The Illuminated Manuscripts after Gutenberg: Persistence, Changes and Adaptation
(with Examples from Croatia)

Content and Objectives of the Lecture and Group Work on the Lecture Topic:

Although the post-Gutenberg tradition of the illuminated book across Western Europe may be a well-researched topic, far less is known about its Croatian counterpart. It is for this reason that my presentation focuses on books with miniatures that are related to Croatia. Some of these books were made in Croatia, and some were brought in for the benefit of Croatian users and patrons from production centres further afield, mostly those in Italy – although this is something we cannot determine with certainty in relation to each individual case. At any rate, all but a few of the books we shall be talking about today are kept in Croatia.

Our material will be primarily divided into two large groups.

1. The first group comprises illuminated incunabula which combined the new technology of the movable type press with the traditional technology of decoration and illustration by hand. In the transitional period of about fifty years miniaturists went on illuminating special copies for printers or buyers who wanted ornamented copies of printed books.

2. The other group covers hand-crafted books (codices) featuring illuminations and decorations done also by hand. We shall be following their production until as late as the 18th century, observing examples which reflect the style of their period and the spirit of their native environment. However, it will become apparent that the miniaturists who created such books were in no position to ignore the emergence of the printed book and the graphic image in their various incarnations.

This group is divided into following subgroups: Zagreb codices, Zadar codices, Glagolitic codices, Bonaventura Razmilović and Franciscan choir books, and secular commissions from 16th to the 18th cent.

Assignment:

Illuminated incunabula: According to the personal experience and skills, students may select some illuminated incunabula preserved in Zadar historical libraries (ie., Library of the Franciscan monastery) and describe them using different standards of incunabula and miniature descriptions.
In comparing and compiling them they should select and formulate the best suitable model for elaborated and detailed
description of illuminated incunabula. Additionally they are encouraged to make a typological,
iconographical, technical and stylistic analysis of miniatures.

Readings:

Armstrong, Lilian. The Hand Illuminated Venetian Incunabule, in: Armstrong, Lilian. Studies of


Jakšić, Nikola. Iluminirani korali, in: Milost susreta. Umjetnička baština Franjevačke provincije

Canova, Giordana Mariani. La miniatura Veneta del Rinascimento: 1450-1500, Venice 1969.

Kolanović, Josip. Liturgijski kodeksi svetokrševanskog opata Deodata Venijera, in: Radovi

Stipčević, Aleksandar. Socijalna povijest knjige u Hrvata, book II. Od glagoljskog prvotiska
(1483) do Hrvatskog narodnog preporoda (1835), Zagreb, 2005, pp. 67-78.