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RADOVI ARHEOLOŠKOG ZAVODA
PAPERS OF THE DEPARTMENT
O F A R C H A E O L O G Y

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Nikolina URODA

PRILOG POZNAVANJU RANOKRŠĆANSKE CRKVE NA LOKALITETU BIČINA U POLAČI

A CONTRIBUTION TO UNDERSTANDING THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH AT THE BIČINA SITE IN POLAČA

Izvorni znanstveni članak / Original scientific paper

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Nikolina Uroda
Muzej hrvatskih arheoloških spomenika
HR-21000 Split
nikolina.uroda@mhas-split.hr

U članku se obrađuje ranokršćanska crkva na lokalitetu Bičina u Polači, koja je istraživana g. 1898. i 1913. Iskapanja g. 1913. don Luka Jelić povjerio je don Kažimiru Perkoviću, polačkom svećeniku. Donose se tlocrt crkve i nacrti pronađenih ulomaka crkvenoga namještaja izrađeni g. 1914. koji su se čuvali u Planoteci Konzervatorskog odjela u Splitu. Prema naputku don Luke Jelića izradio ih je zadarski konzervator Tamino. Tlocrt se uspoređuje s onim izrađenim g. 1971., koji je Boris Ilakovac objavio vodeći se skicama i pismima Kažimira Perkovića iz arhiva Luke Jelića u Arheološkom muzeju u Splitu. Nacrti ulomaka crkvenoga namještaja uspoređuju se s predmetima pronađenima na istom lokalitetu, danas pohranjenima u Zavičajnom muzeju u Biogradu.

Ključne riječi: Polača, Bičina, rano kršćanstvo, crkva, Tamino, Luka Jelić

Selo Polača nalazi se oko 10 km južno od Benkovca. Područje je to plodne zemlje okruženo kosama i uzvisinama od kojih dominiraju Tinjska gradina na jugu, brdo Petrim na istoku te gradina iznad Raštevića i Nadin na sjeveru. Na lokalitetu Bičina, gdje se u kasnoj antici smjestila crkva o kojoj će

The article contains an examination of the Early Christian church at the Bičina site in Polača, which was researched in 1898 and 1913. The excavations conducted in 1913 were entrusted to Fr. Kažimir Perković, a priest from Polača, by Fr. Luka Jelić. The ground plan of the church and sketches of the fragments of discovered church furnishings, made in 1914 and held in the Maps Archive of the Conservation Department in Split, are presented. They were made by the Zadar conservator Tamino at the behest of Fr. Jelić. The ground plan is compared with the one made in 1971, which Boris Ilkovic published, using the sketches and letters of Kažimir Perković from the Luka Jelić Archives in the Archaeological Museum in Split. The sketches of pieces of church furnishings are compared with the items found at the same site, today held in the Local Heritage Museum in Biograd.

Key words: Polača, Bičina, Early Christianity, church, Tamino, Luka Jelić

The village of Polača is approximately 10 km south of Benkovac. This is an area with fertile soil surrounded by slopes and heights, dominated by the hillfort Tinjska in the south, Petrim Hill in the east and the hillfort above Raštević and Nadin in the north. At the Bičina site, the location of the church that will

biti riječi, nalazilo se neolitičko, a kasnije i brončanodobno naselje, dok su na uzvisini istog imena pronađeni ostaci eneolitičkog materijala na temelju kojega se smatra da je gradina u tom razdoblju služila kao izvidnica. U Polači je pronađen i novac grčkog grada Larisse, kovan između 430. i 344. g. pr. Kr. (Batović 1990: 102, 126, 137, 161), te rimski republikanski novac obitelji Cornelia i novac Faustine Starije (Nedved 1990: 223).

O istraživanjima lokaliteta g. 1898. vijesti iz *Smotre Dalmatinske* donosi B. Nedved. Saznajemo da su otkrivena dva objekta: jedan je bio raniji, rimski, vjerojatno vila, s hipokaustom, a kasniji se opisuje kao “kapelica iz 6. st.” (*ibid.* 222). Iste godine vijest o otkriću natpisa i ulomaka arhitekture prigodom zidanja seoskog bunara donosi se u *Izvještaju* Upraviteljstva Hrvatskog starinarskoga društva u Kninu (*Izvještaj* 1898: 104). Istraživanja je posjetio Lujo Marun te je preko svojih povjerenika pratio razvoj događaja.¹ Istraživanja su povjerena lokalnom učitelju M. Zriliću. U svojim dnevnicima Marun spominje da su se istraživale dvije gomile. Pod prvom je pronađena kvadratična zgrada s tri ekседre na južnome zidu te hipokaust s osamnaest stupaca (tri niza po šest) u sjeveroistočnoj četvrtini. Pronađeno je šest tegula s pečatima SOLONAS, jedna PANSIANA te jedna s utisnutim SMAXIMI. Na osnovi Zrilićeva izvješća zaključilo se da zgrade pripadaju “najkasnijem rimskom dobu”. Druga se gomila nalazila istočnije od prethodne i u njoj se naišlo na srušenu zgradu s ekседrom i pragom s četiri kvadratna utora koji su služili kao ležište pregradnih stupova ili pilastara, ulomak stupa, četiri ukrašena ulomka poput zabata, jedan lijepo ukrašen ulomak, tri profilirana arhitektonska elementa (“kao od zvona”), natpis na kamenu FRPXX IIA.²



Slika 1. Karta.

Figure 1. Map.

¹ Dokumentaciju o spomenutim događajima obrađuje Mate Zekan iz Muzeja hrvatskih arheoloških spomenika u sklopu još neobjavljena opsežna rada. Ovom prilikom zahvaljujem kolegi na ustupljenim podacima.

² Natpis bi se mogao pročitati: (IN)FR(ONTE) P(EDES) XX IN A(GRO PEDES).

be discussed herein, there was once a Neolithic, and later a Bronze Age settlement, while on a rise of the same name, the remains of Eneolithic materials were found, on which basis it is believed that the hillfort served as a sentry outpost during this era. Coins from the Greek city of Larissa, minted between 430 and 344 BC, were also found in Polača (Batović 1990: 102, 126, 137, 161), as well as a Roman Republic coin of the Cornelia family and a coin of Faustina the Elder (Nedved 1990: 223).

B. Nedved provided a report on research at the site in 1898 for the periodical *Smotra Dalmatinska*. From it, we learn that two structures were found: the earlier one is Roman, probably a villa with a hypocaust, while the later one was described as a “chapel from the sixth century” (*Ibid.* 222). In that same year, news of the discovery of an inscription and fragments of architecture during construction of a village well was carried in the Report (*Izvještaj*) of the Directorate of the Croatian Antiquities Society in Knin (*Izvještaj* 1898: 104). The research works were visited by Lujo Marun, and his associates kept him apprised of the progress.¹ The research was entrusted to a local school teacher, M. Zrilić. In his journals, Marun mentioned that two mounds were examined. A quadratic building was found beneath the first, which had three exedrae on the southern wall and a hypocaust with eighteen pillars (three rows of six) in the north-east quarter. Six tegulae with stamps reading SOLONAS, one with the stamp PANSIANA and one with SMAXIMI were found. Based on Zrilić’s report, it was concluded that the building belonged to the “latest Roman era”. The other mound was farther east than the preceding one, and in it a demolished structure was found with an exedra and a threshold with four quadratic slots that served as bases for partition columns or pilasters, a fragment of a column, four decorated fragments resembling pediments, one finely ornamented fragment, three moulded architectural elements (“as from a bell”), and an inscription on stone, FRPXX IIA.² All were built into the structure below the second mound of stones, which Lujo Marun mentioned as a demolished building with exedra.

Later research in 1913, which was initiated by Luka Jelić, and led by the priest Kažimir Perković, concentrated on the Early Christian church. The results were not published, so its appearance was

¹ The documentation on these events is discussed by Mate Zekan from the Museum of Croatian Archaeological Monuments as a part of an extensive, as-yet unpublished, work. I would like to take this opportunity to thank this colleague for the mentioned data.

² The inscription may have read: (IN)FR(ONTE) P(EDES) XX IN A(GRO PEDES).

Svi su bili uzidani u građevinu pronađenu ispod druge gomile kamena, a koju Lujo Marun spominje kao srušenu zgradu s egzedrom.

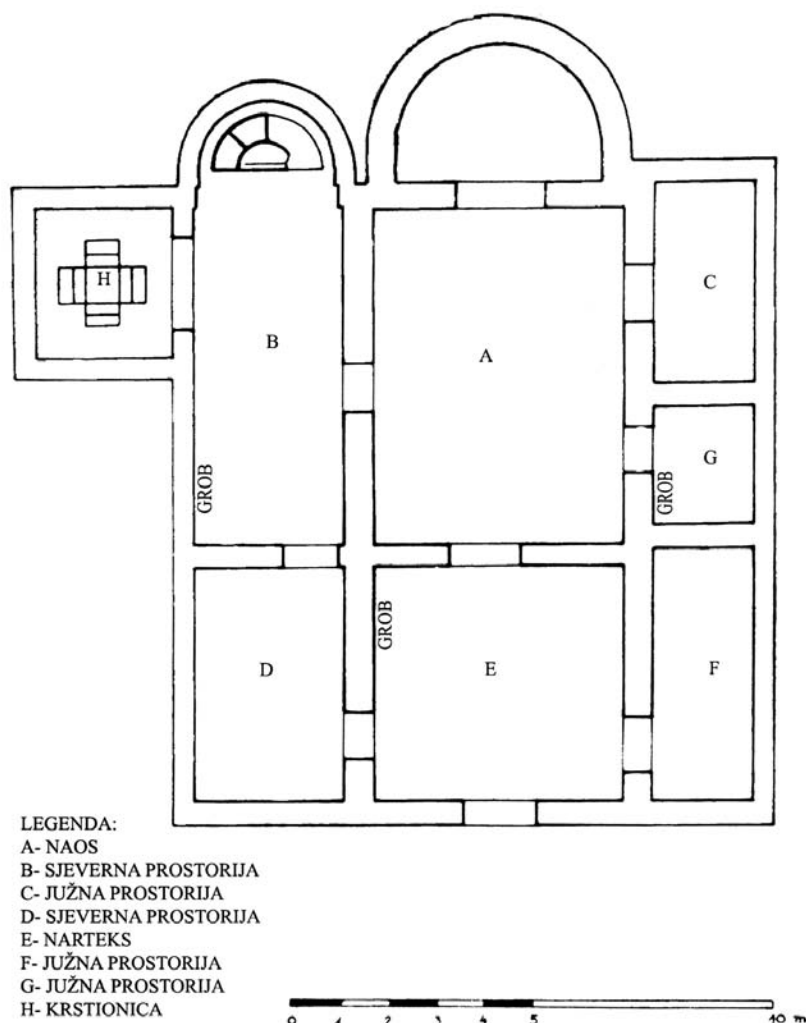
Kasnija istraživanja g. 1913., koja je inicirao Luka Jelić, a vodio svećenik Kažimir Perković, koncentrirala su se na ranokršćansku crkvu. Rezultati istraživanja nisu objavljeni, pa njezin izgled nije bio poznat sve do g. 1971., kad ju prema skicama u ostavštini Luke Jelića i pismima Kažimira Perkovića iz arhiva Arheološkog muzeja u Splitu (sl. 2) detaljno opisuje i rekonstruira B. Ilakovac (1971: 115–118). Taj je tlocrt preuzet u stručnoj literaturi te je uvršten u sve važnije preglede ranokršćanske arheologije u sjevernoj Dalmaciji i općenito (Chevalier 1995; 1995a; Uglešić 2002; Vežić 2005). Crkva je izgrađena oko ranijeg objekta pravokutnog oblika. Apsida je polukružna i naslonjena na rame ranije građevine. Ostale su prostorije također naknadno dodane, a ističe se gotovo kvadratna krstionica s krsnim zdencem križnog oblika. S lokaliteta su u Zavičajni muzej u Biogradu na Moru doneseni: dio ranokršćanskog pluteja, pilastri, impost, stupići s kapitelom te inventar jednog od grobova pronađenih unutar crkve tijekom istraživanja 1913. g. (Ilakovac 1971: 115, sl. 16).

not known until 1971, when, using the sketches in the papers of Luka Jelić and the letters of Kažimir Perković from the archives of the Archaeological Museum in Split (Fig. 2), it was described in detail and reconstructed by B. Ilakovac (1971: 115-118). This ground plan was assumed in the literature and has been included in all major overviews of Early Christian archaeology in Northern Dalmatia and in general (Chevalier 1995; 1995a; Uglešić 2002; Vežić 2005). The church was constructed around an earlier structure with rectangular layout. The apse is semi-circular and leans on the frame of the earlier building. The remaining rooms were also added subsequently, and the almost quadratic baptistery with cross-shaped font stands out. The following items were brought from the site to the Local Heritage Museum in Biograd na Moru: a part of the Early Christian pluteus, pilasters, an impost, small columns with capitals and the inventory of a grave found inside the church during research in 1913 (Ilakovac 1971: 115, Fig. 16).

Luka Jelić's documentation is held in the archives of the Archaeological Museum in Split. The map of the site mentioned by Ilakovac (1971: 112, n. 134) has

only a few notes and sketches of the Roman building, while there is no trace of the letters of Kažimir Perković. The only source that would help in a reconstruction of the appearance of the church after its excavation in 1913 is the drawing from the report on Luka Jelić's research, written in German. From this report, we learn that in 1914 Luka Jelić commissioned the technical draftsman Tamino to make a ground plan of the structure excavated a year earlier. Luka Jelić additionally described in detail the structure and the phases of its construction, and mentioned the fragments of church furnishings, as well as the fragments of architectural sculpture from the research in 1898.

An interesting fact about the church in Bičina was provided by Jasna Jeličić in an article in which she discussed the narthex in



Slika 2. Tlocrt ranokršćanske crkve u Bičini (Ilakovac 1971: 134, sl. 16).

Figure 2. Ground plan of the Early Christian church in Bičina (Ilakovac 1971: 134, Fig. 16).

Dokumentacija Luke Jelića čuva se u arhivu Arheološkog muzeja u Splitu. U mapi o lokalitetu koju spominje Ilakovac (1971: 112, n. 134) nalaze se tek natuknice i skice rimske građevine, ali spomenutih pisama Kažimira Perkovića nema. Jedino što bi pomoglo pri rekonstrukciji izgleda crkve nakon njezina iskopavanja 1913. g. jest nacrt iz izvještaja o istraživanju Luke Jelića, koji je napisan na njemačkom jeziku. Iz izvještaja saznajemo da je g. 1914. Luka Jelić tehničkom crtaču Taminu dao da napravi tlocrt građevine iskopavane godinu dana ranije. Osim toga Luka Jelić detaljno opisuje građevinu i faze njezine izgradnje te spominje ulomke crkvenoga namještaja, ali i ulomke arhitektonske skulpture s istraživanja g. 1898.

Zanimljiv podatak o crkvi u Bičini donosi Jasna Jeličić u članku u kojem raspravlja o nartekusu u ranokršćanskoj arhitekturi na području istočnog Jadrana. Autorica donosi informaciju da se u Konzervatorskom zavodu u Splitu čuva nacrt te građevine koji se u nekoliko detalja razlikuje od Ilakovčeva (Jeličić 1983: 25, n. 47). Tragom te bilješke pronađen je plan crkve nastao 1914. g. (sl. 3). Uz tlocrt su se sačuvali i skice položaja lokaliteta (sl. 4) te crteži dijelova crkvenoga namještaja koji je pronađen u crkvi i oko nje (sl. 5). Sama palača, odnosno njezin položaj, također je ucrtan na jednoj skici (sl. 6), s koje možemo očitati i njezine dimenzije: 80 × 53 m (104 × 75 koraka). Prema potpisu nacрте iz Konzervatorskog odjela u Splitu izradio je zadarski konzervator Tamino, koji se spominje kao autor dokumentacije i u nacrtu izvještaja Luke Jelića.³

Na Taminovu tlocrtu (sl. 3) orijentacija objekta nešto je drugačija nego što je objašnjeno kod Ilakovca, pa je crkva orijentirana gotovo po pravcu sjeverozapad–jugoistok. Naznačene su tri faze razvoja građevine, onako kako su to smatrali sam crtač i Luka Jelić. Kao osnova za razvoj crkve poslužila je pravokutna građevina iz ranijeg antičkog razdoblja, na koju su u drugoj fazi nadograđena apsida, prostorije sa zapadne strane, nartek i krstionica. Prostorije s istočne strane izgrađene su kasnije, u trećoj fazi razvoja objekta. Krstionica je pravokutnog oblika i manjih dimenzija nego što pretpostavlja Ilakovac, a krsni je zdenac, kako i Luka Jelić u svom izvještaju kaže, kružnog oblika sa stepenicama na četiri strane u obliku križa. Pročelje nartekusa zakrivljeno je, a zidovi sa sjeveroistočne strane kao i sjeverozapadni pročelni zid necjeloviti su. U apsidi crkvi pridodane prostorije nacrtano je popločanje opisano i u izvješću Luke Jelića, koji nastavlja da se na jednoj ploči

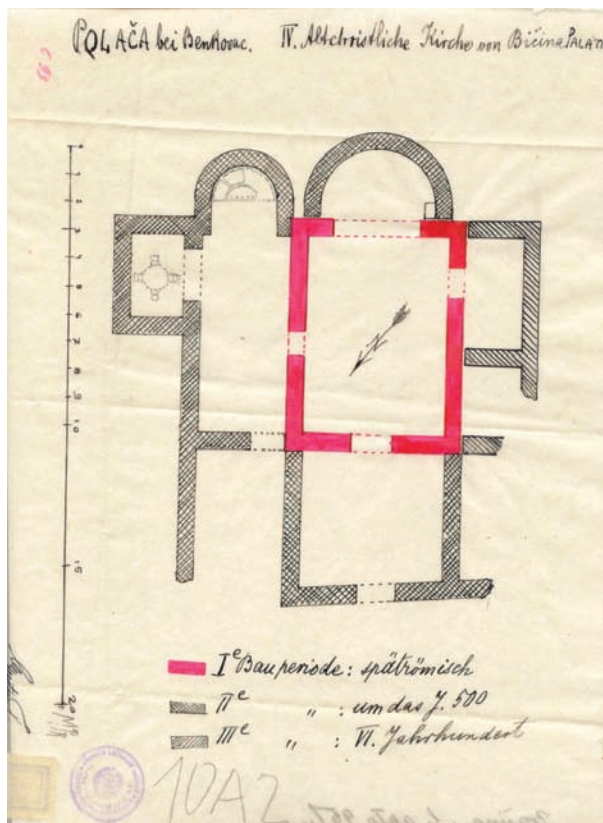
Early Christian architecture in the Eastern Adriatic seaboard. She reported that the Conservation Department in Split holds a sketch of this building, which differs in several details from that of Ilakovac (Jeličić 1983: 25, n. 47). On the basis of this notation, a layout of the church made in 1914 was found (Fig. 3). In addition to the ground plan, sketches of the site's position were also preserved (Fig. 4), as well as drawings of pieces of church furnishings found in and around the church (Fig. 5). The palace itself, or rather its position, was also drawn into one of the sketches (Fig. 6), from which its dimensions can be discerned: 80 × 53 m (104 × 75 paces). According to the signature on the sketches from the Conservation Department in Split, they were done by the Zadar conservator Tamino, who is mentioned as the author of the documentation in Luka Jelić's report as well.³

On Tamino's ground plan (Fig. 3), the orientation of the structure is somewhat different than that explained by Ilakovac, so the church is oriented almost in the north-west to south-east direction. Three phases of the building's development are indicated, as deemed by the draftsman himself and Luka Jelić. The rectangular building from the earlier period of Antiquity served as the foundation for the growth of the church, on which an apse, rooms on the western side, a narthex and baptistery were added on in the second phase. The rooms on the eastern side were built subsequently, during the third phase of the building's development. The baptistery is rectangular, with smaller dimensions than Ilkovac assumed, while the baptismal font, as Luka Jelić said in his report, is circular with steps on four sides forming a cross. The façade of the narthex is warped, while the walls on the north-east side, like the north-west façade wall, are not whole. The tiling drawn in the apse of the room added to the church is also described in Luka Jelić's report, which goes on to state that one tile had seven holes on it for inserting an iron grill and that the main apse was probably tiled in the same manner, as opposed to the remains of the church, which had a plastered floor.

The essential difference immediately noticeable between the two existing ground plans is the orientation, the shape of the baptismal font and the appearance of the narthex. The baptismal font on Ilakovac's ground plan is circular. Ilakovac himself stated that the data from K. Perković are insufficient and unverified and that he did not have data on the dimensions and position of the baptismal font, which during the research in 1913 was entirely

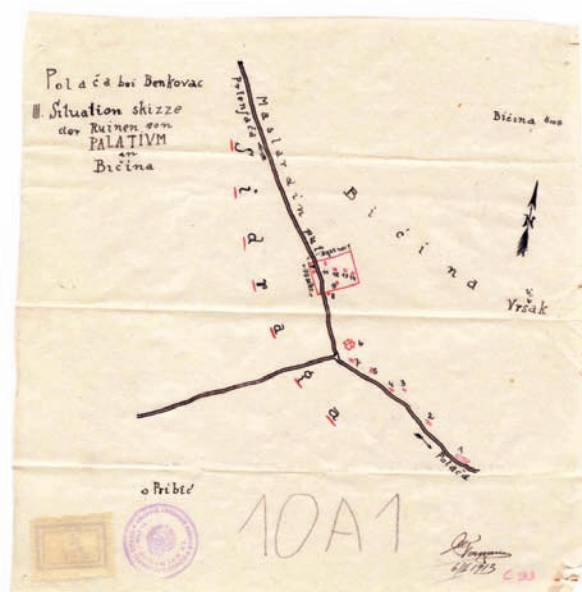
³ Ovom prilikom zahvaljujem Konzervatorskom odjelu u Splitu na ustupljenom materijalu iz njihove planoteke. Potpis je identificirao g. Arsen Duplančić iz Arheološkog muzeja u Splitu, na čemu mu zahvaljujem.

³ I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Conservation Department in Split for placing the materials from their maps archive at my disposal. The signature was identified by Mr. Arsen Duplančić from the Archaeological Museum in Split, for which I am grateful.



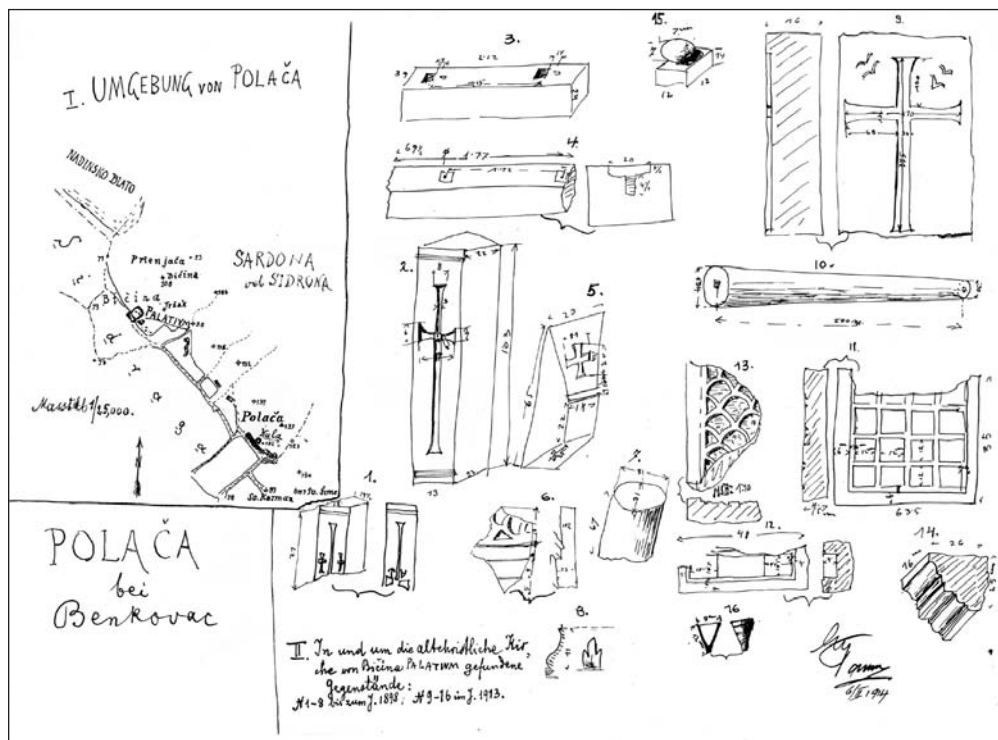
Slika 3. Tlocrt ranokršćanske crkve u Bičini (Tamino, 1914, Planoteka Konzervatorskog odjela u Splitu).

Figure 3. Ground plan of the Early Christian church in Bičina (Tamino, 1914, Maps Archive, Conservation Department in Split).



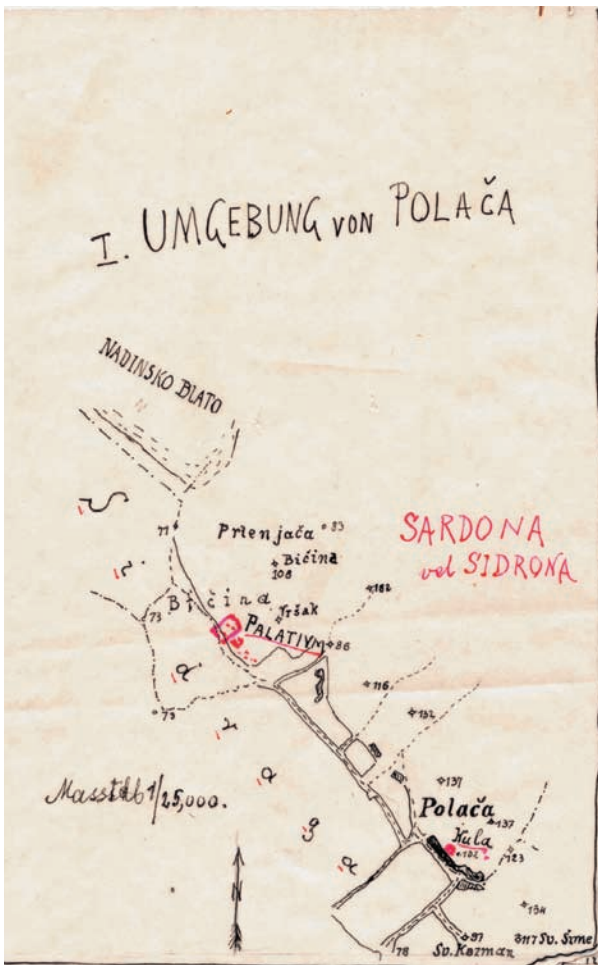
Slika 4. Skica položaja istraživanih lokaliteta (Tamino, 1913, Planoteka Konzervatorskog odjela u Splitu).

Figure 4. Sketch of the positions of the researched sites (Tamino, 1913, Maps Archive, Conservation Department in Split).



Slika 5. Skica okolice Polače i crteži ulomaka pronađenih tijekom istraživanja 1898. g. (1–8) i 1913. g. (9–16) (Tamino, 1914, Planoteka Konzervatorskog odjela u Splitu).

Figure 5. Sketch of the Polača environs and drawing of fragments found during research in 1898 (1-8) and 1913 (9-16) (Tamino, 1914, Maps Archive, Conservation Department in Split).



Slika 6. Skica okolice Polače (Tamino, 1914, Planoteka Konzervatorskog odjela u Splitu).

Figure 6. Sketch of the Polača environs (Tamino, 1914, Maps Archive, Conservation Department in Split).

nalazilo sedam udubljenja za umetanje željezne rešetke te da je – za razliku od ostatka crkve, koja je imala žbukanu podnicu – i glavna apside vjerojatno bila popločana na jednak način.

Ono što se uočava kao bitna razlika između dva postojeća tlocrta jesu orijentacija, oblik krsnog zdenca i izgled nartekse. Krsni je zdenac na Ilakovčevu tlocrtu križnog oblika. Sam autor navodi da su podaci K. Perkovića nedostatni i neprovjereni te da ne raspolaže podacima o dimenzijama i položaju krstionice, koja je za vrijeme istraživanja g. 1913. bila u potpunosti sačuvana (Ilakovac 1971: 117). U nastavku navodi da je potrebno načiniti reviziju istraživanja jer podaci potrebni za detaljan snimak građevine nisu bili provjereni na terenu. Krstionica crkve u Bičini vezana je uz prostoriju koja se nalazi sjeveroistočno od glavnog broda. Prema nekim autorima služila je kao mjesto za potvrdu nakon krštenja (*consignatorium*). Smještaj i izgled te prostorije, s popločanom apsidom (prema Taminovu tlocrtu i Jelićevu opisu), u kojoj bi trebala biti klupa

preserved (Ilakovac 1971: 117). He went on to say that it would be necessary to conduct a revision of the research because the data needed for a detailed recording of the structure were not verified in the field. The baptistery of the church in Bičina is connected to the room north-east of the main nave. According to some authors, it was used as a place for consignment after baptism (*consignatorium*). The location and appearance of this room, with the tiled apse (according to Tamino's ground plan and Jelić's description), in which there should be a pew for the clergy and the cathedra, backs this assumption. The font itself was circular according to the sketch from 1914, with steps on four sides and it can be compared to those found in the baptistery in Nin (Kolega 2002: 74; Vežić 2005: 154) and with the font in Dikovača (Cambi *et al.* 1999: 23), which had access steps only on two sides.

The orientation of the structure deviates from the customary canons of Early Christian church construction, and it was predicated upon the first building within and around which the church developed, and partially by the Roman road near the building. A similar situation applied to the church in Rižinice, with south-north orientation, as well as the church in Brzet near Omiš, with a north-south orientation (Gjurašin 2008: 200).

A narthex with a skewed façade was a common phenomenon of the Early Christian period, as well as the Early Middle Ages. This form can be seen on the church in Stipanska on the island of Šolta (Marasović 1969: Fig. 3), on the basilica in Kapljuč (Rapanić 2003: 34), in Muline on the island of Ugljan (Suić 1960: Fig. 1), Sustipan in Split (Marasović & Vrsalović 1965: appendix 1), the basilica in Zmijavci (Cambi *et al.* 1999: 28) and many other buildings. The symbolism and function of such skewing has been the subject of many polemics, but a final answer has yet to be ascertained.⁴

Within the typology of the Eastern Adriatic seaboard, the narthex of the church in Polača belongs to the endonarthex group (Jeličić 1983: 25, 37). Based on its characteristics and dimensions, its external appearance probably was not separated from the main nave, and it was covered with the same roof (Chevalier 1995: 124).

One of three tombs found in the church was examined in the narthex. It was intact because it was covered by a thick stone slab. The remains of four skeletons were discovered, and among the goods, two

⁴ De Angelis d'Ossat (1970) supported the hypothesis that such skewing was done in line with the aesthetic principles of Plotinus, while Rapanić (2003) refuted this, pointing out the errors in this hypothesis and other possible explanations for this phenomenon.

za svećenstvo i katedra, ide u prilog toj pretpostavci. Sam krsni zdenac prema nacrtu iz g. 1914. kružnog je oblika sa stepeništem na četiri strane i može se usporediti s onim pronađenim unutar krstionice u Ninu (Kolega 2002: 74; Vežić 2005: 154) i sa zdencom u Dikovači (Cambi *et al.* 1999: 23), koji imaju prilazne stubbe samo s dvije strane.

Orijentacija objekta odstupa od uobičajenih kanona izgradnje ranokršćanskih crkava i uvjetovana je prvom građevinom unutar i oko koje je crkva nastala, a dijelom i rimskom cestom u blizini objekta. Slična je situacija i kod crkve u Rižinicama, orijentacije jug–sjever, kao i crkve u Brzetu kraj Omiša, orijentacije sjever–jug (Gjurašin 2008: 200).

Zakošeno pročelje narteksa česta je pojava u razdoblju ranoga kršćanstva, ali i ranog srednjeg vijeka. Takav se oblik susreće na crkvi u Stipanskoj na Šolti (Marasović 1969: sl. 3), na bazilici u Kapljuču (Rapanić 2003: 34), u Mulinama na otoku Ugljanu (Suić 1960: sl. 1), Sustipanu u Splitu (Marasović & Vrsalović 1965: prilog 1), bazilici u Zmijavcima (Cambi *et al.* 1999: 28) te mnogim drugim građevinama. O simboli i funkciji takva zakošenja bilo je dosta polemike, no konačni se odgovor nije pronašao.⁴

Unutar tipologije na istočnoj obali Jadrana narteks crkve u Polači spada u skupinu endonarteksa (Jeličić 1983: 25, 37). Prema svojim karakteristikama i dimenzijama vjerojatno se u vanjskom izgledu nije odvajao od glavnog broda te je bio pokriven istim krovom (Chevalier 1995: 124).

U narteksu je istražena jedna od triju grobnica pronađenih u crkvi. Bila je intaktna zahvaljujući činjenici da je bila pokrivena debelom kamenom pločom. Pronađeni su ostaci četiriju kostura, a od priloga su ostale sačuvane dvije svjetiljke, vrč i balsamarij, dok su dvije svjetiljke ukrašene jelenima i metalna kopča nestale. Svjetiljka ukrašena kristogramom (sl. 7) (Ilakovac 1971: 112, sl. 34; Gluščević 1997: T. I: 4; T. V: 1) može se datirati u kraj 4. ili prvu polovicu 5. st. (tip Hayes IB). To ukazuje na vrijeme jednoga od ukopa, no ne mora nužno biti okosnica za dataciju crkvenog objekta, jer postoji mogućnost da je grobnica nastala uz prostoriju koja je kasnije adaptirana u crkvu. Osim u narteksu grobovi su se nalazili i u dvjema bočnim prostorijama, ali su, prema Ilakovcu, bili već ranije otvarani, te se u njima nije našlo gotovo ništa. Na lokalitetu Mirine u Otoku kod Sinja nailazimo na sličan slučaj. U narteksu crkve slična tlocrta pronađeni su brončani vrč i zvon, koji se datiraju u 5–6. st. (Milošević 1981:



Slika 7. Svjetiljka s kristogramom iz groba u narteksu crkve (snimio: Ivan Alduk).

Figure 7. Oil lamp with Christogram from the tomb in the narthex (photograph: Ivan Alduk).

oil lamps, a jug and a balsamarium were preserved, while two oil lamps decorated with images of a deer and a metal buckle are now missing. The oil lamp decorated with a Christogram (Fig. 7) (Ilakovac 1971: 112, Fig. 34; Gluščević 1997: Pl. I: 4; Pl. V: 1) can be dated to the end of the fourth century or the first half of the fifth century (Hayes type IB). This indicates the time of one of the interments, but it need not be the underpinning to date the church building, for there is a possibility that the tomb was made next to the room which was adapted into a church. Besides the narthex, tombs were also found in the two lateral rooms, but according to Ilakovac they had already been opened so almost nothing was found in them. A similar case can be found at the Mirine site in Otok, near Sinj. A bronze jug and bell, dated to the fifth-sixth centuries, were found in the narthex of a church with similar groundfloor plan (Milošević 1981: 62). This tomb was also covered with stone slabs, and on one of the preserved slabs there are grooves into which parts of the altar above the tomb were inserted (Jeličić 1983: 25-26). The other tomb was found along the north-east wall of the room with apse (Ilakovac 1971: 134, Fig. 16). The situation in Zmijavci is similar, where a walled tomb was found in the area called the lobby of the baptistery, below thick plastered flooring (Cambi *et al.* 1999: 43).

In the literature, the form of the church building in Bičina is called the “complex basilica” type, or the

⁴ De Angelis d'Ossat (1970) zastupa tezu da se takva zakošenja rade prema Plotinovim estetičkim načelima, dok je Rapanić (2003) pobija ukazujući na greške pri postavljanju teze te na druga moguća objašnjenja tog fenomena.

62). I taj je grob bio pokriven kamenim pločama, a na jednoj od njih sačuvani su žljebovi u koje su se umetali dijelovi oltara koji se nalazio nad grobom (Jeličić 1983: 25–26).

Drugi je grob pronađen uz sjeveroistočni zid prostorije s apsidom (Ilakovac 1971: 134, sl. 16). Slična je situacija i u Zmijavcima, gdje je u prostoriji koja se naziva čekaonicom krstionice pronađen zidani grob koji se nalazio ispod debele žbukane podnice (Cambi *et al.* 1999: 43).

Oblik građevine crkve u Bičini u literaturi se naziva tipom "kompleksne bazilike" ili bazilike naronskog tipa⁵ sličnim onima u Otoku kod Sinja, Korlatu kod Benkovca te crkvama u Naroni, Danilu (Cambi 1976: 247, n. 49; 1978: 614), Rešetarici kod Livna (Vrdoljak 1990), Dabravinama (Basler 1972: 78, sl. 65). Postoje mišljenja da je oblik tih crkava uzrokovan potrebama kršćanske liturgije jer su one u pravilu nastajale u ruralnim sredinama te u sebi ujedinjavale liturgijsku, memorijalno-cemeterijalnu i krstioničku namjenu u razdoblju intenzivne kristijanizacije pagusa, što objašnjava i nastanak velika broja krstionica (Migotti 1991–1992: 170–172; Jeličić 1983: 36–37). Prostorije oko glavnoga broda objašnjavaju se potrebama bizantske liturgije, za koju su potrebne tri apside ili pak dodatne prostorije oko svetišta za obrede Malog i Velikog ulaza (Stričević 1959: 61; Krautheimer 1986: 102, n. 3). Smanjena longitudinalnost građevine pretpostavlja orijentalne utjecaje koji su preko Ravenne dospjeli do naših krajeva (Migotti 1991–1992: 172), a smatra se da se takve građevine, barem na ovome području, počinju graditi nakon Justinijanove rekonkviste, jer predstavljaju oblike svojstvene ranoj bizantskoj arhitekturi (Vežić 2005: 150). Na nekim se mjestima taj tip bazilike povezuje s utjecajima egejskog prostora (Cambi 1984–1985: 197; Vežić 2007: 154). Zbog sužene apside prema unutrašnjosti neki bi autori početnu fazu crkve datirali već u 5. st., uz slične primjere iz Podvršja i Sv. Martina u Nevidanima (Vežić 2005: 119). Srednjovjekovni izvori spominju posvetu Mariji te se smatra da je crkva preživjela turbulentno razdoblje dolaska novih naroda na to područje (Chevalier 1995: 123–125; Vežić 2005: 102). Na tom se području osim tog titulara javlja i onaj Sv. Martina. Smatra se da je na uzvisini iznad lokaliteta bila crkva posvećena tom svecu, no nedostaju konkretni arhivski podaci (Jurić 1990: 291). Skulptura koja je pronađena tijekom iskopavanja crkve 1913. g., ali i u ranijim istraživanjima 1898. g., prema dosadašnjim interpretacijama pripada razdoblju 5. i 6. st. (Ilakovac 1971: 118).

⁵ Polemika oko nazivlja tog tipa građevina najbolje je sažeta u Cambi (2002: 233, n. 1050).

Narona basilica type⁵ similar to those in Otok, at Sinj, Korlat, near Benkovac and in the churches in Narona, Danilo (Cambi 1976: 247, n. 49; 1978: 614), Rešetarica, near Livno (Vrdoljak 1990), Dabravine (Basler 1972: 78, Fig. 65). According to one view, the shape of these churches emerged due to the needs of the Christian liturgy, for they generally appeared in rural places, and they unified the liturgical, memorial/cemeterial and baptismal purpose in the period of intense Christianization of the *pagus*, which explains the appearance of a large number of baptisteries (Migotti 1991–1992: 170–172; Jeličić 1983: 36–37). The rooms around the nave are explained by the needs of the Byzantine liturgy, which require three apses or, otherwise, rooms around the chancel for the major and minor Entrance Rites (Stričević 1959: 61; Krautheimer 1986: 102, n. 3). The reduced length of the building indicates oriental influences which reached Croatia's territory through Ravenna (Migotti 1991–1992: 172), while it is believed that such buildings, at least in this territory, began to be constructed after Justinian's reconquest, for they are forms typical of Early Byzantine architecture (Vežić 2005: 150). In some places, this basilica type is associated with the influence of the Aegean zone (Cambi 1984–1985: 197; Vežić 2007: 154). Due to the narrowed apse, some scholars would date the initial phase of the church already to the fifth century, with similar examples from Podvršje and Sveti Martin in Nevidane (Vežić 2005: 119). Medieval sources mention the dedication to Mary, and it is believed that the church survived a turbulent period marked by the arrival of new peoples in this territory (Chevalier 1995: 123–125; Vežić 2005: 102). Besides this titular, that of St. Martin also appears in this territory. It is believed that a church dedicated to this saint was situated on the heights above the site, but specific archival data are lacking (Jurić 1990: 291).

The sculpture found during excavation of the church in 1913, and also in the earlier research in 1898, according to previous interpretations, is placed in the fifth and sixth centuries (Ilakovac 1971: 118).

A problem which emerged after the discovery of the documentation was that the fragments of furnishings depicted in the sketches are not in the Local Heritage Museum in Biograd, where the remaining church inventory is held (discovered, according to the aforementioned report, during the examination of the church in 1913, but only brought to the collection in 1930) (Fig. 8). According to available information, the fragments were not even regis-

⁵ The polemics on the terminology of this type of building are best summarized in Cambi (2002: 233, n. 1050).

Problem koji se pojavio nakon pronalaska dokumentacije jest činjenica da se ulomci namještaja koji su donijeti u spomenutim crtežima ne nalaze u Zavičajnom muzeju u Biogradu, gdje je pohranjen ostali inventar crkve (prema navedenom izvješću pronađen za vrijeme istraživanja crkve 1913. g., međutim u zbirku donesen tek 1930. g.) (sl. 8). Prema raspoloživim informacijama ulomci nisu zavedeni ni u knjigama inventara Arheoloških muzeja u Zadru i Splitu, a nalaza s lokaliteta nema ni u Muzeju hrvatskih arheoloških spomenika u Splitu. Stoga nije ostalo ništa drugo doli pokušati interpretirati nalaze prema sačuvanim crtežima. Uspoređujući nacrt izvještaja Luke Jelića iz Arheološkog muzeja u Splitu i crteže nalaza iz Konzervatorskog odjela u Splitu, možemo sa sigurnošću reći da se radi o istim predmetima. Podudaraju se opisi pojedinih priloga, njihov redni broj u izvješću te broj predmeta naznačen na dokumentaciji. Nažalost, Luka Jelić ne opisuje nacrtane predmete, već samo spominje brojeve pod kojima se nalaze na crtežu. Izdvojeni su nalazi stakla, koji su mogli pripadati, kako Jelić kaže, crkvenim svjetiljkama.

Iz sačuvanih pisama raznih povjerenika fra Luji Marunu (Arhiv Hrvatskog starinarskog društva) doznajemo da je već 1898. g. prilikom izgradnje bunara Pribića, i danas vidljiva na cesti između zaselaka Prtenjače i Tinja, razgrađena gomila unutar koje su se vidjeli obrisi građevine koja bi mogla biti crkva o kojoj je ovdje riječ. Unutar te građevine pronađeni su "pragovi" s utorima. Skica koja prikazuje kako su ti pragovi izgledali nalazi se u jednom pismu, uz komentar da su u njima bili "neki" stupci. Prema tim podacima smije se pretpostaviti da se radi o stipesu oltarne ograde koji se vidi i na crtežu u Konzervatorskom odjelu u Splitu (sl. 5: 3, 4). Dužina sačuvanih dijelova stipesa iznosila bi 389 cm, što je šire od dužine među ramenima apside. Očito je da tu nije mogla stajati oltarna ograda, tako da valja pretpostaviti da je bila smještena dublje u naosu. Budući da su nacrtani odvojeno, postoji mogućnost da dva ulomka ne pripadaju istom stipesu. Na crtežu iz Taminove dokumentacije nalazi se dio ploče s utorima (sl. 5: 12), a prema svojim sačuvanim



Slika 8. Nalazi s istraživanja ranokršćanske crkve u Bićini u Zavičajnom muzeju u Biogradu na Moru (snimio: Ivan Alduk).

Figure 8. Finds from research in the Early Christian church in Bićina in the Local Heritage Museum in Biograd na Moru (photograph: Ivan Alduk).

tered in the inventory logs of the Archaeological Museums in Zadar or Split, and the finds from the site are not held in the Museum of Croatian Archaeological Monuments in either. Therefore, the only option remaining was to attempt to interpret the finds based on the preserved sketches. After comparing the sketch in Luka Jelić's report from the Archaeological Museum in Split and the drawings from the Conservation Department in Split, one may safely conclude that these are the same items. The descriptions of individual goods, their numbers in the report and the numbers cited in the documentation correspond. Unfortunately, Luka Jelić did not describe the sketched items, rather he only mentioned the numbers under which they are specified in the drawing. The glass

dimenzijama (širina 48 cm, utori dimenzija 10,5 × 10,5 cm) ploča bi mogla biti baza oltara (sl. 9) na koju su nalijegala četiri stupića pravokutnih osnova i vjerojatno okrugla tijela. Slične dimenzije ima npr. baza oltara iz Gata (Jeličić-Radonić 1994: 109, kat. 119, 120).

Ukras *squama* ili ribljih ljuski (sl. 8: 4) dosta je čest motiv na ranokršćanskim plutejima. Ima ga na području čitave Dalmacije, a najbliža su analogija ulomci pluteja iz crkve Sv. Bartolomeja u Galovcu (Belošević 1993–1994: T VI, T VII). Moguće je da je ovaj pogrešno atribuiran ulomcima iz Polače, jer se upravo taj komad našao u katalogu J. Beloševića kao sastavni dio pluteja ranokršćanske crkve u Galovcu (*ibid.* T VI: 4). U dokumentaciji s istraživanja nacrtana su još dva slična ulomka (sl. 5: 6, 13). Ukrašeni su istim motivom, a završavaju profilacijom.

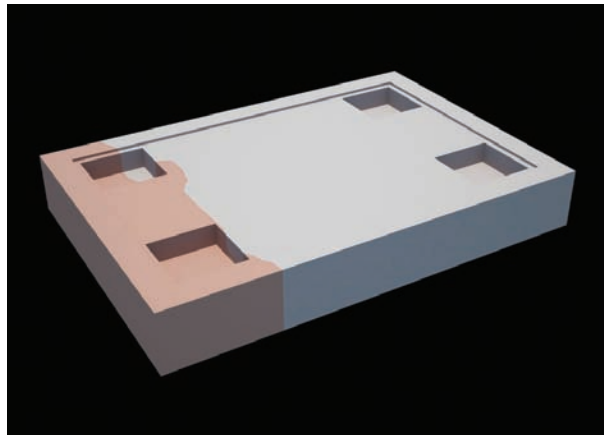
Plutej s križem blago raširenih krakova dosta je čest inventar ranokršćanskih crkava. Iako je sačuvan samo na crtežu (sl. 5: 9), možemo ga povezati s nalazima u Galovcu (Belošević 1993–1994: 131, sl. 3: 2) i Saloni (Dyggve & Egger 1939: T. 7, F 7). Ulomak završnog pilastra s kuglom (sl. 5: 15) nalazimo kod oltarnih ograda u Saloni (Dyggve & Egger 1939: 35, T. 5, D. 13) i Srimi (Gunjača *et al.* 2005: 75, sl. 1).

Plutej ukrašen kvadratima (sl. 5: 11) zasad nema bližih analogija, no uklapa se u ranokršćansku skulpturu zadarskog i salonitanskog kruga (Migotti 1991: *passim*).

Dva četvrtasta pilastra prozora crkve (sl. 8: 1A, 1B, 2) čuvaju se u Zavičajnom muzeju u Biogradu (Ilakovac 1971: sl. 34). Prema načinu izrade i tragovima koji su majstoru služili za što preciznije izvođenje ornamenta (sl. 10) te kvadratnom izbočenju na sjecištu hasti usporedivi su s pilastrima bifora na crkvi Sv. Martina u Pridrazi (Vežić 2005: 164) i onima iz Srima (Gunjača *et al.* 2005: 162, kat. br. 132). Zanimljiv je primjerak iz biogradskog muzeja (sl. 8: 2) na kojem se naziru tragovi crvene boje. Analogija ima podosta, no već su navedene u radu B. Ilakovca (Ilakovac 1971: 118). Na spomenutim crtežima iz Konzervatorskog odjela u Splitu nalaze se još dva slična pilastra (sl. 5: 1, 2). Jedan je nacrtan kao cjelovit s naznačenim dimenzijama. Uz njega je i impost (sl. 5: 5) ukrašen križem, čije bi dimenzije odgovarale ovom pilastru, pa se tako može rekonstruirati izgled bifore (sl. 11). Drugi nacrtani primjerak fragmentiran je, no naznačeni su mu A i Ω s jedne i dva križa s druge strane (sl. 4: 1), kao kod ranije spomenutog pilastra u biogradskom muzeju (sl. 8: 1B, sl. 10).

U inventaru nalaza u biogradskom muzeju nalazi se još jedan, necjelovit ulomak za koji bi se moglo pretpostaviti da je dio imposta (sl. 8: 3).

Dva stupa s bazom (sl. 8: 5, 6) vjerojatno su pripadala oltarnoj ogradi. Iako su im kapiteli različito



Slika 9. Rekonstrukcija baze oltara prema Taminovu crtežu (rekonstrukcija: Dalibor Popović).

Figure 9. Reconstruction of the altar base according to Tamino's drawing (reconstruction: Dalibor Popović).

items were set aside, as they could, so Jelić said, have belonged to the church lamps.

From the preserved letters of various close associates of Fr. Lujo Marun (Archives of the Croatian Antiquities Society), we learn that in 1898, during the construction of the Pribić well (still visible today on the road between the hamlets of Prtenjača and Tinje), a mound was cleared, in which the contours of a building could be discerned that may have been the church in question here. "Thresholds" with slots were found inside this building. The sketch depicting the appearance of these thresholds is in one letter, accompanied by the comment that there are "some" columns in them. According to these data, it may be assumed that this was an altar screen stipes which can be seen in the sketch in the Conservation Department in Split (Fig. 45: 3, 4). The length of the preserved pieces of the stipes would be 389 cm, which is wider than the length between the shoulders of the apse. It is obvious that the altar screen could not be here, so it should be assumed that it was situated deeper in the nave. Since they were sketched separately, it is possible that they do not belong to the same stipes.

The drawing from Tamino's documentation contains a piece of a slab with slots (Fig. 5: 12), while according to its preserved dimensions (width 48 cm, slot dimensions 10.5 × 10.5 cm) the slab may have been an altar base (Fig. 9) on which four small columns with rectangular bases and probably round bodies were set. The altar base from Gate has similar dimensions (Jeličić-Radonić 1994: 109, cat. no. 119, 120).

The *squama* or fish scale decoration (Fig. 8: 4) is a rather frequent motif on Early Christian plutei. They can be found throughout Dalmatia, and the closest analogy is the pluteus fragments from the Church



Slika 10. Detalj pravokutnog pilastra iz Zavičajnog muzeja u Biogradu na Moru (snimio: Ivan Alduk).

Figure 10. Detail of the rectangular pilaster from the Local Heritage Museum in Biograd na Moru (photograph: Ivan Alduk).



Slika 11. Rekonstrukcija bifore prema Taminovu crtežu (rekonstrukcija: Dalibor Popović).

Figure 11. Reconstruction of the bifora according to Tamino's drawing (reconstruction: Dalibor Popović).

oblikovani, oba stupa na bazi imaju pravokutni utor koji bi mogao služiti za pričvršćivanje na pilastar oltarne ograde. Sličan je primjer sačuvan u Starom Gradu na Hvaru (Jeličić-Radonić 1994a: 57, kat. 11). Uz te stupove na crtežu postoje još dva primjerka, od kojih je prvi čitav i visok je 2 m, a od drugog je nacrtan samo ulomak (sl. 5: 7, 10). Njih spominje i Ilakovac, ali drži da su izgubljeni (Ilakovac 1971: 116). Chevalier (1995: 124) pretpostavlja da su ti stupovi pripadali ciboriju, no došlo je do konfuzije, jer su se dimenzije tih stupova odnosile na monolitne stupiće oltarne ograde.

of St. Bartholomew in Galovac (Belošević 1993-1994: P VI, Pl. VII). It is possible that this example was mistakenly attributed to the fragments from Polača, for it was precisely this piece which made its way into J. Belošević's catalogue as a component of the pluteus from the Early Christian church in Galovac (*Ibid.* Pl VI: 4). In the documentation from the research, two additional, similar fragments were sketched (Fig. 5: 6, 13). They were decorated with the same motifs, and they have moulded endings.

Plutei with gently outspread branches were quite common among the inventory of Early Christian churches. Although only preserved in a drawing (Fig. 5: 9), it may be associated with the finds in Galovac (Belošević 1993-1994: 131, Fig. 3: 2) and Salona (Dyggve & Egger 1939: Pl. 7, F 7). A fragment of the terminal pilaster with sphere (Fig. 5: 15) can be found in the altar screens in Salona (Dyggve & Egger 1939: 35, Pl. 5, D. 13) and Srma (Gunjača *et al.* 2005: 75, Fig. 1).

The pluteus decorated with quadrants (Fig. 5: 11) thus far has no closer analogies, but it fits into the Early Christian sculpture of the Zadar and Salona circles (Migotti 1991: *passim*).

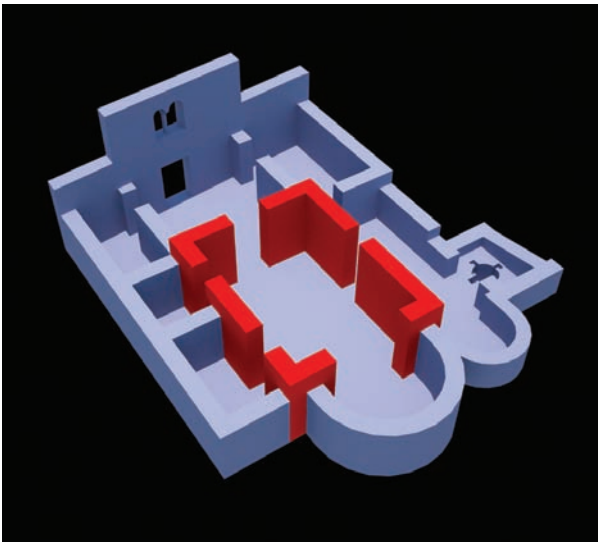
The two rectangular pilasters from the church window (Fig. 8: 1A, 1B, 2) are held in the Local Heritage Museum in Biograd (Ilakovac 1971: Fig. 34). Based on their rendering and the traces which served the craftsman to render the ornaments as precisely as possible (Fig. 10) and the quadratic protuberance at the intersection of the arms, they are comparable to the bifora pilasters in the Church of St. Martin in Pridraga (Vežić 2005: 164) and those from Srma (Gunjača *et al.* 2005: 162, cat. no. 132). Interesting is an example from the Biograd museum (Fig. 8: 2) on

which traces of red paint can be discerned. There is a considerable number of analogies, but they have already been cited in the work by B. Ilakovac (Ilakovac 1971: 118). Two similar pilasters (Fig. 5: 1, 2) are on the aforementioned drawings from the Conservation Department in Split. One was drawn whole with dimensions indicated. Next to it is an impost (Fig. 5: 5) decorated with a cross, whose dimensions would correspond to this pilaster, so the appearance of the bifora can be reconstructed in this manner (Fig. 11). The other sketched example is fragmentary, but the letters A and Ω are indicated on one side, and two crosses on the other (Fig.

Sažmu li se svi podaci, dobiva se malo jasnija slika lokaliteta. Istraživanja 1898. g. koja je vodilo Hrvatsko starinarsko društvo, odnosno povjerenik M. Zrilić, rezultirala su pronalaskom dvaju objekata na lokalitetu ispod brda koje se naziva Bičina.

Vili u kojoj su pronađeni stupići hipokausta pripadaju nalazi tegula s pečatima (datiranima u 1. i 2. st.), natpis koji indicira postojanje grobnih parcela (v. ovdje n. 2) te neki arhitektonski dijelovi koji su doneseni na skicama (sl. 5: 8, 14).

Ranokršćanskoj crkvi pripadaju svi ostali nalazi te ulomci koje Marunovi povjerenici opisuju "kao od zvona", što prema skici iz arhiva Muzeja hrvatskih arheoloških spomenika mogu pripadati preslici koja joj je u nekoj kasnijoj fazi pridodana, kao što je to slučaj kod Sv. Martina u Pridrazi.



Slika 12. Idealna rekonstrukcija crkve prema Taminovu i Ilakovčevu tlocrtu (rekonstrukcija: Dalibor Popović).

Figure 12. Ideal reconstruction of the church according to the floor plans by Tamino and Ilakovac (reconstruction: Dalibor Popović).

Ovaj je prilog doprinos poznavanju ranokršćanske crkve na lokalitetu Bičina u Polači kroz objavu dokumentacije koja nije do sada bila razmatrana ili je bila samo spomenuta u širem kontekstu, no nikada publicirana. Ostatke te građevine, kao ni vile u njezinoj blizini, danas nije moguće vidjeti, pa su svi podaci iz vremena njezina istraživanja bitni za sagledavanje tog važnog spomenika u kontekstu ranokršćanske arheologije.

4: 1), like the previously mentioned pilaster in the Biograd museum (Fig. 8: 1B, Fig. 10).

The inventory of finds in the Biograd museum includes one more, incomplete fragment which may be assumed to have been part of an impost (Fig. 8: 3).

Two columns with bases (Fig. 8: 5, 6) probably belonged to an altar screen. Even though their capitals were formed differently, both columns on bases had rectangular slots which may have served to fasten them to the altar screen pilaster. A similar example was preserved in Stari Grad on the island of Hvar (Jeličić-Radonić 1994a: 57, cat. no. 11). Besides these columns, there are two more examples on the drawing, of which the first is complete and 2 m high, while the other was sketched only as a fragment (Fig. 5: 7, 10). They were also mentioned by Ilakovac, but he stated that they were lost (Ilakovac 1971: 116). Chevalier (1995: 124) assumed that these columns belonged to a ciborium, but there was some confusion, for these columns referred to monolithic altar screen columns.

If these data are summarized, a somewhat clearer picture of the site is obtained. The research from 1898 led by the Croatian Antiquities Society and its trustee M. Zrilić, resulted in the discovery of two structures at the site beneath the hill called Bičina.

The stamped tegulae (dated to the first and second centuries), the inscription which indicates the existence of grave plots (see note 2 herein) and some architectural components included in the sketches (Fig. 5: 8, 14) belonged to the villa in which the small hypocaust columns were found.

All of the remaining finds belonged to the Early Christian church, including the fragments which Marun's associates described "as from a bell", which according to the sketch from the archives of the Museum of Croatian Archaeological Monuments may have belonged to the small gabled bell-tower that was added in a later phase, as is the case with St. Martin in Pridraga.

This work is a contribution to an understanding of the Early Christian church at the Bičina site in Polača through publication of documentation which had not been examined thus far or had only been mentioned in a broader context but never published. The remains of this building, like the villa in its immediate vicinity, are today no longer visible, so all data from the time of their research are essential to an understanding of this important monument in the context of Early Christian archaeology.

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