest. It also emphasizes the emotional value of the visit to Kyiv for the author. The presence of other landmarks is also noted, such as St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery and St. Sophia Cathedral, but the writer mentions that their varied character across a wide area somehow eliminated their coherent vision compared to the Great Bell Tower.

Michael Zhdanov, a nobleman and Senior Desk Officer of the Department of State Property from St. Petersburg, wrote in his travel notes after August 1838²⁶ that he saw the golden dome of the Lavra from a distance of 10 versts (about 11 km). As he approached Brovary, he could make out all the golden domes of the churches and the majestic bell tower towering over the surroundings. He asked the driver if it was the bell tower of the Lavra, and the driver answered that it was²⁷. M. Zhdanov's emotional response to the bell tower is evident in the exclamation marks that punctuate his descriptions²⁸. The mention of the writer of the very visible dome of Lavra miles away, the aesthetic sides of Lavra are very delicately pointed out, thus implying that the grandeur of the Lavra monastery is shown through Kyiv and its religious architecture.

Andrii Muravyov, a nobleman and writer, Member of the general presence of the Asian Department Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided a poetic description in August 1843²⁹. He described that during a thunderstorm, as they approached Kyiv, the golden dome of the Pechersk bell tower suddenly shone like a certain luminary of this wonderful night. And upon exiting the forest, the entire Lavra was instantly illuminated, and above all the heads of the churches, the white column of the bell tower rose in a fiery wreath, like a majestic apparition over the elements, from which lightning streamed, and its muffled ringing of bells echoed the thunder³⁰. Mura-

²¹ Долгорукий И. Путешествие в Киев в 1817 г. С. 105.

²² Вигель Ф. Записки: У 2 кн. Москва: Захаров, 2003. Кн. 1. С. 2.

²³ Вигель Ф. Воспоминания. Ч. 6. Москва: Катков, 1865. С. 68–69.

²⁴ Габбе П. Русский биографический словарь: У 25 т. Москва: Тип-я Г. Лисснера и Д. Собко. 1914. Т. 4: Гаг – Гербель. С. 7.

²⁵ Габбе П. Прогулка за Днепром (Окончание). Московский телеграф. 1827. Ч. XIV. Отд. I. С. 19.

²⁶ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 598.

²⁷ Жданов М. Путевые записки по России, в двадцати губерниях: С.-Петербургской, Новгородской, Тверской, Московской, Владимирской, Пензенской, Саратовской, Тамбовской, Воронежской, Курской, Харьковской, Екатеринославской, Полтавской, Киевской, Черниговской, Могилевской, Витебской, Псковской, Ярославской, Костромской, Нижегородской и Симбирской. Санкт-Петербург: В. Поляков, 1843. С. 148.

²⁸ Там само. С. 149.

²⁹ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 599.

³⁰ Муравьев А. Путешествие по святым местам русским. Санкт-Петербург: Тип. III отд. собств. Е.И.В. канцелярии, 1844. С. 1–2.

vyov's account presents the bell tower as a sublime, almost supernatural presence in the landscape.

Contributor to the newspaper «Odessa Bulletin» A. Kovalenkov vividly depicts the bell tower in Kyiv Caves Lavra (1857)³¹: "The 44-sazhen (about 94 m) bell tower rises as a majestic guardian of the sanctuary"³². A. Kovalenkov also described the deep, difficult to traverse sands near Brovary, heralding the proximity of the Dnipro. He dwelled in detail on how hundreds of pilgrims from all corners of vast Russia, overjoyed that they would soon see Kyiv, forgot all the hardships of the journey through the Kyiv sands and joyfully began to embrace and congratulate one another. He noted that one had to witness such a sight to appreciate its full significance, for here the traveller forgets all the deprivations, all the dangers, sometimes of a journey of thousands of miles, gains new, refreshing strength, and greets the emerging cross of the Lavra bell tower with an almost childlike cry³³. The piece as a whole suggests that A. Kovalenkov was a very observant, empathetic, and skilled author who could perfectly describe and express the physical and emotional aspects of the plight to Kyiv in the middle of the 19th c. There is no way to know the personal convictions of A. Kovalenkov, but he certainly knows and honours the importance of the pilgrimage spiritually and the Kyiv Caves Lavra.

Retired active civil servant adviser Oleksandr Bashutsky³⁴, writing between 1853 and 1857, addresses the addressee, a conditional "friend", reminding: "You have stopped many times, after leaving Brovary (the last station before Kyiv) at that line where the holy mountains of our Russian Jerusalem first appear, still in unclear, bluish outlines. On the moving horizon, more than once along the hilly strip of their edges, searching with your eyes for bodies and souls, shining through the haze of the blue distance, stars, golden points of domes and the Lavra bell tower gleaming high above them, you crossed yourself, with an inexplicable calmness, but with an intensified heartbeat. You remember the feelings, thoughts, considerations, and external impressions, everything that the view of these mountains produced in you"³⁵. This text highlights how Kyiv's skyline can be seen from far away, particularly describing the domes and the Lavra bell tower with the emphasis on the former. This passage also introduces O. Bashutsky as a brilliant wordsmith who possesses a profound admiration for the cultural and spiritual aspects of Kyiv.

His Grace Sava, who was at that time the Bishop of Polotsk and Vitebsk (Савва, 1902), wrote about his trip to Kyiv in 1870, that in the morning of July 29th, in clear sunlight, he saw with admiration the golden dome of the high Lavra bell tower from the Brovary station 27 versts away, and as he approached Kyiv, the magnificent panorama of the sacred Kyiv hills began to unfold wider and wider before his eyes³⁶. This text conveys a sense of awe and reverence for the sight of Kyiv, particularly its religious landmarks. His attitude towards the bell tower: The author's attitude is one of deep admiration and reverence. The author viewed the Lavra Great Bell Tower as an impressive and significant landmark.

Count, Major General Serhiy Sheremetev³⁷ mentioned in the description of a trip to Kyiv for a few days in the spring of 1877 that it was a clear spring evening when his train was quietly approaching Kyiv. Starting from Brovary, it slowly moved across the majestic Dnipro bridge, "and a wonderful picture opened up before us. In the twilight, the domes of the cathedrals and the bell tower of the Great Church of Pechersk stood out against the clear sky"³⁸. The author's vivid and poetic description suggests his strong emotional connection to the city and its religious landmarks, emphasizing their beauty and spiritual significance as seen from the approach to the city.

I. B[?]rov, a pilgrim from the Saratov province who visited Kyiv on June 8th, 1890, left the following account: "'Kyiv, Kyiv!' people in the train carriage started saying. All faces lit up with smiles. Evidently, all the Orthodox were filled with that feeling of reverence which draws thousands of God-lovers to Kyiv's holy sites. At least, that's how it seemed to me; everyone rushed to the windows and platforms, as if each wanted to see the beauty of the city faster and more than others. But it was still far away, seemingly hidden in a haze. Only the golden-domed Lavra bell tower stood out, rising majestically towards the clouds. It can be seen from dozens of versts away, though not for long. Closer to the city, the pine forest near the Dnipro and various woods obstruct the view. But once past the forest ... it suddenly appears before you by the Dnipro

³¹ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 601.

³² Коваленков А. Киево-Печерская лавра: (Из путевых заметок). *Одесский вестник*. 1857. № 99. С. 3.

³³ Там само. С. 3.

³⁴ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 601.

³⁵ [Башуцкий А.]. Письмо к приятелю, отсюда и отсюда: (путешествие в Неаполь и Киево-Печерскую лавру). Санкт-Петербург: Королев и комп., 1858. С. 48–49.

³⁶ Савва, архиепископ Тверской и Кашинский. Хроника моей жизни: Автобиографические записки высокопреосвященного Саввы, архиепископа Тверского и Кашинского. Сергиев Посад: 2-я тип-я А. Снегиревой, 1902. Т. 4: 1868–1874 гг.

³⁷ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 603.

³⁸ Шереметев С. Киев. Санкт-Петербург: Стасюлевич, 1877. С. 5.

ro in all its grandeur”³⁹. This excerpt captures the energy and awe of the travelers, highlighting the spiritual significance of Kyiv for believers. Among the city’s sacred landmarks, the bell towers stand out as especially meaningful. The writer stresses that Lavra’s belfry is the first building visible from heaven in front of you as an architect, a confirming part of the city. The author uses vivid language to convey his impression of the tower, highlighting both its beauty and structural strength. The author instils a sense of excitement in the reader by showing the place in steps, with the bell tower as the main element of the view.

In the report about the journey of students from Pereyaslav Theological School to Kyiv in 1892, it is described how from a distance, 40 versts (about 42 km) away, the slender Lavra bell tower appeared in the misty distance like a poplar tree⁴⁰. And on July 21st, it was already clearly visible from the window of the guest building on the hill⁴¹. This account portrays the Lavra bell tower as a striking landmark that served as both a physical guide and a source of anticipation and wonder for pilgrims and visitors approaching Kyiv in the late 19th c. The author’s detailed and somewhat poetic description suggests a deep appreciation for the bell tower’s beauty and significance.

In 1894, a group of schoolchildren from a school located 400 versts (about 427 km) from Kyiv, near Kremenchuk, embarked on a journey to Kyiv. Their main purpose was to visit the Kyiv Caves Lavra. On May 23, the children eagerly awaited their first glimpse of the Lavra. The day was warm and calm, so the captain allowed everyone to stay on the upper deck of the steamboat. When they were still 40 versts (about 43 km) from the city, the cross of the Lavra bell tower gleamed in the distance on a hill through the haze. The children reverently removed their hats and made the sign of the cross. As they approached Kyiv, the children’s anticipation grew. They were struck by the majestic view of the city: magnificent bridges across the Dnipro, monasteries in the forests, grand temples with gilded domes, and of course, the Lavra with its outstanding bell tower. Many children turned pale and wept with joy, overwhelmed by impressions⁴². An account by Priest Vladimir Markov from the Kustolovskaya public school in Poltava province states, that the group travelled by steamship. Early in the morning on May 24, the majestic, gold-headed bell tower of the Lavra shone in front of the children 40 versts from Kyiv on the horizon. Everyone took off their hats and reverently made the sign of the cross⁴³. These accounts not only describe the children’s physical journey to Kyiv and the Lavra, but they also reveal the attitudes of our authors and their views of the bell tower. The authors were deeply impressed by the Lavra bell tower. They felt that it held great spiritual and religious importance. Through their writings, they sought to convey their feeling of wonder and respect, as they saw the Lavra bell tower not merely as a symbol of spiritual power but as a proof of the religious and cultural importance of Kyiv.

Major General Mykola Repin, director of the Mikhailovsky Voronezh Cadet Corps⁴⁴, provided the following account of his journey to Kyiv on July 24, 1894: “As the train approaches Kyiv, it travels for about 15 versts (approximately 16 km) through a beautiful pine forest. Even from a distance, the bell tower and churches of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, as well as other temples on the high bank of the Dnipro, become visible”⁴⁵. M. Repin describes this view as delightful and he notes that this striking picture involuntarily compels travellers to bare their heads and make the sign of the cross before the holy sites of the ancient Russian capital⁴⁶. M. Repin pays particular attention to the Lavra’s bell tower, calling it one of the most remarkable structures. He mentions that its total height, including the cross, is 46 sazhen (about 98 m). From the top of this tower, one can see the surroundings for up to 50 versts (about 53 km)⁴⁷. The general emphasizes that the bell tower is visible from the route and serves as a prominent reference point, symbolizing Kyiv’s religious significance. The writer’s gesture of removing his hat and making the sign of the cross indicates deep respect for the Lord and the sacred structures, including the bell tower. He describes the bell tower with great amazement. On the whole, Major General Repin not only delineates the physical splendour of Kyiv’s nearness but also the tremendous emotional and spiritual influence that travellers felt in the late 19th c. through his description.

³⁹ Б-ров И. Письма паломника. Письмо с пути первое. *Саратовские епархиальные ведомости*. 1890. Вып. 17. Отд. неоф. С. 702–709.

⁴⁰ П[амфил] Л. Путешествие учеников Переяславского духовного училища в Киев на поклонение святыне. *Приложение к церковным ведомостям*. 1892. Вып. 34. С. 1177.

⁴¹ Там само.

⁴² А.Б. Экскурсия учеников в Киев. *Образование*. 1894. Вып. 3. Отд. 2. С. 57.

⁴³ Марков В. Паломничество учеников и учениц Кустоловской народной школы, Полтавской губернии, на поклонение святыням Киевским. *Прибавления к церковным ведомостям, издаваемым при Святейшем правительствующем синоде*. 1894. Вып. 33. С. 1154.

⁴⁴ Репин Н. Образовательные прогулки по России. 1894–1902. Санкт-Петербург: А. Бенке, 1903. С. 13.

⁴⁵ Там само.

⁴⁶ Там само. С. 14.

⁴⁷ Там само.

It is described in the work by the parish priest from Samara province Aksenov⁴⁸ (visited Kyiv between October, 15 and 17, 1895), that the group was travelling by train, and one of the experienced fellow travellers in the railcar, influenced by reverence from approaching the holy city, unprompted, loudly described the state of the pilgrims approaching the holy city, and how the sight of the bell tower's golden dome rejuvenated their spirits: "The travellers are exhausted from fatigue, barely dragging their feet, and their gazes ask: will you soon appear, will you soon appear, holy city? But then to them, weary at last, the great Lavra bell tower with its golden dome flashed between the trees of the thinning forest and rejoiced them"⁴⁹. The bell tower symbolizes the pilgrim's ultimate goal, representing a significant milestone in their spiritual journey. It is also depicted as the earliest on the pilgrim's road, the "holy city" is portrayed as a destination that tests the pilgrims with physical exhaustion, yet fills them with spiritual fulfillment upon arrival, and the voices of the pilgrim's: expressing their emotions, align perfectly with the author's empathy for their struggles and his understanding of their spiritual journey. They experience a life-changing moment when they finally have the opportunity to see their goal.

This text contains a passage: "The train was rushing towards Kyiv, and as we approached, something unusual was happening to all the passengers: due to the extreme tension of anticipation, no one could sit still. Suddenly, someone exclaimed, "Brothers, look! The bell tower of the Lavra has appeared!". At that moment, everyone began to cross themselves fervently. It seemed there was not a single person in our carriage who didn't shed a tear of heartfelt joy and gratitude"⁵⁰. The passage vividly illustrates the cultural and religious value of Kyiv and the Kyiv Caves Lavra with its bell tower through the eyes and hearts of individuals at this point, demonstrating how the mere vision of the city could bring about intense emotional and spiritual reactions.

Ivan Lebedev, a pedagogy teacher at the Chernihiv Eparchial Women's School⁵¹, described a journey of a group of students and mentors from June 16–20, 1897. He noted that the pilgrims were fascinated by everything they encountered during their journey. He observed that the students eagerly questioned the elderly captain, who did his best to ensure their comfort and answer their queries⁵². As a pedagogy teacher, I. Lebedev seems interested in the educational aspects of the journey, noting how the students were eager to learn about their environment. His text also conveys a sense of anticipation and excitement as the group approaches Kyiv: "There, the Lavra is visible!" – the captain's voice suddenly rang out, and everyone's gaze turned in the direction of his outstretched hand. For a long time, the inexperienced eye searched in vain for the silhouette of the Lavra bell tower, vaguely outlined in the misty distance. But then voices were heard: "I see it!" "I see it too!" <...> And indeed, almost everyone saw the tall bell tower, about 35 versts before reaching Kyiv"⁵³. I. Lebedev's depiction of the Lavra bell tower suggests that he views its sighting as a triumphant moment in the pilgrimage, which symbolizes not only the group's physical journey but also their spiritual quest. The shared joy of seeing the tower highlights the group's unity in their devotion to Kyiv and its spiritual significance.

The writer Ariston Laskeev, a graduate of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy⁵⁴, who spent four days in Kyiv in mid-June 1898, demonstrated his keen observational skills and his ability to capture both the physical landscape and human reactions: "And there's Kyiv, its hills and ravines, houses on the slopes and mountain tops, literally drowning in the greenery of gardens, golden-domed churches, and the Lavra bell tower rising high above them!"⁵⁵. The specific mention of the Lavra bell tower "rising high above other structures" highlights its prominence in the cityscape, suggesting that A. Laskeev sees it as a defining feature of Kyiv's skyline. This passage: "In the train car, everyone bared their heads and crossed themselves, while those who were traveling to Kyiv for the first time stood up from their seats and admired through the windows the gradually unfolding wonderful picture of the city of holy sites"⁵⁶, – demonstrates the inquisitiveness of A. Laskeev in the field of human psychology and the cultural traditions. He closely observes the people around him and their shared reverence for the sacred landmarks. Typical expressions of respect, such as uncovering their heads and making the sign of the cross, reflect the passengers' reverence for the sacred place and apply to all travelers, no matter whether it is their first visit or not. The contrast between seasoned and first-time travelers adds depth to

⁴⁸ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 607.

⁴⁹ Аксенов Н. Из дневника путевых воспоминаний приходского священника. *Прибавления к церковным ведомостям*. 1896. № 32. С. 1151.

⁵⁰ Там само. С. 1152.

⁵¹ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 608.

⁵² Л[ебедев] И. Поездка воспитанниц Черниговского епархиального женского училища, окончивших курс, в Киев для поклонения святыням. *Черниговские епархиальные известия*. 1897. Вып. 13. Ч. неоф. С. 492.

⁵³ Там само.

⁵⁴ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 608.

⁵⁵ Ласкеев А. В колыбели Земли Русской – среди святынь и угодников Киевских. Извлечено из журнала *Странник*. 1898. № 11. С. 4.

⁵⁶ Там само.

his observations. The eagerness of new visitors to stand up and witness Kyiv, especially the Lavra bell tower, highlights the emotional and spiritual resonance of the city's landmarks for first-time pilgrims and tourists. By describing Kyiv as a "city of holy sites" and noting the "golden-domed churches"⁵⁷, A. Laskeev acknowledges the city's significant religious importance. His use of the phrase "wonderful picture" to describe the unfolding view⁵⁸ suggests his personal admiration for both the physical beauty and spiritual significance of the city.

A. Laskeev also described how he left Kyiv on a steamboat along the Dnipro, admiring the scenery from the captain's bridge: "But then it disappeared behind the winding banks of the Dnipro, and only the shining dome of the Lavra bell tower was visible, and after some time, at a distance of about twenty versts from Kyiv, even it was no longer in sight"⁵⁹. This part describes leaving by river, offering a new vantage point. This reinforces the earlier impression of the bell tower's height and significance as a landmark and shows A. Laskeev's attention to how the city's appearance changes from different angles and distances.

Overall, A. Laskeev's work portrays him as a thoughtful observer who appreciates the multifaceted nature of Kyiv – its natural beauty, architectural splendour, and spiritual significance. The Lavra bell tower, prominently featured in his description, serves as a powerful visual symbol of the city's religious importance. Through his vivid description and attention to his fellow passengers' reactions, A. Laskeev captures a moment of shared awe and reverence, highlighting the bell tower's role as both a physical landmark and a spiritual beacon for visitors to Kyiv. The mention of his departure adds depth to the understanding of the author's narrative style and his ability to use the bell tower as a symbol of the Kyiv's enduring presence in the traveller's mind, even as they depart.

In the book "In the South" (journey with the students on June 16, 17, 18, 1900), edited by Teacher of the Samara Theological Seminary, candidate of theology, external councillor Kostyantyn Kazansky⁶⁰, there is this description: "About 30 versts (32 km) away, they saw the cross of the Lavra bell tower shining high on the hill, almost in the clouds. This was the most cherished moment of the entire journey"⁶¹. The account written here not only focuses on the Lavra bell tower but also portrays it as a significant channeling of strong feelings and a symbol of faith for religious travellers. The writer's respectful style and depiction of this moment as the highlight of the journey represent its must-visit significance, not only as a building but also as a spiritual guide and the pilgrimage's goal.

The priest and teacher at the Olonets Theological Seminary, Yevgeny Mertsalov⁶², wrote about a trip with a student group on May 29, 1899. He described how everyone in the train car, as if by agreement, rushed to the windows when the domes of the Vydubitsky Monastery gleamed ahead through the gaps between the trees. He emphasized that further on, the golden domes of the Kyiv Caves Lavra shone, above which the majestic and graceful Lavra bell tower rose and dominated. The multi-domed Great Church also shone, while the churches above the caves were barely visible⁶³. The author emphasized: "The heart is involuntarily filled with a sense of reverence and delight, the hand itself rises for the sign of the cross. And look what's happening in the car then: everyone crowds at the windows, all faces are bright, joyful and content, some are crossing themselves, others are making deep bows, and some (not many) are not ashamed and do not hurry to wipe away the tears of gratitude to the Lord God that have welled up in their eyes, for allowing them to reach the holy sites of Kyiv"⁶⁴. Being both a priest and a teacher, Ye. Mertsalov revealed the beauty of Lavra in different ways, combining religious and educational perspectives, with the admiration for Lavra's architectural beauty and spiritual significance. He demonstrated his emotional and spiritual state following the observation of the Lavra and its bell tower, and that of the other people, showing how both its worshipers and others have their faith affected by it. The writer not only showed the appearance of the constructions but also described the exposure of the bells on the Lavra church tower, the dome of the Great Church, and the concealment of the cave churches within the rocks. The description of passengers' reactions underscores the common spiritual experience and the bell tower's status as a main destination for religious devotees.

⁵⁷ Ласкеев А. В колыбели Земли Русской – среди святынь и угодников Киевских. С. 4.

⁵⁸ Там само.

⁵⁹ Там само. С. 19–20.

⁶⁰ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 608.

⁶¹ На юге: Путевой дневник воспитанников Самарской духовной семинарии / Ред. К. Казанский. Самара: Тип-я Самар. духов. консистории, 1900. С. 44.

⁶² Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 608.

⁶³ Мерцалов Е. От Петрозаводска до Иерусалима и обратно (путевые заметки и впечатления паломника). Москва: Индрик, 2014. С. 13.

⁶⁴ Там само.

The teacher of the Velemichi church-parish school, A. Rozdialovska (her group had been to Kyiv on August 8, 1902)⁶⁵, described how the city gradually disappeared into the mist, and when the dome of the Lavra bell tower sank into it, the children traveling on the steamboat “made the sign of the cross, took a deep bow – a final greeting to Kyiv – and silently sat down on the benches”⁶⁶. During a trip with children, A. Rozdialovska played the role of both a leader and a watcher, observing and taking notes, thereby emphasizing her dual role as a guide and an observer. The description of the children’s actions – making the sign of the cross and taking a deep bow – expresses the profound emotional and spiritual impact of the Lavra bell tower on individuals, even though it is no longer visible. The bell tower is presented here as a symbol of the entire city of Kyiv. Its disappearance highlights the end of the visit and leads to the last expression of respect. The simultaneous acts of the children (crossing, bowing, sitting) are examples of their harmonious existence with the moment and thus, a leveling of their perceptions of the situation. The imagery of it slowly disappearing into the mist adds a feel of gloominess in the departure that the bell tower has as it is the last connection to the protected city.

The teacher of the two-class Cherniatyn school, V. Cherniavsky⁶⁷, wrote about May 26, 1903, that his student group woke up in the train at dawn, anticipating Kyiv. After Boyarka station, all the students began to look for the city on the horizon: “But then something flickered in the far east, glittered and began to grow smoothly, rising higher and higher; it was the Lavra bell tower that appeared; behind it, churches, factory chimneys, and roofs of buildings began to take shape in a solid mass”⁶⁸. As a teacher leading a student group, V. Cherniavsky paid close attention to the students’ experiences and the gradual revealing of the city, showing his role as both educator and observer. The description of the students waking early and eagerly looking for the city highlights the excitement and anticipation surrounding the visit to Kyiv. The Lavra bell tower is described as the first visible structure of Kyiv, emphasizing its height and significance in the city’s skyline. Poetic description of the bell tower suggests a sense of wonder and admiration. The bell tower is described individually, while other buildings (churches, factories, roofs) are mentioned as a “solid mass”, further emphasizing the bell tower’s distinctive presence. This account portrays the Lavra bell tower as a striking, awe-inspiring structure that served as both a physical landmark and a symbolic gateway to Kyiv.

Deacon Vikentiy Filippovich noted about his trip in 1911 that “When approaching the Lavra, from afar, the majestic golden-domed Lavra bell tower draws attention”⁶⁹. This text refers to the author’s deep respect and admiration for the bell tower design, presence and dominance in the landscape. The bell tower is portrayed as the first feature that “draws attention”, suggesting that it establishes its presence as a defining symbol of the approaching Lavra complex.

The priest Ivan Korolyov, who arrived to Kyiv on August 8, 1912 to the opening of the relics of St. Joasaph of Bilhorod wrote: “We are approaching Kyiv. It’s still far away, but the Lavra bell tower is visible. My heart trembled from the excitement that seized it”⁷⁰. The message of the text is designed in such a way as to provide the entire gamut of emotional and spiritual experiences that the author may have undergone just by the mere sight of the bell tower. In the text itself, the bell tower is the reason why the city of Kyiv is mentioned, which suggests its centrality as the city’s primary and most recognizable landmark. The author’s vivid account of his emotional reaction seemingly overshadows the tower’s role as a functional building, instead presenting it as a sacred symbol of pilgrimage.

N. Lavbenska, describing the trip to Kyiv of the students of the Ustyug Eparchial Women’s School who completed their course of study in the 1911–1912 academic year, mentioned July 6: “Far, far away from Kyiv, the numerous churches of the mother of Russian cities are already visible, especially the Lavra bell tower and the St. Michael’s Golden-Domed Monastery tower above and sparkle in the sun with their golden domes”⁷¹. For N. Lavbenska, the Lavra bell tower is a magnificent and awe-inspiring landmark that serves as a point of reference not only Kyiv but also for its historical and religious cultural identity. The writer demonstrates her appreciation for the tower’s beauty and its role in creating a strong first impression of the city. The emphasis on its visibility from a distance and its golden, sunlit dome underscores the idea that the bell tower

⁶⁵ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 609.

⁶⁶ Роздяловська А. Паломництво учеників Велемичської Церковно-приходської школи, Мозырського уезду, во время летних каникул текущего 1902 г. *Минские епархиальные ведомости*. 1902. Отд. неоф. № 22. С. 512.

⁶⁷ Кізлова А. Усамітнення в натовпі... С. 610.

⁶⁸ Чернявський В. Паломництво учеників и учителів Чернятинської второкласної школи в г. Києв. *Подольські епархиальні ведомости*. 1903. № 27. Ч. неоф. С. 913.

⁶⁹ Филиппович В. Поездка в Киев. *Варшавский епархиальный листок*. 1912. № 3. С. 43.

⁷⁰ Королев И. По случаю годовщины открытия св. мощей святителя Иоасафа. *Енисейские епархиальные ведомости*. 1912. № 22. Ч. неоф. С. 34–35.

⁷¹ Лавбенская Н. Воспоминание о поездке на юг России воспитанниц Устюжского Епархиального женского училища, окончивших курс учения в 1911–1912 учебном году. *Прибавления к Вологодским епархиальным ведомостям*. 1913. № 21. С. 620.

is a key feature shaping visitors' expectations and impressions of Kyiv. For the students on this trip, the sight of the bell tower likely marked a memorable moment in their educational and cultural experience.

Nikolai Stoikov, a priest from Chisinau who was passing through Kyiv with a group of priests on June 4, 1912, emphasized that the Great Lavra Bell Tower majestically stands out and dominates the Pechersk Heights along with the golden domes of the Great Lavra Church (Dormition Cathedral), without specifying exactly how he first saw it⁷². The author's word choice, for example, "majestically stands out" and "dominates", shows his admiration and amazement for the towering clock building. Incidentally, by mentioning the clock tower alongside the golden domes of the Cathedral, the author emphasizes the architectural and spiritual significance of the buildings within the Kyiv Caves Lavra complex. The entire article thus reveals the Great Lavra Bell Tower as a magnificent structure that deeply impressed the author, thus making it a focal point of both the spiritual and physical skylines of Kyiv.

Conclusion. When all of these reports coming from different periods of time and are told from the diverse perspectives of clergy, laypeople, local travellers, and visitors from other provinces are considered together, they evoke the Lavra bell tower in a distinctive manner. The descriptions mostly highlight features that are first seen from a distance: the way the bell tower reaches towards Kyiv's sky and the striking view of its golden dome. Additionally, they reflect a shift in focus to the moral and spiritual aspects, which serve as an incentive for pilgrims to visit. The architectural design of the tower – both its height and shape – is also frequently mentioned as a distinctive feature. Most of the analysed papers noted that, in addition to it being visible only from a distance, there were some accounts of sightings from 35–40 versts (approximately 37–42 km) west of the river Dnipro, and from 45 versts (48 km) – while on the train. A number of sources provide data regarding the changes in the human population through the years, referring to one nuclear family of five members, who were the first to notice the brilliant golden domes and the crosses of the bell tower radiate in the sun's light from far outside Kyiv. This sight was the reason they experienced such overwhelming emotions, or, in other words, developed a sense of awe. Examples of this include a person leaning against the tower in the passage and a girl passing near the tower, praying in a low voice. The tower was visible both upon arrival and at the time of departure. The buildings and towers are the only lasting connections between the city and the people who depart from it. Thus, the Lavra bell tower was truly an unmatched ornament and symbol of Kyiv. It was frequently observed and described by travellers and pilgrims, who admired the tall, slender shape of the Church and the gleam of its domes. The image of the Kyiv Caves Lavra, its main shrine, was inextricably connected to the magnificent bell tower, which was an astonishing sight due to its height, massiveness, and incredible design. Seeking the Lavra bell tower is a custom among religious people, distinguished and easily recognized by travellers. The tower is brought to life by these powerful albeit usually straightforward descriptions of people who visited it. The Kyiv Lavra bell tower evolved into an emblem of the city's spiritual and historical leadership – a ceremonial and dignified beacon for people who seek sanctification, and a constant source of attraction and delight for all who were fortunate enough to know about it. It can be argued that the Great Bell Tower was not only an architectural and spatial landmark, but also a spiritual one for visitors to Kyiv.

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