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# Firentičeva katedrala i problem “međufaze”

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Samostalni istraživač

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73 Niccolo di Giovanni Fiorentino

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Sintagmu “Firentinčeva katedrala” objavio sam prvi put u monografiji *Šibenska katedrala* 1998. godine kao naslov poglavlja.<sup>1</sup> Podijelivši razvoj katedrale u tri velike etape: kasnogotičku (nova katedrala biskupa Pulšića), gotičko-renesansnu (Jurjeva katedrala), dao sam trećem dijelu već u naslovu najvišu kvalitativnu ocjenu “Nikolina kruna djela”.<sup>2</sup> Budući da se o Nikolinu udjelu dosad najviše pisalo samo s arhitektonskog stajališta, najprije sam u nekim priložima interpretirao njegove krovne skulpture. Nakon toga sam mogao dati interpretaciju i (re)valorizaciju Nikolina djela iz tri aspekta: arhitektonskog, skulpturalnog i urbanističkog.<sup>3</sup> “Kameni svodovi—krovovi što ih je Firentinac jednostavno i

*Autor uspoređuje razlike faza: Jurjevu, Nikolinu i “trećeg majstora” i samtra da su najčitljivije kao njihova signatura na tri vijenca istočne fasade katedrale. Usporedbom jednostavne linearne profilacije vijenca kojim Juraj obrubljuje poligonálnu glavnu apsidu s iluzionističkim nišama, zatim bogatu višeslojnu ranorenesansnu profilaciju veoma istaknutog u prostor Nikolina vijenca (astragal, girlanda povezana trakom, zupci, užljebine, ovulus) kojim je dovršio sakristiju i produžio ga iznad konhe sjeverne apside odnosno ispod zabata sjevernog svetišta — a kojim će dosljedno opasati cijelu katedralu — s profilom vijenca iznad renesansno-gotičkih prozora glavne apside s malim konzolicama. Jasno se razlikuje Jurjeva gotičko-renesansna faza od Nikoline ranorenesane i ova “međufaza”, koju bismo mogli nazavati renesansno-gotičkom, koja je na svoj način pastiš gotičko renesansnih komponenata, što je protivno strukturalnoj jasnoći i tektonici jednoga i drugoga velikog protomagistra katedrale.*

skladno presavio nad otmjenom unutrašnjosti Šibenske katedrale i grupa slobodnih skulptura svetaca što lebdi nad njima oko kupole u doslovnom su i prenesenom smislu riječi kruna građevine. Zaobljeno krovšte, kupola i krovne skulpture katedrale izdižu se nad kuće i zidine, dominiraju kompozicijom grada i dozivaju izdaleka putnika što se morem

<sup>1</sup> R. Ivančević, *Šibenska katedrala*, izd. J. Šizgorić, Šibenik 1998., str. 43.

<sup>2</sup> N. dj., str. 42

<sup>3</sup> N. dj., str. 45.

približava Šibeniku ili ga ispraćaju na odlasku upisujući se kao prvi i posljednji dojam i doživljaj u usmenama o gradu."<sup>4</sup>

Inzistiranje na interpretaciji i revalorizaciji Nikoline krovne skulpture bilo je, u okviru mojih istraživanja, potaknuto s dva razloga. Prvo, trebalo je dokazati moju već veoma staru tvrdnju da je integracija skulpture i arhitekture i neodvojivost ikografskog programa od prostornih uvjeta jedna od značajki "srednjodalmatinske ranorenesansne arhitektonske škole" koju je utemeljio Juraj, a da je Firentinac u cijelosti preuzeo sva ta načela i genijalno ih nastavio. Tako ni izbor ni raspored kipova nije ni slučajna, ni proizvoljna, nego izrasta organski i iz unutrašnjeg prostora: kip sv. Jakova nad svetištem točno je nad oltarom sveca u glavnoj apsidi, kao što kipovi sv. Marka i sv. Mihajla vrh zabata južnog i sjevernog transepta korespondiraju s titularima oltara u apsidama bočnih brodova.<sup>5</sup> Drugo, trebalo je pobiti besmisleni i površnu tezu, ali opasnu jer je promovirana od talijanskih istraživača, a bez provjere općenito prihvaćena u europskoj i svjetskoj znanosti, naime, da je Nikola, tobože, bio dobar kipar, sa solidnom talijanskom naobrazbom što ju je stekao u Toskani ili Veneciji (A. M. Schulz), a da je dolaskom u Dalmaciju, bez poticaja u "provincijskoj" sredini — "bez odgovarajuće konkurencije i u relativno nerazvijenoj, nezahtjevnoj i nezainteresiranoj sredini" — postupno zahirio.<sup>6</sup> Interpretacijom sam nedvojbeno dokazao da je Firentinac posljednji kip, arkandela Mihajla na sjevernom transeptu, ne samo jednako dobar kao i oni najraniji (npr. sv. Pavao ili Ivan Evanđelist u trogirskoj kapeli), da je čak bolji i od mladenačkih, koji su mu (još nedokazano) pripisani u Veneciji.<sup>7</sup> Ujedno sam po ne znam koji put morao upozoriti europsku znanstvenu javnost na bitnu distinkciju što ju je genijalni Ljubo Karaman još 1964. godine proveo između "periferijske" sredine, s pozitivnim konotacijama i često velikim kreativnim doprinosom i sintezama, u koju ubraja Dalmaciju i "provincijske" imitatorske i epigonske, isključivo receptivne sredine.<sup>8</sup>

Ne bih o tome pisao, ali smatram da nitko do tada nije dao tako cjelovitu i integralnu prosudbu o Nikolinu udjelu u gradnji, a ako sam nešto previdio, bit ću zahvalan svakome tko me upozori. Bilo bi smiješno da inzistiram da mi se prizna autorstvo sintagme "Firentinčeva katedrala", ali prisiljen sam podsjetiti na to stoga što se u posljednje vrijeme ne samo prešućuje taj moj "primat" nego mi se čak spočitava da sam zapostavio Nikolu, forsirajući isključivo Jurja.<sup>9</sup> Da paradoks bude veći, čak me se podučava "da je u najmanju ruku podjednako i 'Nikolina katedrala'".<sup>10</sup> Ovo moje stajalište o odlučnom doprinosu Nikole Firentinca jedinstvenoj cjelini Šibenske katedrale znatno je starije. Ne samo da nisam glorificirao samo Jurja, nego sam čak zbog isticanja Nikolina

udjela dolazio i u sukob s gradskom upravom i građanima Šibenika.<sup>11</sup> Najenergičnije sam protestirao zbog postavljanja brončanoga kipa Jurju Dalmatincu pred glavno pročelje kamene katedrale iz dva razloga: prvo, jer je primitivno, provincijalno i nedostojno umjetnika da se sam "divi svojem djelu", a drugo zato što upravo iz te vizure nema gotovo uopće vidljivoga udjela Jurjeva, jer je donji dio još kasnogotički, a gornji Firentinčev. A da se Juraj "divi" njihovu djelu, kraj svog veličanstvenog apsidalnog dijela, to je zbilja glupo.

#### Što je novo?

Prije svega treba reći da je otkriće dokumenta o boravku Nikole Firentinca u Šibeniku 1464., dakle cijelo desetljeće prije no što će definitivno preuzeti gradnju katedrale, ne samo izuzetno značajan doprinos nego i prekretnica u istraživanju katedrale. Ono postavlja brojna nova pitanja i daje novu vizuru na proces smjene rada ove dvojice protomajstora: od vjerojatnosti da je Firentinac već tada počeo surađivati u gradnji, do mogućnosti da je ranije i znatnije djelovao na njezinu potpunu transformaciju iz gotičko-renesansnog stila u ranorenesansni. Da ne govorimo koliko je značajna prevratnička hipoteza, koju Hilje iznosi u istom prilogu, da Nikola zapravo potječe iz Dalmacije i da mu je pridjev

<sup>4</sup> N. dj., str. 45.

<sup>5</sup> R. Ivančević, *Udio renesansne skulpture na šibenskoj katedrali*, Zbornik radova znanstvenog skupa u povodu 700-godišnjice biskupije, Šibenik 2000.

<sup>6</sup> A. M. Schulz, *Nicolo di Giovanni Fiorentino and Venetian Sculpture of the Early Renaissance*, New York 1978. No to uporno ponavljati i u svim kasnijim prilogima, npr. A. M. Schulz, *Nicolo di Giovanni Fiorentino in Venice: the documentary evidence*, "The Burlington Magazine", vol. 1161, 12, 1999., str. 749–752.

<sup>7</sup> O tome posebno u posljednjem polemičkom prilogu; R. Ivančević, *Nikola Firentinac u Veneciji i Dalmaciji*, u: *Zbornik Tomislava Marasovića*, str. 443–454, u kojem sam upravo zbog tih razloga inzistirao da bude dvojezičan, odnosno integralno preveden na talijanski, da bude cjelovit i sa svom argumentacijom dostupan i međunarodnoj publici.

<sup>8</sup> Lj. Karaman, *Problemi periferijske umjetnosti*, Zagreb 1964., str. 75–91, posebno str. 91. Drugo izdanje, Zagreb 2001. Absurd je u tome što je u prvome izdanju bio dodan integralni prijevod na njemalki, ali to nitko nije koristio jer nije bilo označeno u sadržaju. Upravo tražimo izdavača za to njemačko izdanje, koje je sasvim pripremljeno, iako bi najbolje bilo prevesti ga i na engleski.

<sup>9</sup> Hilje, *Nikola Firentinac u Šibeniku 1464. godine*.

<sup>10</sup> N. dj., bilj. 68. Ne, kolega Hilje, ne bi tek "trebalo" govoriti o "Nikolinoj katedrali", jer je to već davno učinjeno. Problem je samo nekih mladih kolega što ili ne čitaju stariju literaturu ili je čitaju tako površno da je to zanemarivo.

<sup>11</sup> Ovu diskusiju nisam namjerno pretvarao u javnu polemiku da omogućim što bezbolniji uzmak i bez skandala primještanje kipa na neko drugo mjesto, u park pred gradom, na primjer. To dobro zna kolega J. Čuzela, jer smo o tome mnogo razgovarali u doba obnove kupole. Međutim, o samom problemu apsurdnog postavljanja skulptura pred arhitektonske spomenike, što je u nas često, pisao sam iscrpno u prilogu: R. Ivančević,

Firentinac samo epitetom po mjestu gdje se školovao, radio i razvijao, naime u toskanskom odnosno firentinskom kulturnom ambijentu. Autor ponovno ukazuje na davno spominjanu, ali uglavnom odbijanu mogućnost da "u Nikoli Firentincu prepoznamo onog Hrvata, Brunelleschijevog učenika, koji je — kako bilježi Giorgio Vasari — načinio puno stvari u Veneciji", a što potkrepljuje i navodom Antonia Averlina Filaretea u *Traktatu o arhitekturi* (1451.) "uno di Schiavonia il quale era bonissimo scultore".<sup>12</sup>

Ovo bi, između ostalog, još jače potkrijepilo moju tezu o "srednjodalmatinskoj arhitektonskoj školi", jer bi pojasnilo kako se s lakoćom ovaj (navodni) Firentinac oslobodio postavke toskanskog i uopće talijanskog quattrocenta (u prvom redu miješanja materijala i polikromije) i nastavio na Jurjevu invenciju s oslonom na antičku konstrukciju i jedinstvo kamene građe. Značilo bi to da se naprosto vratio zavičaju i ambijentu u kojem je odrastao i gdje je stekao prvu kamenarsku naobrazbu.

Treba, međutim, svakako nedvojbeno konstatirati da nema tog senzacionalnog otkrića koje bi moglo negirati neke temeljne postavke o ulozi Jurja Dalmatinca. Naime, da je upravo on, svojim projektom iz 1441., uveo u dalmatinsku sredinu montažnu metodu kamene gradnje, načelo jedinstva kamene građe i neodvojivost skulpture od arhitekture,

odnosno prožetost arhitektonske konstrukcije i ikonografskog programa.

Ostaje također nepobitno da je to proveo i dokazao najprije u krstionici, u njezinu zidnom plaštu s kulminacijom u svodu od 9 kamenih blokova klesanih po mjeri iz monolita, zatim u konstrukciji poligonalnih apsida od pilastara s umetnutim kamenim pločama dotad nezamislivo velikih komponenata i, napokon, identičnim dijelovima izvana i iznutra. Ali treba, također, reći da su sva navedena neosporno Jurjeva rješenja izvedena uvijek metodom spajanja elemenata po načelu "utora i pera", odnosno zasijecanja stepenastih usjeka unutar susjednih dijelova, no važno je konstatirati da su tako oblikovane površine uvijek ravne: od nacрта svoda krstionice u podu svetišta južne lađe, u kojem se jasno "čita" kompozicija svoda od blokova, do vanjštine konha sjevera i južne apsida.<sup>13</sup> Ključno je pitanje bilo da li se njemu može pripisati također i invencija i metoda "preklopne građe", kako su riješeni krovovi-svodovi transepta i sva tri broda, te kupole?

Kao znanstvenik moram priznati da ovaj novi podatak dovodi u sumnju, ukoliko i ne pobija, moju argumentaciju da je i to bilo Jurjevo djelo, i to prvi put ostvareno na svodu sjevernog svetišta. Naime, budući da je taj dio pouzdano datiran grbom u 60-e godine, dakle još za Jurjeva života, a prije Nikolina preuzimanja gradnje,<sup>14</sup> bio mi je to glavni argument za tezu da je i to rješenje uveo Juraj, a da ga je Nikola samo dosljedno proveo na cijelu ostalu gornju konstrukciju katedrale.<sup>15</sup> No, ako se Firentinac već ranije nalazio u Šibeniku i možda surađivao u gradnji još za Jurjeva života, odnosno dok je on bio protomajstor, onda bi se i to rješenje svoda-krova moglo pripisati Firentincu, tim prije što je u obradi luka zabata ovdje primijenjena već savršeno jasno ranorenesansno, toskansko oblikovanje s motivima u okviru samog luka, odnosno zabata s tipično ranorenesansnim motivom kratkih uzljebina, kao što je to učinjeno dosljedno i na svim ostalim krovovima i zabatima katedrale (transept glavnog i pobočnih brodova) zaključeno još sa slobodno stojećim, tro-dimenzionalnim skulpturama na vrhu, na zabatu južnoga kra-ka transepta i na stopama luka (s grupom *Navještenja*).

Stoga smatram da otriće dokumenata o boravku i radu Nikole Firentinca u Šibeniku 1464. godine (kapela sv. Stjepana i Bernardina u crkvi sv. Franje), dakle još prije njegova pouzdana boravka u Trogiru krajem 1467., a za života Jurjeva time i mogućnost da je već 60-ih godina sudjelovao u gradnji katedrale, te predstavlja izuzetno važan obrat u dosadašnjem istraživanju katedrale. Jer, ako je surađivao i upleo se u gradnju, onda bi se i ovo rješenje iz 1468. moglo pripisati njemu, budući da bi upravo na tom dijelu i započeo svoju suradnju. Hilje s pravom upozorava na izrazito Nikolin karakter "između transepta i sjeverne bočne apsida... gdje se nalazi ukras izrazito ranorenesansnih oblika, srodan onom na drugim

*Pseudomonumentalizam u opusu Antuna Augustinčića*, "Anali galerije Augustinčić" XV/1995., Klanjec 2001., str. 21–43.; posebno u poglavljima s podnaslovima *Spomenički vampirizam* i *Spomenički piranizam*, detaljno analizirajući i za nas adekvatan i analogan primjer: "pred kamenu renesansnu fasadu osorske katedrale (usp. također trolisnu) postavljena Meštrovićeva brončana gudačica" (u čast Osorskih glazbenih večeri, odnosno koncerata što se održavaju u katedrali). "Tako istinski povijesni spomenici postaju kulisom za moderne skulpture, a sve zajedno spomenici suvremenih nesporazuma s kriterijem vrijednosti, poštivanja tradicije i čuvanja dosegnutih vrijednosti".

<sup>12</sup> N. dj., bilj. 54.

<sup>13</sup> Prilozi problemu interpretacije djela Jurja Matejeva Dalmatinca. *Deset teza o razdoblju 1441-1452* u: *Zbornik radova simpozija u Šibeniku (21–24. 9. 1975.) Juraj Matejev Dalmatinac*, poseban broj "Peristila", str. 31.

<sup>14</sup> O tome je pisao već G. Fosco. G. Fosco, *La cattedrale di Sebenico ed il suo architetto Giorgio Orsini, detto Dalmatico*, Šibenik 1893., koji objavljuje skicu s oznakom grbova na sjevernom pročelju katedrale (str. 17), a opisuje ih na str. 44.: "... nell'alteza del numeoro VII, nell'interno della chiesa, fu collocato nal aperure (dis. 14 VII) delle volte delle due navate minori, lo stemma del vescovo da Tollentis, quando nel 1468 era stato eletto alla sede di Sebenico; ...", a D. Frey upozorava da je na sjevernoj fasadi sjevernog broda, izvana prema trgu, ugrađen grb kneza Stefana Malipiera (1465.–1468.) koji se poklapa s tim datumima. D. Frey, *Der Dom von Sebenico und sein Bumeister Giorgio Orsini*, "Jahrbuch des Kunsthistorisches Instituttes", Bd VII, Beč (ili prijevod D. Rajića u povodu simpozija, str. 36).

<sup>15</sup> Ovaj sam argument kao "odlučujući datum kad je prvi put realiziran oblik polukružnog zabata kao projekcija bačvastog svoda oblikovanog velikim kamenim pločama, a to je ostvareno najkasnije 1468. godine" obradio i argumentirao u: R. Ivančević, *Trolisna pročelja renesansnih crkava u Hrvatskoj*, "Peristil" 35–36, 1992–1993, str. 94 i fotografija br. 6.

Firentinčevim radovima", te mu pripisuje i reljefni prikaz sv. Jeronima u luneti transepta. To bi, dakle, još trebalo podrobnije istražiti i još detaljnije argumentirati, a još bi epohalnije bilo da se i o tome nađe neki odgovarajući dokumenat.

Napominjem da nam još stoji otvoreno pitanje i autorstva "međufaze", tj. rješenje prozora glavne, srednje apsida, koji pokazuju još neke gotičko-renesansne natruhe u svojim mrežistima, ali ne odgovaraju ni Jurjevoj, niti Firentinčevoj morfologiji, ni metodi. Kad riješimo pitanje i tog apsidalnog "čvora", tek će onda naše poimanje građevnih faza i rasta katedrale biti potpuno i bez zastoja.

Razlika faza Jurjeve, Nikoline i "trećeg majstora" najčitljivija je kao njihova signatura na tri vijenca istočne fasade katedrale. Usporedi jednostavnu linearnu profilaciju vijenca kojim Juraj obrubljuje poligonalnu glavnu apsidu s iluzionističkim nišama, zatim bogatu višeslojnu ranorenesansnu profilaciju veoma istaknutog u prostor Nikolina vijenca (astragal, girlanda povezana trakom, zupci, užljebine, ovulus) kojim je dovršio sakristiju i produžio ga iznad konhe sjeverne apsida

odnosno ispod zabata sjevernog svetišta — a kojim će dosljedno opasati cijelu katedralu — s profilom vijenca iznad renesansno-gotičkih prozora glavne apsida s malim konzolicama. Jasno se razlikuje Jurjeva gotičko-renesansna faza od Nikoline ranorenesane i ova "međufaza", koju bismo mogli nazavati renesansno-gotičkom, koja je na svoj način pastiš gotičko renesansnih komponenata, što je protivno strukturalnoj jasnoći i tektonici jednoga i drugoga velikog protomagistra katedrale. Pravokutno uokvireni prozori podijeljeni su razmjerno jakim kaneliranim stupom s kompozitnim kapitelom, ali polustupići sa strane još su gotički poligonalni (5/8) s lisnatim kapitelima. Također, lukovi otvora bifore su polukružni, ali mrežište, iako jasnog geometrijskog nacrtu izvedenog iz kružnice, ima još gotičke zupce.<sup>16</sup> Ovaj pomalo nezgrapni *intermezzo* u rastu katedrale, u doslovnom i prenesenom smislu traži još pojašnjenje. Po svojoj dvojnosti i mješovitosti metodski je najbliži Alešiju, ali ne odgovara ni njegovoj tipologiji. Te se razlike jasno čitaju i na fotografiji koju prilažem.

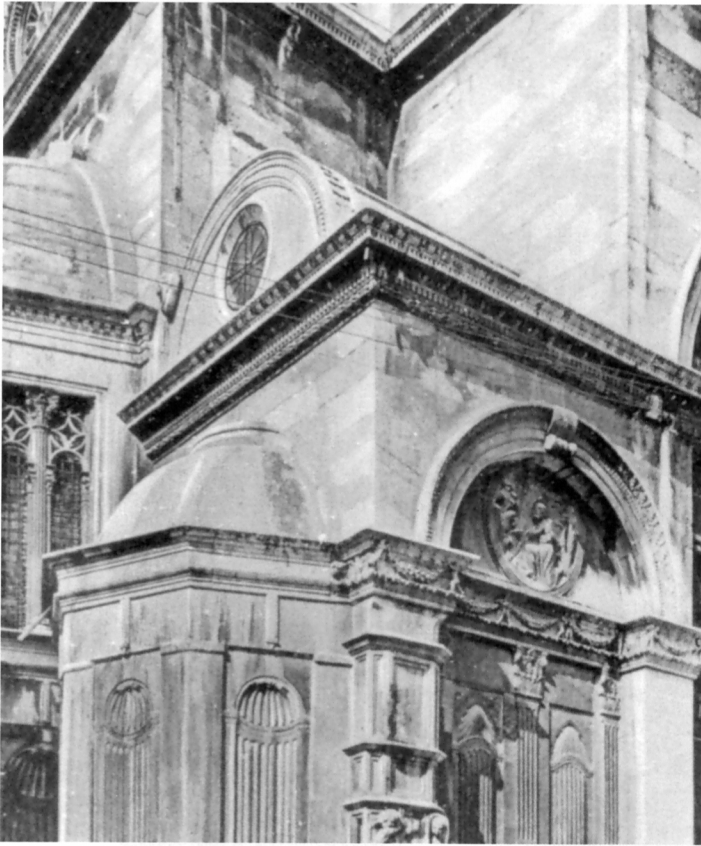
<sup>16</sup> Za razliku od tipičnih ranorenesansnih jednostavnih polukružnih bifora koje podupiru krug. Vidi: Michelozzo, palača Medici Ricardi (1444.), L. B. Alberti, palača Rucelai (1446.) ili B. Rossellino, Palača Piccolomini, Pienza, nešto kasnije itd. (Murray, *architettura del Rinascimento*, Milano 1978., sl. 23, 37, 48, 49). Ili u Sieni, Bologni, Lucchi, Veneciji itd. (vidi: J. Burckhardt, *The Architecture of the Renaissance*, Penquin book, 1987., ur. P. Murray.

Ali sve te bifore su upisane u obli luk, za ove u pravokutniku vidi: Verona, Pavia, Bergamo (*isto*, sl. 230, 282, 314). Po načinu mišljenja najbliži smo negdje u Paviji (Certosa) i Bergamu (S. Maria Maggiore), i ako je majstor došljak, možda bi ga trebalo tražiti negdje u tom krugu. Zanimljivo je, međutim, da što se kompozicije tiče: bifori u pravokutniku sa srednjim pilastrom i bočnim polustupovima najrodniji su prozori na katu San Satira u Milanu, ali to je već Bramante (*isto*, sl. 386). Inače, spomenuti tipični oblik širi se cijelom Europom i traje do 16. st., pa tako i u Francuskoj (vidi: *La France de la Renaissance*, Paris 1998., str. 53, 60 itd.). No, preteču kompozicijskog rješenja vidimo već u imaginarnom deambulatoriju na crtežu-ilustraciji u glasovitoj maštariji *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* iz 1433., tiskanoj 1485. godine (Burckhardt, sl. 13).

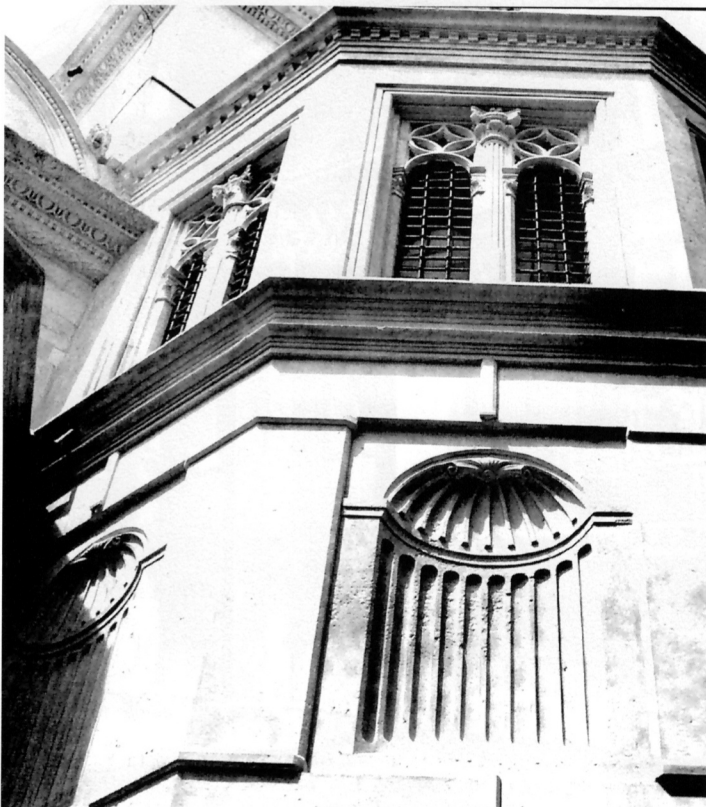
Desno:  
1. Istočni dio katedrale s kupolom







3. Istočni dio katedrale, detalj



2. Srednja apsida

## Radovan Ivančević

### *Nikola Firentinac and his Contribution to Šibenik Cathedral – the Problem of "Intermezzo"*

I used the phrase "Nikola Firentinac's Cathedral" for the first time as a chapter title in my monographs on Šibenik Cathedral in 1998.<sup>1</sup> Having divided the building of the cathedral into three major sections – the Late Gothic cathedral of Bishop Pulšić, the Gothic-Renaissance cathedral of Juraj Dalmatinac, I gave the highest grade to the third section by using the term "Nikola's crown of the oeuvre."<sup>2</sup> As Nikola has been mostly discussed in terms of his architecture, I have, first of all, in some other contributions, dealt with Nikola's roof sculptures. Having done this I was able to comment on Nikola's triple contribution: in terms of architecture, sculpture, and urban design.<sup>3</sup> "The stone vaults/roofs, Nikola wove so simply and harmoniously over the elegant interior of the building, and a group of free standing saints around its dome are both literally and figuratively the crown of the building. The curving roof, the dome, and the roof sculptures soar above the houses and city walls, dominate the silhouette of the city, and attract the attention of an incoming visitor already from afar; or they bid him farewell as he leaves – being his first and last impression of the city."<sup>4</sup> My insistence on reevaluation of Nikola's roof sculptures was motivated by two reasons. First, it was necessary to substantiate my old thesis that integration of sculpture and architecture, and inseparability between iconography and the spatial conditions, are characteristic of "central Dalmatian Renaissance school of architecture founded by Juraj, and continued and developed, with genius, by Nikola. Thus the choice and positioning of the statues is by no means random; it organically grows from the inner space: the statue of St. James is exactly above the same saint's altar inside the main apse, whereas the statues of St. Mark and St. Matthew stand at the top of the transept ends pediments, i.e., corresponding to the altars in the side apses."<sup>5</sup> Second, it was necessary to refute a senseless and superficial thesis, yet dangerous as it was promoted by Italian scholars and uncritically accepted throughout Europe and the world, that Nikola was, allegedly, a good sculptor with a solid Italian – Tuscan and Venetian training (A. M. Schulz), but who, having found himself in a "provincial" setting, and "without true competition, and within a relatively underdeveloped, undemanding, and disinterested milieu", totally decayed.<sup>6</sup> I proved without a shade of a doubt that Nikola's last statue, the Archangel Michael on the northern transept, is not only as good as his youthful works (e.g., St. Paul and St. John Evangelist in the Trogir Chapel), but even better than those early works still dubiously attributed to him in Venice.<sup>7</sup> At the same time I had to warn, for I do not know which time, the international scholarly public of an essential distinction superbly stated already in 1964 by Ljubo Karaman between a "peripheral" milieu (with positive connotations, and often great creative contributions and ability for synthesis), which also includes Dalmatia, and a "provincial" milieu characterized by mere imitation, and uncreative reception.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. Ivančević, *The Šibenik Cathedral*, J. Šizgorić, Šibenik 1998, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>5</sup> R. Ivančević, "Udio renesansne skulpture na šibenskoj katedrali," *Zbornik radova znanstvenog skupa u povodu 700-godišnjice biskupije, Šibenik*, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> A. M. Schulz, *Nicolo di Giovanni Fiorentino and Venetian Sculpture of the Early Renaissance*, New York, 1978; systematically repeated in later studies, e.g., A. M. Schulz, "Nicolo di Giovanni Fiorentino in Venice: the documentary evidence," *The Burlington Magazine*, 1161/12: 1999, 749-752.

<sup>7</sup> I wrote about this specifically in my polemical contribution R. Ivančević, "Nikola Firentinac u Veneciji i Dalmaciji," *Marasovićev zbornik*, pp. 443-454, wherein I insisted on bilingual text (Croatian and Italian), so that it may be accessible to international scholarly audience.

<sup>8</sup> Lj. Karaman, *Problemi periferijske umjetnosti*, Zagreb, 1964, pp. 75-91, especially p. 91, second edition, Zagreb, 2001. It is absurd that the first edition contained a complete German translation, which was mostly overlooked as it was not marked in the table of contents. We are looking for a German publisher for that fully edited and ready to go text, although it would be also very good to translate it into English.

I would not be mentioning this but I believe that nobody before Karaman had offered a more complete and integral judgment of Nikola's participation in the building, and if I am mistaken I will gladly stand corrected. It would be silly to insist on my authorship of the term "Nikola Firentinac's Cathedral" but I am forced to state this as this "primacy" of mine has been recently overlooked, and I have been taken to task for leaving Nikola aside while favoring Juraj.<sup>9</sup> I was even lectured on how "this was also Nikola's cathedral."<sup>10</sup> My standpoint about the crucial contribution of Nikola Firentinac to the unique whole we call the Cathedral of Šibenik is rather old. I have never glorified only Juraj, and, thanks to my insistence on Nikola's contribution to the oeuvre, I even clashed with the city government and the people of Šibenik.<sup>11</sup> I most energetically protested against placing a bronze statue of Juraj Dalmatinac in front of the Cathedral's façade: first, as it is primitive, provincialist, and unseemly for an artist to "admire his own work," second, as from that vista one cannot see anything made by Juraj, as the lower part is Late Gothic, and the upper is by Nikola. And for Juraj to "admire" their work, given his magnificent apsidal section, is indeed stupid.

#### *What is New?*

We must say first of all that the discovery of a document about Nikola's stay in Šibenik in 1464, an entire decade before he took over the building of the Cathedral, is an extremely important contribution, as well as a turning point in the study of the building. It opens many new questions and sheds new light on the process of change from one chief architect to another. There is a possibility that Nikola even earlier and more profoundly influenced the Cathedral's transformation from a Late Gothic to a Renaissance building. Not to mention Hilje's revolutionary proposal that Nikola was indeed born in Dalmatia and that his attribute "Firentinac" just marks the place where he was trained, where he worked and developed, i.e., in the Tuscan, Florentine cultural milieu. The author again quotes the well-known but mostly rejected thesis that "in Nikola we could see that Croat, a pupil of Brunelleschi who, according to Giorgio Vasari, made many things in Venice," supporting this further by quoting Antonio Averlino Filarete who in his *Treatise on Architecture* (1451) mentions "uno di Schiavonia il quale era bonissimo scultore."<sup>12</sup>

This, by the way, would be an additional argument for my thesis on a "Central Dalmatian School of Architecture," as it would explain how that alleged Florentine easily dropped the features of Tuscan, or, in general, Italian Quattrocento (primarily, mixing of materials and polychromy), and continued Juraj's inventions based on the tradition of Antiquity and the unity of stone material. This would mean that he simply came back to his native environment where he had received an early training as a stone cutter. One must, however, also take into account the fact that any discovery as sensational as it might be, would not take away some fundamental theses on the role of Juraj Dalmatinac. Namely, that it was Juraj who, through his project launched in 1441, brought to Dalmatia the principle of assembly method in stone construction, of the unity of stone construction, and of architecture and sculpture, or, of integration of architectural construction and iconography.

It is also unquestionable that it was Juraj who demonstrated this in the baptistery, in its wall structure and, in particular, in the vault consisting of nine blocks of stone cut to suit form monolith pieces; next, in the construction of the polygonal apses containing pilasters and inserted stone slabs of that far

<sup>9</sup> E. Hilje, "Nikola Firentinac u Šibeniku 1464."

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, footnote 68. No, Mr. Hilje, it is not necessary to speak "only now of Nikola's cathedral, as this had been done long ago. The problem is that some younger scholars do not seem to read earlier literature, or if they do, they do it in a superficial way.

<sup>11</sup> I did not intend to turn this discussion into a matter of a public issue in order to make a painless withdrawal of the statue and its relegating to a more suitable place (e. g., the city park) possible. Mr. I. Čuleza knows that very well as we spoke about it several times during the rebuilding of the dome. On the absurd question of placing sculpture in front of architectural monuments I extensively wrote in my study: R. Ivančević, "Pseudomonumentalizam u opusu Antuna Augustinčića," *Anali galerije Augustinčić*, XV/1995, Klanjec, 2001, pp. 21–43, in particular in the chapters entitled "Spomenički vampirizam," and "Spomenički piranizam." Therein I analyzed an analogous example of a Meštrović bronze female fiddler being placed in front of the trefoil façade (like in Šibenik) of Osor Cathedral to celebrate the Osor Musical Evenings, i. e. the concerts held at the Cathedral. "Thus true historical monuments become a coulisse for modern art, and also monuments of contemporary misunderstanding concerning the values of tradition and preservation of existing achievements."

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., footnote 54.



unconceivable size, which, at the same time, represent both the interior and the exterior surfaces. One must, however, stress that all Juraj's achievements always followed the method of frames and inserts, meaning the cutting of step-like incisions within neighboring parts, yet leaving thus created surfaces even. And so from the design for the baptistery vault within the floor of the southern apse, where one can clearly "read" the composition of a vault consisting of blocks, to the exterior of the conchs of the northern and southern apse.<sup>13</sup> The key question has been: could we attribute to Juraj also the invention of "overlapping structure" as applied to the roofs-vaults in the transept and all three aisles, and in the dome?

As a scholar I must admit that the new data seriously question, or even refute my thesis that the latter was also Juraj's work, first applied to the vault of the northern apse. That section is securely dated to the sixties by a coat-of-arms – thus to Juraj's lifetime – and before Nikola took over the building.<sup>14</sup> This was the main argument for my thesis that this was also Juraj's idea, taken over and carried to conclusion by Nikola in the upper sections of the Cathedral.<sup>15</sup> But if Nikola had already been in Šibenik possibly participating in the building during Juraj's lifetime, while Juraj was still the chief architect, then one could attribute the vaulting solution to Nikola, especially as in the form of the pediment arch a perfect early Renaissance, Tuscan, solution was applied in the motifs of the arch frame. Or of the pediment with a typical early Renaissance motif of short flutes, as they appear on the rest of the roof and on the pediments of the Cathedral (the transept of the main and side aisles), complete with freestanding, three-dimensional sculptures at the top, at the peak of the pediment of the southern transept, and at the foot of the arch (the Annunciation).

I believe that the discovery of the document showing that Nikola lived and worked in Šibenik (the chapels of St. Steven and St. Bernardino in the church of St. Francis) even before his documented arrival at Trogir in 1467, which means, during Juraj's lifetime, is of great significance. This opens a possibility of his participation in the Cathedral shop at an early stage and so the solution produced in 1468 may be attributed to him, as it was exactly there that he initiated his cooperation. Hilje is right when he points out that that the area 'between the transept and the northern apse... where we find truly Renaissance décor, close to other Florentine's works,' shows Nikola's character. He attributes to Nikola also a relief of St. Jerome in the transept lunette. This should be further explored and supported with additional arguments, and it would be, of course, most helpful if this could be born out by some document.

I add that the question of the "intermezzo" remains open. By this I mean the solution of the main apse windows revealing some Gothic-Renaissance features in their tracery and showing little of either Juraj's or Nikola's method or morphology. When we solve the problem of that apsidal "knot," our insight into and understanding of the building phases of the Cathedral may become smooth and complete.

Differences between Juraj, Nikola and "The Third Master" are most visible in the three cornices of the eastern façade. One should compare the simple linear profile of the cornice Juraj weaved around the main polygonal apse with illusionist niches, with the rich, multilayered Renaissance profile of Nikola's energetically projecting cornice (egg-and-dart, garlands with ribbons, dents, flutes, ovulus) on the sacristy; which he continued over the northern apse, i.e., below the pediment of the northern section of the sanctuary to be applied, later on, to the entire Cathedral. And finally to the profile of the cornice above the Gothic-Renaissance windows of the main apse carried by small brackets. One can clearly

<sup>13</sup> "Prilozi problemu interpretacije djela Jurja Matejeva Dalmatinca. Deset teza o razdoblju 1441-1452 in *Zbornik radova simpozija u Šibeniku*, September 21-24, 1975; also. "Juraj Dalmatinac," *Peristil*, special issue, p. 32.

<sup>14</sup> G. Fosco already wrote about it; G. Fosco, *La cattedrale di Sebenico e il suo architetto Giorgio Orsini, detto Dalmatico*, Šibenik, 1893. Fosco published a sketch with coats-of-arms on the northern façade (p. 17), and he describes them on the page 14. "...nell'altezza del numero VII, nell'interno della chiesa, fu collocate nel aperure (dis 14 VII) delle volte delle due navate minori, lo stemma del vescovo da Tolleris. Quando nel 1468 era stato eletto alla sede di Sebenico...". D. Frey warned that on the northern façade of the sanctuary, facing the square, there was a coat-of-arms of duke Stefano Malipiero (1465-1468), corresponding to those dates; see D. Frey, "Der Dom von Sebenico und sein Baumeister Giorgio Orsini," in *Jahrbuch des Kunsthistorisches Institutes*, Band VII, Vienna (or see Rajić's translation for the Symposium, p. 36).

<sup>15</sup> I offered this argument as "the decisive date when, for the first time, one realized a trefoil façade as a projection of a barrel vault created from large slabs of stone, the date being 1468 at the latest" in R. Ivančević, "Trolisna pročelja renesansnih crkava u Hrvatskoj," *Peristil*, 35-36 (1992-1993): 94, and photo 6.



distinguish Juraj's Gothic-Renaissance phase, Nikola's Early Renaissance contribution, and the "intermezzo" which one might call "Renaissance-Gothic," a sort of pastiche of Gothic and Renaissance components in opposition to structural and tectonic clarity of both great headmasters. Rectangular windows are divided by a rather strong column with a composite capital whereas the side colonettes are still polygonal in gothic fashion (5/8) bearing leaf capitals. The arches of the bifora openings are semicircular but the tracery, albeit designed in a clear geometric manner deriving from a circle still bears gothic dents.<sup>16</sup> This somewhat awkward "intermezzo" in the growth of the Cathedral, still begs for an explanation, both literally and in a figurative sense. By its dualism and hybrid character it is closest to Aleš's method, but does not belong to his typology.

Those differences are clearly legible on the photograph and the measured drawing I have appended.

<sup>16</sup> As opposed to typical early Renaissance simple semicircular biforas based on the circle. See, e.g., Michelozzo, Palazzo Medici-Ricardi (1444), L.B. Alberti, Palazzo Rucellai (1446), or B. Rosellino, Palazzo Piccolomini in Pienza (a bit later; Murray, *Architettura del Rinascimento*, Milano, 1978, pl. 23, 37, 48, 49). Or palaces in Siena, Lucca, Venice (see. J Burchardt, *The Architecture of the Renaissance*, Penguin Books, 1987, comp. P. Murray).

All those biforas were inscribed inside a round-headed circle, whereas for those inscribed within a rectangle we must go to Verona, Pavia, Bergamo (ibid., pl. 230, 282, 314). The closest analogies are found in Pavia (Certosa), and Bergamo (S. Maria Maggiore), and if our master should be a foreigner we should look for him within that circle. It is interesting, however, that, compositionally speaking (a bifora with a pilaster in the middle and colonettes at the sides) the closest analogies are found at the second story of San Satiro in Milano by Bramante (ibid., pl. 386). Otherwise, the above mentioned typical form spread throughout Europe to continue into the 16th century, also in France (see, *La France de la Renaissance*, Paris 1998, pp. 53, 60ff). A predecessor of the compositional solution could be found as early as 1433 in an imaginary ambulatory drawn in the famous fantasy *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (printed in 1486; Burchardt, pl. 13).