The Poem Of Praise for King Robert of Anjou and Hval’s Miscellany – links and influences

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Among the few surviving mediaeval manuscripts of the Bosnian krstjani, followers of the Bosnian Church, Hval’s Miscellany or Hval’s Codex is the finest and most sumptuously illustrated example of late mediaeval religious literature in Bosnia. This illuminated codex, written by a member of the Bosnian Church by the name of Hval for Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić of the Bosnian landed nobility, herceg (Duke) of Split, is now in the Bologna University Library (Biblioteca dell’ Università di Bologna, Ms. 3575 B). Slavicist scholars have been studying it ever since a few sketchy details of this remarkable manuscript dubbed the Miscellany first came to light in the early 19th century. In 1854 a work by Ivan Kukuljević Sackinski brought it to the notice of academia in general, and ever more detailed and varied studies of the manuscript followed, which remain relevant to this day. Though many scholars have worked on the artistic repertoire of the codex, which is highly complex and iconographically fascinating, it has not been the subject of detailed study, both because of the shortage of comparative material and corresponding archive records, and because most scholars have focused primarily on the linguistic and palaeographic structure of the codex, or more precisely on a philological analysis, and on the historical context in which the manuscript was composed, as well as on issues relating to the Bosnian Church as a distinct, autocephalous Church in the Balkans, with a view to shedding light on the language of the region, the Church’s discipiles, and so forth. As noted, there is a relative abundance of works on Hval’s Miscellany. Some historians and theologians use it to argue their case in the endless debates over the nature of the Bosnian Church, as they attempt to prove their hypotheses that it was dualist, Bogomil or Patarene, Orthodox, Eastern Rite Catholic, Benedictine or even schismatic, orthodox or heterodox. Philosophical studies by several authorities, on the other hand, have led to new discoveries concerning the development and ductus of Old Slavonic in this part of the world. Given the complex questions relating,  

1) In 1986 a facsimile edition of the Miscellany was published (The codex of Hval krstjani: transcription and commentary. Akademija nauka i umjetnosti BiH, Svjetlost, Sarajevo), making it available to the wider academic public.  
2) The codex was a gift to the University Library in Bologna from Pope Benedict XIV, (1740-1758), who had obtained it from the Italian linguist Giacomo Facciolati (1682-1679). We do not know how Facciolati came into possession of the codex, but one theory is that Hrvoje’s heirs settled in Dalmatia or, more likely, in Italy after the fall of Bosnia in 1463, taking with them their personal effects, including the codex (H. Kuna, M. Harisijadis, Hvalov Miscellany). It acquired the name Hvalov zbornik, Hval’s Miscellany, after the scribe Hval, who gives not only his name in the colophon on fol. 359r, but also that of the head of the Bosnian Church, Đed Radomĕr, and the year of composition.  
3) J. Dobrovský, Institutiones linguae slavicae dialecti veteris XIII. Vindobonae 1822.  
4) I. K. Sackinski, Izvjeshte o putovanju kroz Dalmaciju u 17. stoljeće, 1824.  
5) Two more Miscellanies are still extant from the corpus of mediaeval Bosnian literature, along with Hval’s: the Venice Miscellany (early 15th century) and the Radosav Miscellany (mid 15th century). Manuscripts dating from the late 14th and early 15th century include the Gospel of Tepčija Batalo, the Čajniče Gospel, the Gospels of Daničić, Pripković, Kopitar and the Gospel from Dowola; the Nikoljsko Gospel is of particular note for its very fine illuminations. For more on mediaeval Bosnian manuscripts, see J. Maksimović, Sliskarstvo minijatura u srednjovekovnoj Bosni. Zbornik radova Vazantološkog institut 17 (1976) 175-188, and Umesto u doba srednjovekovne Bosna i Hrnja 4 (1997) 53-72.  
7) There are many such studies, of which we single out just a few: H. Kuna, Srednjovekovna bosanska književnost. Forum Bosnae 45 (2008), D. Dragoljović, Istoriija srpske književnosti u srednjovekovnoj bosanskoj državi. Novi Sad 1997, A. Nazor. Rukopisi ‘Crkve bosanske’, F. Šanjek (ed.). Zbornik radova sa međunarodnoga skupa Fenomen ‘krsta-
above all, to the ecclesiastical historical context of mediaeval Bosnian religious literature, many of these questions remain unanswered.

Some scholars, as they address these issues, have also touched on the visual artistry of the Bosnian krshtjani, as they study original material or set the artistic content in context, from their various perspectives. Only a few have focused mainly on the illustrations. These studies, of varying scope and interest, and with little in the way of systematic analysis, though they cover more than a century, have failed to provide satisfactory answers; there are too many undefined or imperfectly studied aspects of this extremely complex chapter in mediaeval Bosnian history.

Since there has as yet been no overview of studies of the codex in the specialist literature, we shall highlight here the principal scholars and their contributions to the subject.

Research to date on the illuminations of Hval’s Miscellany

First to turn his attention to the figural illustrations of the codex, albeit superficially, was Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski (1857), followed by Franjo Rački (1869), whose study of the illuminations was limited to considering whether they were orthodox or not. Arguments of this kind, which were limited to the wealth of illuminations as well as the historical context of the manuscript, are often seen as indicating that the artistic content of Hval’s Miscellany was “converging on” those of Catholic provenance, with the miniatures representing a “compromise”, given the political circumstances in which the manuscript was composed, and that they are something quite unique in the book art of mediaeval Bosnia (the view proposed by, e.g., A. Solovjev, Dragutin Kniwald, Vladimir Vrana...), were the norm until the work of art historian Svetozar Radojičić (1950). In his brief survey of the Hval’s Miscellany miniatures, Radojičić attributed them stylistically to the late Gothic with a suggestion of the Romanesque and hints of the early Renaissance. It is significant that, albeit hesitantly, he took Hval to be the illuminator; but in an article published in 1953, he took a different view, stating that the miniatures were “the work of a master from the Littoral, probably from Split”.

A turning-point in the study of the Miscellany came with the work of Giovanni Muzzioli, who was the first to recognize that the miniatures were the work of two artists, the first strongly influenced by the Italian Gothic, the second associated rather with local art (1954). Muzzioli begins by briefly classifying the miniatures in Hval’s Miscellany “by artist.” Taking the artistic analysis a step further, the Byzantine scholar and historian of mediaeval Serbian art Vojislav J. Đurić published a lengthy article (1957) with a comprehensive survey of the miniatures by both artists, emphasizing that the work as a whole was influenced by the iconography of Western art, and that the two miniaturists were Catholics. Generally speaking, in his view the style of the figured miniatures belonged to the high Gothic, the work of Littoral masters based on the art of Dalmatia, Venice and northern Italy; he associated the work of the first master, who was undoubtedly from Dalmatia and most likely from Split, with the art of Venice, particularly that of Niccolò di Pietro, the Paduan Gothic school and the miniatures of 14th century Venice and Emilia, and saw the second primarily as an artist of “refined draftsmanship”, an original painter for whom it was not easy to find analogies in Littoral and Italian miniature painting.

The most significant contribution to the study of the miniatures in Hval’s Miscellany was that of art historian Jovanka Maksimović (1976). Of particu-
lar value is her survey and analysis of the entire body of book art in Bosnia and Hum, which she regards as distinct in the art of the Balkans. She identifies and compares the features common to the illuminations, speculates on the book art on which they might have been modelled, and classifies them stylistically, not altogether successfully, into groups – for example, the Gothic, which takes two forms in Bosnian manuscripts, the first a supposedly superficial, linear interpretation, the second part of the international Gothic deriving from 14th century Venice and northern Italy and reaching the Venice and Hval’s Miscellaneies and Hrvoje’s Missal via Split and Littoral masters, thus revealing the influence of Miroslav’s Gospel on later manuscripts and of other written and art works that might possibly have influence this codex, directly or indirectly. In her book Srpske srednjovekovne minijature, which includes all the Bosnian codices (!), she studies the Hval’s Miscellany illuminations, but briefly and in insufficient depth. She offers a rather more detailed analysis in her introduction to the facsimile edition (1986) and in an article entitled Rukopisi i minijaturno slikarstvo (1997). Adopting the hypothesis that there were two miniature painters proposed by Muzzioli and Đurić, she finds that the first, belonging to the Dalmatian school, was strongly influenced by Gothic panel painting and miniatures, mainly from Emilia, Ferrara, Bologna and Padua, as well as by that of Venice in some of his compositions, and identifies comparable treatment in the oeuvres of Niccolò di Giacomo da Bologna, Jacopo di Paolo and the Maestro delle Iniziali di Bruxelles. She describes the second master as “a true miniaturist,” still more original in his decorative synthesis, and sees him as a Gothic artist but coming out of several local traditions. In her view, both miniaturists were trained in scriptoria in Dubrovnik, Split or Zadar. Here she studies the work of the second master, Hval, and his artistic vocabulary, on which her views are expressed in this sentence: “The blend of Dalmatian Gothic and traditional Bosnian illumination, which included elements from Raškan manuscripts... reveals that this master must have acquired his knowledge in scriptoria where all these elements came together and were fostered.” As already noted, that would mean Dubrovnik, Split or Zadar.

Maksimović rightly notes certain important points: that the second miniaturist is Hval himself (a conclusion she reaches with some hesitation), whose self-portrait appears in the initial O on fol. 13r that the cities behind the three evangelists are Jerusalem, Corinth and Ephesus, the prototypes for which she identifies as the similar compositions by Cimabue in St. Francis’s Church in Assisi; and that the order of the leaves in the codex has been greatly disrupted by a later binding.

The intention of this brief survey of earlier studies was to provide a more coherent account of reflections on the origins of the models, the sources, the question of the illuminators and the stylistic features of the paintings in Hval’s Miscellany. This has led to the following conclusions: as well as drawing attention to the marked presence of Western elements and iconography and of the Gothic style in general in the Hval’s Miscellany miniatures, the Italian schools of Bologna, Padua, Venice, Emilia Romagna and Florence have been identified as possible sources. Here it should be made clear that formal similarities with the Hval’s Miscellany miniatures have been noted in the opus of certain Italian artists, among them Niccolò da Bologna, Jacopo di Paolo and Niccolò di Pietro, but that no specific examples have been cited that could have served as models for our miniaturists. Most of these analogues relate to the work of the first master, who is believed to have studied in Dalmatia, and more specifically in Split, while doubts are expressed whether the second master is Hval or not.

16) Here the example given is that of an Annunciation from a 15th century Italian textile in the Cleveland Museum of Art, seen as similar to the Annunciations of Hval’s Miscellany, miniatures by the second master.

19) Ibid. 67.
20) In the commentary on the illuminations in the facsimile edition of Hval’s Miscellany, Maksimović’s self-portrait of Hval’s is located in the Cyrillic initial Π, even though it is quite clear that it should be the initial O. 21) In her analysis of the original sequences of the leaves, she notes that part of the codex (the work of the first master), with the figures of the apostles and St John the Baptist, the Crucifixion, the Virgin and Child and the Resurrection (the so-called miniature polyptychs of fol. 1v to fol 6v) should originally have followed the four Gospels or Acts of the Apostles, which our research has shown to be incorrect. The original sequence did indeed begin with the canonical tables (the miniaturist Hval), followed by the miniature polyptych (the Dalmatian miniaturist), followed by Hval again, who painted his self-portrait after the polyptych and continued illuminating the codex as far as the beginning of the Gospel according to St John on fol. 106r – this sheet being the work of both miniaturists. It should be noted that the canonical tables and all the headers and initials of the entire manuscript are Hval’s work.
The suggested places of origin of the codex are the major cities of the Dalmatian Littoral – Split, Zadar, Dubrovnik and Omiš, places associated in various ways with Duke Hrvoje in the early 15th century, and also places where there were scriptoria in which these illuminators might have been learned their craft. Other than classifying the illuminations in the Miscellany by artist, scholars have confined themselves to analyzing the individual miniatures, without studying the manuscript as a whole or the very significant, inter-related issues associated with it: 1. its relationship with the local artistic tradition, both Bosnian and Dalmatian, and in this regard, the places where the two miniaturists acquired their skills, a matter that some scholars have admittedly touched upon; 2. the question of the specific models, whether of miniature or monumental painting, that the artists might have used; and 3. the relationship between the illustrations and the accompanying text, which has scarcely been considered thus far. The first two are closely related, but must be clearly distinguished in further studies, as the identification of possible sources for the various illuminations could provide the answer as to where the miniaturists learned their craft, and in what sphere of influence, while recognizing the artistic circle in which the models were composed would enable us to identify the movements of portable artefacts and what kind of artistic synthesis prompted their use.

Without wishing to understate the importance of studies to date, which are of undoubted value, it has to be said that few specific works have been definitively identified as models used by the miniaturists of the Hval’s Miscellany illuminations, whether among other miniatures or in easel or mural painting, or even sculpture or goldsmiths’ work.

The Poem of Praise for King Robert of Anjou and Hval’s Miscellany

The codex known as the Poem of Praise, written for King Robert of Anjou and housed in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale of Florence, is now identified for the first time as a model for the Miscellany. Here we shall focus on a few compositions from Hval’s Miscellany for which, also for the first time, an immediate model may be found in this manuscript.

The Florentine codex consists of two richly illuminated texts: the Regia Carmina of Convenevole da Prato (1270/75–1338), and quotations from St. Augustine, with six additional hexameters, the virtues, and the seven liberal arts. Robert of Anjou’s consiliarius and capellanus, Augustine of Ancona (Ancona, 1243–Naples, 1328), began composing the text, which corresponds to the Millelologium Veritatis Sancti Augustini, and was completed in 1330 by the Augustinian theologian Bartolomeo da Urbino (Urbino, ...–1350). The artistic model for the first part of the Regia Carmina is the Regia Carmina manuscript in the British Library (Ms. Royal 6 E IX), illustrated a few years earlier by the Florentine miniaturist Pacino di Buonaguida, while the model for the illustrations of the second part of the codex, with quotations from St Augustine, was the monumental fresco cycle in the Augustinian church in Bologna, now lost. Scholars who have studied the iconography of the second part of the codex (the Vienna and Florence mss.) have found a number of examples in book and monumental art that echo the original. The Florentine codex was illustrated by

24) I want to thank Karl Georg Pfändtner and Caroline Smouth for generously giving of the necessary materials for this study.

25) The author of the poem cannot be clearly identified from the text, but since 1759 scholars agree that he was Convenevole da Prato – K. G. Pfändtner, Das Lobgedicht auf König Robert von Anjou, Kommentar, Graz 2008, 12.

26) Without analyzing this part of the codex, Giulio Vaccaro states in a single sentence that it was the work of Bartolomeo de’ Bartoli Canzone delle virtù e delle scienze – Regia Carmina Panegirico in onore di Roberto d’Angiò, Commentario, chapter Filologia del testo e filologia dell’immagine nel Regia Carmina di Convenevole di Prato. Torino 2004. 20-38 (33).

27) The contents of the Florentine codex match those of the Vienna codex (Wien, ÖNB, Cod. Ser. n. 2639), but it is much larger (47.4-48.5 x 34.0-34.5 cm). These two codices are also linked by their illuminators, and probably came from the same studio (Pfändtner, Vaccaro).

28) Dizionario biografico dei miniatori italiani: Secoli IX-XVI, Ada Labriola, Pacino di Buonaguida, ed. Milvia Bollati, Milano 2004, 841; M. Ciatti, Le miniature, in: Convenevole da Prato, Regia Carmina dedicati a Roberto d’Angiò e di Gerusalemme I. Faksimile, ed. C. Grassi, Prato, 1982; another, less tenable hypothesis is that the miniaturist of this codex was someone from the bottega of Taddeo Gaddi.

29) In book art these are: Justinian, Digestum vetus cum glossa Accursii. Bologna 1345, Maestro del 1346, Paris, BNF, Ms. Lat. 14.339; Giovanni di Andrea, Novela in libros Decretalium, Bologna 1354, Niccolò di Giacomo, Mailand, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Ms. B.42 Inf; Bartolomeo de’ Bartoli, Canzone delle Virtù e delle Scienze, 1355, studio di Nic-
two anonymous miniaturists, and its place of origin is uncertain, scholars hesitating between Naples and Tuscany.

The respective sizes of the Florentine codex, measuring 370 x 243 mm, and of Hval’s Miscellany, at 170 x 110 mm, reveal that the figures in the miniatures of the Miscellany must have been greatly reduced in size by comparison with their model.30

The first miniature in Hval’s Miscellany to be studied is the composition of the Blessing of the Apostles (fol. 38r). The illuminator, Hval, found his model for this in three miniatures in the Florentine codex.

1. The image of Christ Enthroned31 (Lat. Maestas Domini, fol. 4v) above the sun, moon and stars, right hand raised in benediction towards the Virgin on the next leaf, the personification of the Church as well as of all the saints portrayed on the following pages, which some scholars see as symbolizing Heaven.32

2. The standing Christ, giving a blessing (fol. 9r).
The figure of Christ is painted in monumental style, holding in his left hand a banner with a cross, a serpent entwined around the top of the staff, and giving a blessing with his right.33

3. Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles (fol. 7v). The miniatures occupy the full height of the right hand side of the leaf, with the patriarchs at the top, prophets in the centre and apostles at the bottom, each register with its own architectural setting. The apostles in the Regia Carmina that served as a model occupy the lowest register of the tripartite miniature, just one of a series of images of all the saints. There is an obvious connection between this miniature and the figure of Christ giving a benediction in the original manuscript. The Virgin Mary, the nine angelic choirs, the patriarchs, prophets, apostles and the blessed all face the central figure of Christianity on fol. 4v, so that Hval’s selection of the two compositions (1 and 3 above) which he merged into one becomes Christ with the entire angelic host. Hval also drew on the figure of the standing Christ for certain details.

![Christ Enthroned, Regia Carmina, anonymous miniaturist, Naples?, bef. 1343, fol. 4v](image)

![Christ blessing the Apostles, Hval’s Miscellany 1404, Hval, fol. 38r](image)

The miniature of Christ blessing the apostles based on these three models occupies a full page of Hval’s Miscellany, the text of the Gospel according to St. Matthew (Mt. 23, 3-6) incorporated into the image.34

In this chapter, Christ addresses the multitude and his disciples, so that even without the multitude, there is a logical connection with the text.35 If one was detailed description of the manuscript dedicated to Robert of Anjou.


35) Jesus speaks to his disciples and the multitude about the hypocrisy of thescribes and Pharisees: “Тогдa явлено ла
unaware of the connection between the text and this scene, one might quite naturally call it the Blessing of the apostles. It is interesting that on fol. 23r, where Hval inscribed lines from Matthew 10, the logical place for the Blessing, the double-column text is reduced to a single column, leaving the right hand side of the page blank, an exception in the Miscellany where the text runs on in two columns. This compels us to the conclusion that Hval originally perhaps left space for the miniature that should have been painted there, but that as the work progressed he found a better solution, and located it on fol. 38r, where he left himself more space for the illumination neatly accompanying the text.

The composition with the figure of Christ giving a blessing is almost identical, even though about sixty years separate the codices. Christ is seated on a throne, right hand raised in blessing, with a globe (terra tripartita) in his left hand in the Regia Carmina and codex in Hval’s Miscellany. The miniatures in both codices portray him in frontal position, leaning slightly, his head with its cruciform halo in three-quarter profile. Hval followed the model with only slight alterations, in his distinctive artistic language, with its broader, slightly cruder lines, as can be seen in the image as a whole and in the details. The position of both hands and the modelling of the fingers are almost identical, and the gold-bordered robes, differing only in colour, are a true copy of the Regia Carmina in the draping of the fabric over the body, which is slightly out of proportion anatomically. Even the detail of the inscription across Christ’s lower legs also features in Hval’s Miscellany miniature, except that the text in the Regia Carmina is in Latin, glorifying God the Father as ruler, while Hval’s Miscellany simply has Christ’s monogram in Old Slavonic. Christ’s distinctive, somewhat clumsily executed feet, with toes all of the same size peeping out from under his garments, are repeated in Hval’s Miscellany.

Though the similarities in the execution of the figure are obvious, there are also a number of differences, particularly in the treatment of the background. In the Regia Carmina, the space of God’s rule is described in more literal terms. Christ is seated on a throne composed of the starry skies, the sun and the moon; beneath his feet is a six-arched plinth. Golden rays burst from his entire body, and in particular the halo, with its double gold circle (and in the background), enhancing the impression of Christ’s holiness and the light of Salvation. In Hval’s Miscellany, the space is more compressed, and the background is composed of a narrow band reminiscent of the curtain behind Mary (Regia Carmina fol. 5r), particularly the top. The cloth behind Christ, however, is stretched tight, with no suggestion of the softness of the fabric, falling into folds under its own weight; it now becomes the backrest of the one-dimensional throne of heaven. Here too there are different zones in the gold background, albeit not so strictly and visibly separate as in the Regia Carmina. In Hval’s Miscellany, Christ is seated on a red cushion rather than on the starry heavens, his feet are on a plinth indicated only by a red band, and there is no clear suggestion of architectural features. The harmonious colour scheme of touches of red and blue on gold visually links the upper and lower zones of the miniature. In Hval’s Miscellany, for instance, Christ’s halo is not surrounded by gold rays, but forms a perfect red-rimmed circle.

Hval used as his model for the halo the standing Christ of Regia Carmina fol. 9r, which he follows in both form and colour. The red rim echoes the gold within, turning into a cross with a punched decoration (and also with imitation gemstones, in the model). This and the blue background are identical in both compositions, except that Hval’s line is more skilled and sure, and he also made minor changes to the details, such as the small gold Greek crosses with four dots on each side on the blue-painted interior of the halo.

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36) Though St Peter, to whom Jesus promises the keys to the kingdom of Heaven, is mentioned only in Mt. 16, 19.
37) Mt. 10 describes Jesus’ commanding the disciples to go forth and preach the good news.
38) The Latin inscription, in a rectangular strip, reads: Sum pater en reram, presum quas nempe creati Et quas saluatu, faciens cognoscere uerum (Vaccaro, note 26).
39) The symbolism of the number six in this context may denote man (Genesis 1, 26-31), which could suggest humanity beneath the feet of Him through whom comes salvation.
40) The colour scheme is entirely different in the two backgrounds.
41) A symbol of this kind also features at the beginning of ban Kulin’s charter and in certain documents and manuscripts of mediaeval Bosnia. One interpretation of it is that the cross symbolizes Christ and the four dots the four Evangelists and their Gospels.
Hval’s meticulous work as illuminator can be seen in even the smallest details of his miniatures; in this case, particularly in the decorated gold background, which is finely textured, almost as if in relief, as well as on Christ’s hair, executed in fine white lines on a brown ground.

The third miniature used by Hval as an integral part of his complex composition, as noted above, was part of the miniature showing the apostles.

The similarities between parts of the *Regia Carmina* and *Hval’s Miscellany* compositions, and the extent to which Hval relied on the former, are plain to see, but are at their most explicit in the figure of St. Peter, who here occupies the foremost position in the apostolic hierarchy. Holding two gold keys to the kingdom of heaven in one hand, and an unfurled scroll in the other, St. Peter is at the head of the other apostles, who stand behind and below him. In *Hval’s Miscellany* this hierarchy is still more marked – the apostles seem to be losing their individual physical features, and instead are portrayed stereotypically, arranged in order of age. This part of the Blessing of the Apostles is much taller and narrower than the one in the *Regia Carmina*, probably in order to fit the miniature to the shape of the page.

Hval faithfully echoed the half-length figure of St Paul – his blue, gold-bordered robe, the red-gold mantle over his right shoulder, the way he is holding the keys in his right hand and a scroll in his left. In the *Regia Carmina*, there is a suggesting of lettering on the scroll, while in *Hval’s Miscellany*, the wording on the scroll, in red, is very clear – *Peter the Apostle*. Hval also copied the modelling of the face, beard and moustache, though not the hair, of the model. The architectural setting of the apostles in the

42) Mt. 16, 19.
Regia Carmina features in Hval’s Miscellany only in the lower register, in the form of a free re-interpretation of the crown of the wall, now covered with geometric designs and surrounded by a red band. Hval fitted these modified architectural features around the figures, causing the architecture to lose its original characteristics.

The apostles occupying the lower register above the architectural frame, who appear to be the youngest, were treated in an extremely interesting way by the miniaturist, who represented them as in the model, with their apostolic staffs. The greatest similarity is to be seen in the way the figure of the apostle at Christ’s feet is holding the Gospel book and his staff. The entire composition in Hval’s Miscellany is more compact and rigid than in the Regia Carmina.

The miniature in Hval’s Miscellany relating to the second part of the codex, Milleloquium Veritatis Sancti Augustini, is at the very beginning of the Gospel according to St. Mark. The tradition in illuminated mediaeval Bosnian manuscripts is for the symbols of the Evangelists to feature at the head of their respective gospels. In Hval’s Miscellany, this iconographic repertoire is enriched, in that the Evangelists themselves appear at the head of their Gospels along with their symbols; in three instances, they feature together on the same leaf, and in Mark’s Gospel they appear on two. Mark’s symbol, the winged lion with a crown and the Gospel, feature on fol. 47v, with the figure of the Evangelist himself on the next, fol. 48r, in the header, above the first verses of the Gospel.

The model for the figure of the Evangelist Mark, sumptuously portrayed half-length in a Gothic quatrefoil frame, with a header composed of foliar motifs, is to be found on fol. 33r. An allegorical figure of Dialectics, in the shape of a young woman, is seated above Zarathustra, shown as an elderly man with a long beard, seated beneath her feet, writing. In Hval’s Miscellany, the figure of Zarathustra is transformed into the Evangelist Mark, shortened to fit into the header and the quatrefoil frame.

Even so, this example reveals how literally Hval the miniaturist followed his model. Like Zarathustra, the Evangelist is seated, with a page of writing in his lap. His slightly bent head, his grey-bearded and moustached face framed by his cowl, the repetition of the folds of his robes—all these reveal the close similarities between the two compositions. Certain details, too, are treated in much the same way: the left hand holding the page, the right hand holding the pen, and the modelling of the face. Where Hval differs is in the colour scheme—the cowl is much darker, but of the same shape, surrounded by two lighter lines;

43) Vaccaro notes in his Commentary on Regia carmina that the apostles holding Gospel books are in fact the Evangelists, note 26, 29.

44) In Kopitar’s Gospel, figures of two of the Evangelists, Luke and John, appear along with the symbols that feature in the majority of illuminated manuscripts from Bosnia.
the lower part of the robe is dark green – and in the background: the Evangelist is set against a blue background with gold fleur-de-lys and stars. The script on the pages held by Zarathustra also differs, naturally enough, from St. Mark’s – in Hval’s Miscellany the page bears the Evangelist’s name in Old Slavonic.

It is a mystery why Hval chose the figure of Zarathustra for the Evangelist; could it perhaps have had some deeper meaning for him? It is doubtful whether he was even familiar with Zarathustra’s teachings; more likely is that he found in this figure the ideal solution for the Evangelist.

Finally, we shall turn our attention to the model for the figured initial with Hval’s self-portrait, which is to be found on fol. 32r of the Milleloquium Veritatis Sancti Augustini. Here, below the miniature with the allegorical figures of Caritas and Spes (Charity and Hope), the double-column text is separated by a banner with the figured initial O, within which is a saint, probably St Augustine himself. The treatment of the banner and initial is very similar in both cases, though Hval’s is more elaborate in both decoration and colour. The position of the hands holding the book and the frontal pose of the bust are identical, and there are similarities in the treatment of the robes. The differences are also interesting. In the Poem of Praise the figure in the initial is that of a saint, while in Hval’s Miscellany the portrait is of a krstjanin, where the rounded modelling of the face and tonsured head of the former becomes more pointed in the latter, in which Hval is wearing a cap.

Where the Milleloquium has a gold halo, Hval paints the background gold, probably to indicate the sanctity of those belonging to this Church and, of course, placing himself in that context. It should be noted that the self-portrait in this initial appears immediately after the work of the first master of Hval’s Miscellany, which suggests that Hval intended his portrait to indicate that the remainder of the work was his, and that he regards his Church as legitimate. Incidentally, this is the clearest portrait of any member of the Bosnian Church.

Krstjanin Hval, scribe and miniaturist, the Master of Hrvoje’s Missal, and Duke Hrvoje

Following this account of the relationship between these two codices, we shall touch on the question of the authorship of certain miniatures in the Miscellany, particularly Hval’s, since it is to him that the miniatures in the Miscellany for which we
find parallels in the Poem of Praise for Robert of Anjou are attributed. As already noted, the Miscellany was illuminated by two miniaturists. Studies to date have formed the basis for much debate over the identity of the two masters, and in particular over Hval, the scribe of the Miscellany, who recorded in two places (fol. 48r and fol. 188r): "I have written in gold and black." The assumption that Hval was one of the illuminators of the codex is both justified and wholly acceptable. The chapter headers, the canon tables, the banners and initials that can be ascribed to this master reveal a very close connection with the book art of mediaeval Bosnia and Hum. The scribe and illuminator Hval was active in the early 15th century, when he was middle-aged, judging from his self-portrait in the 1404 Miscellany. Unfortunately, other than this codex, there are no documents or manuscripts that might supply us with additional information. A comparison between his work and that of the illuminators of other late 14th and early 15th century Bosnian manuscripts immediately shows that he was a very talented miniaturist, with whom, artistically speaking, only the anonymous miniaturist of the Nikoljsko Gospel and the first master of the Venice Miscellany are on a par (though the latter’s illustrations are mainly line drawings). He would certainly have acquired his skills in one of the Bosnian Church’s scriptoria, in the atmosphere of the international Gothic that was certainly present in mediaeval Bosnia at the time. However, one should not exclude the possibility that he travelled (to Italy, perhaps) and spent some time in the Littoral, gaining further experience; for we see in his work the forms typical of the part of the world where he lived and worked (including the influence of Serbian Cyrillic manuscripts from the east, very similar in basic form to those from Bosnia) coexisting with those of Dalmatia and of Central and Western Europe, and we have also seen that some of the models he used matched the artistic vocabulary he had already developed. As is well known, mediaeval Bosnia lay on the boundary between East and West, and artistic influences would therefore have reached it from different directions. Nonetheless, the works that originated there, including book art, were above all a product of their own environment, itself very distinctive. This is the context in which we shall consider Hval the miniaturist, as the most relevant to his work.

The other, anonymous master (called the first master in the various studies) of Hval’s Miscellany, painted another manuscript for Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić in 1403/4, known as Hrvoje’s Missal. We shall therefore call this artist the Master of Hrvoje’s Missal.

The Master of Hrvoje’s Missal belonged to the Dalmatian artistic environment, was most likely from Zadar or Split, and learned his craft within the ambit of the Italian Gothic and the specific Adriatic Byzantinism typical of the eastern Adriatic coast at that time. What has been most puzzling to scholars analyzing his works is their marked complexity, particularly as regards the iconography (in other words, whether certain miniatures should be ascribed to the Gothic, Byzantine, Romanesque or early Renaissance manner). Properly to evaluate his work, we must determine his artistic vocabulary, which is basically Gothic, and identify the models he used and adapted to his own distinctive language, whatever their origins. This is the only way to gain a clear picture of the complex synthesis within his opus of miniatures.

Even though the original sequence of the leaves of the codex was different, the work of the two miniaturists of Hval’s Miscellany, as now bound in the Florence copy, can be classified as follows: the Master of Hrvoje’s Missal painted the first leaves
of the *Miscellany* (to fol. 6v); the twelve apostles, St. Paul and St. John the Baptist, two to a page; the Resurrection, the Crucifixion and the Virgin and Child (all occupying a full page); the figure of St. John the Evangelist (fol. 106v), John and Prochoros (fol. 123v), the Resurrection (fol. 123v), the Stoning of St. Stephen (fol. 171v), the figures of St. James (fol. 198r), St Peter (fol. 202r and 205v), St. John the Evangelist (fol. 208v), Judas (fol. 213r), St. Paul (fol. 225r), King David (fol. 296r) and Moses with six figures (fol. 354r) at the beginning of the Song of Moses for the deliverance of Israel.

Hval, for his part, illustrated the following leaves: the canon tables (fols. 7r to 12v), the banner with initial containing his self-portrait (fol. 13r), the Annunciation (fol. 13v), the miniature with St. Matthew the Evangelist, his symbol and the city of Jerusalem in the background (fol. 14r), the Blessing of the Apostles (fol. 38r), the winged lion, symbol of St. Mark (fol. 47v), the header with the figure of St. Mark the Evangelist (fol. 48r), the miniature with the figure of St. Luke, the city of Corinth and his symbol, the six-winged ox (fol. 69v), the elaborate initial and banner with inscription (fol. 70r), the symbol of St. John the Evangelist, the six-winged eagle, and the city of Ephesus (fol. 106v) and the header with initial at the beginning of the Gospel of St. John (fol. 108r), the header at the beginning of the Apocalypse (fol. 133v) and the Decalogue (fol. 151v), the figured initial $P$ (fol. 161v), the header at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles (fol. 163v) and the Psalms (fol. 296v), and all the initials and floral decorations in the codex. It is rare, in the history of book art, to find an example of a codex illustrated by two artists of different religious affiliations – in this case, one belonging to the supposedly Patarene Bosnian Church for which the codex was made, and the other a Catholic, assuming of course that his religion can be identified from the artistic world in which he worked. It is equally unusual to find codices originating from different religious traditions dedicated to a single person, in this case Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinčić: *Hrvoje’s Missal*, composed under Roman Catholic canon law, and *Hval’s Miscellany*. This fact tells us much about Duke Hrvoje and his politics in the broader context, illustrating the special position of the Bosnian Church on the boundary between East and West, but even more so his personal political aspirations, which at the time were clearly for closer links with and even recognition by the Catholic Church. They could also be seen as attesting to his separation between his public and private religious convictions. For all these reasons, this influential member of the nobility is often referred to in the literature as the “master of Bosnian foreign policy.”

The illuminators and Duke Hrvoje are certainly connected by the writing and illumination of the two codices. The *Missal* is associated with Split and Zadar (priest Butko), and on the basis of the facts set out above *Hval’s Miscellany* also presumably originated from one of those towns, though its exact point of origin remains an open question.

**Was the codex Poem of Praise in the hands of krstjanin Hval?**

We have seen that some of the iconography of the *Poem of Praise* appears in the manuscript composed for the Bosnian Church. The textual content of the *Miscellany*, consisting of the New Testament, a Psalter, the Decalogue and Apocrypha, is unrelated to that of the *Poem of Praise*, but the models fit comfortably into an entirely new textual context. The final question that arises, one that is crucial to this study, is how Hval came into contact with a manuscript of the *Poem of Praise*, and indeed whether he had direct access to it or knew it only indirectly, through other models. A related question is why the Master of *Hrvoje’s Missal* did not also use it as a model to illustrate the *Miscellany*.

Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinčić, an extremely powerful and influential Bosnian noble, Grand Duke of Bosnia and loyal follower of the Angevin King Ladislaus of Naples, who was crowned King of Hungary and Croatia in Zadar on 5 August 1403, was rewarded with the title of Duke of Split for his support for King Ladislaus’ ideas and policies, becoming the king’s viceroy in Hungary, Croatia, Dalmatia and Bosnia.

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50) The *Missal* was produced for St. Michael’s Church in Split under Roman Catholic canon law.

51) The *Hval’s Miscellany* was made for the krstijanja of the Bosnian Church, as the scribe himself states at the end of the codex: *A pisate se i dosvorštise v’ lêto rož’stva Hristova 1404 lêto, v’dny epyskap’stva i nastavnika i s’v’šytela cr’ky bosans’kot gospodina dêda Radomêra* (This was written and completed in the summer of the year of our Lord 1404, for the bishops and teachers and head of the Bosnian Church, elder Radomer).

As he wavered between Catholicism and the Bosnian Church, Hrvoje was in fact attempting to retain power and influence over a wide area, whether inherited – the kings of mediaeval Bosnia had bestowed certain lands on the Hrvatinići family – or the lands Hrvoje himself had acquired, or even those he received as Duke of Split.\(^{53}\)

Antonio Magliabecchi (1633-1714), who brought the *Poem of Praise* codex to the library in Florence, was given it on a Greek island.\(^{54}\) We do not know who brought it to Greece. Since it was composed as a gift to King Robert of Anjou, it would doubtless originally have been in his library, and King Ladislaus of Durazzo, also of the House of Anjou, could have inherited the manuscript. Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinići is known to have been a loyal supporter of two Angevin kings of Naples – Charles II and Ladislaus of Durazzo – with whom he maintained extremely close political relations, particularly with Ladislaus. After Hrvoje brought all the cities on the Dalmatian Littoral “under Ladislaus’ flag,” with the backing of the marshal of Sicily and Aloysius Aldebarisco, Admiral of the Naples navy, King Ladislaus and his retinue – his guardian Angelo Acciaiuoli, Judge Benedikt Acciaiuoli, his secretary Matthias of San Miniato and various followers, mainly from Florence – came to Zadar, where he was crowned by Archbishop John Kanižaj of Ostrogon (Esztergom) in August 1403.\(^{55}\) Prior to Ladislaus’ visit to Zadar, Hrvoje had become close to the Archbishop of Split, Pelegrin of Aragon, who negotiated on Hrvoje’s behalf with the Papal Legate, Cardinal Angelo Acciaiuoli.\(^{56}\)

It is entirely possible that King Ladislaus, or someone in his retinue, brought the codex to Zadar, and that Hval thus came into direct contact with the original through Duke Hrvoje, who later became Duke of Split.\(^{57}\) Another possibility is that copies of some of the miniatures in this codex were in circulation in various artistic circles. In the light of known historical facts and a comparison of the illuminations, the former is the more likely possibility, as well as the most logical. Furthermore, these models were true miniatures, mainly figured initials, of which copies were rarely made to be passed from hand to hand; and in any case, Hval’s miniatures are true to the originals down to the minutest detail, in which he sometimes skillfully drew on a number of different models for a single composition. All this makes it likely that a codex of the *Poem of Praise* to King Robert of Anjou came into the hands of Duke Hrvoje and Hval the illuminator before it reached Greece.

Further support for this hypothesis can be found in a careful examination of what copies of mediaeval book art actually looked like. For the most part, they consist of drawings in imitation of the originals, focusing on key components, with as bolder figures, *never* treatment and so on. In addition, a comparison between the models and the compositions based on them in other examples of book art reveals considerable freedom of reinterpretation – one need look no further than the Florence and Vienna codices of the *Poem of Praise*, produced in the same studio, to see that the artists did not invariably blindly follow their models. Here one should make a clear distinction between easel painting and book art.

The assumption that Duke Hrvoje and Hval the illuminator had been in possession of the *Poem of Praise* leads us to another question: why was this manuscript not used as a model by the Master of Hrvoje’s Missal, who also illustrated part of *Hval’s Miscellany*, and did they work in the same studio at the same time. To draw the proper conclusions, we shall have to consider a number of examples that will help to shed light on these questions. The Glagolitic initial V of *Hrvoje’s Missal* (fol. 104b) contains a scene of Christ appearing to the disciples that resembles the Blessing of the Apostles in *Hval’s Miscellany*, in even more condensed form. Though the Master of *Hrvoje’s Missal* used different models to illuminate the *Missal* (at least two codices), and the examples cited are not so closely analogous as in the case of Hval, it is possible that the *Poem of Praise* provided him with a design for this figured initial.\(^{58}\)

\(^{53}\) For more on the history of mediaeval Bosnia, see *D. Lovrenović*, Na kliziju povijesti 2006; *S. Cirković*, Istorija srednjovjekovne bosanske države, Beograd 1964; *A. Babić*, Istorija srednjovjekovne Bosne. Sarajevo 1972.

\(^{54}\) *Pfändtner*, op. cit., 14.


\(^{56}\) Ibid. 84.

\(^{57}\) Or perhaps Archbishop Pelegrin had previously brought some codices to Split.

\(^{58}\) Conceptually similar scenes in *Hrvoje’s Missal* and the *Poem of Praise* can be found in the portrait of Duke Hrvoje on horseback on fol. 242v, and the portrait of a knight on horseback in full military attire on fol. 24r; disregarding the seals of the Bosnian Kotromanići dynasty, which were used to some extent as a prototype for representations of rulers in...
If this hypothesis is seen as tenable, the implication is that this Glagolitic initial, freely interpreted by comparison with its artistic model, was used both by the Master of Hrvoje’s Missal and Hval, with the figure of Christ based more closely on fol. 9r, but we shall not study this miniature in greater detail here for lack of space, beyond noting that the vocabulary of the illuminator of Hrvoje’s Missal is extremely specific: although the environment in which he learned military attire on horseback, we believe that the miniature of the knight from Prato could have been used by the Master of Hrvoje’s Missal as inspiration.

His craft is clear, his compositions still remain somewhat unclear. The treatment in both of Hrvoje’s codices is essentially similar. We therefore incline to the view that the two illuminators simply could not, independently of each other, have chosen three compositions from the Regia Carmina and combined them in very similar ways. Only one of them could have done so, and the only debate is whether the Master of Hrvoje’s Missal saw Hval’s treatment or vice versa; whichever is the case, he executed them in his specific, readily identifiable manner. Still, bearing in mind the fact that, as noted, Hval made literal copies of the very small originals in the Poem of Praise, it seems more likely that it was he who had access to them. Though the original conception was probably Hval’s, we believe that the Master of Hrvoje’s Missal could also have used the manuscript, since his portrayal of Christ, as we have seen, is mainly based on fol. 9r of the model, particularly as regards the colour scheme of Christ’s robes, which he certainly could not have seen in Hval’s work. All this, however, is no more than speculation.

Based on our research to date, we could hypothesize that Duke Hrvoje himself gave Hval this codex to use when illustrating the Miscellany, and that since the Master of Hrvoje’s Missal was illuminating the sumptuous Missal at that time, as well as working on Hval’s Miscellany, he too could have had access to it, though he did not use it as a model for his work on Hval’s Miscellany. The illuminations of Hval’s Miscellany and Hrvoje’s Missal were being executed at the same time, but not in the same studio, and the two artists worked together very successfully on the miniatures of Hval’s Miscellany, seemingly taking pleasure in competing with one another.

59) For example, a comparison with the composition of Lorenzo Veneziano’s Virgin and Child – the Madonna of the Olive Grove (Zadar, permanent exhibition of religious art) (J. Belamarčić, Z. Demori Staničić, B. Rauter Plančić, Stoljeće gotike na Jadranu. Slikarstvo u ozračju Paola Veneziane. Zagreb 2004, 95), which could undoubtedly have served as a model for the miniature of the Virgin and Child (Hval’s Miscellany fol. 6r), reveals many similarities but also considerable freedom of interpretation, particularly as regards the upper parts and the margins of the architectural treatment of the throne.

60) Several places reveal how closely they worked together, but we have not the space for such analyses here. We shall merely make some observations relating to the date of origin of these codices. Our study of the miniatures of Hval’s Miscellany and the work of the Master of Hrvoje’s Missal reveals that his illuminations are uneven in quality, with the early ones in Hval’s Miscellany produced in great haste, unlike the later ones, suggesting that he completed the illumination of the Missal before Hval’s Miscellany was finished, and that as
The paths taken by these codices, as portable artefacts, from their point of origin to the present, were undoubtedly dictated or influenced by social and political developments and concatenations of circumstances, with Hval’s Miscellany ending up in Bologna, Hrvoje’s Missal in Istanbul, and the Poem of Praise, by good fortune, finishing up where it belongs. Notwithstanding the various political connotations, pretensions to territory and power, divisions into proper Christians and heretics, and all the events that created the environment in which Hval’s Miscellany came into being, one can see how the artistic impulse overrode them all, particularly the definition of who was a true believer and who a heretic, and that soon as he had completed the Missal, he continued working on the Miscellany with greater concentration.

there was considerable freedom of communication between artistic movements in the late middle ages. The art of mediaeval Bosnia was greatly enriched thereby, including that of the krstjanin Hval.

Sources of illustrations:
Hvalov zbornik/Hval’s Miscellany, transcription and commentary, fascimile, grupa autora, redaktor Herta Kuna, Svjetlost Sarajevo 1986;
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