

Danko Dujmović and Vjekoslav Jukić

## The “Koloman Renaissance” in North Western Croatia – An Unfinished Project \*

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Danko Dujmović and  
Vjekoslav Jukić

School of Arts and Sciences

University of Rijeka

HR, 51 000 Rijeka

Omladinska 14

ddujmovic@ffri.hr; v.jukic@inet.hr

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*The authors discuss the political and historical situation in medieval Slavonia in the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Tatar invasion stopped two important political processes that might have changed the history of medieval Slavonia and the whole of Croatia. The main role was performed by Duke Koloman and Stjepan II, bishop of Zagreb. They planned to move the seat of the archbishopric from Split to Zagreb, and to make Čazma the political, religious and cultural center of Northern Croatia. The authors offer new information and interpretation about the role of art in that process.*

**Key words:** Croatia, Stjepan II, Duke Koloman, Romanesque art and architecture

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THE early 13<sup>th</sup> century in today's North Western Croatia was a remarkable period, both in terms of historical and artistic developments. It centres on one big historical event – the Tartar invasion (1242), which left its mark not only on that century, but also on the entire Croatian history and culture.<sup>1</sup> In this paper we will look at certain features of art and culture in the time just before the invasion in the western section of the medieval Slavonia, arguing that what happened was in fact a true mini-renaissance in terms of cultural growth.

Before one takes a deeper look at the art and urban development in medieval Slavonia, i.e. today's North Western Croatia, in the 13<sup>th</sup> ct., a brief note on directly preceding events is in order. As a territory obtained at the end of 11<sup>th</sup> century, Slavonia was quite a catch for the Hungarian kingdom, as it opened the way to expansion toward Dalmatia and the Adriatic coast. To ensure the domination in the region, some political moves were made immediately, such as the foundation of the Zagreb bishopric<sup>2</sup> (to mention just the most significant one), which was subjected to the Archbishopric of Esztergom and later of Kalocsa (although the earlier bishopric of Siscia, covering the territory of the new diocese, had belonged to the Archbishopric of Salona/Split).

The bishop of Zagreb was seen as one of the main supporters of the Hungarian kings and their policies in the regions to the south of the Drava river. For that reason the bishopric was provided with large feudal estates, which made it quite an opulent and powerful patron in the country.<sup>3</sup>

Beside the bishops of Zagreb, there was also the post of the Slavonian Duke (Herceg)<sup>4</sup> which had a leading role in the history of the territory. The title was attached either to the king's brother or son who was a regent in Slavonia, Croatia and Dalmatia in the king's absence, and included royal privileges such as a court, a chancery, founding of monasteries, etc.<sup>5</sup>

If we look at the art activity of the 12<sup>th</sup> century in the regions between the Sava and Drava river, we will



Fig 1 Rudina, the so-called Cat bracket (photo by Filip Beusan)

find very few monuments of architecture or figured sculpture.<sup>6</sup> It would be wrong to conclude that this absence of projects and monuments automatically meant a low quality production. Quite to the contrary – the few preserved fragments, of sculpture in particular, show respectable quality which also indicates the presence of quality buildings to which the fragments belonged. Many questions about the 12<sup>th</sup> century art in medieval Slavonia are still open. The best example is the outstanding but still rather poorly investigated Benedictine abbey of St. Michael at Rudina near Požega (fig. 1).<sup>7</sup> The present-day state of Rudina is indicative of how little public opinion cares for great cultural, historical and artistic monuments in present-day Croatia. When Rudina's sculpture was presented in the last few years at several important exhibitions, the famous heads-brackets have invariably left the visitors fascinated by their unique expressive and highly original stylized forms. Unfortunately, we still do not have a clear idea about their number, function or artists. The complex has remained unexplored as excavations were suspended several years ago, without sufficient restoration or presentation.

One could also wonder about such a quality piece as the pier with a relief of the *Agnus dei* from Ilok (mid-12<sup>th</sup> ct.), today in the Archaeological museum in Zagreb (fig. 2).<sup>8</sup> That piece of sculpture was, evidently, a part of an important 12<sup>th</sup> century building, which has

1 Considering all consequences, in particular the death of Duke Koloman, the invasion was fatal for medieval Slavonia because many of Koloman's projects were stopped or never finished, what left its trace on the future evolution of what is today Northern Croatia.

2 Klaić 1990, p.150.

3 Klaić 1990, pp. 249–250.

4 The Croatian title Herceg is translated as Duke into English.

5 Klaić 1976, Budak, Raukar 2006, p.173.

6 For 12th century sculpture in North Croatia please see catalogue of exhibition in the Archaeological museum of Zagreb from 21st October 2007 till 6th January 2008, *A Hundred Stones from the lost Paradise*, Goss 2007A.

7 Goss 2007A, pp. 26 – 30 and 77 – 85.

8 Goss 2007A, p 96.



Fig 2 Ilok, Agnus dei (photo by Filip Beusan)



Fig 3 Bapska, church of Our Lady (photo by Vjekoslav Jukić)

so far remained unknown. One might assume that the building in question was connected with some fairly distinguished, maybe even royal patron. No less important are the fragments of architectural sculpture in the Museum of Croatian History in Zagreb which could be connected with the most important project of the 12<sup>th</sup> century architecture in medieval Slavonia – the Romanesque Cathedral in Zagreb.<sup>9</sup>

Along with the sculpture one should also touch upon the architectural accomplishments in today's continental Croatia in the 12<sup>th</sup> ct. As an example, we shall take the three interesting albeit rather small churches of the so-called “Sirmium group” (Bapska, Novi Mikanovci, Morović). What they have in common in spite of obvious differences is their link with the colonization movement within the so-called “Renaissance of the 12<sup>th</sup> century,” which reached the Pannonian plain by ca. 1200. That issue has been amply treated by Vladimir P. Goss who in several works wrote about the “Sirmium group,” as well as on “The 12<sup>th</sup> Century Renaissance” in today's Croatia (fig. 3).<sup>10</sup> The important conclusion is that each of the three mentioned churches is linked to the process of colonisations of the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries when significant groups of colonists from North Western Europe,

usually known as the “Saxons” appeared in the Carpathian basin. Although we are dealing with the architecture of the well-advanced 13<sup>th</sup> century, its roots lie to a considerable extent in the migration milieu of “The 12<sup>th</sup> century Renaissance,” in terms of their plans and décor.<sup>11</sup>

The earlier part of the 13<sup>th</sup> century is marked by two important figures of vision and power which made medieval Slavonia an important area within the Lands of the Crown of St. Stephen. Their main political dreams, sadly enough, did not come true, but despite that they had a significant role in Croatian history as it is well recorded in medieval sources. They are Duke Koloman (1226–1241) and Stjepan II, bishop of Zagreb (1225–1247). Both of them appear on the medieval Slavonian scene around the middle of the first half of 13<sup>th</sup> century, where they left their mark also on art and culture.<sup>12</sup>

Before we more properly introduce those two remarkable men, we must also recall two other important figures in the Kingdom of St. Stephen's, who could be seen as their forerunners and, in terms of art, true apostles of the Early Gothic art in Hungary.<sup>13</sup> They are King Bela III (1172–1196) and his contem-

9 Goss 2007A, pp. 101 – 104.

10 Some of articles about these topics are: Goss, Jukić 2008, pp. 133 – 140; Goss 2005, pp. 91 – 112; Goss 2008A, pp. 417 – 426 Goss 2008B, pp. 242 – 246; Goss 2003, pp. 5–12; Goss 2004, pp. 5–14.

11 More on the renaissance of 12th century can be find in Hollister 1969; Goss 2008A, Goss, Jukić 2008; Goss 2010; Marosi 1984.

12 Goss 2007C, pp. 51 – 63.

13 Goss 2007B, p 146; Goss 2007C, pp. 212 – 213; Marosi 1984, pp. 78 – 89.

porary, Archbishop Hiob of Esztergom, who, in the royal domain had created a model of high quality art for the entire region of the Carpathian basins, what could also be seen as a reflection of “The 12<sup>th</sup> Century Renaissance.” The creation of that royal idiom in the heart of the kingdom, and its dissemination, brings us back to Bishop Stjepan II and Duke Koloman.<sup>14</sup>

Duke Koloman was the younger son of King Andrew II and brother of the future king Bela IV. He was born in 1208 and was appointed Duke in 1226 replacing his older brother Bela, who had been made King Andrew’s co-ruler.<sup>15</sup> Koloman was also nominally the king of Galicia (Halič) since 1217, due to Andrew’s (mostly ineffective) attempts to expand his lands to the northeast.<sup>16</sup>

Bishop Stjepan II was possibly a member of the great Croatian noble family of the Babonić.<sup>17</sup> Before the appointment to the bishop’s seat he was the chancellor of King Andrew II. Having acquired that experience, he made considerable improvements in the chapter of the Zagreb Cathedral and its chancery as a *locus credibilis*, i.e., the official place that issued verifications or original documents.<sup>18</sup>

Many words have been written about the collaboration between Bishop Stjepan and Duke Koloman in the last few years,<sup>19</sup> but we propose to look at their interrelation in the light of the new projects in medieval Slavonia by concentrating on several monuments that could be linked with both main figures, or at least one of them.

There are two interesting and rather recent articles on the relations between the Archbishopric of Split and the Bishopric of Zagreb. One of them, written by Ivan Basić, introduces the political concept that Duke Koloman and Bishop Stjepan jointly cherished, i.e. the idea of transferring the archbishop’s seat from Split to Zagreb so that the bishop of Zagreb would have become a primate, autonomous from any church centre in Hungary. Basić has discussed the matter in his paper on Thomas Archidiaconus of Split (1200 – 1268)

and his work the *Historia Salonitana*.<sup>20</sup>

Another paper on the same subject was written by Vladimir P. Goss, who has examined the same problem from a view of some important 13<sup>th</sup> century monuments in today’s Northern Croatia. The latter paper is the basis of our suggestion that the activities of Koloman and Stjepan constituted a mini-renaissance in the 13<sup>th</sup> century Slavonia.<sup>21</sup>

The beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century in medieval Slavonia was also marked by the activities of the Cistercians and the Templars. Invited by king Andrew II (1205–1235), the former are to be credited with an important architectural project at Topusko<sup>22</sup> (under construction about 1220) while the Templars built their fine church in Gora about 1200, where a Romanesque building preceded an Early Gothic one, as revealed by investigations after the devastations of the Homeland War at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century (fig. 4 and 5).<sup>23</sup> These building projects could be described as attempts by the Crown to highlight its rule in this part of country by using the most modern, early French Gothic art as its signature.<sup>24</sup>

The two key projects linked to Stjepan and Koloman are the castle of Medvedgrad (fig. 6) and the new town of Čazma. Medvedgrad has been subject to controversies concerning its exact date. The recent article by Vladimir P. Goss and Vjekoslav Jukić made some important steps by focusing on similarities between Duke Koloman’s projects in the Spiš region of Slovakia (a staging point for the Duke’s campaigns into Galicia/Halič).<sup>25</sup> At Spišsky Hrad the arch-presbyters of Spišska Kapitula were given the permission to construct a refuge within the walls of the Hrad (fig. 7).<sup>26</sup> The authors also noticed that Spišsky Hrad in Slovakia and Medvedgrad in Croatia share many points in terms of organization, history of alterations and decorative sculpture, which led them by analogies to conclude that Medvedgrad was a royal castle originating before the Tartar invasion, the only post-Tartar structure being the southern keep, built by the Bishops of Zagreb as a refuge.<sup>27</sup> It is manifest from the above as

14 Marosi 1984, pp. 78 – 89.

15 Marosi 1984, pp. 78 – 89; Klaić 1984, p. 47.

16 Prochazkova 2003, pp. 243 – 250.; Goss, 2007C, pp. 51 – 63.

17 This thesis brought Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski in 19<sup>th</sup> century, but there is no argument to confirm it. Budak 2004, pp. 153 – 158.

18 Budak 2004, pp. 153 – 158.

19 Some of latest texts about the topic are: Budak 2004, pp. 153 – 158; Basić 2006, pp. 25 – 43; Goss, Jukić 2007, pp. 295 – 307; Goss 2007C, pp. 51 – 63; Goss 2007B, pp. 146 – 154.

20 Basić 2006, pp. 25 – 43.

21 Goss 2007B, pp. 146 – 154.

22 Smičiklas 1906, pp. 54–5.

23 Miletić 1997, 127 – 152.; Goss 2007C, pp. 51 – 63

24 Goss 2010, pp. 191 – 192; With this thesis agrees also I. Takács whose book about Andrew II is in press.

25 For Spišsky Hrad in Slovakia please see: Prochazkova Spišsky 1998, pp. 64 – 75.; Prochazkova 2003, pp. 243 – 250.

26 Ibid.

27 Klaić 1984, pp. 36 – 51; Bedenko 1991, pp. 17; Goss, Jukić 2007, pp. 295 – 307 (especially p. 302, footnote 32).



Fig 4 Topusko, sculpture (photo by Vjekoslav Jukić)



Fig 5 Gora, sculpture (photo by Vjekoslav Jukić)



Fig 6 Medvedgrad, view of the chapel (photo by Filip Beusan)



Fig 7 Spišsky hrad (photo by Vjekoslav Jukić)

well as from a reading of the papal document concerning Medvedgrad from 1252,<sup>28</sup> that Medvedgrad and its chapel and palace would be one of the most important projects in medieval Slavonia before the Tartar invasion, and also an example of the Slavonian mini-ren-

aissance. Their quality is absolutely on the level of the art of the royal domain of Esztergom, and the artist of the column eating lions in the chapel knew very well the “Renaissance” trends, such as pursued in the circle of Villard de Honnecourt (fig. 8).<sup>29</sup>

Vladimir Bedenko in his article noticed differences between structures of Medvedgrad (the huge southern keep is different in style from sophisticated architecture of the palas and chapel). Besides, the southern keep is positioned on the wrong side within the scope of military technology of the 13th century. The position of the southern keep (and the existence of another keep on the northern side of the castle, which was never thoroughly explored) shows its purpose as a refuge. V. P. Goss and V. Jukić used the similarities with Spišsky Hrad to demonstrate that thesis and show that some part of Medvedgrad (palas and chapel) existed before 1242, while only the southern keep was built after 1252 as the refuge for the Bishop of Zagreb.

28 Smičiklas 1906, p 481. Although some historians as N. Klaić use this document as proof of the late foundation of the Medvedgrad castle, the text just claims that some part of Medvedgrad was built after the Tatars.

Čazma, established by Stjepan and Koloman (around 1230), is a unique example in Slavonia of a new town, a “bastide”, in itself a running feature of the “Twelfth Century Renaissance.”<sup>30</sup> Before 1232 (when bishop Stjepan II gave privileges to the Chapter of Čazma<sup>31</sup>) there must have already existed several key buildings making Čazma a significant medieval urban design project. In his paper “The Battle of the Cathedrals,” Vladimir Goss has pointed out the existence of several churches (The Holy Spirit of the Chapter, the church of St. Mary Magdalene with the Dominican

29 Goss, Jukić 2007, pp. 295; Goss 2010, pp. 189 – 193; Goss 2007A; pp. 16 – 48; Marosi 1984, p 125.

30 Čazma started to convert into a new capital of medieval Slavonia (Koloman was also buried in Čazma).

31 Smičiklas 1906, pp. 369–374.



Fig 8 Column eating Lion (photo by Filip Beusan)



Fig 9 Čazma, church of St. Mary Magdalene (photo by Vjekoslav Jukić)

monastery and four more churches were mentioned in medieval sources in or near Čazma<sup>32</sup>), the Bishop's Palace, the palace of the Canons, the palace of the Duke, a fortress and probably at least some kind of fortification. Although the original plan remains unknown (i.e. unexplored), the town is formed along a main road and recalls the regularity of the west European "new towns" of the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. In some of his latest works, Goss has assumed that such a major project as Čazma must have been a part of some larger plan of urbanization in medieval Slavonia. It is well-known that Duke Koloman heavily relied on towns and burghers in strengthening his rule.<sup>33</sup> Arguments for such an opinion could be found in historical sources (e.g., his charter of the king's free borough to Virovitica (1234) and Petrinja (1240)).<sup>34</sup>

The church of St. Mary Magdalene in Čazma has been rather fully explored (fig. 9). Its décor is close to the works at the Medvedgrad chapel, and they probably belong to the same workshop.<sup>35</sup> This includes the bud capitals as well as a fragment of a warrior's head, all fine pieces equal to anything done in the royal domain. Finally the grand rose of the church is very close to that of the southern end of the western transept at Bamberg, one of the main centres of early 13<sup>th</sup> ct. European art, the masters from which are known

to have worked within the royal circle (Ják).<sup>36</sup>

Thus the powerful political position and strong patronage meant to reinforce the secular projects, brought about a true mini-revival of art and culture in the western section of the medieval Slavonia, which is comparable to what Charles Haskins defines as the main characteristic of "The Twelfth Century Renaissance" in general – a powerful new growth of forms and ideas.<sup>37</sup>

This "Renaissance" should be seen in the light of several political developments. The royal court tried to tie regions between the Sava and Drava rivers to central Hungarian lands by the expansion of the Pecs bishopric to the South of the Drava already in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>38</sup> and by creating the Zagreb bishopric in 1094. Let us remember that Siscia was a centre of a bishopric since antiquity, and thus the Zagreb bishopric had some kind of Christian roots in the past.<sup>39</sup> About a century after the Bishopric of Zagreb had been established, the entire area was fully organized in both religious and secular way, and the next step in the homogenisation process could be embarked upon.

32 More informations about that is in Goss 2007B, pp. 147 and 153; Goss 2007C, pp. 213 – 214; Goss 2008A, pp. 421 – 423; Štrk 2001, pp. 21 – 50; Stošić 2001, pp. 69 – 71.

33 Goss 2010, p 164.; Klaić 1976, p 128.; Karač 1991, p 250; Brúsztle 1999, p 175.

34 Smičiklas 1906, pp. 422–423, VOL III; Smičiklas 1906, p. 123, VOL IV; Klaić 1990, pp. 261–262.

35 Goss 2007A, pp. 22 – 24.

36 Goss, Jukić 2007, pp. 295 – 307.

37 Haskins 1927. Although in this paper one refers to buildings revival as term was used to emphasize the development of whole cultural landscape (including new ideas) in Northern Croatia. Besides Haskins, about 12th century renaissance please see Goss 2008A, Hollister 1969; Goss, Jukić 2008; Marosi 1984.

38 Andrić 2000, pp. 50 – 52.

39 There is no evidence of connections between the Siscia Bishopric in the late antique and the new Zagreb Bishopric in the medieval period, but some form of christianity had to exist in Slavonia much before it spread throughout the entire kingdom of St. Stephen.



Fig 10 Đakovo, capital (photo by Filip Beusan)

In the early 13<sup>th</sup> century three new bishoprics were founded by Bela IV and his brother Koloman at the south eastern rim of the kingdom, in the regions that had had problems with heresy. Their major task was to convert the heretics and to organise a limes keeping Christian lands safe from heresy.<sup>40</sup> The three bishoprics were Sirmian, Kumanian and Bosnian. Between 1237 and 1239 Koloman led a mini-crusade against the Bosnian heretics to strengthen the bishopric<sup>41</sup>. He also gave the Bosnian bishop some properties in eastern Slavonia to become the nucleus of a new bishopric of Đakovo in the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, after the Bosnian heretics had expelled the bishop from Central Bosnia, where he had started to build a cathedral (fig. 10).<sup>42</sup>

The third major process was the attempt to move the archbishopric from Split to Zagreb, as verified by several letters between the Holy See and Duke Koloman and Bishop Stjepan II, approving such a move.<sup>43</sup> One of them is referred to in the above mentioned paper by Basić centering on the idea of the unification of the Split and Zagreb churches within a single archbishopric. Basić's major source has been Thomas Archidiaconus of Split who was a witness to those events. Ever since Dalmatia became a part of the Hungarian kingdom, the kings had been trying to gain influence in the political life of the Dalmatian communes, in the first place of Split because of its leading ecclesiastical role in the region, as the Archbishop of Split was also the

primate of Dalmatia and Croatia. On several occasions they succeeded to place their candidates upon the seat, but either they did not last long or, if they had, were not powerful enough. The material state and the income of the Split church decreased in the process. Meanwhile, Duke Koloman and Bishop Stjepan created their plan to unite the churches of Zagreb and Split, thus making the bishop of Zagreb the primate of Dalmatia, Croatia, and Slavonia. In that way the coastal parts would be more closely drawn to and integrated into the Hungarian kingdom; Zagreb was certainly easier to control than the far away Split. Koloman and Stjepan went a step further in their plans by Koloman's intention to abdicate from the honour of the Duke and concede it to Bishop Stjepan, who would become both, a spiritual and secular leader of Croatian and Slavonian lands. As the King of Galicia, Koloman's idea was probably to move further north into that country and to restore the power he nominally had there. His first try (before 1221) was unsuccessful because of his youth and inexperience, but also due to poor organization and the weakness of Hungarian policy. As Koloman had matured as administrator and organizer in the southern parts of the Kingdom of St. Stephen's, he finally had strength enough to try to defeat his enemies who had displaced him from Galicia (Halič) at the end of the second decade of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

In the meantime, Stjepan II succeeded in persuading Archbishop Guncel to abdicate from the See of Split,<sup>44</sup> removing the last barrier between Stjepan and the archbishopric. The Holy See supported the idea of uniting Split and Zagreb, as Pope Gregory IX was in

40 Tóth 2007, pp. 207–224.

41 Štrk 2110, pp. 21 – 50.

42 Tóth 2007, pp. 207–224.

43 Goss 2007B, pp. 146 – 154; and Basić 2006, pp. 25 – 43.

44 Smičklas 1906, pp. 114 – 115, Vol IV.

a mortal combat with Emperor Frederic II, and any support from the Hungarian Court would have been more than welcome.

The entire plan started to gain momentum at the turn of fourth decade of the 13<sup>th</sup> century as documented in a letter from Pope Gregory IX to Duke Koloman in 1240, but it eventually collapsed due to the Tartar invasion and the ensuing fear and disorder. Duke Koloman himself died in Čazma from the wounds received in the battle with the Tatars at the Sajó river in 1241. Political circumstances in Western Europe had meanwhile changed. Gregory IX died in August of 1241, followed by a seventeen day papacy of Celestine IV, and a 22 months of *interregnum*, until Innocence IV became pope in 1243. In such conditions a new archbishop of Split could not be confirmed.

Despite the political situation in Europe after the death of Duke Koloman, Bishop Stjepan appears to have lived long enough to accomplish at least some parts of the project vindicating his title of the “great builder of churches” (as Ivan Archdeacon of Gorica called him writing in 1334),<sup>45</sup> but there are serious problems in identifying any of the churches that might have been built during his patronage and planning. He may have been instrumental in starting the repair work on the Cathedral of Zagreb as well as erecting the Chapel of St. Stephen in the Bishops’ Palace after a serious damage the Tartars had inflicted upon the old Romanesque Cathedral. The evidence is, however, confusing as some of the forms of the Chapel seem to indicate to a later date.<sup>46</sup> He was also mentioned as the founder of a church in Ivanić, but unfortunately we cannot tell much about it with any certainty.

Yet, there are projects one could associate with Bishop Stjepan. These are the churches of St. John in Sv. Ivan Zelina, St. Peter in Novo Mesto Zelin-sko, St. Mark in Vinica and, possibly, St. Martin in Varaždinske Toplice.<sup>47</sup>

In Sv. Ivan Zelina there is a 19<sup>th</sup> century well oriented church with a single nave, a semicircular apse and a tower above the main entrance. Small well-dressed stones inside the tower indicate to medieval roots. The church was never seriously investigated, but these facts, as well as a typical medieval position

on a top of a hill within an urban setting, could point to a 13<sup>th</sup> century origin. There is also a small animal head preserved today in the Museum in Zelina. That small but well made sculpture was a part of a larger composition. It was recently discovered in the Museum of Sv. Ivan Zelina, and for the first time publicly displayed at the exhibition *A Hundred Stones from a lost Paradise* in 2007,<sup>48</sup> and more elaborately discussed in a yet unpublished article, where the authors propose that the head may have been a part of a lunette of a medieval church (as part of an *Agnus dei*), especially as the church in Sv. Ivan Zelina is dedicated to St. John the Baptist. All this points to a possibility that Sv. Ivan Zelina, a possession of the Zagreb Church, was one of the beneficiaries of Stjepan’s patronage.<sup>49</sup>

The church of St. Mark in Vinica was presented in Motovun<sup>50</sup> as a case of a quality rural medieval church datable to the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>51</sup> In addition to the numerous spoliae built into the walls of a recent church, there are also three fragments preserved inside the building after the old church was thoroughly rebuilt at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These three fragments show exceptional quality and can be related to sculptures from such places as Esztergom and Pilisszentkereszt (1200 – 1220) – products of a top royal workshop.<sup>52</sup>

Another interesting spot in the Zelina area is Novo Mesto Zelin-sko with the church of St. Peter. The church was connected to the Templars who are known to have had their possessions around Zelina. It is a small aisleless church with a square apse and quality frescoes (from the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries).<sup>53</sup> Despite the date of the frescoes, the architectural elements, the shape and position of the church within a hillfort indicate to an earlier date, most likely in the course of the second quarter of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, what

45 Tkalčić 1874, p 5.

46 Goss 2010, pp. 191, 192 and 216. That indications could be a product of the unexplored chatedral complex what is excerpted and explaind in the book by V. P. Goss.

47 Some of the mentioned churches are still not researched, for more data please see in Houška 2009.; Goss, Jukić 2008, pp. 133 – 140; Srša 1998, pp. 67 – 96.

48 Goss 2007A, p 87.

49 Houška 2009, pp. 33 and 51; There is also a paper from the conference about Zelina wrote by V. P. Goss and V. Jukić where more facts about the animal head and the church in Zelina were presented; the conclusion of that paper can be found in the catalogue of the exhibition *Templari i njihovo nasljeđe*.

50 Paper was presented at 14th International IRCLAMA Colloquium in Motovun from 7th till 10th June 2007; published as Goss, Jukić 2008.

51 Goss, Jukić 2008, pp. 133 – 140.

52 More of that topic can be found in Mikó, Takács 1994 and Takács 2001.

53 For that topic please see some of the latest papers and works of V. P. Goss such as: Goss, Šepić 2007, pp. 21 – 40; or his paper in Houška 2009, pp. 30 – 39.



makes it possible to associate it with Bishop Stjepan. What, however, provides an additional weight to such a suggestion, are the sculpted decorative fragments inside the church. These fragments, recently cleaned, display a high quality of carving which could be associated with the royal domain artists of the earlier part of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The similarity of the sculpted forms with the fragments from St. Mark in Vinica and the pieces from Pilisszentkereszt brings them all into relation and suggests that the churches in Vinica and Novo Mesto Zelinsko were built in the same period by some significant patron who had connections with the royal workshop.<sup>54</sup> That suggestion points to Bishop Stjepan.

Varaždinske Toplice are known primarily as an important Roman site (*Aquae Iassae*), but a number of capitals in the City Museum show forms which are quite compatible with the works of the royal domain in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, Bina (*Beny*) in particular. Whereas already Marosi warned that the type is eminently late Antique, further research is definitely indicated. The parish church at Varaždinske Toplice, a spacious Gothic building rebuilt in the Baroque, is dedicated to st. Martin, a Carolingian Saint, and an existence of an early, definitely pre-Tartar church of considerable size should not be ruled out; in particular as Varaždinske Toplice, in addition to its important Prehistoric and Roman remains, display a finely preserved structure of a sizable medieval settlement on an almost impregnable hill, and may have continued as a population centre throughout the early middle ages to eventually claim Bishop Stjepan's patronage as an important holding of the Church of Zagreb. Another interesting spot is the chapel of the Holy Spirit on a perfect medieval position on a steep spur of land

at the eastern end of the city. All this should be taken as a preliminary suggestion, but, hopefully, also as an incentive to thoroughly explore and protect a potentially very promising and reasonably well-preserved medieval settlement in present-day Northern Croatia.

It is still believed that medieval Slavonia is a cultural and artistic “*tabula rasa*.” This is completely wrong. It might be better say that the material, as well as our knowledge thereof, are highly fragmentary. The careful reading of the fragments of walls, of carvings and of patches of colour reveals that Slavonia was a part of a lively and creative artistic milieu of the Carpathian Basin, and by the way of it, of Central Europe and beyond. As elsewhere in medieval Croatia, when a powerful patronage and sufficient funds were available, projects were carried out by the best artists at hand, such as the sculptors of the Medvedgrad Chapel and St. Mary Magdalene in Čazma. The countryside did not lag behind, as Vinica and Novo Mesto Zelinsko amply testify. As elsewhere in the realm of the Crown of St. Stephen, the period of the early 13<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the full blossoming out of the late Romanesque/Early Gothic art. In that context, the same period under the royal and episcopal patronage in the western part of medieval Slavonia experienced a true local “mini-Renaissance,” a brilliant episode of cultural growth and refinement, a project that was unfortunately cut short by the fatal 1242.<sup>55</sup>

We hope that this brief note may inspire further field investigations as well as studies of more theoretical nature into the medieval art of continental Croatia.

54 Goss 2007A; Houška 2009, pp. 35, 47–51

55 Goss 2010, p 221, and Barral i Altet 2009, pp. XVII – XXIII.

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## “Kolomanova renesansa u sjeverozapadnoj Hrvatskoj – nezavršeni projekt”

*Ključne riječi: Hrvatska, Stjepan II., herceg Koloman, romanička umjetnosti i arhitektura*

Na prvi se pogled čini da u 12. stoljeću u kontinentalnoj Hrvatskoj nije bilo značajnijih umjetničkih ostvarenja. Nekoliko zanimljivih primjera iz istočne Slavonije, međutim (poput pilastra s prikazom Agnus Dei iz Iloka ili dvije baze iz Nuštra), svjedoče o postojanju velikih graditeljskih projekata. To potvrđuju i ostaci benediktinske opatije u Rudini u središnjoj Slavoniji. U zapadnom dijelu kontinentalne Hrvatske nema gotovo ništa iz 12. stoljeća, unatoč činjenici da je u to vrijeme građena romanička katedrala u Zagrebu.

Prva polovica 13. stoljeća iznenađuje intenzitetom graditeljskih i političkih aktivnosti u tim krajevima, ponajprije povezanim s dvojicom značajnih ljudi tog vremena, hercegom Kolomanom i zagrebačkim biskupom Stjepanom II. Ta lokalna mini renesansa bila je odjek težnji koje su započeli kralj Bela III. i ostrogonski nadbiskup Hiob svojim projektima u Esztergomu (Ostrogonu) i čitavoj zemlji. Započela je dolaskom templara i cistercita i gradnjom njihovih samostana u Gori (oko 1200.) i Topuskom (prva četvrtina 13. st.), gdje se mogu prepoznati tadašnji međunarodni utjecaji koji su dolazili iz kraljevskih radionica. Glavna ostvarenja dvojca Koloman–Stjepan su novoosnovani grad Čazma s nekoliko crkava (danas je jedino djelomično očuvana Sv. Marija Magdalena) i kapela na Medvedgradu gdje su vidljivi elementi koje možemo povezati s tadašnjim trendovima u središnjoj Europi, a koji su strujali iz Francuske kao pomalo zakašnjeli odjek »renesanse 12. stoljeća«. Takav trend zacijelo je obilježio i druge spomenike koje bismo

moгли povezati s biskupom Stjepanom, tim »velikim graditeljem crkava«, kako ga naziva gorički arhiđakon Ivan. Osim samostanske crkve u Ivaniću koju spominju izvori, čije tragove još uvijek nismo otkrili, mogli bismo spomenuti crkve sv. Ivana Krstitelja u Sv. Ivanu Zelini, sv. Marka u Vinici, sv. Petra u Novom Mjestu Zelinskom i sv. Martina u Varaždinskim Toplicama; skulpturalni elementi nađeni u tim crkvama pokazuju srodnost i bliskost izraza koji se javlja u vrijeme «kolomanske renesanse» u našim krajevima.

Graditeljsko–umjetnička djelatnost hercega Kolomana i biskupa Stjepana II. imala je i političku pozadinu – naime pokušaj da se formira nova metropolija u južnom dijelu zemalja Krune sv. Stjepana, i to tako da se sjedište nadbiskupije iz Splita prenese u Zagreb ili možda u Čazmu. Ta je zamisao bila popraćena i osnutkom novih biskupija na južnoj granici koje su trebale zaustaviti širenje hereze u Bosni i osigurati ingerencije ugarskoga kralja u tom području. Tako konsolidiranu i stabiliziranu zemlju herceg Koloman je namjeravao u potpunosti prepustiti zagrebačkom (nad)biskupu Stjepanu II. kako bi on sam mogao urediti prilike u Galiciji, pokrajini čiji je naslovni kralj bio još od 1217. godine. Tek što se zamisao počela ostvarivati u prepisci s papom Grgurom IX. i pregovorima sa splitskim nadbiskupom Guncelom, Tatari su svojom provalom i pustošenjem zaustavili projekt, a smrt hercega Kolomana, nadbiskupa Guncela i pape Inocenta IV. godine 1242. zauvijek ga je prekinula.