


## Intertextuality and Iconography in Sergei Iukhimov's Illustrations for *The Lord of the Rings*: Five Case Studies

Joel Merriner

*University of Plymouth*, [joel.merriner@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:joel.merriner@plymouth.ac.uk)

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## Intertextuality and Iconography in Sergei Iukhimov's Illustrations for *The Lord of the Rings*: Five Case Studies

### Introduction: Text, image, prototype

In their 1999 introduction to the golden anniversary edition of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Farmer Giles of Ham*, Christina Scull and Wayne G. Hammond describe the process behind George Allen & Unwin's commissioning of Pauline Baynes, a young English artist whose faux-medieval line drawings had been of particular interest to Tolkien.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the publisher's earlier candidate Milein Cosman, Baynes had quickly embraced her role as book illustrator, creating a series of images for *Farmer Giles of Ham* which successfully encapsulated both the historical and fairy-tale elements of Tolkien's narrative.<sup>2</sup> Impressed with the finished results, Tolkien wrote a letter to George Allen & Unwin dated 16th March 1949 stating that, for him, the artist's work surpassed "even the expectations aroused by the first examples."<sup>3</sup>

This must have been welcome news for Baynes, who would go on to enjoy a fruitful association with Tolkien, producing illustrations for several of his works. It is the subsequent lines of Tolkien's letter, however, which I find more significant:

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<sup>1</sup> Introduction to J.R.R. Tolkien, *Farmer Giles of Ham*, 50th Anniversary Edition. (London: HarperCollins, 1999), 23-24.

<sup>2</sup> It appears that Cosman, a German graduate of the Slade School, had been rather slow to submit her specimen drawings to the publisher. When they finally did arrive, Tolkien's reaction (recorded in a letter to George Allen & Unwin dated 5 August 1948) was less than enthusiastic; "I am not for myself much interested in the fashionableness of these drawings, or in their resemblance to Topolski or Ardizzone. I find their lack of resemblance to their text more marked. ... The giant is passable – though the artist is a poor drawer of trees. The dragon is absurd. Ridiculously coy, and quite incapable of performing any of the tasks laid on him by the author... The Farmer, a large blusterer bigger than his fellows, is made to look like little Joad at the end of a third degree by railway officials. He would hardly have used as a cowshed the shambling hut at which the miller and parson are knocking. He was a prosperous yeoman or franklin." Humphrey Carpenter and Christopher Tolkien, eds. (London: HarperCollins, 1981), 130-131.

<sup>3</sup> Humphrey Carpenter and Christopher Tolkien, eds. *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981) 133; quoted in Christina Scull, Wayne G. Hammond, Introduction to J.R.R. Tolkien, *Farmer Giles of Ham*, 24.

“They [Baynes’ images]” he writes “are more than illustrations, they are a collateral theme. I showed them to my friends whose polite comment was that they reduced my text to a commentary on the drawings.”<sup>4</sup>

There may be no way of independently corroborating this episode, and Tolkien might simply have included the anecdote as a light-hearted aside, but the words hold a kernel of truth: for certain readers, Pauline Baynes’ illustrations, with their delicate blending of medieval manuscript and modern fairy-tale imagery may have overshadowed, even diminished the power of Tolkien’s text. Images which, for Tolkien, perfectly complimented his words, could, if manipulated, or simply viewed from a different perspective, contradict or undermine them.

So, how might this connect with Sergei Iukhimov, the Ukrainian artist whose illustrations for *The Lord of the Rings* are the primary focus of this article? On first impression, Iukhimov’s work would appear to have little in common with Baynes’. His style is unorthodox, and his subject matter often strays from the source text, functioning at times more like a visual analogue to the Russian Tolkienist literary model of alteration and apochrypha than a “collateral theme”.<sup>5</sup> The connection resides in that truth which unites all illustrators, regardless of style or nationality; namely, the problematic relationship between text and image (and to a further extent between what Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson (1991) would refer to as predetermined and polysemous meaning) which is implied by the Baynes anecdote.<sup>6</sup> Ostensibly, the function of a book illustration is to illustrate a passage of text, however, like any piece of visual art, the reading of an illustration - regardless of creator - is dependent on the individual viewer. As can be seen from the example

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<sup>4</sup> Carpenter and Tolkien, *Letters*, 133.

<sup>5</sup> Altering Tolkien’s texts in translation has considerable pedigree in Eastern and Central Europe, particularly in Russia. Natalya Grigor’eva argues for the existence of a clear East-west dichotomy in literary (and reader) approaches to *The Lord of the Rings* in *Problems of Translating into Russian* (1992). The book’s connection, she says, with the “mythological, heroic, historical and literary tradition of Western Europe” plus Tolkien’s supposed predilection for “historical and pseudo-historical allusions”, makes translation into Russian an almost “insuperable” task. Therefore, many Russian translations are created in “accordance with the translator’s own way of understanding, sometimes even for their own liking.”

Natalya Grigor’eva, “Problems of Translating into Russian,” in *Proceedings of the J.R.R. Tolkien Centenary Conference 1992* eds. Patricia Reynolds and Glen Goodknight (Milton Keynes: The Tolkien Society, 1992), 200-205.

Another translator, Maria Kamenkovich, likens Russian attitudes to Tolkien to Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s boy with a star-map from *The Brothers Karamazov*; the inference being that a readiness to expand and embellish the canon is also innate to the Russian Tolkienist.

Mark T. Hooker, *Tolkien Through Russian Eyes* (Zollikofen: Walking Tree Publishers, 2003), 25-26.

<sup>6</sup> Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, “Semiotics and Art History,” *The Art Bulletin* 73 (1991): 207.

of Tolkien's "friends", a viewer invariably brings his or her own set of culturally acquired "discursive precedents" to the act of looking, and these precedents may, on occasions, provoke a reading which digresses from, ironizes, or contradicts the subject matter of the "illustrated" text.<sup>7</sup>

A second factor connecting the two illustrators - one which compounds the complexity and instability of image-reading - is visual borrowing. By *visual borrowing* I refer to the transferal of a visual motif (i.e. a theme, concept, idea, expressed by forms) from an earlier work into a new one. In the context of this article, visual borrowing can be delineated by two distinct forms, which I will refer to as *a*) general correspondence (a motif derived from two or more similar visual sources; e.g. three religious paintings depicting St Sebastian pierced by arrows), and *b*) direct visual prototype (a motif derived from a single visual source; e.g. one manuscript miniature of St Peter by William de Brailes). Both forms of visual borrowing have the capacity to generate intertextual implication (*meaning*) and this phenomenon itself complicates the act of image-reading.

Baynes makes use of the two forms in her illustrations for *Farmer Giles of Ham*; witness her Chrysophylax, for instance, whose expressive facial features could be said to display a general correspondence with several of E.H. Shepard's illustrations of the Reluctant Dragon<sup>8</sup>; or her minstrel with *vielle* which is, in fact, a direct visual borrowing of a single element from folio 399r *Meister Heinrich Frauenlob* of the 14<sup>th</sup> century *Codex Manesse*.<sup>9</sup> Both these prototypes appear to be in keeping with the "no-time" atmosphere of Tolkien's Little Kingdom, where the authentically medieval and the humorously anachronistic are juxtaposed.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, as demonstrated by Tolkien's 1949 anecdote, even illustrations which incorporate motifs as complimentary to their source text as these remain subject to the individual interpretation of the viewer, and as such, may stand or fall accordingly.

If, then, the relatively modest text-image interrelations of *Farmer Giles of Ham* can embody these issues, what about the more complex, multi-layered narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*? How might perceived signs of general correspondence or direct visual prototype within an illustration of, say, Gandalf confronting the Witch-king, or Sam bearing the One Ring into Mordor, combine with the cultural backstory of an individual viewer to invoke intertextuality? Of course, there may be no definitive answers to such questions; subjectivity dictates that incidences of meaning arising from the intersection of viewer and motif will remain unique to the individual. However, it is certainly possible to postulate, with more than a degree

<sup>7</sup> Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, "Semiotics", 207.

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth Grahame, *The Reluctant Dragon* (London: Egmont Books, 2008).

<sup>9</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *Farmer Giles of Ham*, 57.

<sup>10</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *Farmer Giles of Ham*, 22.

of confidence, new intertextual outcomes for illustrations from *The Lord of the Rings*, based on careful analysis of the content and form of their visual borrowing.

Finding a suitable corpus on which to apply this method is, of course, crucial, and my decision to focus on the work of Sergei Iukhimov was informed by several theoretical constraints. Firstly, in order to maximise the possibility for encountering visual plurality, I chose to concentrate on images which predate the global visual conformity of the post-Peter Jackson era. Secondly, I opted for works originating from the former Soviet Union (and the states which emerged in its immediate aftermath) as it is these which display the greatest potential for borrowed motif. Such potential may, in part, be due to the experimental nature of Russian Tolkienism, and the oppressive state censorship which impelled many of the movement's writers and illustrators to gravitate towards allusion and allegory. According to Olga Markova (2004), the main issue regarding *The Lord of the Rings* and the censor was the (incorrect) assumption made by many Soviet officials during the 1960s-70s that the book contained a "hidden allegory" of Cold War conflict between the democratic, capitalist West and "the totalitarian, Communist East."<sup>11</sup> Ironically, a dichotomy would later emerge between this early, hard-line viewpoint and the post glasnost ideas of modern Communists, who would perceive Tolkien's anti-industrialism as a blueprint for recapturing a form of "primordial communism". Nevertheless, for the original Russian Tolkienists, the barrier to publication was almost insurmountable. Zinaida Bobyr, author of the first, radically abridged, Russian translation of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* entitled *Повесть о Кольце* (*Povest' o Kol'tse*. "The Tale [Lay] of the Ring") made several attempts to reimagine Tolkien's work to fit the state-approved literary genres of science-fiction story and fairy tale. Neither were successful and Bobyr was forced to distribute her work clandestinely.<sup>12</sup> However, her experimental model did prove

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<sup>11</sup> Olga Markova, "When Philology Becomes Ideology: The Russian Perspective of J.R.R. Tolkien," trans. Mark T. Hooker, *Tolkien Studies* 1 (2004): 165.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.

It is worth mentioning that the state censor charged with policing the publishing industry during the Soviet era was a powerful entity known as Главлит (Glavlit), and prospective authors were required to submit their work for examination. Established in 1922 as a countermeasure against the explosion of unregulated literature that followed the October Revolution, Glavlit was originally tasked with upholding six overarching requirements for effective Soviet censorship: "(1) control of every (national and foreign) printed work, with the right to adopt heavy sanctions; (2) prohibition to contradict Soviet ideology; (3) constant participation of the secret police in censorship interventions; (4) professionalism of censors; (5) political evaluation of works being reviewed; (6) compilation of a list of banned books." Works in contravention of Glavlit's code could be either "mutilated", destroyed or sent to secret holding archives, known as *spetskhrany*, where only Party members were permitted to view them.

Maria Zalambani, "Literary Policies and Institutions," in *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth Century Russian Literature*, eds. Evgeny Dobrenko and Marina Balina (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 256.

influential, and when combined with a readiness among artists of the region to adapt imported ideas to fit, what Mark T. Hooker refers to as, “the Russian mental climate”, facilitated the creation (during the 1980s and early 1990s) of several highly innovative Tolkien interpretations.<sup>13</sup>

Of these, Sergei Iukhimov’s corpus for the 1993 two-volume edition of Natalya Grigor’eva and Vladimir Grushetskij’s Russian translation of *The Lord of the Rings*, Властелин колец (*Vlastelin Kolets*), constitutes possibly the richest visual interpretation, and therefore the most compelling subject for my analysis. Ostensibly, each of the images in question portrays a moment from Tolkien’s narrative, and an iconographic reading of the correspondence between the visual motifs perceivable in each image and the source texts (both Tolkien’s and the translation) is an important component of my analysis. However, such is the complexity of the visual borrowing intrinsic to each composition, that many of these perceivable motifs are, in fact, borrowed from sources outside of Tolkien’s text: medieval manuscripts, frescoes, even archaeological artefacts. These borrowed motifs are employed, not in the traditional iconographic manner codified by the art historian Erwin Panofsky (1939), which would see, for instance, a motif borrowed from a Biblical image linked back to the appropriate Biblical text, but rather to construct a new iconographic correspondence between the motif as it appears in the Iukhimov illustration and *The Lord of the Rings*.<sup>14</sup> At times, the iconography of the borrowed motif is so strong that the original meaning endures, and when this is combined with the motif of the new work, may give rise to intertextuality in the form of polysemy; the co-existence of multiple meanings. A major goal of this study has been the evaluation of such incidences of polysemy, and this process has revealed visual parallels new to the field.

### **Motif and borrowing in the literature**

Discourse on the manipulation of motif within Tolkien visual culture features in a variety of works, including several exploring the author’s own artistic corpus. Of the latter, perhaps the most widely known is *J.R.R. Tolkien: Artist and Illustrator* (1995) by Christina Scull and Wayne G. Hammond, a meticulously researched volume chronicling the greater part of Tolkien’s visual career. Here, as an example of Tolkien’s visual borrowing, two of his “new” works; *The Trolls* and *Firelight in Beorn’s House*, are positioned in proximity to their earlier prototypes, Jennie Harbour’s *Hansel Comforted His Sister* (1921) and E.V. Gordon’s *Untitled*

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<sup>13</sup> Mark T. Hooker, *Tolkien Through Russian Eyes* (Zollikofen: Walking Tree Publishers, 2003), 25.

<sup>14</sup> Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Aylesbury: Peregrine Books, 1970), 51.

(*Interior of a Norse Hall*) (1927).<sup>15</sup> The effect is striking; however, Scull and Hammond refrain from any extended analysis of the potential intertextual implications arising from these borrowed motifs. More recently, Michael Organ (2013) has engaged with the possibility of Tolkien's illustrations having been influenced by elements of Japanese art and calligraphy, offering the 1937 dust jacket design for *The Hobbit* as one example of a possible link with the imagery of the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century *ukiyo-e* ("pictures of the floating world").<sup>16</sup> Micael D.C. Drout's edited volume *J.R.R. Tolkien Encyclopedia: Scholarship and Critical Assessment* (2007) contains two essays which acknowledge Tolkien's artistic connection with William Morris; James I. McNelis' *Artistic Movements* and John Garth's *Artists and Illustrators' Influence on Tolkien*.<sup>17</sup> John Garth speaks of Tolkien's "visual debt" to Morris, and also cites Kay Neilson, Arthur Rackham and the calligrapher Edward Johnston as stylistic influences on his work.<sup>18</sup> In addition, Garth provides examples of Tolkien's more tangible appropriations, such as Baldwin Brown's South African cave painting sketches from 1928 (incorporated into the 1932 *Letter from Father Christmas*) and Alexander Thorburn's 1891 golden eagle which forms the centrepiece of *Bilbo woke up with the early sun in his Eyes* (1937). Both Tolkien's *Cave Drawings* (1932) and the eagle image are included in Catherine McIlwaine's *Tolkien: Maker of Middle-earth* (2018), a companion volume to the Bodleian Library exhibition.<sup>19</sup> McIlwaine positions Thorburn's eagle directly opposite Tolkien's image in her book, and furnishes us with the detail of how a young Christopher Tolkien discovered the prototype in a copy of T. A. Coward's *Birds of the British Isles and Their Eggs* (1919).<sup>20</sup> Tolkien's later insistence (also recounted by McIlwaine) that his illustration should appear in conjunction with the opening line of the chapter *Queer Lodgings* (hence the subsequent illustration title) is indicative of his own awareness of the power of the image-word interrelationship.<sup>21</sup> Jeffrey J. McCleod and Anna Smol succinctly describe Tolkien's creative methodology regarding this issue in *Visualizing the Word: Tolkien as Artist and Writer* (2017), stating that, for Tolkien "in his drafting

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<sup>15</sup> Christina Scull and Wayne G. Hammond, *J.R.R. Tolkien: Artist and Illustrator* (London: HarperCollins, 1995), 101-102, 115.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Organ, "Tolkien's Japonisme: Prints, Dragons and a Great Wave," *Tolkien Studies* 10 (2013): 109, 114.

<sup>17</sup> James I. McNelis, "Artistic Movements," in *J.R.R. Tolkien Encyclopedia: Scholarship and Critical Assessment*, ed. Michael D.C. Drout (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis, 2007), 35-36.

<sup>18</sup> John Garth, "Artists and Illustrators' Influence on Tolkien," in *J.R.R. Tolkien Encyclopedia: Scholarship and Critical Assessment*, ed. Michael D.C. Drout (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis, 2007), 36-37.

<sup>19</sup> Catherine McIlwaine, *Tolkien: Maker of Middle-earth* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2017), 97, 306-307.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 306.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 306.

of stories and in his invented signs and alphabets, word and image work in tandem.”<sup>22</sup> Their conclusion that Tolkien also “feared the ability of the visual image...to supplant words” whilst simultaneously believing that illustrations could “complement a Secondary World, but only if the power of the image can be restrained from overwhelming the word” poses intriguing questions regarding the logic behind Tolkien’s more overt visual borrowings.<sup>23</sup>

Within the wider field of Tolkien illustration, the concepts of motif and borrowing are less evident in the literature. Christopher Tuthill touches briefly upon the subject in *Art*, published as part of *A Companion to J.R.R. Tolkien* (2014) edited by Stuart D. Lee.<sup>24</sup> Tuthill’s primary focus appears to be on making stylistic and compositional comparisons between depictions of pivotal moments from *The Lord of the Rings* by artists John Howe, Alan Lee, Jef Murray and Ted Nasmith. However, he does venture a potential visual prototype in the form of the Egyptian Mortuary Temple which allegedly inspired Ted Nasmith’s *Minas Tirith at Dawn*.<sup>25</sup> A more thorough investigation of the manipulation of visual elements in a Tolkienian context would be Emily E. Auger’s *The Lord of the Rings Interlace: Tolkien’s Narrative and Lee’s Illustrations* (2008). Auger’s study is centred on the hypothesis that Alan Lee (the illustrator perhaps most closely associated with the contemporary visual culture of Middle-earth) consciously incorporated a series of repeated motifs into his illustrations for HarperCollins’ 1991 edition of *The Lord of the Rings*, which augmented the existing “interlace structure” of Tolkien’s narrative.<sup>26</sup> For Auger, it is Lee’s habitual use of mountains, blocked paths, sensory invocations, and confluences of time and space, which best replicate Tolkien’s complex form of textual interlacing.<sup>27</sup> The parallels discussed remain centred upon Tolkien’s secondary world, and, as Auger herself admits, Lee’s recurring motifs operate most effectively when viewed as “sets - pairs, sequences, and series - that

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<sup>22</sup> Jeffrey J. McCleod and Anna Smol, “Visualising the Word: Tolkien as Artist and Writer,” *Tolkien Studies* 14 (2017): 126.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 126-127.

<sup>24</sup> Christopher Tuthill, “Art” in *A Companion to J.R.R. Tolkien*, ed. Stuart D. Lee (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2014), 487-500.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 497-498.

<sup>26</sup> Emily E. Auger, “The Lord of the Rings’ Interlace: Tolkien’s Narrative and Lee’s Illustrations.” *Journal of the Fantastic In the Arts* 19, no 1 (2008): 71.

Tom Shippey defines this *interlacing* as an “ancient and pre-novelistic device”, familiar to medieval French prose tales such as the *Vulgate Cycle* and which forms the “basic structural mode of *The Lord of the Rings*”.

Tom Shippey, *The Road to Middle-earth: How J.R.R. Tolkien Created a New Mythology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: HarperCollins, 2005), 181.

<sup>27</sup> Emily E. Auger, “Interlace”, 80.



cross-reference each other and the text.”<sup>28</sup> In contrast, Thomas Honegger highlights the intersection of Middle-earth and real-world motifs as it exists within Jay Johnstone’s painting *Isildur’s Bane* in *Ut pictura tractatio – Some Thoughts on Jay Johnstone’s Isildur’s Bane*.<sup>29</sup> Johnstone’s approach, according to Honegger, forms an extension of Tolkien’s “The Red Book of Westmarch” translation conceit, with the artist acting as a visual translator, interpreting “original Middle-earth symbols into a real-world context.”<sup>30</sup> Johnstone’s evocation of Orthodox Church imagery naturally invites comparison with Iukhimov’s images (which, it should be stated, predate Johnstone’s by several decades), however, Honegger makes no reference to Iukhimov in his essay. Perhaps this is understandable, given the differences in methodological approach between the two artists, and the fact that Iukhimov although grounded in the Orthodox tradition, finds equal recourse - as I will demonstrate - in the motifs of the Western Church and wider visual culture.

Outside of the field of Tolkien illustration, the subject of direct visual borrowing and intertextuality is examined through the prism of *The Lord of the Rings* films in Dimitra Fimi’s *Filming Folklore: Adapting Fantasy for the Big Screen through Peter Jackson’s The Lord of the Rings* (2011). Here, Fimi deftly traces the visual links between Duncan’s Celtic Revival painting *The Riders of the Sidhe* (1911) and two scenes from Jackson’s trilogy depicting Elven processions.<sup>31</sup> Both processions, she informs us, are designed to evoke the “alluring otherworldliness” and “implied sadness” of Duncan’s image. and constitute a “conscious borrowing” on the part of the film-makers. This borrowing, it appears, has been primarily orchestrated by Alan Lee, who, in his capacity as Jackson’s conceptual designer, has incorporated key motifs from *The Riders of the Sidhe* (via his own Duncan-inspired 1978 illustration of the “Faerie Rades”), into the visuality of the two filmed processions.<sup>32</sup> Fimi’s analysis provides further evidence, if any were needed, of Lee’s formative role in the modern visual language of Middle-earth.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Honegger, *Ut pictura tractatio – Some Thought’s on Jay Johnstone’s Isildur’s Bane*, Academia.edu, 2017, [https://www.academia.edu/12234866/\\_Ut\\_pictura\\_tractatio\\_Some\\_Thoughts\\_on\\_Jay\\_Johnstone\\_s\\_Isildur\\_s\\_Bane\\_](https://www.academia.edu/12234866/_Ut_pictura_tractatio_Some_Thoughts_on_Jay_Johnstone_s_Isildur_s_Bane_) (page 5).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 2-3, 5.

<sup>31</sup> The scenes in question are scene 11 “The Passing of the Elves” from the extended edition of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, and scene 9 “Arwen’s Vision” from the extended edition of *The Return of the King*.

Dimitra Fimi, “Filming Folklore: Adapting Fantasy for the Big Screen through Peter Jackson’s *The Lord of the Rings*” in eds. Janice M. Bogstad and Philip E. Kaveny, *Picturing Tolkien: Essays on Peter Jackson’s The Lord of the Rings Film Trilogy* (London: McFarland, 2011), 88-90.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 89-90.

## The illustrator

Сергей Борисович Юхимов, or Sergej Borisovich Juhimov (I refer to him as *Sergei Iukhimov* in accordance with his own favoured Latin script spelling), was born in 1958 in the Black Sea port of Odessa, a part of what was then known as the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Iukhimov studied graphic arts at the Odessa Pedagogical Institute; a training school for teachers of the “elementary and secondary school system” which, until 1992 was “under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education of the Ukrainian SSR”.<sup>33</sup> The Institute, which in 1994 was renamed the South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University, today lists its Faculty of Arts and Graphics specialisms as being “Artistic corrections of educational editions [sic]”, “Visual art” and “Artistic Crafts”, leading to the qualification of “Teacher of Graphical Art”.<sup>34</sup> It is likely that Iukhimov received training in artistic practice and visual culture commensurate with being able to teach at “secondary education” level.<sup>35</sup> According to Rossenberg (2015), Iukhimov graduated in 1981, subsequently working as a professional artist, exhibiting and producing illustrations for ten books, including Russian-language editions of Oscar Wilde’s *The Selfish Giant* and *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll.<sup>36</sup>

Iukhimov first encountered Tolkien in 1982, when he acquired a copy of Vladimir Murav’ev and Andrej Kistyakovskij’s abridged translation of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Хранители (*Hraniteli* “Guardians”).<sup>37</sup> Of this initial reading Iukhimov writes (on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2008);

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<sup>33</sup> Danylo Husar Struk, ed., *Encyclopedia of Ukraine: Vol III: L-Pf* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993). <https://books.google.co.uk/books?isbn=1442651253>.

<sup>34</sup> South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K.D. Ushynsky *List of training directions and specialities*, South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University, 2017, <http://www.pdpu.edu.ua/en/for-applicants.html>, 5 January 2018.

<sup>35</sup> South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University, <http://www.pdpu.edu.ua/en/for-applicants.html>, 5 January 2018.

<sup>36</sup> René van Rossenberg, *Sergei Iukhimov*, The Tolkien Shop, 2015, <http://www.tolkienshop.com/contents/en-uk/d193.html>, 5 January 2018.

<sup>37</sup> *Hraniteli* was published by Детская литература (*Detskaja literatura*, “Children’s Literature”), a Moscow publishing house, which was, (according to Ben Hellman), established by the Communist Party in 1933 with the express aim of producing “books that are attractive and accessible, but also strong, principled and on a high ideological level.”

Ben Hellman, *Fairy Tales and True Stories: The History of Russian Literature for Children and Young People* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 363-364.

The translators of *Hraniteli*, Vladimir Murav’ev and Andrej Kistyakovskij have been accused of incorporating an overly fatalistic tone to their translation, stripping away much of the element of hope present within Tolkien’s original work.

Hooker, *Russian Eyes*, 124.

For the first time I read the *Guardians* on November 2, 1982. Unforgettable days! Unforgettable nights...Three times I read the book and did not understand anything at all. What is it? Fairy tale? Saga? Novel? No, not that. In the "Literary Encyclopedia" a dozen lines, nothing to explain.<sup>38</sup> In the libraries - nothing. Friends have nothing. I seemed to hang in the air.<sup>39</sup>

It was not until 1986, that Iukhimov was moved to attempt any visual interpretation based on his reading of *Hraniteli*;

...I started sketching something, and sketching it, without having the slightest idea of what I was actually doing. In general, the whole process of creation was akin to the work of Melkor: the tree grew on its own, without special quibbles on my part.

It smelled of Dickens and the Victorian era. It seemed to me, for some reason, Mr. Pickwick, together with Sam, going on a long and dangerous journey... all 1988 I languidly worked on the first volume...Finally, in the spring of 1989 a miracle happened: a friend of my friend gave me the Polish text of *The Lord of the Rings*...I bought a dictionary and learned by the method of Schliemann: took the first volume of Murav'ev and Kistyakovskij's and the first volume of Polish, reading them in parallel....I first received the first and third volumes of the Polish translation, the second came later....

...I first thought that such a multicultural symphony cannot be depicted in terms of an ordinary illustrative series: we need cultural depth and variety. And I started to play with styles, epochs, cultures...Irish, Carolingian, Ottonian, and early medieval manuscripts generally....

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It should also be noted that, until 1988, when a revised edition was published (with Volumes I and II following in 1990 and 1991), *Hraniteli* was the only state-sanctioned publication of any part of *The Lord of the Rings* available to Soviet citizens.

<sup>38</sup> It is possible that the "Literary Encyclopedia" Iukhimov is referring to here may in fact be the *Краткая литературная энциклопедия (Kratkaja literaturnaja jenciklopedija* "Concise Literary Encyclopedia"), a nine-volume work published in the USSR between 1962-1978. According to John Glad, the KLE was "undoubtedly the most basic and important reference tool to appear from the Soviet Union." Soviet dissidents were largely barred from the work, and foreign writers were given emphasis in volume nine, which Glad claims was "largely intended to fill in the gaps regarding modern writers and schools."

John Glad, "The Soviet Concise Literary Encyclopedia: A Review Article," *The Slavic and East European Journal* 25 (1981): 80-84.

<sup>39</sup> Sergei Iukhimov, *ТОЛКИЕН*, Iukhimov, 2009, <https://iukhimov.livejournal.com/>, 5 January 2018.

...Finally, I came to understand when reading *The Silmarillion*: everything fell into place.<sup>40</sup> There was a firm and clear hierarchy of both light and dark forces. How is it possible to clearly and adequately convey the said hierarchy in a picture? With the help of nimbuses, which exist not only in the Christian tradition. - although there is no way to do without Christianity....

...Origen asserts that angels are balls of fire...I do not argue.<sup>41</sup> But if I draw such a glowing ball, no one will understand anything without a detailed comment; if we portray an anthropoid creature in white robes with wings and a halo, then any fool will understand that something pure, bright and blissful is before him. Say "bread" and everybody imagines their homeland; draw a loaf and everyone will be dissatisfied."<sup>42</sup>

Iukhimov produced 120 full colour Middle-earth illustrations, encompassing not only *The Lord of the Rings*, but also *The Hobbit* and *The Silmarillion*.<sup>43</sup> Although he latterly attempted to create a faux art-historical Middle-earth "visual culture" based upon his Tolkien images, his final creative work on the corpus consisted of renderings of the hobbit family trees from Appendix C of *The Return*

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<sup>40</sup> There is no record of which edition of *The Silmarillion* Iukhimov is referring to. The first official published Russian translations appeared in 1991 – 1992.

<sup>41</sup> Greek scholar and Christian theologian, Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD) when describing "the substance of angels" writes "As God then is a fire, and the angels a flame of fire...". Rev Frederick Crombie trans., *The Writings of Origen, Volume 1* (London: T. & T. Clark, 1869), 122.

<sup>42</sup> Sergei Iukhimov, *ТОЛКИЕН*, Iukhimov, 2009, <https://iukhimov.livejournal.com/>, 5 January 2018.

When Iukhimov speaks of "bread" and "homeland" in this context it is possible that he may be alluding to Tolkien's rather contentious discourse on the role of illustration in the depiction of fairy stories; a part of which reads:

"However good in themselves, illustrations do little good to fairy-stories. The radical distinction between all art (including drama) that offers a visible presentation and true literature is that it imposes one visible form. Literature works from mind to mind and is thus more progenitive. It is at once more universal and more poignantly particular. If it speaks of bread or wine or stone or tree, it appeals to the whole of these things, to their ideas; yet each hearer will give to them a peculiar personal embodiment in his imagination. Should the story say "he ate bread," the dramatic producer or painter can only show "a piece of bread" according to his taste or fancy, but the hearer of the story will think of bread in general and picture it in some form of his own." J.R.R. Tolkien, *Tolkien On Fairy-Stories*, eds. Douglas A. Anderson and Verilyn Fleiger (London: HarperCollins, 2008), 81-82.

Ruth Lacon eloquently dissects the above passage in *To Illustrate or Not to Illustrate? That is the Question...*, Tolkien Library, 2012, <http://www.tolkienlibrary.com/press/1026-To-Illustrate-or-Not-to-Illustrate.php>, 20 January 2019.

<sup>43</sup> Sergei Iukhimov, *Tolkien*, Iukhimov, 2009, <https://iukhimov.livejournal.com/845.html>, 15 January 2018.

of the King.<sup>44</sup> As Iukhimov himself wrote; “The last thing I did...were the hobbits’ genealogies, without them I saw neither unity nor integrity. This is the basis, the soil on which all the flowers of Francis of Assisi grow.”<sup>45</sup>

Iukhimov died in Odessa in 2016, leaving behind a series of unpublished illustrated cycles, including works devoted to William Shakespeare, Ernst Hoffman’s *Klein Zaches genannt Zinnober* and an *ABC for Children*, inspired by Tolstoy’s fictional author Kozma Petrovich Prutkov.<sup>46</sup>

## Methodology

When it comes to the actual identification of motifs within the illustrations, Erwin Panofsky’s theory of iconographic analysis, as detailed in *Iconography and Iconology: An Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art* (1939), provides a methodological foundation. Panofsky’s method is concerned with “the subject matter or meaning of works of art as opposed to their form.”<sup>47</sup> Subject matter for Panofsky encompasses three levels; 1) primary or natural subject matter (“the world of artistic motifs”). 2) secondary or conventional subject matter (images, and combinations of images which become stories and allegories). 3) intrinsic meaning or content (the interpretation of the previous elements as symptomatic of “the world of “symbolical” values.”)<sup>48</sup> My investigation of the iconographic correspondences between the Iukhimov images will be primarily concerned with the use of Panofsky’s first and second levels. The former, which we may refer to as *pre-iconographical description*, requires a familiarity with “the world of artistic motifs” and the way in which “*objects and events*” have traditionally been expressed by *forms*.<sup>49</sup> The latter, *iconographical analysis*, is an interpretive act reliant on a “knowledge of literary sources” for the successful identification of visual themes or concepts within a work of art.<sup>50</sup> This knowledge, according to Panofsky may be acquired through “purposeful reading” and “oral tradition”, and in the case of Iukhimov’s work the primary literary source would be *The Lord of the Rings* (or its translations).<sup>51</sup> As previously mentioned, there is a complex form of visual borrowing inherent to Iukhimov’s illustrations; with the iconographic Tolkien

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<sup>44</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King* (London: HarperCollins 2011), 1099-1105.

<sup>45</sup> Sergei Iukhimov, *ТОЛКИЕН*, 2009, <https://iukhimov.livejournal.com/>, 5 January 2018.

<sup>46</sup> Sergei Iukhimov, *The ABC*, Sergei Iukhimov 1958-2016, 2017, <https://www.lordoftheringsforsale.com/the-abc>, 5 January, 2018.

<sup>47</sup> Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Aylesbury: Peregrine Books, 1970), 51.

<sup>48</sup> Panofsky, *Meaning*, 61.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

motifs present often having been constructed out of other borrowed motifs removed from their original iconographic contexts. Therefore, the initial identification of any general correspondence/direct visual prototype will be performed using the *pre-iconographical* method, whilst the subsequent evaluation of the new Tolkienian motif will be performed via *iconographical analysis*.<sup>52</sup>

Determining the point at which a perceived general correspondence or direct visual prototype may acquire intertextual significance is dependent on several factors. Bal and Bryson, in their *Semiotics and Art History* (1991), define intertextuality as referring to “the ready-made quality of linguistic-and, one can add, visual-signs, that a writer or image-maker finds available in the earlier texts that a culture has produced.”<sup>53</sup> This “ready-made” element indicates that the intertextual sign, or prototype, comes complete with a meaning. Therefore, unlike iconographic analysis, which often avoids engaging with the actual meaning of “borrowed” motifs, intertextuality actively imports the meaning, together with the visual sign, out of the historical text (or image) and into the new. Of course, as is the case with many of Iukhimov’s images where the borrowed motif is used as the basis for a completely new iconographic reference, this predetermined meaning may be altered, subverted, discarded, or, when subject to the “discursive precedents” of the viewer replaced by polysemy. Nevertheless, it must be reckoned with in some capacity. For an Iukhimov case study to qualify as an intertextual piece, it must meet these criteria and demonstrate a potential meaning, or range of meanings, occurring from the intersection of 1) “ready-made” prototype (general correspondence or direct visual) 2) new work (Iukhimov illustration containing potential iconographic Tolkien motif) and, by extension, also 3) viewer subjectivity.<sup>54</sup>

Of the thirty-two colour illustrations which comprise Iukhimov’s published corpus for *The Lord of the Rings* I have selected five examples for this article which, I believe, demonstrate incidences of perceived general correspondence or direct visual prototype together with varying levels of intertextual meaning. The illustrations in question, which I will refer to as the *case studies*, are (listed in order of analysis): 1) *Gandalf and the Wraith-king at the gate of Minas Tirith*. 2) *Farewell Galadriel*. 3) *Fearless Samwise*. 4) *March of the Rohirrim* [sic]. 5) *On a Visit to Tom Bombadil*.

It is quite possible for a case study to display a general correspondence but strong intertextuality, or conversely a direct visual prototype but weak intertextuality. To illustrate this point; a hypothetical image of Gandalf bestowing

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>53</sup> Bal and Bryson. *Semiotics*. 206.

<sup>54</sup> Bal and Bryson. *Semiotics*. 207.

the White Crown upon Aragorn (Book Six, Chapter V of *The Return of the King; The Steward and the King*), might have perceivable within it only a general correspondence derived from several medieval manuscript depictions of Popes crowning Carolingian monarchs. However, from this general motif alone it might still be possible to extrapolate a strong intertextual meaning, for instance the symbolic importance in both Tolkien's work and medieval society of a "divine" figure, whose power transcends earthly rule (such as a Pope, or Gandalf) in the authentication of kingship. Likewise, a hypothetical image of Gandalf appearing to Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli (as in Book Three, Chapter V of *The Two Towers: The White Rider*) which incorporates, say, a direct visual motif borrowed from Theophanes the Greek's 1408 *Transfiguration of Jesus* may still have little intertextual meaning beyond the divine symbolism of the nimbus of white light around the central protagonists.

My methodological approach to the individual analysis of each case study will be characterised by five stages of investigation; 1) Synopsis of the 'illustrated' source passage from Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. 2) Brief analysis of the corresponding passage from the Natalya Grigor'eva and Vladimir Grushetskij's *Vlastelin Kolets* translation, highlighting differences in tone or narrative discrepancies. 3) Identification and analysis of perceivable iconographic correspondences which relate to Tolkien's source text and/or Grigor'eva and Grushetskij's translation; with reference to Panofsky's method 4) Identification and analysis of general correspondences or direct visual prototypes which are perceivable within the case study and 5) Identification and analysis of any potential intertextual implication (meaning) which may be extrapolated from the identification of general correspondences or direct visual prototypes.

Before embarking on the analysis of the case studies, however, it would be prudent to take a moment to assess the translation itself.

### ***Vlastelin Kolets***

According to Mark T. Hooker – whose monograph *Tolkien Through Russian Eyes* (2003) provides a useful guide to the history of Russian Tolkienism - Grigor'eva and Grushetskij's translation of *The Lord of the Rings* властелин колец (*Vlastelin Kolets*) was first disseminated in the early 1980s in самиздат (*samizdat* "self-published") format.<sup>55</sup> Outlawed by the Soviet authorities, *samizdat* was a clandestine underground press, (what Maria Zalambani refers to as a "counter-

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<sup>55</sup> Mark T. Hooker, *Tolkien Through Russian Eyes* (Zollikofen: Walking Tree Publishers, 2003), 291.

institution”) concerned with the copying and distribution of banned literature.<sup>56</sup> *Samizdat* were originally produced in the guise of open letters from prominent dissident authors to the Union of Soviet Writers and other official bodies, but later the form expanded to include full books which were circulated primarily among the intelligentsia.<sup>57</sup> Russian historian and human rights activist Ludmila Aleekseva referred to the practice as the “backbone” of dissidence.<sup>58</sup> Zalambani also describes *samizdat* as “a symptom of the struggle fought by non-official culture against official institutions” and adds that “it was the struggle of heretics and ‘pretenders’ against the orthodox and the ‘rulers’ of the literary field.”<sup>59</sup> To possess or distribute a samizdat copy of *The Lord of the Rings* was to risk prosecution, and, to quote Hooker again, “while reading it – to a certain extent – you literally shared the dangers of the fellowship.”<sup>60</sup> For many Russians (including those in authority), Tolkien’s fiction, as well as the numerous apocryphal works which emerged in the wake of the early translations, would become synonymous with dissident, anti-Soviet thought. Conversely, later “alternativist” apocrypha writers such as Nik Perumov, author of the 1985-1993 Russian Tolkienesque duology *Кольцо Тьмы* (*Kol'co T'my* “Ring of Darkness”), would seek to “correct” or “complete” Tolkien.<sup>61</sup> However, as Grushetskij himself comments in *How Russians See Tolkien* (1992), for those people who “began their struggle with the socialistic totalitarian state in the USSR in the 70s” and wished to recruit new activists, Tolkien’s books constituted “a remarkable way to influence a person’s mind, training an individual in certain ethical ideas.”<sup>62</sup>

*Vlastelin Kolets* was finally legally published (after considerable revision) in 1991 by Северо-Запад (*Severo-Zapad*) a St Petersburg publishing house. The two-volume version illustrated by Iukhimov was released two years later by ТО Издатель (ТО Izdatel’) of Moscow, with poems translated by I. B. Grinshpun. Volume one of this edition includes Books One and Two of Братство Кольца (*Bratstvo Kol'ca* “The Fellowship of the Ring”) and Book Three of Две Крепости

<sup>56</sup> Maria Zalambani, “Literary Policies,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth Century Russian Literature*, eds. Evgeny Dobrenko and Marina Balina (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 263.

<sup>57</sup> Zalambani, “Literary Policies,” 263.

<sup>58</sup> Ludmila Aleekseva, Carol Pearce and John Glad trans., *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary Movements for National, Religious and Human Rights* (Middletown: Connecticut, 1985), 284; quoted in Ann Komaromi, “Samizdat and Soviet Dissident Publics” *Slavic Review* 71, no 1 (2012): 72.

<sup>59</sup> Zalambani, “Literary Policies,” 263.

<sup>60</sup> Mark T. Hooker, *Tolkien Through Russian Eyes*, 19-20.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>62</sup> Vladimir Grushetskij, “How Russians See Tolkien,” in *Proceedings of the J.R.R. Tolkien Centenary Conference 1992* eds. Patricia Reynolds and Glen Goodknight (Milton Keynes: The Tolkien Society, 1992), 225.



(*Dve Kreposti* “The Two Fortresses/Towers”). Volume II includes Book Four of *The Two Towers* and Book Five and Six of *Возвращение Короля* (*Vozvrashhenie Korolja* ‘The Return of the King’). Volume I retains a version of Tolkien’s *Prologue*, entitled *О хоббимах* [sic] (*O hobbitmah* “About hobbits”).<sup>63</sup> Volume II meanwhile, contains a version of the *Appendices* (ПРИЛОЖЕНИЯ or PRILOZhENIJa), complete with *Family Trees* (Генеалогии, “Genealogies”), and the original Tengwar and Angerthas tables, although the latter is included without its English letter values.<sup>64</sup> Hooker makes the point that, narrative-wise, Grigoreva and Grushetskij’s translation contains far too many “lacunae” for it to be truly accurate.<sup>65</sup> In 1992 Grigor’eva summarised their approach to the translation of Tolkien’s original text thus;

Imagine that you are going to copy a painting using coloured pencils only. There are two options. You could re-draw the picture accurately reproducing every colour and every detail. Or you could attempt to see this landscape “as it was seen by the artist” trying to understand why it has been so dear to him and to draw the picture anew. We’ve done more or less the same with Tolkien’s books as far as our poor artistic abilities allow.<sup>66</sup>

### **The corpus: Sergei Iukhimov’s *The Lord of the Rings***

The two volumes of Grigor’eva and Grushetskij’s translation contain, in total, thirty-two full colour illustrations by Iukhimov; including separate front and back covers for Volume I, a separate front cover for Volume II (the back cover here repeats an internal illustration), and one endpaper illustration printed in both volumes. Although, (for this article) my focus is upon the colour images, the edition also includes 203 monochrome illustrations: 108 in Volume I and 95 in Vol II. These include Cyrillic chapter initials, repeating borders, chapter headers and scenes. There is no attribution for the monochrome illustrations, but their style points firmly to Iukhimov. Each volume also contains a map of Middle-earth and a map of the Shire, again attributable to Iukhimov. The internal colour illustrations each comprise full page ‘plates’, which are printed on heavier paper than the pages

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<sup>63</sup> It should be noted that the spelling *хоббимах* (*hobbitmah*) for “hobbits” is immediately contradicted in the first line of the prologue by the more usual *хоббитах* (*hobbitah*). J.R.R. Tolkien, *Vlastelin Kolets I*, 13.

<sup>64</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings (Vlastelin Kolets Vol II)*, trans. N. V. Grigor’eva and V. I. Grushetskij (Moscow: TO Izdatel’. 1993), 318, 399.

<sup>65</sup> Mark T. Hooker, *Tolkien Through Russian Eyes*, 119-120.

<sup>66</sup> Natalya Grigor’eva, “Problems of Translating into Russian,” in *Proceedings of the J.R.R. Tolkien Centenary Conference 1992* eds. Patricia Reynolds and Glen Goodknight (Milton Keynes: The Tolkien Society, 1992), 201.

of text. The plates are bound together in sets of four, with four sets included in Volume I, and three sets in Volume II. In the actual case studies, I have labelled each plate accordingly by *Volume, Set* and *Plate Number*, therefore as an example, *A Visit to Tom Bombadil* would be Volume I. Set I. Plate 3, or Vol I.I.3.

The full complement of internal plates are as follows; 1) *Gandalf arrives at Hobbiton* 2) *Farewell to Bag End* 3) *A Visit to Tom Bombadil* 4) *In Peace* 5) *Lodging for the Night in Bree* 6) *Wraith – King* 7) *At Rivendell* 8) *Bridge of Khazad-dûm* 9) *Farewell Galadriel* 10) *Nazgûl over the Anduin* 11) *The Death of Boromir* 12) *Escape with Grishnákh* 13) *In the house of Fangorn* 14) *Return of Gandalf* 15) *At the gates of Isengard* 16) *Conversation with Saruman* 17) *Taming of Sméagol* 18) *Fearless Samwise* 19) *Merry swears to Théoden* 20) *Gandalf and the Witch-king at the gate of Minas Tirith* 21) *March of the Rohirrim* 22) *Pyre of Denethor* 23) *The Tower of Cirith Ungol* 24) *White Tree of Minas Tirith* 25) *Return to the Shire* 26) *Frodo sick again* 27) *Last ship* 28) *King Elessar*.

Thirty-one of the illustrations are rendered in portrait format (only the endpaper depicting the honouring of the Ringbearers on the Field of Cormallen is landscape), and all twenty-eight plates have italicised Cyrillic title captions in the left-hand bottom corner. Iukhimov has provided each plate with an illustrated border; twenty-one possess simple lines of contrasting colour; seven have more elaborate designs, somewhat reminiscent of the work of the Russian illustrators Ivan Bilibin (1876-1942) and Boris Zvorykin (1872-1942). Each plate bears the signature *S. Iukhimov*, accompanied by their date of creation. The earliest are dated 1987 (*A Visit to Tom Bombadil*, *Wraith – King* and *Fearless Samwise*). Most plates are dated around 1990-1991, with 1991, coincidentally, being the latest date for any of the illustrations.

Stylistically, the illustrations range from the representational, such as *Lodging for the Night at Bree* to the highly symbolic (*Fearless Samwise*) and there appears to be a visual progression at work which loosely mirrors Tolkien's textual transition from, as Shippey puts it, "familiar Shire to archaic Wilderland".<sup>67</sup> The illustrations also conform to distinctive stylistic categories, influenced primarily by the artistic period from which the motifs are borrowed: Byzantine, Carolingian, Romanesque and Neo-Gothic (for the Shire scenes and Bree) being the major trends.

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<sup>67</sup> Tom Shippey, *The Road to Middle-earth: How J.R.R. Tolkien Created a New Mythology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: HarperCollins, 2005), 119.

### ***Gandalf and the Wraith-king at the gate of Minas Tirith*** [sic]

Гэндальф и Король-Призрак у ворот Минас Тирита - *Gandal'fi Korol'-Prizrak u vorot Minas Tirita* (1987).

This image (Volume II. I. Plate 20) depicts a pivotal moment in the narrative of *The Siege of Gondor* (Book V Chapter IV of *The Return of the King*). To set the scene; the gate of Minas Tirith has been broken by Sauron's forces, allowing the Lord of the Nazgûl to ride into the city, his shape grown to "a vast menace of despair". Only Gandalf, seated on Shadowfax, holds his ground. The Lord of the Nazgûl halts to face Gandalf and after a brief exchange with the wizard, raises his fiery sword to attack. Tolkien writes;

Gandalf did not move. And in that very moment, away behind in some courtyard of the city, a cock crowed. Shrill and clear he crowed, recking nothing of wizardry and war, welcoming only the morning that in the sky far above the shadows of death was coming with the dawn.<sup>68</sup>

The corresponding chapter of Grigor'eva and Grushetskij's translation is entitled *Осада Города* (*Osada Goroda* "The Siege of the City"). Their version of the confrontation at the gate follows the original sequence of events, however, the language is less evocative, and Tolkien's subtly ambiguous "shadows of death [my emphasis]" becomes something rather more defined in its meaning;

But Gandalf did not move. At that very moment, somewhere far away, in the center of the City, in a sonorous and clear voice a cock began to sing. For him there was no ancient magic; he felt there, high in the sky, the morning rising over the shadow of death.<sup>69</sup>

Iukhimov's illustration depicts the two protagonists armed with swords and without their mounts. On the left stands Gandalf, with closely cropped hair and beard, clad in a purple *chlamys* (a form of Byzantine cloak) fastened with a *fibula* brooch.<sup>70</sup> On the right, stands the Lord of the Nazgûl, portrayed as a skeletal creature wearing a crown and wrapped in a black cloak and hood. The *titulus M* besides Gandalf most likely represents the first letter of *Mithrandir* (*mith* "grey +

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<sup>68</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 3<sup>rd</sup> revised reset edition. (London: HarperCollins, 2011), 829.

<sup>69</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *Vlastelin Kolets (Vol II)*, trans. N.V.Grigor'eva and V.I Grushetskij (Moscow: TO Izdatel', 1993), 164.

<sup>70</sup> Jennifer L. Ball, *Byzantine Dress: Representations of Secular Dress in Eighth to Twelfth Century Painting* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 29-30.

“*randir* “pilgrim, wandering man”)<sup>71</sup>, the Sindarin name for Gandalf.<sup>72</sup> Next to the Nazgûl stands the initial *W*, which could signify either the canonical title *Witch-king* or Grigor'eva, Grushetskij and Iukhimov's more favoured *Wraith-king* (which I will use when referencing the subject of this case study).<sup>73</sup>

Above Gandalf's head is a brightly coloured cockerel, an obvious visual reference to both the crowing bird of the text and a sunrise which will herald the arrival of the Rohirrim. Above the Wraith-king swoops a red and black dragon-like creature, suggestive of one of the Nazgûl's winged steeds; primeval creatures referred to by Tolkien as being survivors of “older geological eras.”<sup>74</sup> Below the two symbolic animals, Gandalf and the Wraith-king face each other across a simplified landscape containing a castle keep, (abutting a pyramid-shaped central mountain), surrounded by a triangular inner wall and a circular outer wall, all with crenellated battlements. The castle, complete with open gateway, symbolises Minas Tirith after Grond's assault has broken the gate, and the mountain behind is representative of Mindolluin. Tolkien, however, describes the textual Minas Tirith as having been “built on seven levels, each delved into the hill” and makes it clear that each level possesses its own separate wall and gate.<sup>75</sup> Iukhimov's outer wall does feature seven turrets, although only one displays a gate, and the two walls combined have nine individual turrets. It could be that the outer wall symbolises the Rammas Echor, the great defensive rampart enclosing the Pelennor Fields, in which case the outer turrets may be the Causeway Forts.<sup>76</sup>

The composition of *Gandalf and the Wraith-king at the gate of Minas Tirith* with its two monumental figures facing each other over a fortified settlement is reminiscent of works from the icon-painting tradition of the Solovetsky Monastery, a religious settlement situated on the Solovki Islands in the White Sea in Northern Russia. The founders of the original 15<sup>th</sup> century monastery, Saints Zosima and Savvatii were often included in paired iconographic images, depicting the two monks stood face-to-face, venerating a symbol such as the Holy Trinity or Transfiguration, which would be positioned above them. These images would then form the focal point of hagiography icons detailing the lives of the saints and their various associated miracles.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull, eds., *The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion* (London: HarperCollins, 2005), 320.

<sup>72</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 670.

<sup>73</sup> Король-Призрак (*Korol'-Prizrak*) could also be interpreted as “Ghost-king”.

<sup>74</sup> Carpenter and Tolkien, *Letters*, 282.

<sup>75</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 751.

<sup>76</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 817.

<sup>77</sup> E. S. Sisov, *Treasures from the Kremlin* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1979), 134.

A notable example from the Solovetsky paired icon tradition that displays a high degree of general correspondence with Iukhimov's image is the 17<sup>th</sup> century tempera painting *The Holy Monks of St Zosima and St Savvatii of Solovki*, currently displayed in the Yaroslavl Art Museum, Russia. This painting shares many common elements with *Gandalf and the Wraith-king at the gate of Minas Tirith*, particularly in the positioning of the background features, such as the Virgin and Child symbol; the placement of which is echoed by Iukhimov's iconographic animals. The semicircular composition of the Saints' backdrop also closely corresponds with the stylised sunrise behind Mount Mindolluin, and the pointed white form of the Solovetsky monastery is almost perfectly echoed by the outline of Iukhimov's White Mountains peak.

Another pairing of relevance may be that of St Zosimas of Palestine and St Mary of Egypt. These saints were frequently portrayed together in religious frescoes, such as those located in the crypt of Taranto Cathedral (painted circa 13<sup>th</sup> century), and in the narthex of Gračanica Monastery, Serbia (circa 14<sup>th</sup> century). Zosimas and Mary were also regularly depicted in Orthodox icons; a good example being the anonymous 17<sup>th</sup> century tempera painting *St. Mary of Egypt communing the Holy Mysteries from St. Zosimas* from the Monastery of Rousanno (now housed in the Onassis Collection). Traditionally, such images would feature the Palestinian Zosimas and the emaciated Mary facing each other across the desert beyond the Jordan River, where Mary had lived for forty-seven years.<sup>78</sup> According to St Sophronius' 7<sup>th</sup> century account, on their first meeting (there were three in total) Mary appears naked before Zosimas, and, in the 12<sup>th</sup> century French text *Life of St Mary the Egyptian* Mary, her skin is described as being "burned by the sun and the frost."<sup>79</sup> The Rousanno icon shows the saints on their second meeting, with Mary swathed in a cloth which leaves her torso and skeletal limbs exposed. Similarly, Iukhimov's Wraith-king is also clad in a tattered cloak, and his limbs appear almost completely stripped of flesh. This strengthens the case for a resemblance, however the primary significance of the Zosimas-Mary pairing as a general correspondence resides in the motif itself; that of two physically contrasting but spiritually potent individuals confronting each other across a symbolic landscape.

The Rousanno icon figures are surrounded by burnished gold leaf, representative of divine light and sacral space,<sup>80</sup> In *Gandalf and the Wraith-king at the gate of Minas Tirith* the spiritual/magical power of the two protagonists is embodied by

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<sup>78</sup> Andrew P. Schell, "Bodies and Boundaries in the Old English Life of St Mary of Egypt," *Neophilologus* 84, no 1 (2000): 137.

<sup>79</sup> Duncan Robertson, "Twelfth Century Literary Experience: The Life of St Mary the Egyptian," *Pacific Coast Philology* 22, no 1/2 (1987): 74.

<sup>80</sup> Joan A. Holladay, "Royal and Imperial Iconography," in Colum Hourihane, ed., *The Routledge Companion to Medieval Iconography* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 368.

their haloes, both of which are rendered in a style used by early Christian artists to symbolise a sacred figure.<sup>81</sup> Gandalf's halo is gold, with a black border, similar in design to those displayed by the eponymous saints of the Solovki icons. By painting his haloes in this manner Iukhimov is acknowledging both the Solovetsky artists and the individuals who inspired them; namely the early Christian artists responsible for images such as the 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> century encaustic icons of *Saint Peter* and *The Virgin and Child with Saints* found in St Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai in Egypt. The Wraith-king's halo is similar in style (if not colour) to Gandalf's but also contains a two-dimensional rendering of a radiating star, a symbol traditionally employed to denote a sun god.<sup>82</sup> This design is particularly reminiscent of the solar discs displayed in depictions of the Roman sun deity Sol, and also in portrayals of the god's later incarnation Sol Invictus ("Unconquered Sun"), who became especially prominent during the reign of Emperor Aurelian between 270-275 AD.<sup>83</sup>

It appears then, that *Gandalf and the Wraith-king at the gate of Minas Tirith* is based upon a composite of correspondences. The Solovetsky icons provide a compositional framework for Iukhimov's image, dictating the placement of key design elements such the monumental figures, the miniaturised buildings, the semicircular background, and the symbolic haloes. The Rousanno icon meanwhile supplies the central motif of the two visually contrasting protagonists.

The intertextual implications of the piece, however, are difficult to determine. Unlike Gandalf and the Wraith-king, neither the Solovetsky monks, nor the saints Zosimas and Mary of Egypt face each other as enemies. Therefore, if the meaning of these prototypes (the peaceful interchange between two spiritual individuals) has not been imported, can there be any real intertextual element? One might exist in the juxtaposition of the two haloes, with the contrasting Christian and pre-Christian symbols having been incorporated into the new image to paraphrase Tolkien's clash of "light", and "darkness". However, as a meaning, this is rather inadequate, and would appear to rest primarily on the erroneous assumption that the viewer will automatically equate Christianity with light, and pre-Christian beliefs with darkness.

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<sup>81</sup> Sharon E. J. Gerstel and Michael W. Cothren, "The Iconography of Light," in Hourihane, *Medieval Iconography*, 467.

<sup>82</sup> Philippa Adrych, Robert Bracey, Dominic Dalglish, Stefanie Lenk and Rachel Wood, *Images of Mithra* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 107.

<sup>83</sup> Steven Hijmans, "Temples and Priests of Sol in the City of Rome," *Mouseion*, Series III, 10 (2010): 382.

## *Farewell Galadriel*

Прощание Галадриэль - *Proshhanie Galadrijel'* (1990).

Volume I.III. Plate 9. *Farewell Galadriel* portrays the moment from Book Two Chapter VI of *The Fellowship of the Ring* (*Farewell to Lórien*) when the remaining eight members of the Fellowship set out from Lothlórien in three Elven boats. As they pass out of the Silverlode into the current of the Great River Anduin, they catch a final glimpse of Galadriel standing on the bank watching them. To the travellers, the distant “white form” of Galadriel appears to shine “like a window of glass upon a far hill in the westering sun”. Tolkien writes;

Then it seemed to Frodo that she lifted her arms in a final farewell, and far but piercing-clear on the following wind came the sound of her voice singing. But now she sang in the ancient tongue of the Elves beyond the Sea, and he did not understand the words: fair was the music, but it did not comfort him.<sup>84</sup>

In Grigor'eva and Grushetskij's chapter, also translated as *Farewell to Lorien* (*Прощание с Лориеном* or *Proshhanie s Lorienom*) the corresponding passage reads;

It seemed to Frodo that Galadriel raised her hand in a farewell gesture, and suddenly the wind clearly conveyed her voice. She sang in the ancient language of the Overseas Elf, the words were not understood, and in the beautiful melody there was an alarm.<sup>85</sup>

Galadriel's song, which Tolkien subsequently includes in the text in both his invented Quenya (the ancient language of the Elves of Valinor) and in English, is usually referred to as *Namárië* (“Farewell”) or *Altariello nainië Lóriendessë*. (“*Galadriel's Lament in Lórien*”).<sup>86</sup> Although Frodo possesses some prior knowledge of Quenya, Tolkien describes the hobbit as unable, at this point in the narrative, to understand the meaning of Galadriel's words.<sup>87</sup> What Tolkien does make clear, however is that despite the beauty of Galadriel's song it “did not

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<sup>84</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 377.

<sup>85</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *Vlastelin Kolets I*, 312.

<sup>86</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien and Donald Swann, *The Road Goes Ever On: A Song Cycle* (London: HarperCollins, 2002), 84.

<sup>87</sup> In the chapter *Three is Company*, upon meeting Gildor Inglorion, Frodo utters the Quenya greeting ‘*Elen síla lúmenn' omentielvo*’ which translates as “a star shines on the hour of our meeting”. In reply, Gildor cries “Speak no secrets! Here is a scholar in the Ancient Tongue.” then adds “Bilbo was a good master,” implying that Frodo's uncle was the primary source of his Quenya knowledge.

J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 81.

comfort” Frodo.<sup>88</sup> Grigor'eva and Grushetskij's Frodo is also unable to understand the actual words of *Namárië* (here translated by I. B. Grinshhpuna), but for him, rather than simply gaining no comfort in the song, he instead detects within it an “alarm”. This would suggest that Galadriel was communicating impending danger through her voice, which is at odds with the melancholia of Tolkien's original. The canonical Galadriel laments for the city of Valimar, which, in her song, is symbolic of Valinor, the land of the Valar lost “from the East” by the Changing of the World.<sup>89</sup> The fact that Frodo finds no comfort in the melody should not imply that the song was intended to invoke fear within him, as Grigor'eva and Grushetskij's choice of words might imply.

Iukhimov's illustration depicts nine figures in total. The primary figure is a tall, golden-haired female clad in a blue gown and a black headcloth which appears to swirl about her as if caught by the breeze. She is positioned to the right of the image, on a small promontory at the river's edge with woodland beyond; a position strongly reminiscent of Tolkien's Galadriel who had watched the Fellowship's departure from a “green bank” near to the point of the “Tongue”, the strip of grassland where the Silverlode met the Anduin.<sup>90</sup> The woman's two raised hands mirror Galadriel's gesture from *The Fellowship of the Ring* rather than Grigor'eva and Grushetskij's Galadriel, who is described as raising only one hand “in a farewell gesture”. Distances here have been condensed so that immediately left of Iukhimov's Galadriel, on the waters of the river float three wooden canoes with curved prows, and black and blue designs painted along their sides. These canoes appear rather more elaborate than the “small grey boats” of Tolkien's text, but their occupants correspond with members of the Fellowship, so they are almost certainly intended to represent the elven craft gifted to them by Galadriel.<sup>91</sup> Of those occupants, eight of whom are present in the text, seven are depicted here. These seven correspond to (from right to left); Aragorn; Legolas (with his arms raised as if responding to Galadriel's song); Sam; Frodo; a third Hobbit which could be either Merry or Pippin; Gimli (reaching out to Galadriel) and a fourth hobbit, who could again be either Merry or Pippin. Above Frodo's head is a red, eight-armed baptismal-style cross set within a blue circle on a white, diamond-shaped ground. From its pattern of distribution elsewhere in the corpus it appears that this cross may function as a signifier for the act of Ringbearing. The circle within diamond

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<sup>88</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 377.

<sup>89</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 427-428.

<sup>90</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 371.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 371.



motif is also evocative of several of Tolkien's Noldorian heraldic devices first reproduced in *The Silmarillion Calendar 1978*.<sup>92</sup>

The sky is a deep blue in colour, dotted with eight-pointed gold stars, approximating the "blue vaults of Varda" featured in *Namárië*. In the top left corner of the illustration the sky parts to reveal an angelic figure, complete with wings, halo and a palm frond clutched in one hand. This visitation, revealed in conjunction with visualisation of Galadriel singing, may be intended as a representation of Varda, who is invoked during *Namárië*.<sup>93</sup> In the light of this possibility, Legolas' gesture may, in fact, be directed towards the Varda figure, although his gaze, (like all of the depicted members of the Fellowship, save Aragorn) is fixed upon Galadriel, suggesting any awareness he may have of the visitation above is communicated to him via her.

The Varda figure holds a palm branch in its outstretched left hand, seemingly offering it to Galadriel. The palm branch holds an iconographic significance in both classical and Christian art. In the classical sphere it was often used to represent victory. This could be a victory in the physical world, as depicted in the 4<sup>th</sup> century *Coronation of the Winner Mosaic* from the Villa Romana del Casale, or in the spiritual world; as in the front panel of a 2<sup>nd</sup> century marble Garland Sarcophagus from Phrygia, where the palm branch symbolises victory in the transition to the afterlife.<sup>94</sup> In Christian art, the palm branch would become indicative of martyrdom; as the palm tree triumphed over the ravages of the desert, so the martyr triumphed over the torments of the flesh.<sup>95</sup>

Overall, the tableau of a lone figure stood upon a shore, hands raised, beckoning or hailing a boat out on the water, could be interpreted as a visual homage to the Miraculous Draught of Fishes; specifically, the second miracle of that name attributed to Jesus, which is recounted in the Gospel of John 21: 1-14. Unlike the first miracle (as detailed in the Gospel of Luke 5: 1-11), the second is set after the resurrection and sees Jesus standing on the shore of the sea of Tiberias calling to a boat carrying seven of his disciples.<sup>96</sup> The disciples, who are named as Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, the sons of Zebedee (James and John), and "two other

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<sup>92</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien and Christopher Tolkien, ed. *The Silmarillion Calendar 1978* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), February, April.

<sup>93</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 16-17.

<sup>94</sup> Gary Vikan, *Catalogue of the Sculpture in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection from the Ptolemaic Period to the Renaissance* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1995), 50.

<sup>95</sup> Marina Viceljo, "Religious Iconography," in Hourihane, *Medieval Iconography*, 229.

<sup>96</sup> Molly Teasdale Smith, "Conrad Witz's *Miraculous Draught of Fishes* and the Council of Basel," *The Art Bulletin* 52 (1970): 150.

disciples” have been fishing, both that morning and the night before, but have caught nothing.<sup>97</sup>

Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

He called out to them, “Friends, haven’t you any fish?”

“No,” they answered.

He said, “Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.” When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.<sup>98</sup>

Iukhimov’s image displays seven members of the Fellowship seated in the three elven boats. By this point in their journey, however, the Fellowship numbered eight. Gandalf had been lost in Moria of course, but also missing from *Farewell Galadriel* is Boromir. From a Tolkienian perspective, Boromir’s omission from the image may have been a deliberate visual foreshadowing of his impending fall. However, if we are to embrace the motif of the Miraculous Draught of Fishes then the absence of Boromir facilitates a closer match with the motif of the seven disciples.

There exist several viable general correspondences for *Farewell Galadriel*. The first of these, which, incidentally, takes a departure from the Miraculous Draught theme, is Giotto di Bondone’s lost *Navicella* (circa 1305-13 AD), a large mosaic destroyed in the demolition of Old St Peter’s Basilica.<sup>99</sup> The mosaic originally depicted the Matthew 14:24–32 account of Christ walking on water and contained many of the important iconographic elements present in Iukhimov’s image; most notably the key combination of Christ, disciples *and* angel, a detail particularly evident in Parri Spinelli’s 15<sup>th</sup> century drawing of the work (now displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art).<sup>100</sup>

Regarding the Miraculous Draught motif again, there are correspondences between *Farewell Galadriel* and Sebastiano Ricci’s Late Baroque oil painting *Christ at the Sea of Galilee* (1695-97). Commonality exists in the serene expressions of Galadriel and Christ, and the way their hair frames their faces. Galadriel’s headcloth also echoes the drapery around Christ’s shoulders, and

<sup>97</sup> John 21: 2 New Revised Standard Version.

<sup>98</sup> John 21: 4-6 (NRSV).

<sup>99</sup> Jules Lubbock, *Storytelling in Christian Art from Giotto to Donatello* (London: Yale University Press, 2006), 156-158.

<sup>100</sup> According to Mark J. Zucker, Parri chose to place his Christ “on a plot of land rather than in the water, apparently following the account of the miraculous draught of fishes...instead of the text from Matthew, upon which Giotto based his design.”

Mark J. Zucker, “Parri Spinelli Drawings Reconsidered,” *Master Drawings* 19, no 4 (1981): 431.

underneath her blue gown she is clad in red, as is Ricci's Christ beneath his blue cloak. In the background of Iukhimov's picture, the lines of the shore and trees slant from right to left, terminating at the upright figure of Aragorn. This compositional feature corresponds to the horizontal sweep of the coastal town in Ricci's painting, where the buildings taper towards the vertical lines of the boat's mast. Although Iukhimov's image, unlike the Gospel account, depicts three boats, they are positioned closely together, as if to suggest a single craft. As previously mentioned, there are also seven members of the Fellowship shown which matches the number of Ricci's canonical seven disciples. Additionally, Gimli, who reaches out his hand towards Galadriel in Iukhimov's illustration, could be perceived as echoing the outstretched form of Ricci's Simon Peter.

The iconography of the biblical motifs is too powerful to be entirely subsumed by the Tolkienian motif of *Farewell Galadriel*. By inserting the discourse of these New Testament images into a particularly transcendental moment from *The Lord of the Rings*, Iukhimov has produced (intentionally or not) a potent hybrid imbued with religious and mythographic meaning. Galadriel and Christ have become closely aligned visually; almost interchangeable depending on the perspective of the viewer. This parallel not only reinforces the emotion of Gimli's gesture (he now also equates with Peter, reaching out towards Christ), but lends a greater, if uncanonical, significance to the seven depicted members of the Fellowship. For early Christians, of course, Jesus was believed to be a martyr, and through the conflation of his and Galadriel's figures in Iukhimov's image, Galadriel too may appear as a martyr.<sup>101</sup> She has resisted the lure of the Ring, offered to her by Frodo (another prospective martyr), and the angelic figure proffering the palm branch may signify Varda bestowing this hypothetical status upon her.<sup>102</sup>

### ***Fearless Samwise***

Бесстрашный Сэмюис - *Besstrashnyj Sjemius* (1987).

Volume II. I. Plate 18. *Fearless Samwise* depicts a scene from Book IV Chapter X of *The Two Towers* (*The Choices of Master Samwise*) where Sam Gamgee, having made the decision to abandon the body of his Master and venture into Mordor alone, finds himself trapped in the Cleft by approaching orcs;

In a minute they would reach the top and be on him. He had taken too long in making up his mind, and now it was no good. How could he escape, or save himself, or save the Ring? The Ring. He was not aware of any thought or

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<sup>101</sup> Phillip B. Munoa III, "Jesus, the Merkavah, and Martyrdom in Early Christian Tradition," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 121 (2002): 324-325.

<sup>102</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 366.

decision. He simply found himself drawing out the chain and taking the Ring in his hand.<sup>103</sup>

Grigor'eva and Grushetskij interpret the same passage more prosaically.<sup>104</sup> Their version (from *Сэм на распутье*, “Sam at the Crossroads”), contains little of Sam’s panic or internal debate concerning the Ring. Significantly, for the contextualisation of Iukhimov’s illustration, they also describe no single instant when the Ring rests in Sam’s hand,

A minute and the orcs would be at the top and see him. He had thought too long! Still unaware of himself, he groped for the chain around his neck. At the moment when the first enemies appeared on the pass, right in front of him, he put on the Ring.<sup>105</sup>

Visually, *Fearless Samwise*, is one of the most arresting images in the corpus. The identity of the character depicted is plain enough, given the illustration’s title and the *titulus* arranged about his head reading *SAMWISE GAMGEE*, but the execution of the figure is unconventional, and makes little concession to the figurative. The elongated bell-shape of the body may hint at Sam’s elven cloak, given to him in Lothlórien; however, the intricate design contrasts with the textual garment’s subtler properties.<sup>106</sup> The position of Sam’s right hand does closely echo Tolkien’s description and the placement of the Ring on the hobbit’s palm (sans chain) provides a strong visual-textual link and a suitable focal point for the entire image. The radiating halo which emanates from the Ring itself contains sixteen beams, alternating red and blue, which in turn culminate in an eight-pointed star. This design (a visual evocation of the Ring’s power), exhibits commonality with the central disc of Tolkien’s heraldic device for Finwë, created around 1960.<sup>107</sup> The eight points of the star and its colour scheme also resemble elements contained within the two Númenórean textile designs which Tolkien devised around the same period.<sup>108</sup>

The star is encircled by an excerpt from the original Tolkien Ring verse (in contrast to Grigor'eva and Grushetskij’s translated Russian); *ONE RING TO BRING THEM ALL AND IN THE DARKNESS BIND THEM IN THE LAND OF MORDOR* (sic). To Sam’s left there is an image of a mountain, floating beneath a small *titulus* which reads *ORODRVIN*. Orodruin, (“burning mountain”) is, of course, the Sindarin name for the forging place of the One Ring, the volcano known

<sup>103</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 734.

<sup>104</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *Vlastelin Kolets II*, 99.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>106</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 370.

<sup>107</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien and Christopher Tolkien, ed. *The Silmarillion Calendar 1978*, April.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, July.

as Mount Doom.<sup>109</sup> In the immediate foreground of the picture, (from inside the inner border), a dark hand with red nails reaches forward, ostensibly towards Sam, although at no point do either texts mention such an occurrence. The hand itself most likely signifies the approach of one of Gorbag's orcs, ascending the pass from Minas Morgul below. This is an interesting addition on Iukhimov's part, as the introduction of such an "outside" element has the potential to shift the narrative mode away from Tolkien's own. *The Lord of the Rings* might normally be considered an omniscient narrative, with the passage in question from *The Choices of Master Samwise* internally focalised upon (or, reflecting the subjective point of view of), Sam.<sup>110</sup> However, the simple addition of the hand lends a component of uncertainty to the image. Exactly who are we supposed to be focalising upon here, Sam, an anonymous orc, or someone else, lurking off-frame? Perhaps the viewer is meant to assume the visual perspective of the orc, suddenly confronted by the sight of Samwise Gamgee as Ringbearer? Graphically, this would appear unlikely, because, although the orc's hand may overlap the inner border of the illustration (suggesting a different spatial or temporal plane), the presence of second inner border ensures that the hand remains firmly located within Tolkien's secondary world.

There is a *triskele* motif on Sam's body/cloak, which resembles an Insular design often used as an artistic expression of the Holy Trinity.<sup>111</sup> Framing the *triskele* are the Cyrillic letters *CF* (*Es* and *Ge*) which transliterate as the English S and G, the initials for Sam Gamgee. Overall, Sam's strange body-shape may be best understood when the image is compared with its possible direct prototypes, which appear to be primarily early medieval in nature. One of the most obvious prototypes can be seen in folio 21v *The Man of Matthew*, an illuminated page prefacing the Gospel of Matthew in the 7<sup>th</sup> century Insular manuscript the *Book of Durrow*. Here the Durrow artist (possibly an Irish or Northumbrian monk) has created a highly stylised version of the Evangelist symbol for Matthew. Unlike those from later Insular books such as the *Lindisfarne Gospels* or the *Book of Kells* the symbol here is depicted "naked", that is, (according to Martin Werner(1969)) "lacking wings, haloes, books or other attributes."<sup>112</sup> The outline of *The Man of Matthew* very much corresponds to that of Sam's, and both figures share an elaborate chequerboard design on their torsos. The *titulus Samwise Gamgee* uses a red and yellow Insular

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<sup>109</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 1134.

<sup>110</sup> Gérard Genette uses the term *extradiegetic-heterodiegetic* to describe this omniscient point of view.

Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), 248.

<sup>111</sup> Ursula Rowlatt, "Popular Representations of the Trinity in England, 900-1300 *Folklore* 112, no 2 (2001): 204.

<sup>112</sup> Martin Werner, "The Four Evangelist Symbols Page in the Book of Durrow," *Gesta* 8, no 1 (1969): 3.

half-uncial script borrowed directly from folio 209b *Saint John the Evangelist* from the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.<sup>113</sup> A possible prototype for the *triskele* design on Sam's body could be the lower central portion of folio 3v, one of the six extant carpet pages from the *Book of Durrow*.<sup>114</sup>

According to Lawrence Nees (1978), “images of the Evangelists and/or their symbols” such as those found in the *Book of Durrow*, may have served an apotropaic function and, in Britain particularly, would often be assigned a “magical potency”.<sup>115</sup> This potency was believed to be increased when the Evangelist symbol, or symbols, were placed in conjunction with the similarly apotropaic power of the cross. A particularly evocative example of this practice, cited by Nees, was the “elaborate ritual prescription for the fertilisation of bewitched fields” which occurs in a 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-Saxon collection of prayers and medical texts known as the *Lacnunga*. The ritual itself entailed the burying of four crosses (each inscribed with the names of the four Evangelists), at the furthest corners of a barren field to ensure a good harvest for the following year.<sup>116</sup> An examination of Iukhimov's Samwise reveals a similar conjunction of apotropaic symbols depicted on the hobbit's body, with his torso, based on *The Man of Matthew* Evangelist symbol enclosing within it two elaborate cross designs. It could be that *Fearless Samwise* constitutes a visual approximation of the talismanic images found in Insular manuscripts such as the *Book of Durrow*.<sup>117</sup> Obviously, as an illustration for a fictitious narrative, *Fearless Samwise* has no ritual significance in a real-world sense, unless, by the simple act of inserting apotropaic symbols into the discourse of a modern illustration it is possible to assign such a significance.

Defining a precise intertextual meaning stemming from the direct visual prototype of *The Man of Matthew* is also problematic. Perhaps it could be hypothesised that the relationship between Sam, the “salt-of-earth”, honest hobbit and his “Master” Frodo, might mirror that of St Matthew the Evangelist (considered symbolic of Christ's human nature) and Christ himself.<sup>118</sup> However, such a reading is tenuous, and difficult to substantiate, and even if it could be proved, the obscurity of the intertextuality may preclude many viewers.

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<sup>113</sup> Janet Blackhouse, *The Lindisfarne Gospels* (London: Phaidon Press Ltd, 1981), 54.

<sup>114</sup> Bernard Meehan, “Durrow, Book of” in *Medieval Ireland: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Seán Duffy (Routledge: London, 2005), 232-233.

<sup>115</sup> Lawrence Nees, “A Fifth-Century Book Cover and the Origin of the Four Evangelist Symbols Page in the Book of Durrow,” *Gesta* 17, no 1 (1978): 5.

<sup>116</sup> J.H.G. Grattan and Charles Singer, *Anglo Saxon Magic and Medicine Illustrated Specially from the Semi-Pagan Text 'Lacnunga'* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), 62-63.

<sup>117</sup> Lawrence Nees, *A Fifth-Century Book Cover*, 6.

<sup>118</sup> Lucy Donkin, “Suo loco: The Traditio evangeliorum and the Four Evangelist Symbols in the Presbytery Pavement of Novara Cathedral,” *Speculum* 88, no 1 (2013): 127.

***March of the rohirrim*** [sic]

Поход рохирримов - *Pohod rohirrimov* (1991).

Volume II. II. Plate 21. *March (Campaign) of the rohirrim* displays perhaps the most obvious direct visual prototype of all the case studies. To place the image in context; Book V Chapter VI of *The Return of the King* (entitled *The Battle of the Pelennor Fields*) opens with the Lord of the Nazgûl departing the gate of Minas Tirith as Théoden and the Rohirrim sweep through the northern half of the Pelennor, sending orcs “flying towards the River like herds before the hunters”.<sup>119</sup> Théoden then directs his force southwards to face the might of the Haradrim. The Rohirrim swiftly break through the Southron ranks and the Haradrim chieftain is slain by Théoden and his standard hacked down. At this point, however, a great shadow falls over the battlefield, heralding the return of the Lord of the Nazgûl on his winged steed. Tolkien writes;

But lo! suddenly in the midst of the glory of the king his golden shield was dimmed. The new morning was blotted from the sky. Dark fell about him. Horses reared and screamed. Men cast from the saddle lay grovelling on the ground.

“To me! To me!” cried Théoden, “Up Eorlingas! Fear no darkness!”<sup>120</sup>

Grigor'eva and Grushetskij's version of the same scene, feels less immersive (at least in translation);

But suddenly the shine of the golden shield of Théoden faded. The sky darkened, the shadow fell to the ground. The horses began snorting and snarling, dropping their riders.

“To me! To me!” cried Théoden “Do not be afraid of shadows!”<sup>121</sup>

By omitting the third line of Tolkien's original passage, the translators have stripped the scene of its internal focalisation.<sup>122</sup> The reader is no longer inside the narrative, witnessing events (for however brief a moment) from Théoden's point of view. The King's perspective has been pared away, and Grigor'eva and Grushetskij's have left us no vehicle through which we can directly experience the horror of the Lord of the Nazgûl's arrival.

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<sup>119</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 839.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 840.

<sup>121</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *Vlastelin Kolets II*, 172.

<sup>122</sup> Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 189-194.

Iukhimov's illustration offers a third perspective on the above scene. Unlike Tolkien or the translators, he displays all the elements (both visible and invisible) together in one image. The primary details of the illustration are contained within a central panel which is bordered by a lower frieze. The focal point of the central panel is a mounted warrior with a teardrop, or kite shield and raised sword who is spurring his horse over the fallen bodies of what appears to be two black men in red chainmail and pointed helms. One of the fallen men clutches a sword, while the other stretches over a broken sword with a rictus of pain on his face. Beneath them is a frieze depicting further combat between three bare-headed white men, armed with sword, spear and sling, and a large dog-headed creature with a spiked club flanked by a black man in red who has been pierced by a spear. *Tituli* accompanying the figures in the frieze read *Rohirrim* and *The ENEMY* (sic) respectively.

In the central panel; to the far left of the first mounted warrior is a second armoured man on horseback, entering the scene wielding a spear. A cloaked, skeletal figure armed with a bow and riding a winged creature also appears in the top left of the panel, aiming a red arrow towards the central rider's horse. A Latin *titulus* above the central warrior (bisected by the skeletal character) reads *THEODEN REX INTERFECTUS EXT*, which translates as "King Théoden has been killed". Obviously, this would imply that the central mounted warrior is indeed Théoden, although discrepancies exist between the warrior depicted and the canonical description. A recurring motif in both Tolkien's text and the translation is Théoden's "golden shield", but Iukhimov's Théoden carries a shield which is blue and red (at least on the inside). There is also no reference in either text to the shield being teardrop shaped like the one depicted in the illustration.

Additionally, there is the matter of Théoden's horse Snowmane. Tolkien describes the animal as being, unsurprisingly, "white as snow", whereas the horse featured in *March of the Rohirrim* is primarily blue and green in colour, with a bright yellow mane and tail.<sup>123</sup> The quasi-pointillist treatment of the horse's body could be intended to suggest chainmail, but this is unlikely, and again would be uncanonical. It is more likely that this effect is designed to simulate a three-dimensional texture of some sort. The two injured or slain men left in Snowmane's wake probably represent allies of Sauron felled by Théoden. Their red clothes and black skin may be indicative of the Haradrim.<sup>124</sup> The second "*ENEMY*" figure in the border could also be a Haradrim warrior, a theory strengthened by the fact that he has just dropped a curved scimitar.<sup>125</sup> His compatriot, the dog-headed creature

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<sup>123</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 540.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 660-661.

<sup>125</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 839.



with a club may be an orc or, perhaps, a rather loose embodiment of the half-troll like men “out of Far Harad”.<sup>126</sup>

The *titulus* *THEODEN REX INTERFECTUS EXT* could be considered misleading, as, ostensibly, we are not witnessing the actual moment of Théoden’s death, but rather one of the events immediately preceding it. However, it is the killing of Théoden’s horse Snowmane which seals the King’s fate, and Iukhimov’s illustration depicts the moment prior to the firing of the projectile which fells the animal. Tolkien describes the missile as a “black dart” but never actually identifies it as having been fired by the Lord of the Nazgûl.<sup>127</sup> In the translation the dart becomes a “black spear” which strikes Snowmane in the chest, but again the firer is never identified.<sup>128</sup> Iukhimov’s image, however, leaves little doubt as to who the culprit is. The offending missile here is a red arrow, clearly about to be fired from a bow held by the skeletal figure who must surely equate to the Lord of the Nazgûl, descending on his winged steed.

The visual prototype for *March of the Rohirrim* is possibly the most obvious in the corpus, as the image clearly combines elements borrowed directly from the Romanesque *Bayeux Tapestry*. The *titulus* *THEODEN REX INTERFECTUS EXT* (“King Théoden has been killed”) in Iukhimov’s illustration borrows from the Bayeux Scene 59 *titulus* *HIC HAROLD REX INTERFECTUS EXT* (“Here King Harold has been killed”). This would suggest a hypothetical conflation of Bayeux Harold and fictional Rohan King, perhaps intended as a way of magnifying the symbolic power of the image. The figure of Théoden himself, seated on Snowmane is very similar to the Norman horseman depicted to the far right of Scene 56, directly below the letters *OLDO* of the *titulus* *HIC FRANCI PUGNANT ET CECIDERUNT QUI ERANT CUM HAROLDO* (“Here the French are fighting and have killed those who were with Harold”). When compared with the prototype, the source of the unusual texture on Snowmane now becomes evident, with the quasi-pointillist rendering obviously designed to replicate the contouring effect of the Bayeux couching stitch.<sup>129</sup> Between Théoden and the Norman there is a difference as regards their weapons; Théoden wields a sword, rather than a spear, although it should be noted that, by this point in Tolkien’s text, the King had broken his spear bringing down the Haradrim chieftain, therefore the change is not an uncanonical

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 846.

Grigor'eva and Grushetskij refer to these figures as полулюдей-полутроллей (*poluljudej-polutrollej* “half-people-half-trolls”).

J.R.R. Tolkien, *Vlastelin Kolets II*, 177.

<sup>127</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 840.

<sup>128</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *Vlastelin Kolets II*, 172.

<sup>129</sup> Trevor Rowley, *An Archaeological Study of the Bayeux Tapestry: The Landscapes, Buildings and Places* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword Books, 2016), 7.

one.<sup>130</sup> However, the tear-drop, or kite shield, remain almost identical, as do the finer details of horse's bridle, saddle and even the leg-wrappings and spurs on both men's feet.<sup>131</sup>

Compositionally, the central panel and frieze of *March of the Rohirrim* most resemble the layout of *Bayeux* scenes such Scene 32 *ISTI MIRANT[UR] STELLA[M]*: ("These (people) are looking in wonder at the star") and Scene 38 *HIC WILLELM[US] DUX IN MAGNO NAVIGIO MARE TRANSIVIT ET VENIT AD PEVENESÆ* ("Here Duke William in a great ship crossed the sea and came to Pevensey"). These scenes, although they do not portray actual combat, more closely reflect Iukhimov's composition than most *Bayeux* sequences, as they incorporate only a single frieze, as opposed to the two friezes (at top and bottom) which are displayed in larger part of the tapestry.

Tolkien himself appears to have pondered the visual similarities between Anglo Saxon and Rohirrim culture, evidenced by his reply to Rhona Beare's 1958 question concerning the style of clothes worn by the peoples of Middle-earth. Tolkien remarked that, although he would not class the Rohirrim as medieval, he found that the visual styles of the Bayeux Tapestry (save for what he called the Bayeux artists' "clumsy conventional sign for chainmail") fitted the Riders of Rohan "well enough".<sup>132</sup>

Any potential visual merging of Harold and Théoden is further strengthened by the symbolism of the arrow, a factor common to both kings' stories. Of course, as contemporaneous accounts testify (witness Norman 'propagandist' William of Poitiers, for example), rather than receiving an arrow in the eye, the real Harold was far more likely to have been hacked down and dismembered by William's knights.<sup>133</sup> Also, modern analysis of the tapestry has suggested that the appearance of an arrow piercing the eye of the Anglo-Saxon warrior depicted in Scene 57 was probably a result of over-zealous "restoration of the needle-work" rather than any real intention by the original artist.<sup>134</sup> However, despite this, in modern visual media the conjunction of the "arrow", and the medieval warrior, remains a strong semiotic sign for the death of a king in battle. When viewed in tandem with the words *HIC HAROLD REX INTERFECTUS EXT* we have a direct link to the *Bayeux Tapestry* which brings with it the added weight of almost a thousand years of European history.

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<sup>130</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 840.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 840.

<sup>132</sup> Carpenter and Tolkien, *Letters*, 307.

<sup>133</sup> Elizabeth Carson Pastan, Stephen D. White and Kate Gilbert, *The Bayeux Tapestry*, 248.

<sup>134</sup> Trevor Rowley, *An Archaeological Study*, 100.

Nevertheless, such a link does not necessarily equate with a strong intertextual significance. In fact, it could be said that elements of the Tapestry have simply been incorporated into *March of the Rohirrim* in the style of a collage. This might result in a strong visual resemblance between prototype and new image (possibly advantageous for Iukhimov), but the meaning itself remains unclear. Are we being asked to conflate William and his Norman knights with Théoden and the Rohirrim, and so, by extension, Harold's men with the Haradrim? Such an interpretation would contrast with Tolkien's source text, where it is the Haradrim, as part of Sauron's army, who are the invaders not the Rohirrim. Of course, historical tradition dictates that the *Bayeux Tapestry* was given Norman patronage as a form of "legal justification for regime change in England" which might suggest another reading where William (Théoden) is just in his actions on the battlefield and Harold (Haradrim) an unjust traitor. Again, this is contentious, and leads to the conclusion that, in this case, a direct visual prototype has not produced a clear intertextual meaning.

### ***On a Visit to Tom Bombadil***

В гости к Тому Бомбадилу - *V gosti k Tomu Bombadilu* (1987).

Volume I. Set I. Plate 3. *On a Visit to Tom Bombadil* portrays a moment from the climax of Book One Chapter VI of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, (*The Old Forest*), where Tom Bombadil, having just released Merry and Pippin from Old Man Willow's grasp, urges the hobbits to follow him home,

Time enough for questions around the supper table. You follow after me as quick as you are able!' With that he picked up his lillies, and then with a beckoning wave of his hand went hopping and dancing along the path eastward, still singing loudly and nonsensically.

Too surprised and too relieved to talk, the hobbits followed after him as fast as they could.<sup>135</sup>

The corresponding passage in Grigor'eva and Grushetskij's translation reads,

At the table we'll talk. Well, march after me, but – mind you! - Do not you lag behind!' Lifting the lilies, he made an inviting gesture and, still dancing and loudly singing all the nonsense, started down the path. The hobbits, happy and

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<sup>135</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 120.

dazed, threw themselves out to catch up with their wonderful savior, but immediately fell behind.<sup>136</sup>

The translators have preserved very little of the ambiguity of Tolkien's original. In their interpretation, Bombadil's exhortation contains a clear note of caution; the implication being that any delay on behalf of the hobbits might place them in peril again. In addition, the hobbits are no longer simply "Too surprised and too relieved to talk", a state which could imply many things; for instance, sheer relief at their rescue, tempered by a nervousness of Bombadil. Instead, they are unequivocally "happy" in their view of Bombadil as "saviour".

Iukhimov's illustration depicts five figures with *tituli* (from left to right); Iarwain Ben-adar, Frodo, Pipin (sic), Marry (sic) and Sam. The name Iarwain Ben-adar refers to the fuller Sindarin title for Tom Bombadil and is loosely translated as "Oldest and Fatherless."<sup>137</sup> A sixth, unidentified winged figure hovers directly above the hobbits, blowing a trumpet, the end of which is encircled by the letter *r* of Ben-adar. Iukhimov's Bombadil has no lilies and is clad in an ankle length blue *chlamys* fastened with a *fibula* instead of the "blue coat" of Tolkien or Grigor'eva and Grushetskij's "faded blue jacket". This garment, in fact, more closely evokes the "синий кафтан" ("blue kaftan") mentioned in Murav'ev and Kistyakovskij's *Hraniteli* translation.<sup>138</sup> The inclusion of the eight-armed cross design emblazoned onto Bombadil's cloak is an interesting addition, as it bears a resemblance to the simpler design featured in *Farewell Galadriel*. In that image, the smaller cross placed beside Frodo functioned as a possible signifier for the act of Ringbearing. Here the cross may be indicative of Bombadil's unique status as one who will handle the One Ring but remain impervious to its power.<sup>139</sup> Close examination of the cross reveals a correlation with the central section of Tolkien's heraldic device for the House of Finarphín (c.1960).<sup>140</sup> Finarphín's device was first reproduced in

<sup>136</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *Vlastelin Kolets I*, 108.

<sup>137</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 265.

<sup>138</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings (Hraniteli)*, trans. Vladimir Murav'ev and Andrej Kistyakovskij (Moscow: Detskaja literatura, 1982), 8.

The kaftan, or caftan, was a traditional form of dress in Russia, worn by both men and women. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century the garment was regarded as a "material symbol of eighteenth-century modernizing processes" and was often used by writers to comment on "social and cultural policies and practices."

Victoria Ivleva, "The social life of the caftan in eighteenth century Russia," *Clothing Cultures* 3, no 3 (2016): 171.

<sup>139</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 132-133.

<sup>140</sup> Catherine McIlwaine, *Tolkien: Maker of Middle-earth*, 81.

print in 1992 in *J.R.R. Tolkien: Life and Legend*, which provokes the intriguing possibility of Iukhimov having amended his 1987 image prior to publication.<sup>141</sup>

Bombadil's physical stance meanwhile indicates that he is climbing the incline near the "short [water] fall" at the edge of the Old Forest, although temporal and spatial elements have been altered and the hobbits are pictured approaching this point with Bombadil still in view.<sup>142</sup> Bombadil wears no yellow boots, only sandals. At his feet snakes the Withywindle (complete with fish and crayfish), whilst above and to his left looms a tree, its twisting bough, overhanging branch and waterside location suggestive of Old Man Willow.

It appears that the figure of Bombadil echoes manuscript miniature depictions of Moses, particularly one featured in the illuminated folio 25v (*Moses Receives the Tables of the Law*) of the 9<sup>th</sup> century Carolingian *Moutier-Grandval Bible*.<sup>143</sup> The miniature in question depicts Moses, on top of Mount Sinai, reaching upwards to accept the Tables from God's hand. The prototype figure has been reversed to correspond with the right to left progression of figures in the Iukhimov image, however the salient features remain, down to the distinctive sandals worn by both Moses and Bombadil. In addition, three of the hobbits (excluding Merry) appear to directly correspond to figures featured in the miniature *Joshua, Moses, Aaron and the Israelites* which accompanies *Moses Receives the Tables of the Law* in folio 25v of the *Moutier-Grandval Bible*. Aaron, shorn of his beard, rod and other accoutrements clearly equates to Frodo; the Israelite directly behind Aaron to Pipin (sic) and the Israelite with his right hand at his chin to Sam.

Returning to the subject of the winged figure hovering above the hobbits; its incongruous appearance alone possibly marks it out as a visual borrowing of some sort. Fortunately, the source of the prototype is quite clear, with the figure almost certainly taken from the Evangelist symbol featured in folio 25b (*St Matthew*) of the 7<sup>th</sup> century illuminated manuscript the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.<sup>144</sup> There are some slight differences between the two images (Iukhimov's figure has no book, for instance) however the closeness of their linear designs is undeniable.

The calligraphic elements in *On a Visit to Tom Bombadil* also seem to possess direct prototypes derived from the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. The *titulus Iarwain Benadar* employs the elaborate Insular half-uncial script seen in the decorated initial pages folio 29 and folio 211.<sup>145</sup> The words *or Bombadil* plus the hobbits' names are

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<sup>141</sup> Judith Priestman, ed. *J.R.R. Tolkien: Life and Legend* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1992), 66.

<sup>142</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 121.

<sup>143</sup> Archer St Clair, "A New Moses: Typological Iconography in the Moutier-Grandval Bible Illustrations of Exodus," *Gesta* 26, no 1 (1987): 19.

<sup>144</sup> Janet Blackhouse, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, 40-47.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 45, 57.

rendered in an unadorned version of the same script but also float in space more akin to Aldred's Old English interlinear gloss.<sup>146</sup>

Is there an intertextual implication discernable amidst this mosaic of visual prototypes? In keeping with the manner of visual borrowing discussed in these case studies, there appears to be no iconographic link between the direct visual motif of the *Moutier-Grandval Bible* as it appears in Iukhimov's image and the biblical text to which it refers (Exodus). Instead, the visual motif of Moses and the Israelites is employed to construct a new iconographic motif which references Bombadil and the hobbits. However, such is the strength of the original biblical iconography that it continues to be detectable even after the borrowed motif has been recycled, giving rise to a possible blending of the two narratives. Of course, this is not to say, that Tolkien himself intended any such conflation, we are simply exploring the possibility as it exists within the context of the illustration.

But what about the mysterious winged figure? Neither Tolkien nor Grigor'eva and Grushetskij reference any such creature in their respective texts and yet Iukhimov places it at the heart of his image. The key to this may reside, not in the winged figure itself, but rather in the motif of the trumpet, an instrument which has its own connection with the *Exodus* story: witness Chapter 19:16-17 where "the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud" incites Moses to lead his people out of their camp and up to the foot of Mount Sinai.<sup>147</sup> The embodiment of this motif in visual form (the winged figure), facilitates a more thorough transfer of meaning from prototype to new work. Bombadil (functioning as Moses), can now respond to the divine trumpet call and lead the hobbits (the Israelites) out of the Old Forest to the foot of the hill upon which his house is situated. From this basis it is also perfectly possible to extrapolate the meaning to encompass the wider Exodus narrative, equating Bombadil's deliverance of the hobbits from the Old Forest to Moses, inspired by Yahweh, leading the Israelites out of Egypt.

## Conclusion

The five case studies examined in this article all correspond to different points on a spectrum of visual borrowing/intertextuality; and it is the relationship which has dictated the order in which they appear in my text. At one end of the spectrum sits *Gandalf and the Wraith-king at the gate of Minas Tirith*; an image which features general correspondence visual borrowing resulting in indeterminate intertextual meaning. At the opposite end is situated *On a Visit to Tom Bombadil*, an image

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<sup>146</sup> Richard Marsden, "The Text of the Lindisfarne Gospels," in *The Lindisfarne Gospels: New Perspectives*, ed. Richard Gameson, (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 187-188.

<sup>147</sup> Exod.19: 16 English Revised Version.

which displays direct visual prototype borrowing with a clearly definable intertextual meaning. Arrayed between these two are *Farewell Galadriel*, containing general correspondence borrowing with a clear intertextual meaning, and *Fearless Samwise* and *March of the rohirrim*, both of which contain direct visual prototypes that result in indeterminate intertextual meaning.

Whether Iukhimov's illustrations for *The Lord of the Rings* could ever be considered a "collateral theme" in the manner of Pauline Baynes' *Farmer Giles of Ham* images is a matter for conjecture.<sup>148</sup> Outwardly, the two bodies of work (*The Lord of the Rings* and Iukhimov's illustrations) may appear too divergent to be descended from the same stock. Tolkien's stated preference for applicability, his determination that the "the large symbolism" of the story should never be permitted to "break through, nor become allegory" would seem at odds with an illustrator whose appropriated motifs often conflated Middle-earth characters with Old Testament prophets, Christian martyrs and historical archetypes (see Théoden as Norman knight, for example).<sup>149</sup> It might also be argued that Iukhimov's experience of *The Lord of the Rings*, refracted as it is through the prism of several Russian and Polish translations, was linguistically too far removed from the original English source text for his visual interpretations to possess real veracity. However, if we advance beyond the obvious outward differences for a moment, a certain level of kinship between author and illustrator may be detected. As Tolkien's philological enquiries underpinned and intertwined with his literary creation, contributing to the sense of depth that was characteristic of his work, so Iukhimov's visual play with "styles, epochs, cultures" brings a similar feel to his unique, if at times uncanonical, vision of Middle-earth.

Throughout the case studies I have incorporated a degree of comparative analysis between the visual content of the Iukhimov illustrations and the narrative content of the Tolkien and Grigor'eva and Grushetskij texts. As mentioned, Eastern European interpretations of Tolkien were often deemed synonymous with Soviet dissidence, and "alternativist" writers like Nik Perumov viewed Middle-earth as a launch pad for their own creations. Iukhimov's work appears rooted in these varied traditions: his initial encounter with Tolkien came via Murav'ev and Kistyakovski's stark 1982 abridgement of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, consequently his imagination would have been kindled by this bleak, highly Russified version of the

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<sup>148</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *Letters*, 133.

<sup>149</sup> Tolkien, J.R.R.. *The Monster and the Critics: And Other Essays* (London: HarperCollins, 1997), 17.

tale. However, unlike his near contemporary Perumov - whose work constitutes a virulent reaction to a perceived philosophical position of Tolkien's – Iukhimov's illustrations convey an obvious affinity for both author and original narrative which belies their beginnings.

Naturally, the question might arise as to whether the illustrations could be considered politically progressive; a visual analogue to the earlier Russian literary model of *The Lord of the Rings* as representative of the struggle between totalitarianism and freedom. Their period of creation alone (circa 1987 – 1991) lends a certain credence to this argument; however, such a conclusion would be an oversimplification. The corpus functions most effectively when viewed as an affirmation of the plurality of images which existed beyond the rigid confines of Soviet doctrine. Iukhimov may have found his access to the diversity of contemporaneous global imagery severely restricted, nevertheless he was able to acknowledge this visual plurality through the careful manipulation of images from the past.

Additionally, there is the question of the existence of a distinct eastern visual inflection within the corpus: one which makes its presence evident within the actual style and content of the illustrations themselves. This is evidenced, for example, by the links between the Solovetsky icon painting tradition and *Gandalf and the Wraith-king at the gate of Minas Tirith*. But Iukhimov does not belabour such connections and makes frequent recourse to western sources such as the Insular Gospels of the British Isles and the Bayeux Tapestry. Where the eastern inflection remains most evident perhaps is in the Orthodox iconography of the halo. This, for Iukhimov, becomes an indispensable tool for the translation of what he refers to as Tolkien's "hierarchy of both light and dark forces" into a visual language that is easily comprehensible to a primarily Russian audience. A similar approach may have been approximated in recent years by the British Tolkien artist Jay Johnstone; whose Orthodox icon-inspired artworks - according to Thomas Honegger - translate an "older 'Middle-earth pictorial tradition'" into a form at once familiar, and yet foreign, to the "north-western European Protestant" viewer.<sup>150</sup>

The primary purpose of this article is not to make straightforward image-text or East-West cultural comparisons, or even to pass judgement on the effectiveness of Iukhimov's images as accurate illustrations of *The Lord of the Rings* (although this has a certain relevance). Rather, my goal has been the identification of incidences of visual borrowing and, by extension, intertextual meaning within the case studies

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<sup>150</sup> Thomas Honegger, *Ut pictura tractatio – Some Thought's on Jay Johnstone's Isildur's Bane*, Academia.edu, 2017, [https://www.academia.edu/12234866/\\_Ut\\_pictura\\_tractatio\\_Some\\_Thoughts\\_on\\_Jay\\_Johnstone\\_s\\_Isildur\\_s\\_Bane\\_](https://www.academia.edu/12234866/_Ut_pictura_tractatio_Some_Thoughts_on_Jay_Johnstone_s_Isildur_s_Bane_)



themselves. This has proved a fruitful exercise, with many prototypes successfully identified and the polysemy generated by these correspondences evaluated.

It appears that a large proportion of the visual borrowing within Iukhimov's illustrations has a biblical or historical source, with hagiographic paintings and illuminated Gospel miniatures all providing material for the creation of new motifs. Iukhimov's knowledge of these various sources may have its foundation in his visual culture training at the Odessa Pedagogical Institute, and it is partly this nuanced connection with the past, which helps to distinguish his *The Lord of the Rings* from other, technically more accomplished, or textually accurate interpretations. It should also be remembered that the work is a product of the Soviet Union, and as such developed both separately (with certain exceptions) from the western Tolkien aesthetic of the time, and before the visual conformity of the post-Jackson era. Emergent intertextual themes of martyrdom and salvation contribute to making the corpus a strong, alternative visual model for Middle-earth. Of course, incidences of polysemous meaning may not be unheard of within Tolkien illustration, however, the complex method by which they are arrived at in the Iukhimov case studies can have very few precedents.

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