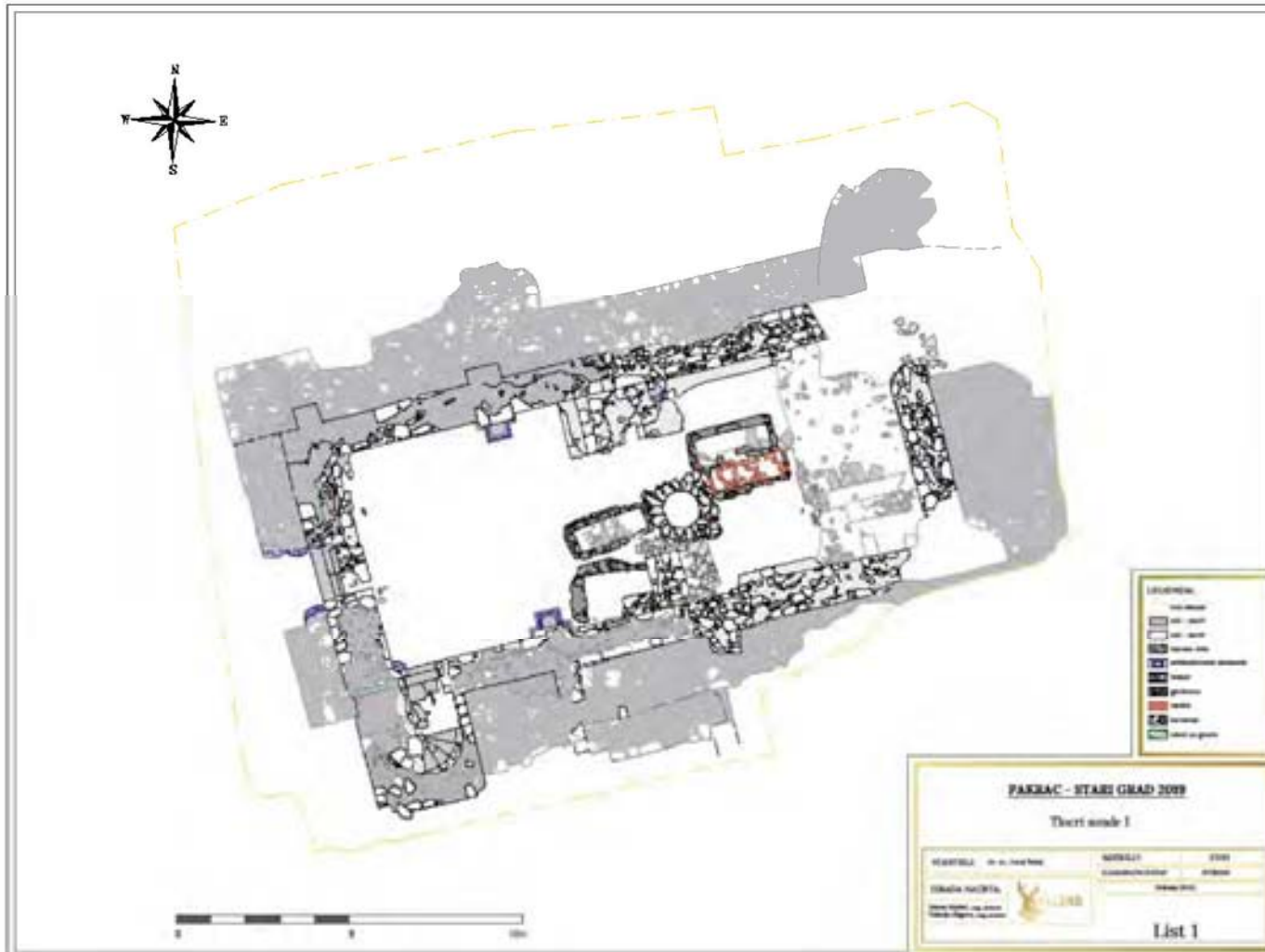


Pakrac-Stari Grad. Military Order church
- archaeological excavations and art
historian analysis

Iva Papić, PhD



Sketch presents two medieval layers of the chapel: the original chapel and a fortified church.

Early 13th original chapel was one-aisled church with a rectangular sanctuary of the same width as the aisle (*Saalkirche*) - an equestrian hall. Today, chapel is preserved in archeological layer. Church had 3 sections of rib vaults that stood on four pairs of pillars. The entrance was through a west portal, while a circular staircase was built on the south-west angle.

This original church was fortified by adding thicker walls and a round tower, around 1500. Original church thus became, most probably, a fortified church. At that time, a new western portal was installed.

Stone fragments/carvings



Considering the aesthetic quality of the church, as well as its significance, there is a relatively small number of stone fragments found during the archeological research.

Some fragments can be easily interpreted, whilst for some is difficult to identify their function.

Stone fragments differ in style – some can be dated in the early 13th century, while others can be dated to late 15th or early 16th century. That is, some belonged to the original church, while others were a part of the later, fortified church.

Early 13th century – columns with bases, staircase, vault ribs



Columns with bases

Four pairs of columns carried three sections of rib vault. Columns are leaned upon a wide protruding of the wall, in function of inner buttresses. Columns are circular and partly attached to the wall surface. Their bases are comprised of two protruding toruses with profiles and one trochilus. An ornamented griffe is connecting lower torus with the plinth that is placed on stylobat.

Column bases are exceptionally carved, with griffe that descends in an organic way from trochilus, lower torus and ends in a form of volute on a plinth.

Although griffe is a common element from 11th till 15th century, and therefore it succumbs to a stylistic development (from linear Byzantine style towards voluminous Gothic), an organic griffe, like the one in Pakrac, develops at the turn of the 12th century, as can be seen in many French, Hungarian and Croatian examples.



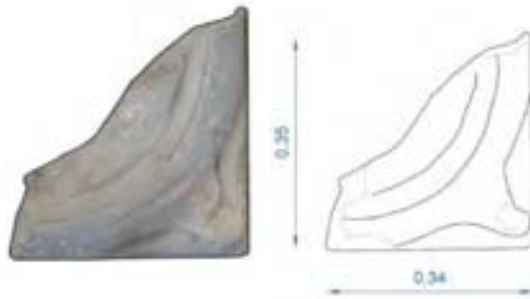
Benedictine abbeys in Zselicszentjakab, 11th century and Nuštar, 12th century

Royal chapel in Esztergom and St-Julian-le-Pauvre, Pariz, late 12th century

Gyulafehérvár cathedral and Pannonhalma abbey, 13th century

Ócsa – Premonstratensians church, 13th century

A type of shaping of a griffe and column base form, present in Pakrac, is common in French 12th century architecture and seems to be found in the cistercians' medieval architecture in Hungary and Croatia.

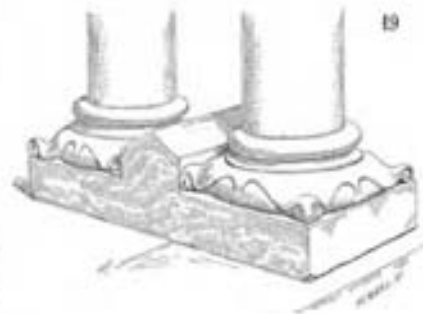
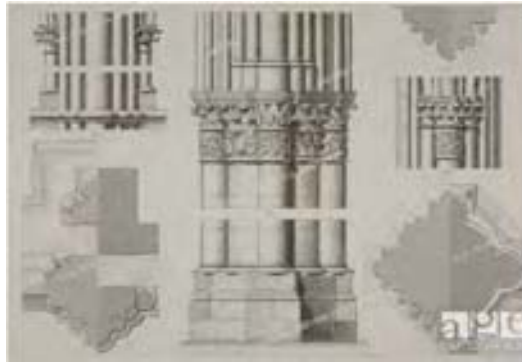
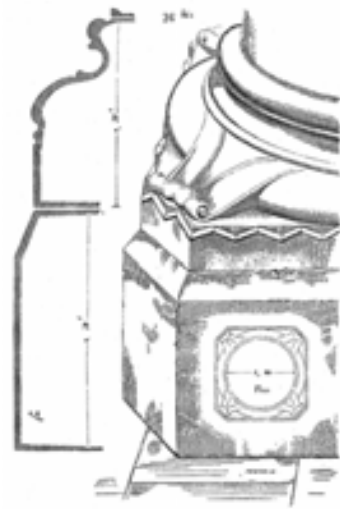


Pilisszentkereszt, Pilis cistercian abbey 12th century

Topusko cistercian abbey, early 13th century, inner north column on a western wall

Topusko cistercian abbey, early 13th century, inner north column on a western wall and a north-west corner column

Topusko cistercian abbey, early 13th century, inner south column on a western wall and a south-west corner column



Refectorium of the convent, Marienthal (bei Helmstedt), 12th century, and crypt in Memleben Kloster, 12th century.

Montreal church, St-Julien-le-Pauvre, Rheims cathedral, Langres cathedral, 12th century.

Divona-Sponza palaca in Dubrovnik (early 16th century) and portal of dominican church in Dubrovnik, early 13th century.

Staircase

Staircase consists of single stone slabs as treads, attached to one axis with a profiled base.

Profile base: semi-torus and a gutter on a circular plinth.

It is not discernible whether staircase lead to a western tribune/emporium or it originally had another function.





Hospitallers church St. John the Baptist, 13th century, Sopron

Staircase on a polygonal ground, next to north-west corner of the church, leads to a western tribune.

Vault rib

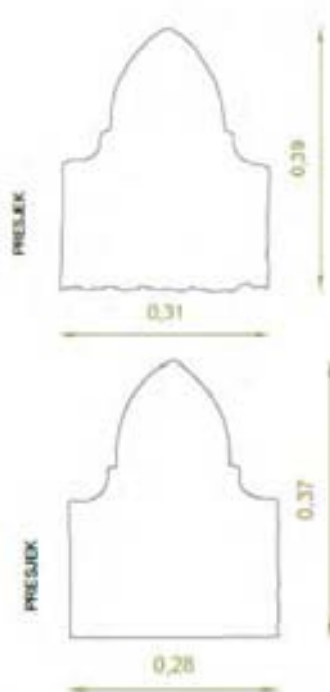
Two found vault ribs are shaped by profiling that consists of: almond profile, a square profile and a gutter (fillister).

Ribs with almond profile (almond-shaped ribs) are probably the earliest ribs used in rib vault construction.

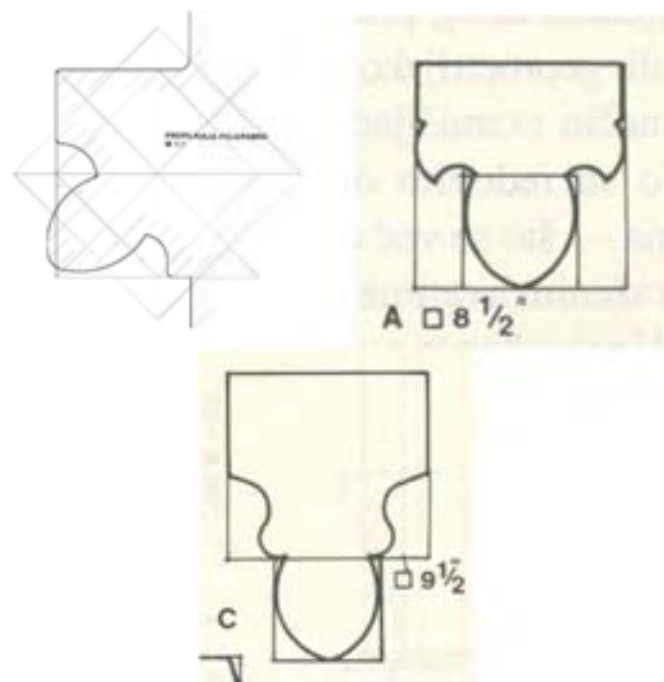
Ribs from Pakrac are easily dated at the time of the building of the original church, in the early 13th century.



Pakrac, almond-shaped ribs



Almond-shaped ribs are often found in Early Gothic monastic churches in Croatia.



Franciscan church in Našice (early 13th century), dominican church in Čazma (early 13th century), cistercian church in Topusko (early 13th century), and Templars' church in Gora, lateral rib (early 13th century) .

Sacrarium

Stone fragments are identified as part of a sacrarium, which probably belonged to the original church. It is not possible to discern whether the church had more than just one sacrarium.



Late-medieval stone fragments: window fragments, portal fragments, western portal

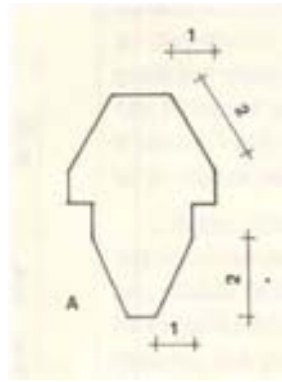
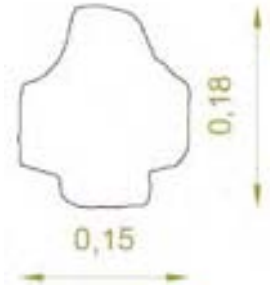
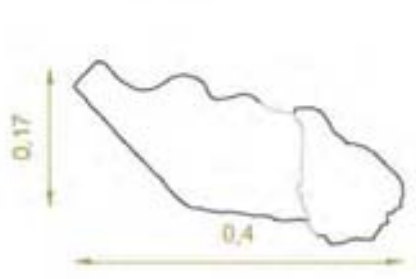
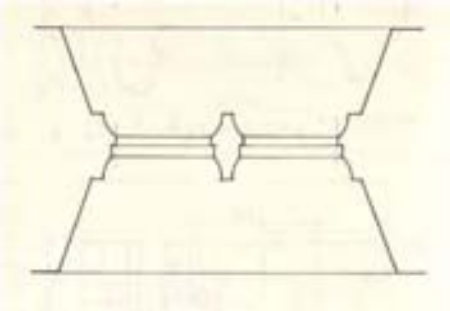
Window fragments

These two fragment are very similar in size, shape and type of carved profiles – it is basically the alternation of semicircular profiling without distinction in the form of another profile. Such stringing of profiles is characteristic for late medieval period.

This stone belongs to the window-crossing and it is a proof of windows being made in the complex form. It is very likely that the windows were biforas.

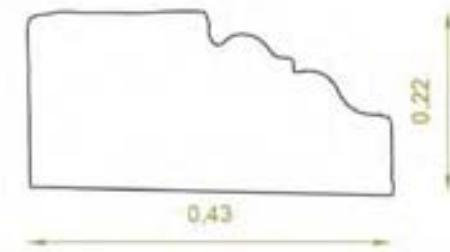
A schematic example of placing of window crossing.

A window crossing from the cistercian church in Topusko.



This stone differs from previous two – it could belong to a portal.

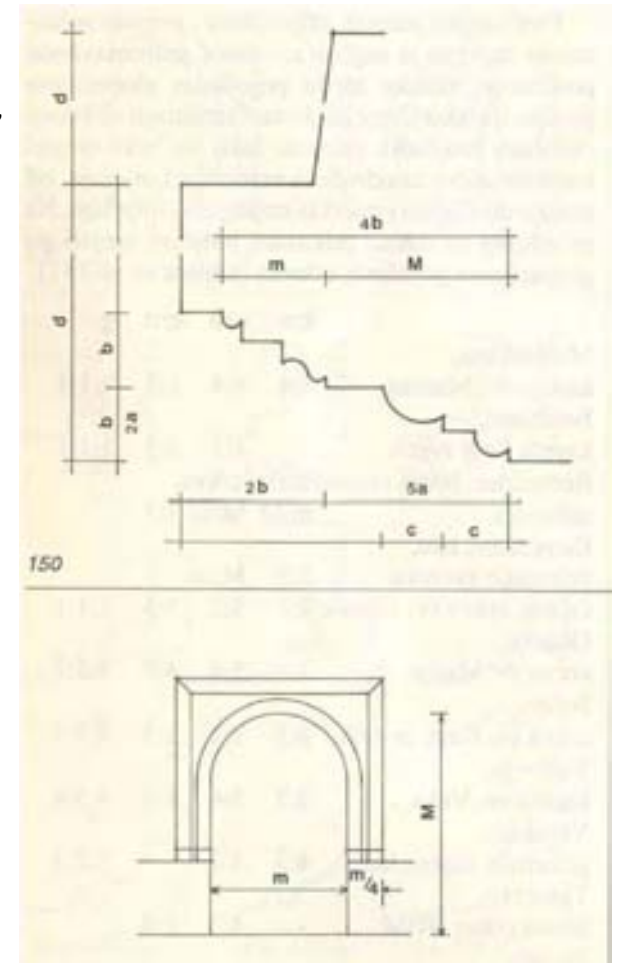
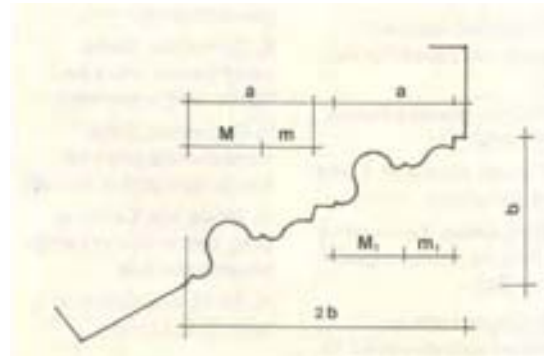
Fragment is defined by two elongated S- profiles, separated from each other by a simple square profile.



Examples of portals using similar S- profiling:

St. Peter chapel in Zdenci, western portal, 15th century (below),

Franciscan church in Kloštar-Ivanić, 15th century, western portal (right).



Western portal – Czech Gothic



Western portal is of later date, around 1500. It is attached to the outer wall of the original church. Original portal is not preserved.

Portal is preserved in three stone fragments: two on the north side, and one on the south side.

Profiling is as follows: two gutters with centrally placed semi-torus profiles, then a pear-shaped or a wedge-shaped profile with canelures, and a semi-column at the far west. It could be that two semi-columns spread from the base of the portal and continued to the lunette.

Stylistic elements:

- portal has no distinctive base, but the base is a roughly shaped stone slab;

- profiling of the portal ascends directly out of the base in shape of a slope;

- gutters are additionally profiled with a centrally placed semi-torus profile;

- a canelured pear profile or a wedge-shaped profile is very similar to rib vaults that are used in Croatian churches decorated in Czech Gothic style of the late 15th and early 16th century: St. Peter and St. Anne in Ilok.



Late medieval portal of the Pauline monks on the Moslavačka Gora – „Bela crkva”: simplified portal base out of which profiles ascend, gutters additionally profiled with a centrally placed semi-torus profile.



Székesfehérvár portal: simplified portal base out of which profiles ascend, gutters additionally profiled with a centrally placed semi-torus profile.



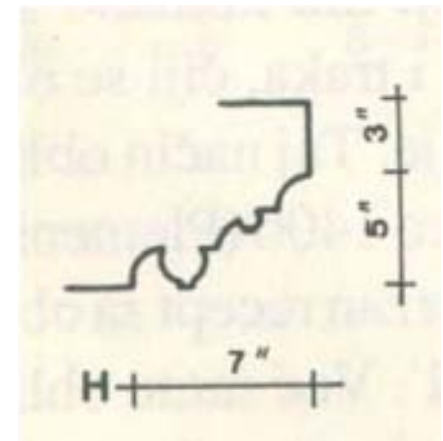
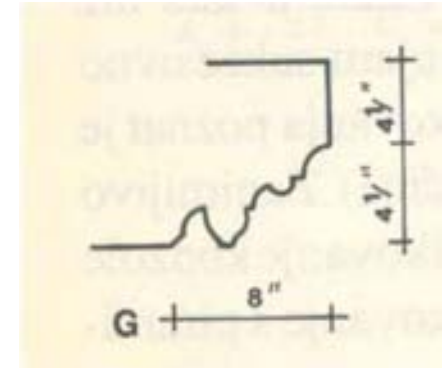
Voćin, late medieval western portal of the franciscan church: gutters ascending out of the simple base, different profiling, canelured middle rib-like profile.



Voćin, late medieval western portal of the franciscan church, northern detail: guttlers ascending out of the simple base, different profiling, canelured middle rib-like profile.



Wedge-shaped rib vault: St. Peter, Ilok, early 16th century, St. Anne, early 16th century.



Some examples of similar use of pear-like profiling in portals: south portal in chapel in Ružica-grad (15th century), St. Lovro, Crkvari (15th century).

Conclusion

Stone fragments correspond to the datation of the two constructional phases of the chapel – first being in the early 13th century, and the other in the late 15th century. In both constructional phases, chapel - later fortified church – was lavishly decorated in contemporary artistic style – Early Gothic in early 13th and Czech Gothic in late 15th century.

Floor plan disposition of an original chapel as an equestrian hall, as well as stone fragments, mainly the preserved column bases, show stylistic influences of French Gothic. The same influences are present in the first Templars', then Hospitallers' church in Gora, dated also in the early 13th century.

Unfortunately, it is not yet possible to determine the shape of the fortified church. Future research should shed more light into the second medieval phase of the chapel.



Pakrac-Stari Grad. Military Order church - archaeological excavations and art historian analysis



(IP-2019-04)

RÓMER FLÓRIS TERV

Megújuló épített örökség a Kárpát-medencében

online conference

October 15, 2020

Pakrac is located in western Slavonia, in Požeško-slavonska county. It is situated on the crossroads of two roads: one, that connects central Hungary to western Bosnia, and the other, which connects Požega and Zagreb.



Commanderies of the Templars and that of **the Hospitallers**



Hospitallers gained land Pakrac (entitled *Petriz*) from king Emerik or Andrew II. (1196. – 1235.). *Cruciferi de Pukruch* are mentioned for the first time in **1266**.

Their domus, with the chapel, was built shortly upon their arrival to Pakrac.

Domus with a chapel → fort around *domus* → suburbs around fort → town of Pakrac

Institute of archaeology started the archaeological research in 2017, based on the results of research by georadar.



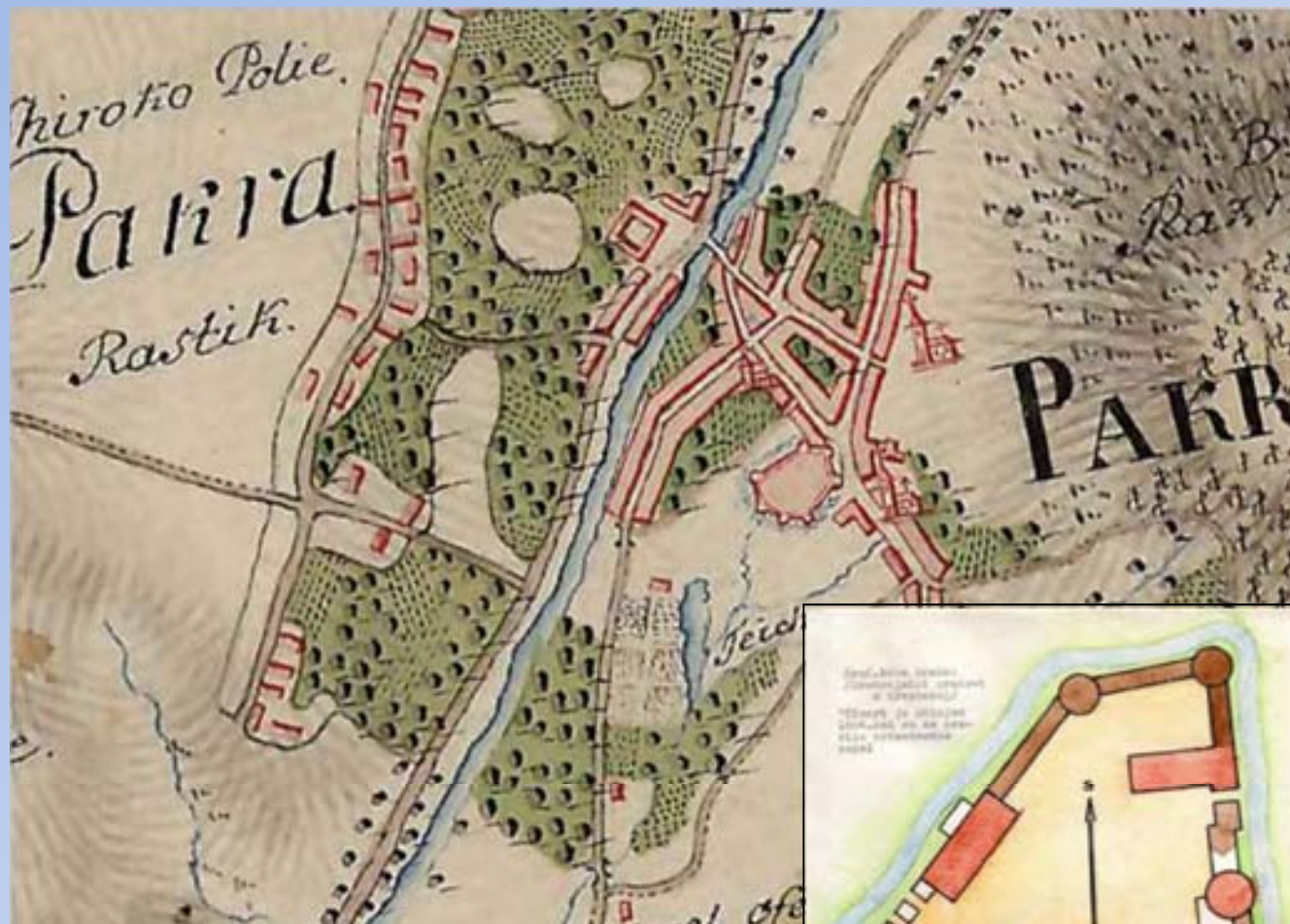
In the 1st campaign three test areas were selected with the aim of testing the existence and the level of preservation of archaeological layers and structures.

Test area 2



Finds from the test area 2 dates mainly from the period of the Ottoman Empire, or younger.

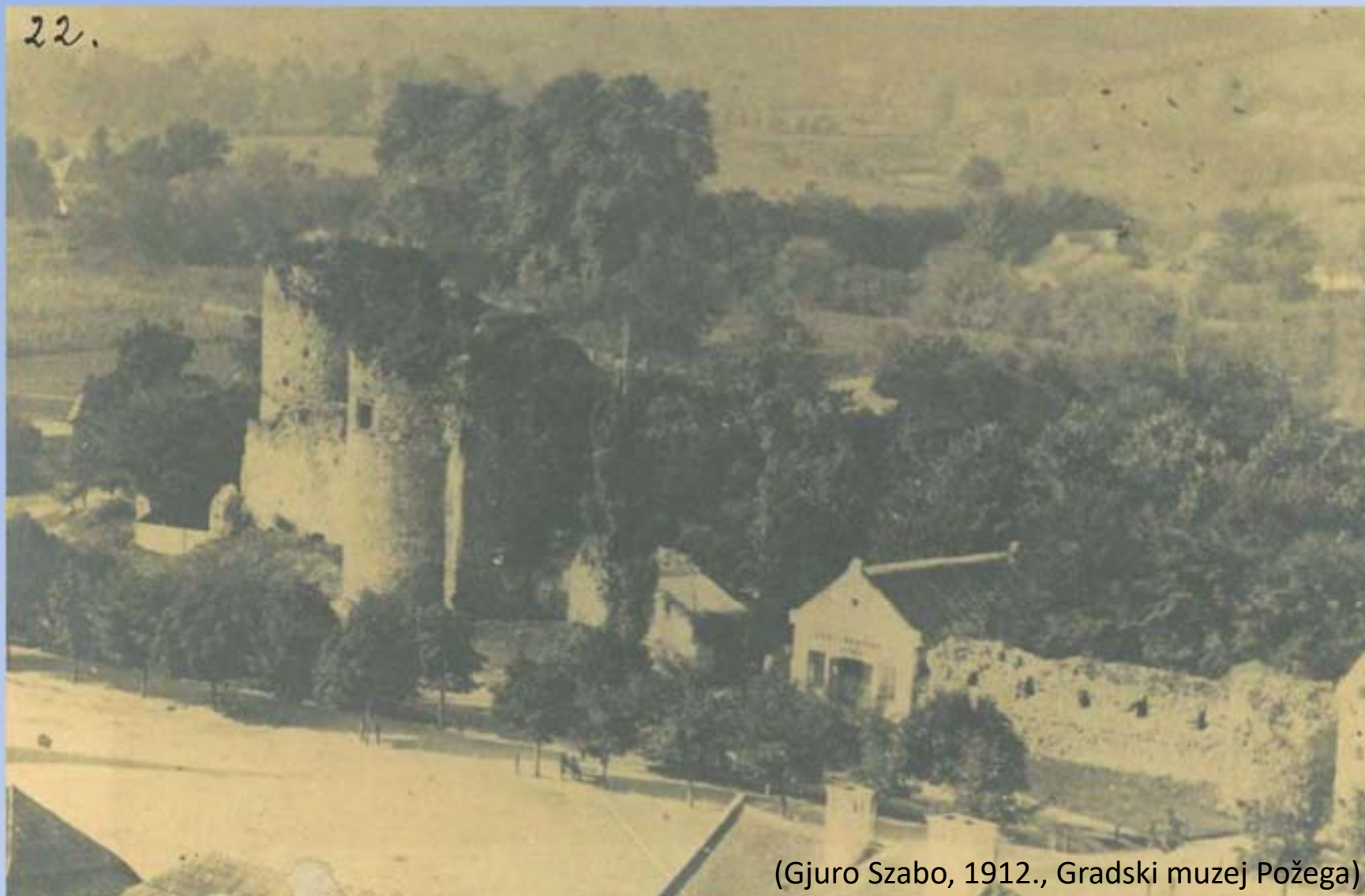
Around 1780



In test area 3 one of circular towers of the medieval fort was researched. It was detected in georadar research. The tower is shown on historic maps from 1780-ies



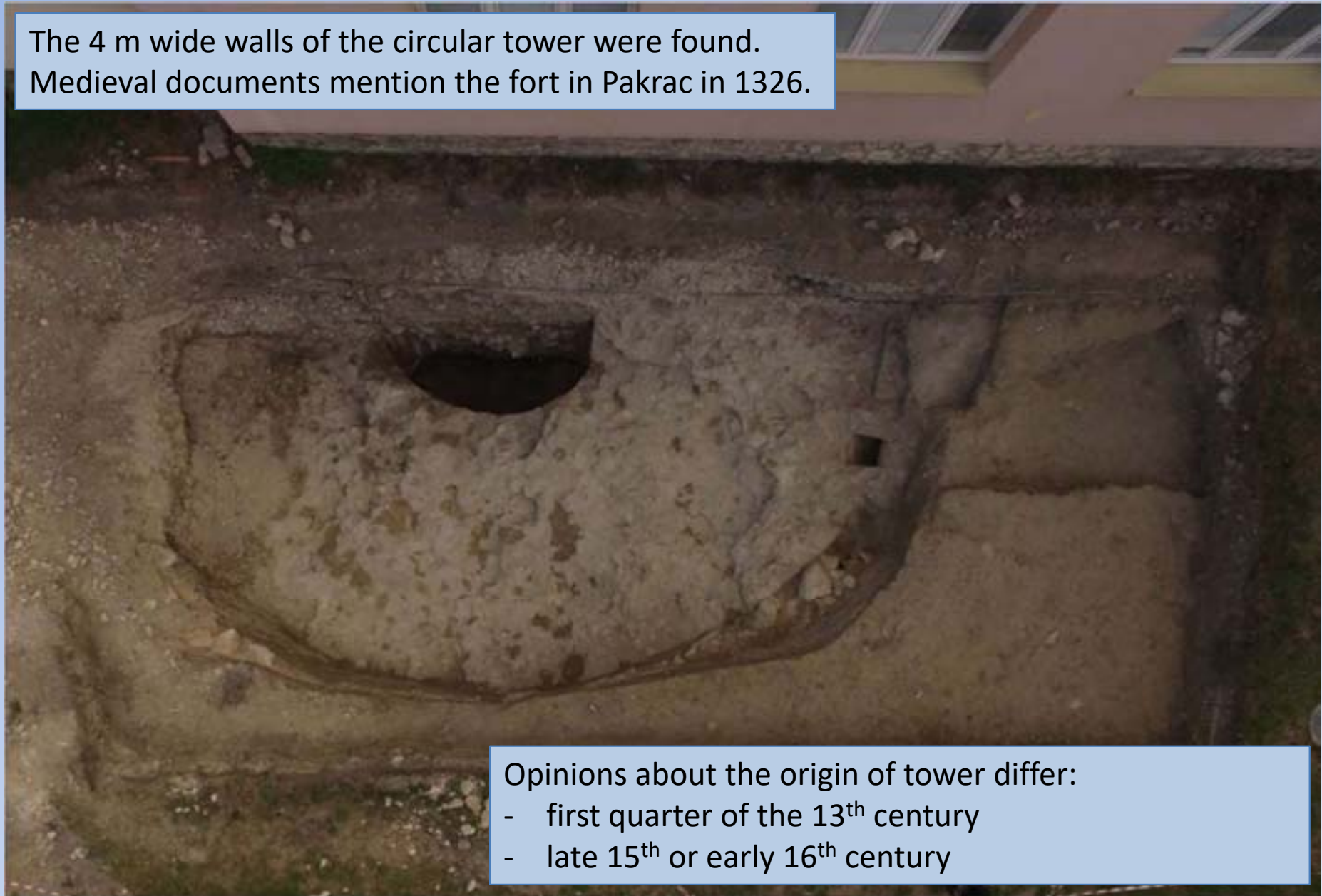
1864



Photography from the beginning of the 20th century.

Test area 3

The 4 m wide walls of the circular tower were found.
Medieval documents mention the fort in Pakrac in 1326.



Opinions about the origin of tower differ:

- first quarter of the 13th century
- late 15th or early 16th century

A layer of wooden boards was found, and, underneath them, a large quantity of pottery, which could be dated in the period of the late 15th or early 16th century.

Next to the pottery, cherry pits and animal bones were found.

The AMS radiocarbon age determination was done in HEKAL AMS Laboratory, Debrecen (Isotoptech-Atomki).

Bones date to the 15th century (1440.-1490.)

The planks are dating the construction of the tower in 14th century.

The wood was re-used, or the tower as well as the whole fort, was erected in the 14th century.



Test area 3



Test area 1

Test area 1 showed that the mediaeval walking level was around 2 meters lower – in later centuries this part of town was levelled by filling.

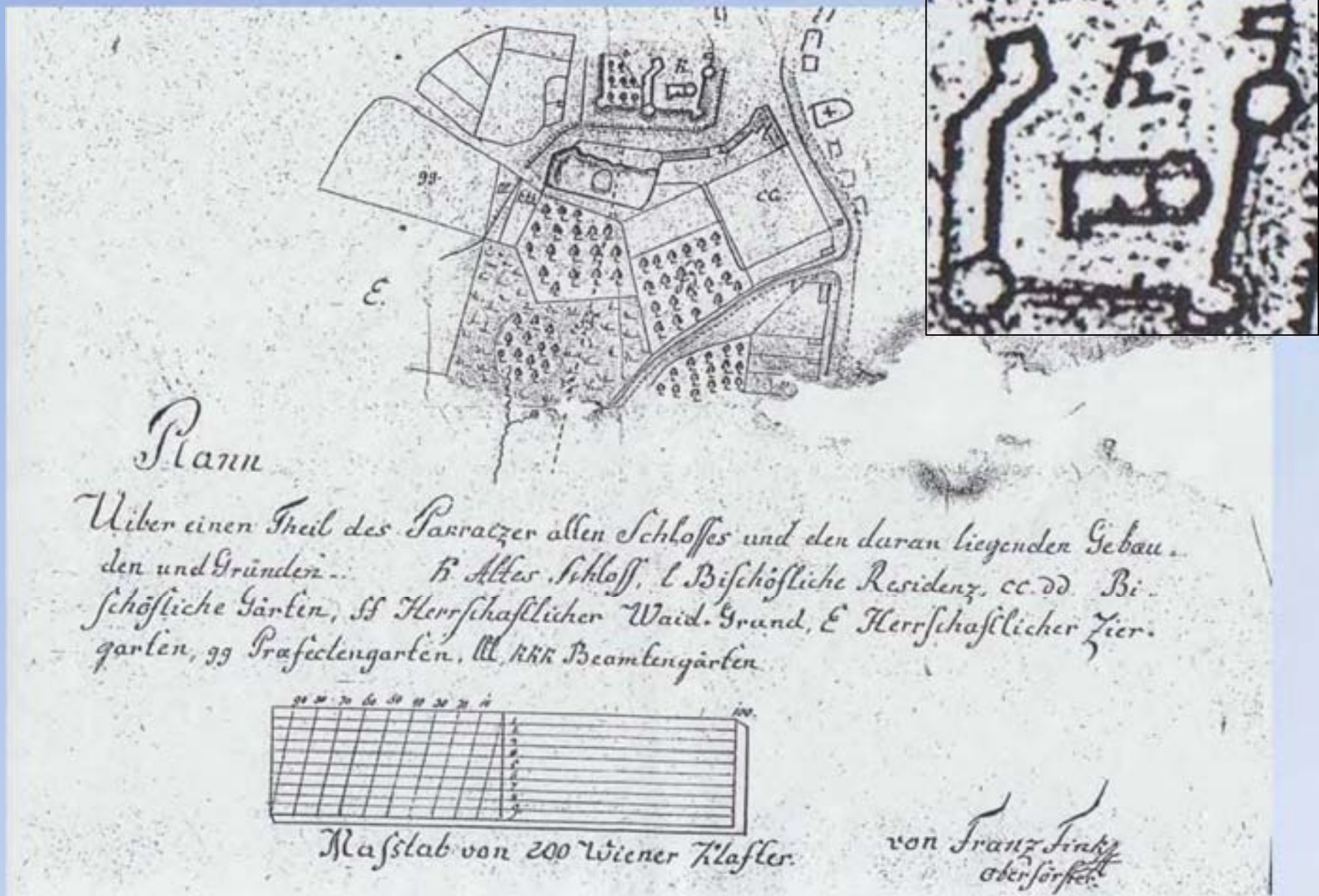


Test area 1

It was assumed that the walls discovered in this area are part of the Hospitallers chapel, which was a part of their *domus*.



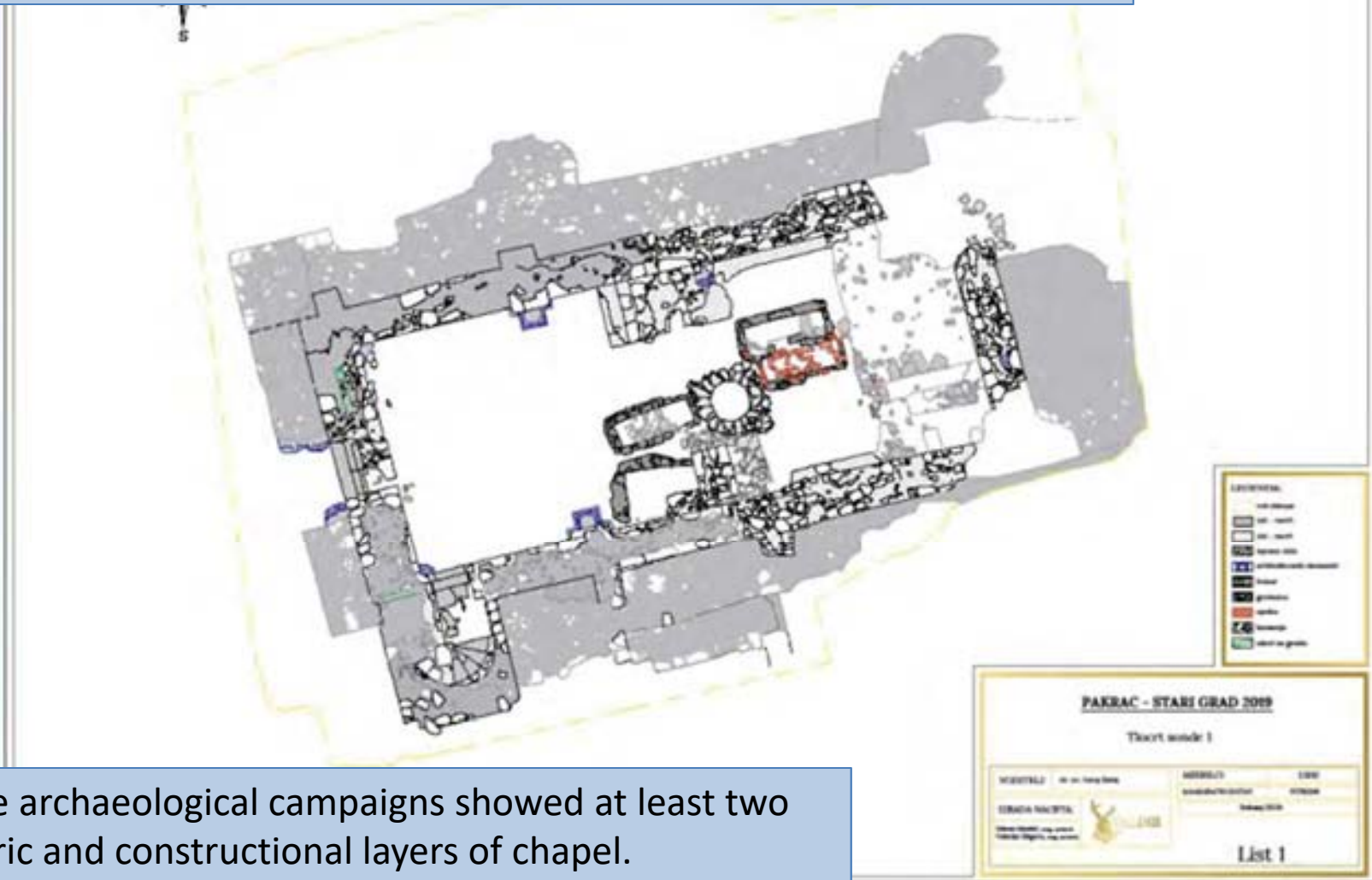
The assumption proved right and we concentrated on this chapel in the next three campaigns of research.



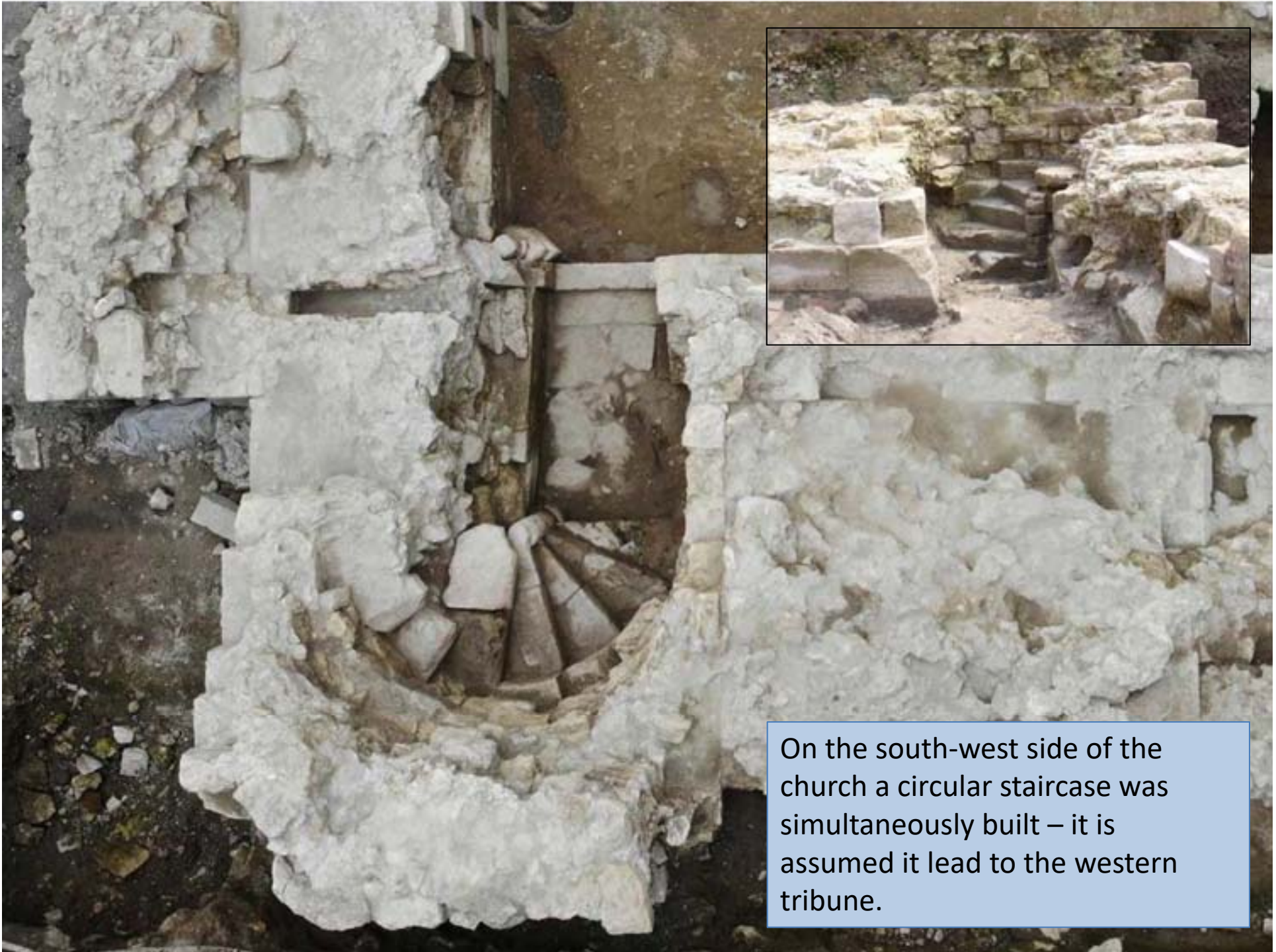
A Plan of one part of the old castle Pakrac and buildings and lands attached to it, from 1755, made by Franz Fink (now kept at the Muzej SPC in Belgrade) shows the chapel.

A) Early Gothic phase

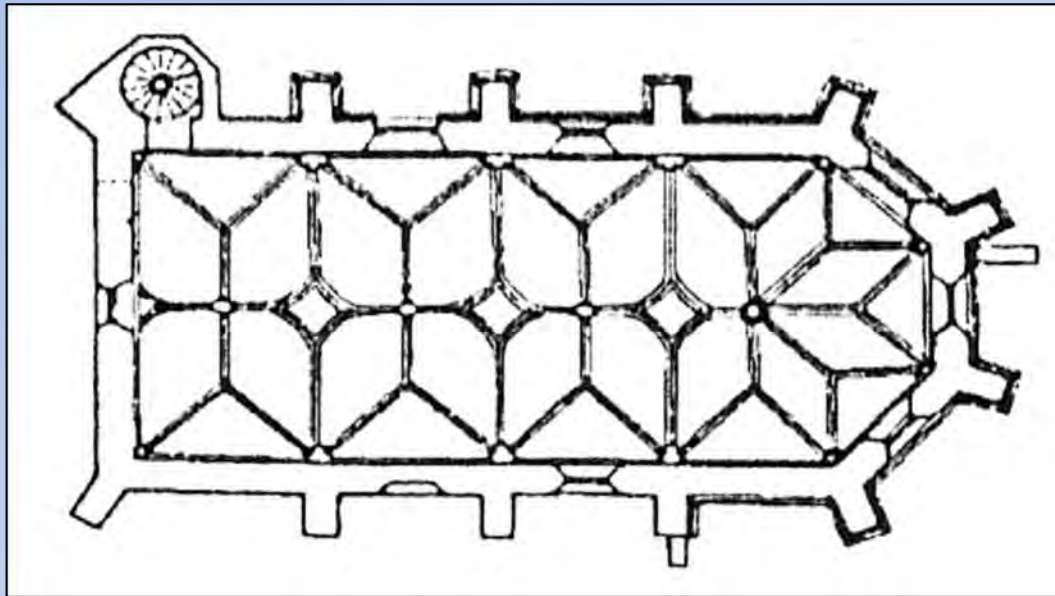
In Early Gothic phase this one-aisled chapel was built of fine masonry sandstone blocks. Inner church dimensions are: 16 x 6,5 m. The chapel had four pair of pillars carrying the rib vault. Bases of four pillars are found, three corner bases are ruined. The church was vaulted with three vault sections – the third section was a little longer and formed a rectangular apse. Church was entirely framed by buttresses.



These archaeological campaigns showed at least two historic and constructional layers of chapel.



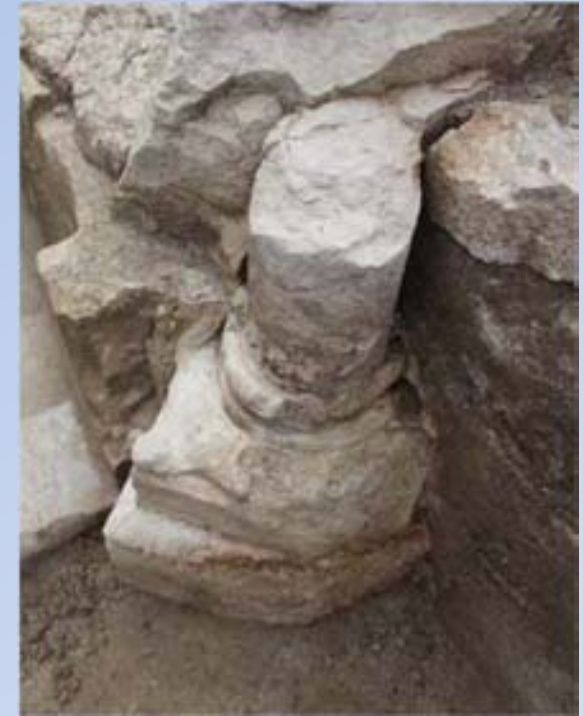
On the south-west side of the church a circular staircase was simultaneously built – it is assumed it lead to the western tribune.



(Ruttkay 1996: 178)

Similar staircase was built in the church of St. John the Baptist in Sopron, built after 1250.

Bases of pillars were found along the north and south wall, framing the central vault section. The most preserved one is situated in the south-west corner, close to the entrance to the staircase. The base had a griffe shaped as stylized volute, with traces of colouring.





Several vault ribs of an almond shape were found, which are characteristic for an early 13th century.



North wall



South wall



Eastern part of the church was significantly devastated, particularly the eastern corners of the chapel.



In the eastern wall a spout was found that led the water away from the *sacrarium*; a piece of sacrarium was also found. *Sacrariums* like this one are found in templar churches in Gora and Našice.




Other interesting details are found, like latch slot for the main western doors and for the doors to the staircase.

According to all these characteristics, and scarce written sources, it is possible to date this first church in the second or third decade of 13th century.



A look at the profiles of the youngest tombs shows considerable preserved stratification inside the chapel.



Interesting layer is the one with admixtures of charcoal and pottery, dated in the 14th century. There is a possibility that this layer was brought in to church for levelling of unevenness in the floor.

AD 1443-1620



So far 18 graves have been researched.

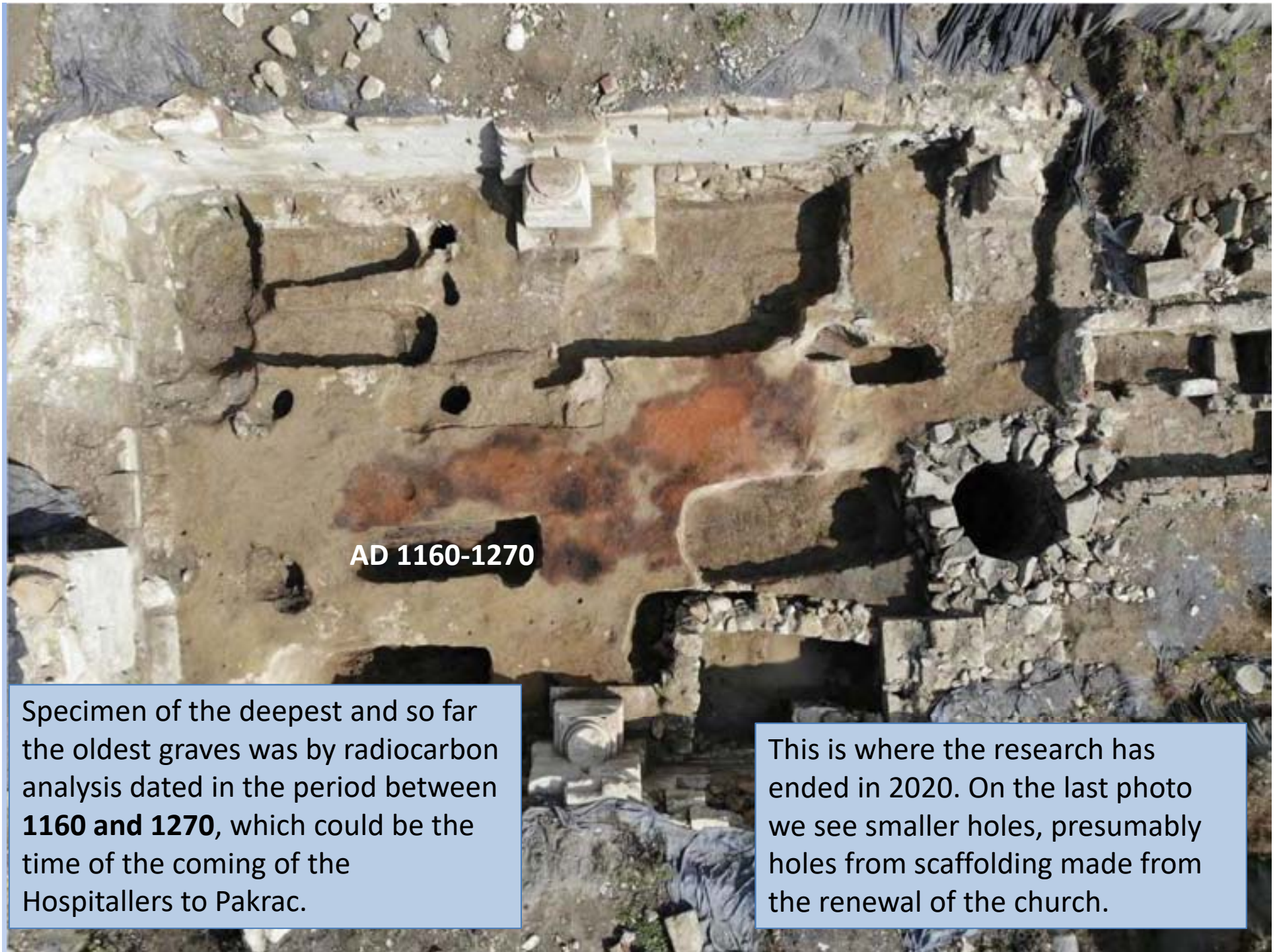


Remains of wooden caskets are found in almost all the older graves – it is extremely rare to come upon caskets so well preserved.



PN125

There are no findings in the graves, which is characteristic for 14th century – an exception is the tip of the arrow for crossbow that pierced the one from grave 10.



AD 1160-1270

Specimen of the deepest and so far the oldest graves was by radiocarbon analysis dated in the period between **1160 and 1270**, which could be the time of the coming of the Hospitallers to Pakrac.

This is where the research has ended in 2020. On the last photo we see smaller holes, presumably holes from scaffolding made from the renewal of the church.

B) Late Gothic / Early Renaissance phase



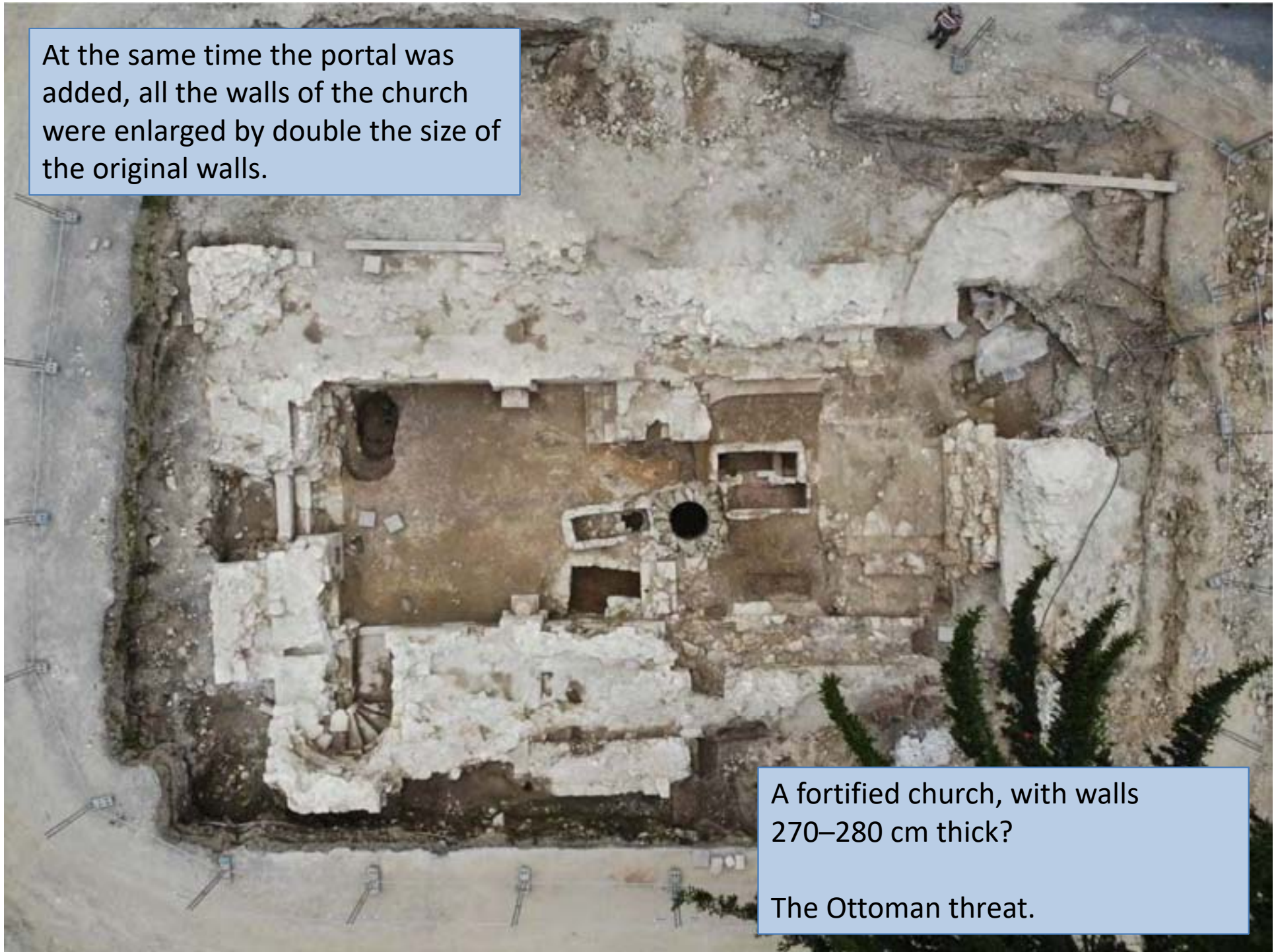
(MK, UZKB – F, inv. br. inv. br. 56432)



The bases of the western portal with complex profiling, dated around 1500, which point to the style of Czech Gothic.



At the same time the portal was added, all the walls of the church were enlarged by double the size of the original walls.



A fortified church, with walls 270–280 cm thick?

The Ottoman threat.




It seems that at the same time a circular tower was added to the eastern wall of the chapel





A new brick-flooring was laid in the church.



AD 1443-1620

The photograph shows an archaeological excavation site. In the foreground, there is a brick floor with some circular features. Below the floor, there is a layer of earth with dark, irregular patches, indicating traces of burning. The background shows more of the site, including a stone structure with a circular opening and some debris.

Below this brick-floor we found a layer with traces of burning, dated in the period between **1443** and **1620**.

C) Post-sacral history of the church



After the medieval periods, chapel had a post-sacral function, which is confirmed by the numerous animal bones found inside the chapel: bones of sheeps, ducks, swines and horses.

Beschreibung
des Königreiches
Slavonien
und
des Herzogthumes
Syrmien,

sowohl
nach ihrer natürlichen Beschaffenheit, als auch
nach ihrer igtigen Verfassung in kirchlichen, bürger-
lichen und militärischen Dingen.

III. Buch.
welches die Topographie enthält.

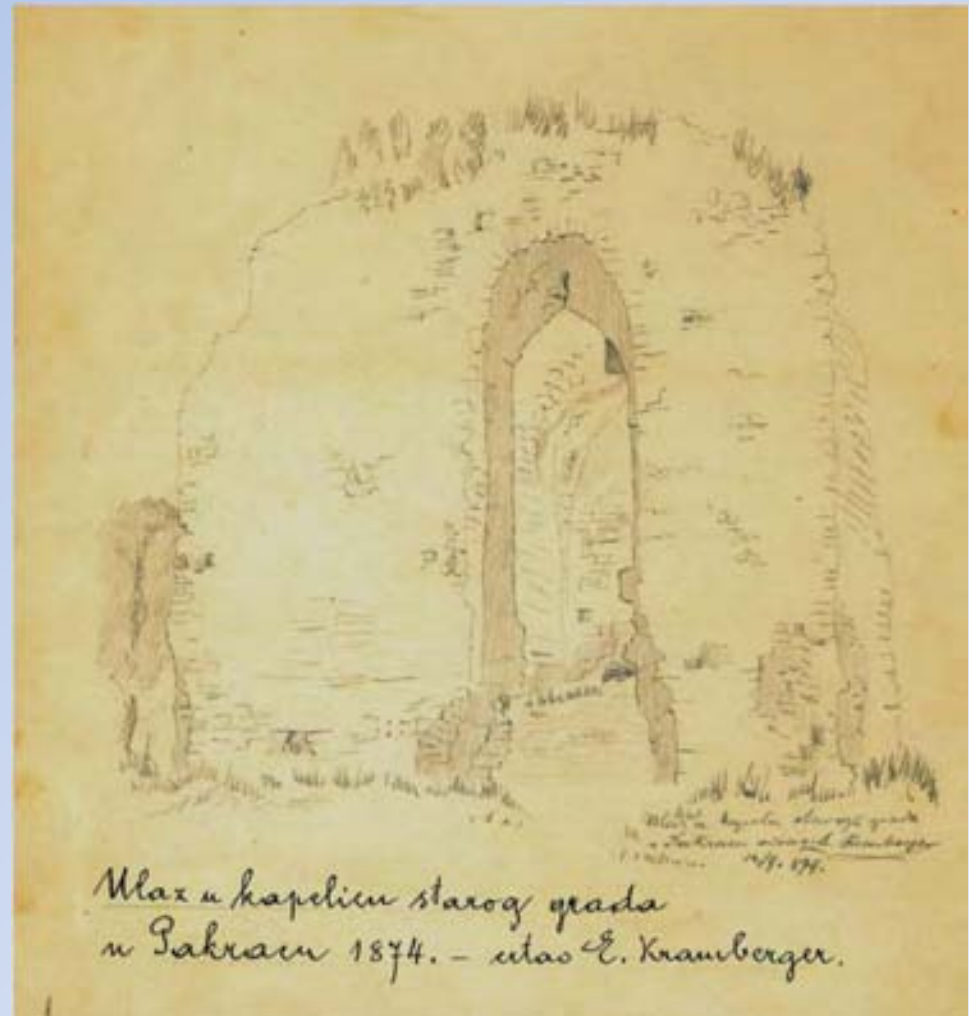
Aus eigenen Beobachtungen und aufmerksamen im Lande
selbst gemachten Wahrnehmungen entworfen

von
Friedrich Wilhelm von Taube,
Kais. Königl. wirklichen N. Oest. Regierungsrathe.

Leipzig, 1778.

Friedrich Wilhelm von Taube, 1777/78

Chapel slowly perishes, von Taube mentions it as a ruin in 1777., and like a ruin it is drawn in rare drawings. It was demolished at the end of the 19th century.



1874. – E. Kramberger (GM Požega)



The youngest structure is a well, constructed when chapel no longer existed.