Sergius of Radonezh illuminated from the Litsevoi Letopisnyi svod to the Litseveoe zhite

Serge de Radonež en miniatures : de la Chronique enluminée à la Vie enluminée

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SERGIUS OF RADONEZH ILLUMINATED FROM THE LITSEVOI LETOPISNYI SVOD TO THE LITSEVOE ZHITIE

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Вмале потріпи чадо, понеже духъ мой трепещеть отъ чуднаго сего зрѣнія.

"Have a little patience, child, for my spirit is still moved by this wondrous vision." These words, pronounced by Sergius of Radonezh after his encounter with the Mother of God, eloquently convey the modern viewer’s amazement at the seemingly endless supply of miniatures offered by the Litsevoi letopisnyi svod. Yet, on some themes there are still richer collections of images to be found in the archives of Muscovy. This paper will compare the iconographic treatment of St Sergius’ Vita, one of the most famous hagiographic compositions of Muscovite Russia, in two major illustrated projects.

The Litsevoi letopisnyi svod (LLS, c. 1568-15762) gives a shortened version of Sergius’ Vita (Povest’ o prepodobnom Sergii), in the yearly entry for 6900, September 25. The text, contained in the Osterman II (O II) volume of the LLS (BAN 31.7.30.II) comprises 56 folios (112 pages), extending from Р379 vª to Р435. The facsimile edition printed by AKTEON publishers reproduces it in volume 11, on pp. 2 to 113. In spite of its relative briefness, the text offers 76 images, a substantial improvement in comparison to icons depicting Sergius’ life (zhitiyne ikony) at that time which contain only a portrait of Sergius and 17 to 19 scenes (kleima) showing a small selection of key episodes.

The Litsevoe zhitie Sergiia Radonezhskogo (LZHSR, c. 1589-1592), held by the Russian National Library in Moscow (RGB fonds 304/III, n°21) comprises

2. We adopt the datation proposed by B. M. Klios and E. V. Ukhanova, Лицевой летописный свод XVI века, , eds. V. V. Morozov, E. V. Uxanova, L. P. Mustafina, Moskva, AKTEON, 2009-2010; Русская летописная история, 24, Сопроводительный том, p. 386-390.

381 folios (including 3 blank ones) and a unique iconographic program of 653 miniatures. As early as 1853 a lithographic edition was printed in Russia, but it is a rarity and very few western libraries possess it. Fortunately, it can be consulted online on the Trinity St-Sergius Lavra website (stsl.ru).

Both manuscripts were executed at the Muscovite Court by artists groomed to fulfill official orders. Their work documents the importance the Muscovite court attributed to Sergius' veneration. The two iconographic cycles have never been systematically compared. However, some leads exist already. Although there is a fifteen years gap between the two projects, B. M. Kloss has suggested that they had one scribe in common. We will attempt to show how the Litsevoi letopisnyi svod influenced the Litsevoe zhitei Sergii Radonezhskogo and how the later explored new iconographic fields.

The following article first presents parallel descriptions of both texts, identifying their main narrative components and sequence. This preliminary comparison demonstrates that each manuscript has its own logic and that their differences increase in the course of each narrative. We then take a closer look at the codicological features of each folio in the LLS in order to detect possible influence on the LZHSR. At this stage, despite the differences between the two texts, we can distinguish several identical combinations of texts and miniatures, which prove beyond doubt that the scribes and painters of the LZHSR used the Osterman II codex of the LLS. Finally, we will look at the illuminations themselves. The logic of numbers tells us already that the LZHSR is much richer than the LLS. Our task will be to explain as precisely as possible how its artists used and developed the iconographic material they inherited from Ivan the Terrible's time.

I. CONCEPTION. THE STRUCTURE OF SERGIUS' LEGEND IN THE ILLUMINATED CHRONICLE AND THE ILLUMINATED VITA

Because Sergius' Vita was a very ample and widely read text among the Russian learned elite, there was a rich choice of versions to be illustrated. It is interesting to see how the LLS and the LZHSR are divided into narrative and iconographic segments and to reconstruct the way they are put into sequence. Indeed, chronological order is not essential in a hagiographic text and episodes can be arranged in many other ways.

According to B. M. Kloss' classification, in the second half of the XVI century, the copyist could choose between nine long versions of Sergius' Vita, authored by two of the most famous hagiographers in the Russian tradition - Epiphanius the Wise and Pachomius the Serb. There were also at least three short

3 В. М. Клосс, Жития Сергия Радонежского, Moscow, Издат. Русской культурь, 1998, 217: РГБ, ф. 304/П ил. 21 [...] текст переписан двумя писцами [...] 2 почерк (письца Избенского летописного свода Ивана Гречного), л. 19-381.
texts. The first one was the Synaxarion redaction (Prolozhnaia redaktsiya, c. 1445), the second figured in the Sophia II chronicle (Sophiskaia vtoraiia letopis', c. 1518) and the third in Step 13 (chapter 5) of The Book of Royal Degrees (Steppennaia kniga tsarskogo rodoslovia, c.1556-1563). The Povest' o prepodobnom Sergii in the LLS is a short text, and yet it is more developed than the three short versions described by Kloss. This redaction is the one we can read in the Nikon Chronicle (Nikonovskaia letopis', c.1522-1529). B. M. Kloss acknowledges it as version 12b of Sergius' Vita. In contrast, the manuscript of the LZHSR reproduces the Extended Redaction (Prostrannaia redaktsiya), a.k.a. 9th version for Kloss, and composed c. 1525.

The differences between the texts strike us immediately. One has to page through 48 folios of the LZHSR before reaching a part that is common to the LLS. The two texts are parallel for roughly two thirds of the LLS tale (f°379v°-416). Then the parallelism ends and the last episodes are narrated in a different sequence. All in all, we can identify eleven matching sequences between LLS and LZHSR (see table 1).

1. Prologue

LLS f°379v° to 380 (ill. 1) = LZHSR f°44v°, 48v° (ill. 63 and 68)

In the LLS Povest' o prepodobnom Sergii starts on f°379v° with a record of the date of Sergius' death (mesiasa sentiabria v 25 den'), as is usual for many entries in Russian chronicles. There follows a short eulogy painting the main virtues of the saint (prepodobnyi igumen Sergii Radonezhskii i Makovskii, tikhii i krotkii i smirennyi). The hagiographer pauses, as expected, to protest that he is unable to adequately describe his subject. Then he tells us that, even in his youth, Sergius distanced himself from the passing beauties of this world, to the astonishment of everyone. At this point the LLS version catches up with the f° 48v° of the LZHSR. Before that the Litsevoe Zhitie offered a lengthy account of the miracles preceding Sergius' birth, his early childhood, and his difficulties in learning letters. All of this is simply omitted in the LLS.

At this point, in both manuscripts, the hagiographer uses a transition formula. The one in the LLS is slightly faulty (dondze oubo spisashasia sia...), whereas it is not in LZHSR (dodze že oubo spisashasia sia...). One might theorize that the scribe of the later manuscript corrected the error while copying the former. The LLS then tells how Sergius' parents were exiled. It mentions the father, Kirill, without properly introducing him. This is a somewhat clumsy narrative link,
but it is repeated in the other manuscripts of the Nikon chronicle. Of course the longer version of the LZHSR had already acquainted us with Kirill.

From there on about two third of the LLS text (up to f.416) is parallel to the LZHSR. Some sequences are missing in the shorter, earlier version of the LLS, but the three most important episodes are essentially identical.

2. Sergius’ youth and his calling

LLS f.380v to 396 (ill. 2-23, 22 miniatures) =
LZHSR f.49 to 71v (ill. 69-98, 30 miniatures)

One can observe two sub-plots in this sequence:

2.1 The exile of Sergius’ parents

LLS f.380v to 383v (ill.2-7, 6 illuminations) =
LZHSR f.49 to 52v (ill.69-75, 7 illuminations)

The family is forcibly resettled (preseleienie) from Rostov to Radonezh. Both manuscripts have almost the same number of images for this part, ending in both cases with two pages (LLS f.384 et 384v) or one page (LZHSR f.53) showing only text.

2.2 Young Sergius’ calling

LLS f.384 to 396 (ill.8-23, 16 illuminations) =
LZHSR f.53v to 71v (ill.76-98, 23 illuminations)

While his two brothers marry, Sergius stays celibate and longs for the cloister. He serves his parents until they die.

3. Eremitic life

LLS f.396v to 408v (ill. 24-38, 15 miniatures) =
LZHSR f.83v to 124 (ill. 114-183, 70 illuminations)

Sergius builds a small hermitage devoted to Trinity in the forest, under the supervision of one abbot, Mitrophan. By the time that Mitrophan dies, Sergius has attracted a small community of disciples. Sergius becomes abbot against his own wishes, tames wild animals and struggles with demons.

At this point the iconography in the LZHSR is already much more developed than in the LLS.

4. Coenobitic reform

LLS f.409 to 416 (ill. 39-51, 13 miniatures) =
LZHSR f.183 to 208 (ill. 298-347, 50 illuminations)

By recommendation of the patriarch in Constantinople and of the Russian metropolitan Alexius, Sergius adopts the coenobitic rule. Facing resistance, he

6. A term loaded with biblical connotations. Thus we find it in the Ostromir’ Gospel about the « the carrying away into Babylon » (Mt. 1:17) et in archbishop Gennadii’s Bible (1499) « we want to praise you in our exile » (Ba.3 :7).
leaves the Trinity monastery and builds another abbey on the Kirzhach river. He comes back to Trinity at the behest of Metropolitan Alexius.

At this point the LLS and the LZHSR cease to follow the same order. Most of the text of the LLS is devoted to describing new monastic foundations by Sergius or by his disciples. Its final part culminates with two fundamental miracles which figure on zhitiiye ikony (the visit of the Mother of God and the vision of heavenly fire) and the account of Sergius’ death.

5. Foundation of the Simonovo abbey

LLS f°416v° to 423v° (ill. 52-62, 11 illuminations) =
LZHSR f°228 to 235 (ill. 386-400, 15 miniatures)

Theodore, Sergius’ nephew, founds a new abbey near Moscow, at a place named Simonovo. Sergius and Metropolitan Alexius give him their blessing. Theodore becomes the spiritual father of grand-prince Dmitrii Ivanovich and of many others among the Muscovite elite. He travels to Constantinople and is elevated to the rank of archimandrite while his abbey is promoted to stauropegia (placed under the direct authority of the patriarchate). Theodor is invested as bishop of Rostov (Sergius’ birthplace). On his subsequent visit to Constantinople, he is promoted to archbishop by the patriarch. Theodore dies after a virtuous life.

6. Foundation of the Spas Andronikov abbey

LLS f°424 to 425 (ill. 63-65, 3 miniatures) =
LZHSR f°214 to 220 (ill. 359-370, 12 illuminations)

Andronicus, another disciple of Sergius and a native of Rostov, is selected by Metropolitan Alexius to head a new foundation, near Moscow. The new buildings are in stone and the church is « very wonderfully painted ». Andronicus dies and his disciple Sava succeeds him.

7. Foundation of the abbey in Serpukhov and Metropolitan Alexius’ succession

LLS f°425v° to 428 (ill. 66-70, 5 miniatures) =
LZHSR f°250v° to 257v° (ill. 431-444, 14 illuminations)

Prince Vladimir Andreievich (a cousin of Dmitrii Ivanovich “Donskoi”) wants his own foundation near his capital, Serpukhov. At his bequest, Sergius selects a place and gives him one of his disciples, Athanasius, as abbot. Metropolitan Alexius, sensing his own end coming, calls for Sergius to succeed him. Sergius refuses, wanting to preserve his simple life in poverty. After Alexius’ death, Michael, archimandrite of the Saviour Monastery in Moscow, dares to take his place on his own initiative, with the approval of grand-prince Dmitrii Ivanovich. Michael considers Sergius as an enemy and boasts that he is going to “avenge himself on him”. Sergius prays to God and prophesies that Michael will never reach Constantinople. Indeed, Michael dies unexpectedly while sailing to the Byzantine capital.
8. The Kulikovo battle and foundation of the Dubenka abbey

_LLS_ f°428v° to 430v° (ill. 71-73, 3 miniatures) =
_LZHSR_ f°239 to 248 (ill. 408-426, 19 illuminations)

Grand Prince Dmitrii comes to Sergius and tells him that Mamai, a prince of the Horde, is menacing him. Sergius advises him to submit with humility and offer gold, but to defend the Orthodox faith if Mamai persists in attacking him. He gives him two monks who are «great experts in battles». Dmitrii promises to build a new monastery if he wins the fight. He returns with a great victory. Sergius selects a place on the Dubenka river and invests his disciple Sava as abbot.

9. The Mother of God's visit to Sergius

_LLS_ f°431 to 433 (ill. 74-75, 2 miniatures) =
_LZHSR_ f°258 to 262 (ill. 445-453, 9 illuminations)

One night, as Sergius is praying and singing and hymn to the Mother of God, he hears a voice telling him that Mary is coming to visit him. The Mother of God comes with apostles Peter and John in a halo of mystic light. She promises that from now on the Trinity abbey will never lack in anything and disappears. Sergius stands up, explains the prodigy to his disciple and orders a special celebration.

10. The vision of the heavenly fire

_LLS_ f°433v° to 434 (ill. 76) = _LZHSR_ f°274 (ill. 476)

While Sergius celebrates mass, heavenly fire descends over the altar, envelops Sergius, and enters the chalice. Sergius then drinks the wine of holy communion from this chalice. The monk Simon has the privilege of witnessing this miracle.

11. Sergius’ death

_LLS_ f°434v° (ill.77) = _LZHSR_ f°276 to 280 v° (ill. 480-489, 10 miniatures).

Sergius understands he is soon going to die. He instructs his community and appoints his disciple Nikon as his successor. He takes holy communion, dies and is buried in his abbey.

The reader is guided through the Vita by rubrics which divide the text into smaller sections (see table 2). Sergius’ Vita in the _LLS_ manuscript has a general title on f°379v° and eight other sub-titles. Curiously, there is no rubric marking the narrative of Sergius’ death. These eight titles have corresponding rubrics in the _LZHSR_ manuscript. But with one exception, their formulation is never exactly the same as in _LLS_. Here, too, an error made by the copyist of the _LLS_ is corrected by the copyist of the _LZHSR_. On f°411v° of _LLS_ the preposition «на» is missing in the phrase _О составлении монастыря [на] Кержаче_.

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whereas it is at its place on f194 of LZHSR O начал монастыря иже на Кержач.

The differences go much further. All in all the LZHSR has 48 chapter titles. If we make allowances for titles of episodes not reported in the LLS we find that the LZHSR has still 15 titles as opposed to only 8 in the LLS. Among them, one is devoted to Sergius’ death.

Thus, we can see that the copyists of the LZHSR freed themselves from the model of the LLS and altered the general architecture of their manuscript. Nevertheless, as our page-by-page comparison shows, they read the LLS carefully.

II. REDACTION. THE MAKE-UP OF FOLIOS IN BOTH MANUSCRIPTS

As noted above, both the LLS and the LZHSR are luxurious court manuscripts. Their copyists did not need to think about conserving on expenses or material, but used costly paper specially imported from Western Europe. Their texts leave ample space for illustrations. A typical illuminated page contains no more than ten written lines. We do find pages (more in the LLS than in the LZHSR) that contain only text. Copyists of the Osterman II volume devote the full width of the page (about 14 cm.) to text, whereas the scribes of the LZHSR indulge in an attractive but expensive gradation, whereby the first line may extend as much as 12 cm. and the last line may be reduced to a solitary letter, or punctuation mark (f318 for example). In the LLS, pages consisting only of text are denser. They contain 29 lines, of which ten measure at least 14 cm. Only the last four lines are sometimes reduced in size (OII, f402). The text of folio 396, which is 27 lines long, with a decrease in the last eight lines is exceptionally short for a page without miniatures. The imageless pages of LZHSR count at most 24 lines, extending 12 cm. (f377v). More often than not, they diminish in length from the top to the bottom of the page. On f 89v, the shortening begins on the thirteenth line and on f375v (20 lines), it starts as soon as the second line. Sometimes, the form of the lines suggests an emblematic image. On f376v (22 lines), the lines shorten from the third to the fifteenth, then they regain space (lines 15 and 16) and shorten again. Each of the two last lines consists of a single sign. The resulting form resembles a chalice. This ornamental way of writing can also be observed on the last page of the manuscript (LZHSR f378). A similar composition is found on LLS f434, which tells about the vision of heavenly fire entering Sergius’ chalice when he is celebrating the holy liturgy.

In view of the significant differences between the LLS and the LZHRS, one would not expect to find the same textual distribution on their folios. But a closer look shows that this happens quite often, at least until f416 of the LLS. In many cases, a miniature will be framed by identical or similar portions of text in both manuscripts, or will occupy the same place at the top or at the bottom of the page, followed or introduced by the same words. The most frequent
coincidences are found before f416 in LLS Ost. II. We reproduce some examples of the distribution of text and image on both sets of manuscripts, with rubricated titles in bold (instead of red).

LLS f380v ...аки вглікое преселеніє... но обаче нужа ми бысть о семь писати. [Illumination]. Се убо пржереченный рабъ божий Кирил прежде имяще житие велико...

LZH5R f49 no обаче нужа ми бысть о семь писати. [Illumination]. О преселений родителей святаго. Сеи убо пржереченный рабъ божий Кирил прежде имяще житие велико [bottom of the page] – see Illustration 1: Exile from Rostov LLS 380v and LZH5R 49.

LLS f383 Онишма же глянь съ Протасьемъ тысячкимъ пришедши въ тую же весь глаголемую Радонежь. 7 [Illumination. Bottom of the page]

LZH5R f52 Онишма же глянь съ Протасьемъ тысячкимъ пришедша [въ] [Illumination] тую же весь глаголемую Радонежь...

LLS 383v разбегося люди мноси. [Illumination]. /384/ Отрокъ же предобры...

LZH5R 52v разбегося люди мноси. [Illumination]. Отрокъ же предобры...

LLS 385v Братйа же его снове криловы Стефанъ и Петръ оженисята. [Illumination]. Трети же съ, блены съюоша Варфоломью ... 

LZH5R 54 ...снове криловы Стефанъ и Петръ оженисята. [Illumination]. Трети же съ, блены съюоша Варфоломью ... – see Illustration 2: Sergius’ calling LLS 385v and LH5R 54.

LLS 386 [text only, decreasing width]

LZH5R 54v [text only, decreasing width]

LLS 400v [Illumination]. По лкте же единомъ пржереченын Митрофань игоюмень же постриже благенаго Сергйа […] преставися ко Гедоу бъ же /401/

LZH5R 94 [Illumination]. По лкте же единемъ пржереченын игоюмень же постриже благенаго Сергйа […] преставися и къ Году отиде. /94v/

LLS 403 [1st Illumination] На оутреже соверши его іериским саномь. [2nd Illumination]

LZH5R 103v и причистомь бжественаго тѣла и крове Га нашего Иса Ха. [1st Illumination] На оутреже соверши его иериским саномь /104/ [2nd Illumination]

7. LLS, t. 11, 9 gives an incomplete transcription and translation of the text.
ЛЛС Острема II 380в

ахи мъхое преселени... но обаче нужа ми бысть о семь писати. [Illumination] Се убо пре-
жереченый райъ божий Кирил прежде имеше житие велико. Printed edition, т. 11, р. 4.

Иллюстрация 1: Exile from Rostov

ЛЗНСР P49

но обаче нужа ми бысть о семь писати.
[Illumination]. О преселений родителей святого. Сен убо прежереченный райъ божий Кирил прежде имеше житие велико [bottom of the page].
I.5s Ostervan II 385v
Братия же его синею кайровы Стефанъ и Петър оженютися. [Illumination]. Третий же синь, бхенны сей юноша Варфоломей…

Illustration 2: Sergei’s calling

I.718ab 085A
сихе крильцы Стефанъ и Петър оженютися. [Illumination]. Третий же синь, бхенны сей юноша Варфоломей.
LLS 409 [Illumination] О составлении общего жития. По сих же приидоша греци от Костянтинаграда…

LZHSR 183 [Illumination] О составлении общего жития. По сих же въ единъ от дней приидоша греци от Костянтинаграда…

LLS 416v° [Illumination] О составлении монастыря на Симановъ. Прежереченнаго оубо старшишаго Сергиева брата по плоти Стефана съ его Ивань.

LZHSR 228 [Illumination] Начало Симановскаго монастыря. Преже оубо бесѣдовахом вамъ же о Стефанѣ по плоти брата стго.

There are, however, some significant differences between the two projects, even if their common subject is Sergius. The LLS is a “Universal chronicle” (encompassing Biblical, Roman, Byzantine and Russian history), and its aim is to glorify the Muscovite dynasty and Church, whereas the LZHSR is entirely focused on Sergius’ person and hesychastic mysticism. The copyists of the LLS make some attempt to build bridges between Sergius’ Vita and other tales in their chronicle while eliminating details that will be narrated under separate years. On folio 388v° of the LLS there is a short notice on the impending foundation of the Simonovo abbey with a cross-reference to a following sequence: “the rest about him will be told later” (прочая же напред сказана будет о нем). The precise place is not indicated, but we find a helpful title on fol 416v° (О составлении монастыря на Симановъ). Further on, there is a short entry about the death of Theodore, first abbot of Simonovo (and Sergius’ nephew) on September 28 of the year 6903 (ф461).

Another saint and close friend of Sergius’, St. Stephen of Perm, is effectively removed from Sergius’ Vita. There is a brief summary of Steven’s Vita in the LLS, dated April 26 6904. It is 12 pages long and has 10 illuminations (O II p°571v to 577). But this version of Stephen’s Vita does not mention his friendship with Sergius, nor does it include his miraculous exchange of salutations with Sergius from a distance. On the other hand, the LZHSR has a special chapter about Stephen and does not fail to illustrate their mutual affection (ф211–213v°).

One can also observe that the LLS is especially interested in questions of ecclesiastical hierarchy. It devotes a page and a half to the prestigious statute of stavropigia conferred on the Simonovo abbey (ф421–421v°) and two pages to the account of how the dioceses of Rostov and Novgorod were elevated to the rank of archdioceses (ф423–423v°). These questions of ranking were obviously of interest to Ivan the Terrible, maybe as another sign of Russian imperial greatness, but they are not treated in the LZHSR, which focuses on the expansion of the cenobitic reform through Sergius and his disciples.

This focus on monastic concerns explains why the LZHSR includes a rather long account of the Spas-Andronikov monastery after its foundation by Sergius.
and the death of its first abbot, Andronicus (P224-228). This section is meant to tell us about Andrew Rublev’s paintings in the Spas-Preobrazhenskii sobor and his saintly ending, although it is duplicated by another tale of Andrew’s death after painting the Trinity abbey church (P290). LLS cuts short its chapter O друхемь гучинь ста Андрониць, right after Andronicus has picked Sabbas as his successor and passed away. On the contrary, and more surprisingly, on one occasion the LLS goes farther than the LZHSR in the mystic domain, when interpreting the visit of the Mother of God to Sergius. On LLS f433, a comparison is made with St. Athanasius the Athonite and his experience of mystical rapture: дхь мои вь малв пе разлучнися от плотскаго ми сьоуза… иакоже древле Афонасе Афонски. The version used in the LZHSR (P262) does not invoke this parallel.

Textological analysis is, of course, essential in a hagiographic monument. But obviously the LLS and the LZHSR were meant to be seen.

III. ILLUSTRATION. DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL

Our two manuscripts stand as landmarks in the history of the iconography of Russian saints. Before they were painted, the visual landscape was dominated by icons and frescoes, and thus largely confined to churches. Even when the full biography and miracles of a saint were painted on an icon, it was limited to as little as 15 and not more than 20 episodes. The manuscript format gave an opportunity to illustrate many more themes from the saint’s legend. Already in the second half of the 14th the Novgorodian Sil’vestrovskii Sbornik offered 53 scenes from the Vita of SS Boris and Gleb. With Sergius, we are talking about 76 (LLS) and 653 (LZHSR). Russian iconography is entering a new dimension. We will begin with some general observations and then discuss individual miniatures in greater detail.

As noted above, the LZHSR is more lavish in its ornamentation than the LLS. Its text is displayed more sparsely and its initials are more splendid and much wider than initials in the LLS. We can give as examples the E on P44v, the C on P49, the II on P228, the K on P276.

As a rule there is only one illumination on a given page, but there are exceptions. Double or even triple illustrations appear on sections of the LZHSR that diverge from the LLS. These miniatures show biblical scenes celebrating the Trinity dogma (LZHSR P23v, 24, 25v) and tell us that Sergius was devoted to the Trinity even while in the womb. In the LLS, Sergius’ Vita has one folio (403) with two illustrations, separated by a single line of text. The reason for this is that the page shows the two closely intertwined steps of Sergius’ sacerdotal ordination. As the text says (on P402v), within two days Sergius becomes first a deacon, then a priest. On the miniatures one can observe that Sergius is still
shown as a young and beardless man. In the LZHSR manuscript, the illuminator devotes a distinct page to each ordination (f°103, 103v° and 104) and considers Sergius as an older man, fully bearded. The question of relative age and the presence of the beard is important in the LLS. At some points in the Tsarstven- naya kniga Ivan the Terrible has a beard, then loses it and finds it again (in between his coronation and the campaign of Kazan). 8

In-depth analysis of the individual miniatures allows us to distinguish between "similar" and "dissimilar" images.

The opening illumination of the LLS (f°379v°) has no identical match in the LZHSR. Rather than illustrating a precise text, it provides a "summary" perspective on the whole Vita, or at least of Sergius’ early years. On LLS f°379v° we see the young Sergius walking with widespread arms in the countryside, facing a radiant sun; an old gentleman seated at a table in front of a blank parchment, with two young servants; a group of laymen pointing towards the glorious sun; a group of monks consulting each other. One could locate a composite equivalent to this miniature by combining several images from the LZHSR. This method works up to a point. LZHSR f°44v°, entitled "Of the young years" (отъ упныя версты), has the figure of young Bartholomew (to become the monk Sergius) praying under a halo of heavenly light we observe on LLS 379v° but differs on other details. On LLS f°48v° we find the assembly of monks and laymen discussing Bartholomew’s unusual piety, also represented on LLS 379v°. But putting the three illuminations together does not resolve all the discrepancies.

In other cases, it is easy to spot a common ground between the two renditions of the same scene. The first example that comes to mind is the torture of one Averkii, member of the Rostov elite, by Muscovite envoys (LLS f°382 and LZHSR f°51). In both cases, as told in the text, he is suspended half naked, feet up, head down, from a post, and savagely beaten in front of other Rostov gentlemen. The abundant similarities between the two miniatures tell us that the LZHSR illuminators had seen the LLS manuscript. But there is also a noticeable mirror effect: Averkii is suspended on the left side of the image in the first version (LLS) and on the right side in the second (LZHSR). This technique recalls successive printings of woodcuts in the West. – see Illustration 3: Averkii suspended LLS 382 and LZHSR 51.

Correspondences between images are more or less complete. The single image in the LLS sometimes anticipates the narrative, whereas the LZHSR scrupulously follows the text because it can offer two, or sometimes three images to one in the LLS. At the time of Sergius’ ordination we can see him

8. Compare И-482 v° Ivan, beardless, receives Crimean envoys, И-483 Ivan, bearded, presides over a council, И-485 and 486 Ivan, bearded, prays in front of the icon of the Mother of God Donskaya, and upon Aleksandr Nevski’s grave, И-488 Ivan, bearded, makes his entry into Vladimir-on-the-Kliazma, И-489 Ivan, beardless, prays at the tomb of SS Petr and Fevronia; see Лицевой летописный свод Русская история, книга 21, 1551-1553 гг., p. 168-169, 173, 175, 179, 181.
Illustration 3: Averkii suspended

LLS Osterman II 382 [Illumination]
И что подобает много глази.
Printed edition t. 11, p. 7.

LZHISR 51 [Illumination]
И что подобает много глази.
already travelling to Pereiaslav'-Zaleskii on LLS p401, before the text has set him in motion (p402, text only).

An example of a “condensed” illumination is LLS p425 showing Andronicus’ activity. In one image he has a lot of visitors from afar, is talking to laymen and monks, and chooses his successor Sabbas. Meanwhile, the text sums up these points: бысть же сея Андроникъ тих и кротокъ и смирень ънло… постави… Саву. ънло дяовна и добродътелна соуца. In the LZHSR, the same text is depicted in no less than three illuminations. On p221 visitors from afar and new disciples come to Andronicus. On p222 he instructs his brethren. On p223 he chooses Sabbas (вручает пасты р своему ауникому Савв именемь в добродътелех ънло сияющо). The famous episode of metropolitan Alexius’ succession is treated in the same way. As we know, Alexius died in 1378 and there was a long dispute about who should succeed him. Sergius himself refused the honour and was against the elevation of one Mikhail-Mitai, an ambitious favourite of Grand Prince Dmitrii Ivanovich. He even predicted that Mitai could not reach Constantinople to be invested by the patriarch. Two images are devoted to this story in the LLS.

Folio 427 shows a) Alexius in his tomb b) Mitai, holding the klobuk and the cross of the Russian metropolitan, c) people discussing the question with the grand prince, d) Sergius observing all of this from the distant Trinity abbey.

On p428 a) Mitai lies dead in the boat that was supposed to bring him to Constantinople but b) Sergius prays in his monastery and c) people discuss the story among themselves. The text explains that Sergius is outraged by Mitai’s boasting and begs God to prevent him from reaching Constantinople (Слышище сіа прудбный игоумень Сергі ви и помолись Гов Богу… царского города не имать вищти). The tale ends on p428v as announced with Mitai falling ill and dying, as prophesied by Sergius (еже и бысть. Понеже бо егда поиде къ иерархобогу тогда разболеть … иакоже пророка велика и чудна). The illustration on this page is devoted to the following episode, the Battle of Kulikovo.

In the LZHSR, the same episode is illustrated with four illuminations. Pieces of the text fit with the LLS tale.

F256v Alexius lies in his tomb, Sergius is asked to succeed him (and refuses). Не по мною же времени Алексій митрополит от жития отходит…
F256v Mitai elevates himself to the metropolitan throne.
F257v Sergius predicts Mitai’s demise to his monks. Слышище блаженны хвалиша Михаила нын реч къ ауником своию… царского города не имать видети еже и бысть по пророчеству стаго.
F257v Mitai lies dead in his boat. Sergius prays in his abbey. По внида бо плоюше къ церковному граду, в телены недугъ впаде… иако единого от пророкъ.
As for the Kulikovo battle, the LLS provides only one image of the combat and a second showing the foundation of the monastery on the Dubenka river. The illustration of this military moment is rather sober, because there are many other occasions to show battle scenes in the chronicle.

On folio LLS 430 Sergius observes the battle from afar (he is in the Trinity abbey); Grand Prince Dmitrii rides to the Don; Tatar emir Mamai, wearing the crown of a tsar (khan) rides to the battle; two cavalry troops charge each other in a bloodbath. Strangely, there are no angels fighting with the Russians. This theme is pervasive in the Laptev codex account of Aleksander Nevskii’s battle on the Neva, but it is not taken up here.

In contrast, the LZHSR depicts seven battle images (f.241-244), and the intervention of the heavenly militia is illustrated on f.243. But the LZHSR has few other chapters devoted to war (except a posthumous miracle with the Tatars on f.309v°-315v°).

Our final comparison concerns Sergius’ death and funerals. The LLS manuscript summarizes most of the facts in one image. On f.434v° Sergius, feeling his last moments are coming, takes holy communion. He then delivers his last words to the brethren and invests Nikon as his successor. Sergius dies and he is put to rest in the abbey church.

LZHSR develops this final scene in no less than six images.

F°276 Sergius prays and gives instructions to the brethren. There is a title on this page, as we mentioned it before. О преставлении стаго. Живъ же стый Ѳъта довоина…

F°276v° Sergius invests Nikon.

F°278 Sergius gives his last words.

F°278v° Sergius takes holy communion.

F°279 Sergius dies. (f.279v° and 280 prayers on his deathbed).

F°280v° Sergius is put to rest in the abbey-church.

CONCLUSION

Comparison of masterpieces like the LLS and the LZHSR provides us with a more profound understanding of the work of Muscovite court illuminators and copyists. It can definitely be likened to what was done at that time in the ateliers of some Western printers or painters. There is evidence of reutilizations of the same material or motives, of corrections and repentances, adjustments, from one set to another, one would say from one edition or printing to another. One should bear in mind that in Moscow (or in Aleksandrovskaya Sloboda) there was only one atelier, whereas in the West the artists had a measure of liberty,
even in the case of official orders. As we know, Russian printing was in its infancy at the time of Ivan the Terrible. Still, it is interesting to remember that the very project of the LLS shared its last reams of paper (which was used for the Tsarstvennaia kniga) with a printing project, the Psalter of Andronik Nevezha, edited between the 20th of June 1576 and the 31st of January 1577.

The corrections and erasures observed in the last two volumes of LLS (Sinodal’nyi tom and Tsarstvennaia kniga) are the most spectacular proofs of editorial activity at the time of Ivan the Terrible, because we possess the unfinished monuments, which are at the same time first drafts and richly decorated manuscripts. There must have been intermediary copies bearing notes and recommendations that were not kept in archives or libraries. Besides, political turmoil (the Oprichnina, the wars), and natural accidents (fires) have deprived us of other examples. The dispersal of folios created additional obstacles to the reconstruction of this editorial process.

The LZHISR was given to the Trinity monastery probably as soon as 1592. Thereafter it was lost as a model for Muscovite illuminators unless they made a pilgrimage to the Troitsa. Later, the sheets of the LLS were acquired by private collectors and had to be recovered piece by piece. Our task, which has now been made much easier with the facsimile edition of the LLS, is to reconstruct the broad picture.
### TABLE 1. PARALLEL READING OF LLS AND LZHSR

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### TABLE 2. CHAPTER TITLES IN LLS AND LZHSR

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