

Artistic Legacy of Military Orders in Croatia – A Network of Traces and Influences

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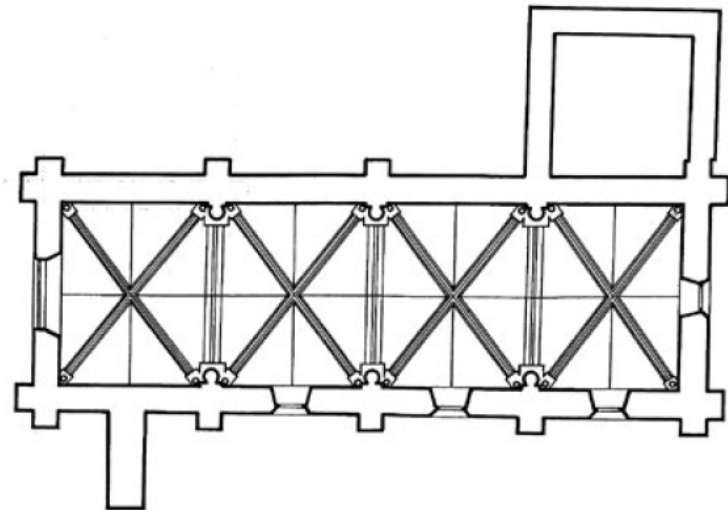
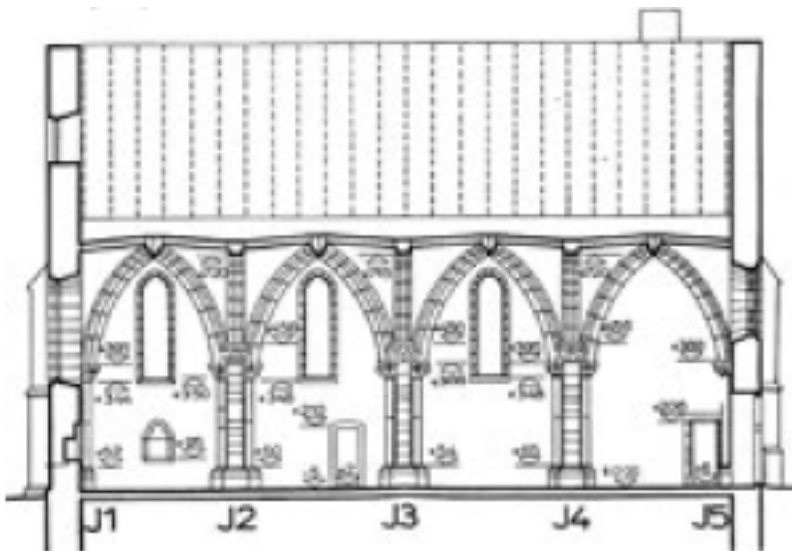
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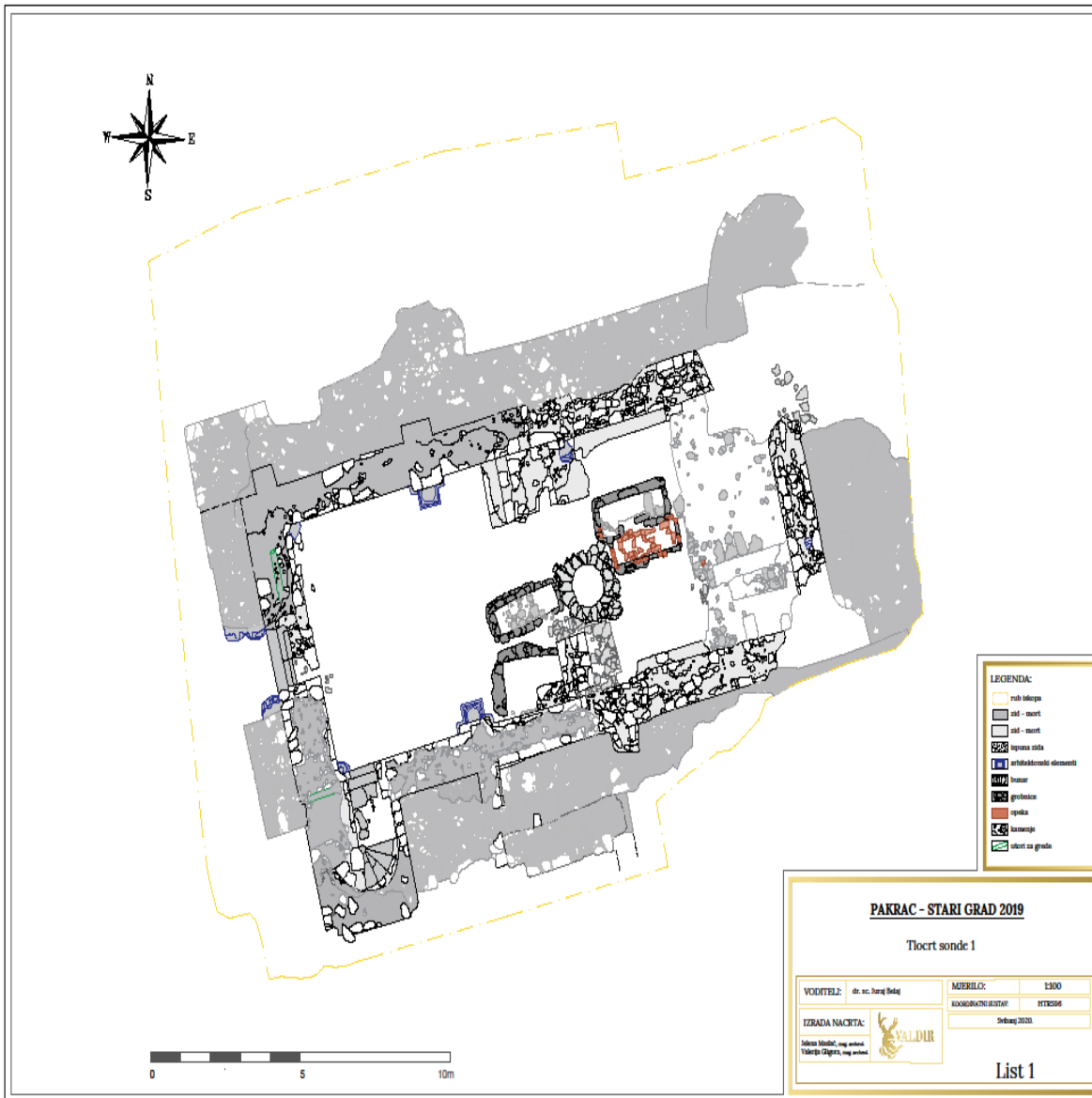


The topic of this lecture is the artistic legacy of military orders in Croatia and its connections with the Early Gothic art and architecture in medieval Kingdom of Hungary – that legacy is analyzed through three examples: the Templar church in Gora from the late 12th century (grant confirmed in 1209 by Andrew II), the Hospitaller chapel in Pakrac from the early 13th century and the Hospitaller church in Koprivna (Hospitaller estate of *Dopsa*) from the first half of the 13th century.



Templar church in Gora was defined during the architectural and archaeological research and was reconstructed after the Baroque layer was removed (finished in 2009). Architectural sculpture was preserved mainly *in situ*, especially capitals and column bases, while the missing parts of vaulting were reconstructed after the original rib vaults, found in debris.





Archaeological research of Hospitaller chapel in Pakrac started in 2017 and are still ongoing.

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.

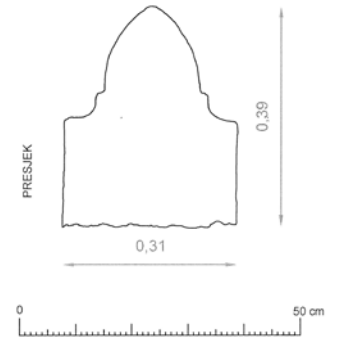


Churches in Gora and Pakrac are of *Saalkirche* type, strengthened by buttresses and vaulted by three (Pakrac) or four (Gora) rib-groined vaults. Church in Koprivna is of a simpler type, presumably because of its smaller significance in the context of the Hospitaller Order.



Commandery Coulommiers,
Cressac, Notre-Dame-de-la-
Boissière Châteaudun

Apart from their architectural layout, churches in Pakrac and Gora show striking similarities: round columns attached to inner lesenes, profiled column bases, vault rib. Similar examples are to be found in the architecture of military orders in northern, central and north-eastern France (regions Ile-de-France, Champagne, Lorraine, Centre, Limousin, Aquitaine).

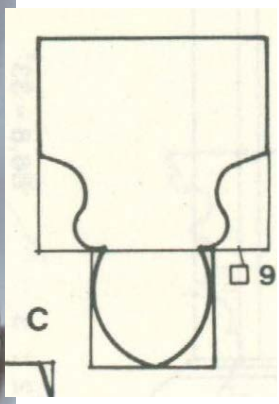
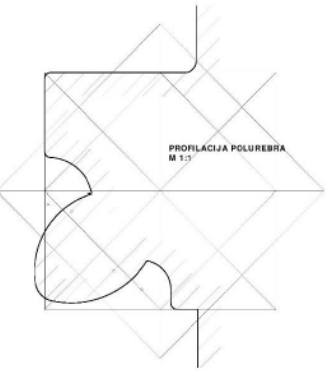


The Hospitaller chapel in Pakrac

The Templar church in Gora

Vault ribs from Gora (above) and Pakrac (below)

Similarities between Gora and Pakrac churches are visible in the amount in which the Pakrac chapel is preserved, which is about 1,3 meter above the walking surface. Elements for comparison are: inner lesenes, column bases, column bottoms, rib vaults.



— Ostaci arhitekture - temelji zidova
 - - - Područje s kamenim grobnicama?



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) .

As shall be showned, there are similarities in
 architectural sculpture between Templar church in
 Pakrac, Hospitaller chapel in Pakrac and
 Cistercian church in Topusko, which was, as
 recent research proves, a three-aisled basilica with
 an apse and two side chapels with apses (similar
 examples being Ciscercian churches in Stična,
 Mazan and Tamié).



Topusko, Cistercian church, base of north-western corner column in the northern aisle

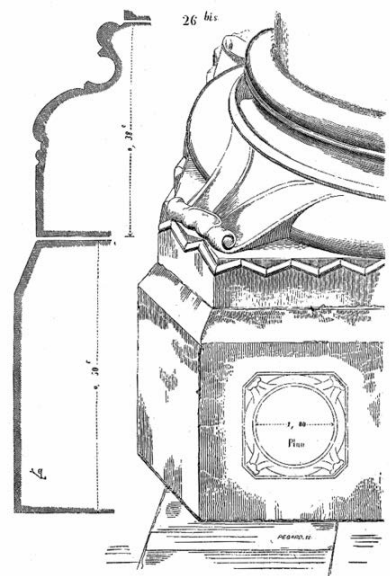
Topusko, Cistercian church, base of a northern clustered half-column by the western wall

Pilisszentkereszt, Pilis Cistercian church, 12th century

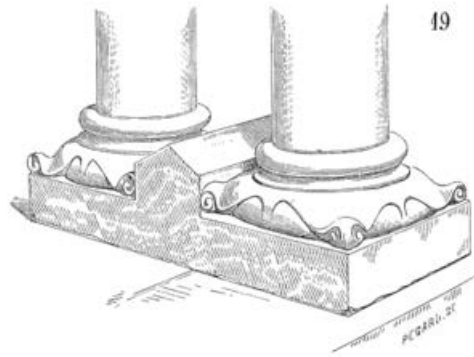
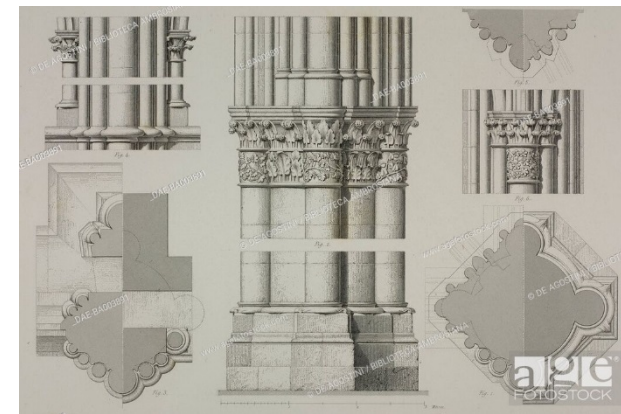


Pilis, Cistercian church, Tomb of Queen Gertrude

Similar column bases as the ones in Gora nad Pakrac are seen in the Cistercian architecture of Topusko (founded by Clairvaux monks in 1205 by the grant of King Andrew II) and Pilis (founded by Ace Abbey monks in 1184 by the grant of King Bela III).



Pannonhalma griffe/spur



Pakrac griffe/spur



Topusko griffe/spur

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

A type of a volute-like spur/griffe and a form of a column base, present in Pakrac, is common in French 12th century architecture and also in the Cistercians' medieval architecture in Hungary and Croatia, as well as in Hungarian examples of Early Gothic style on which French influences and French workshops are recognized (from Il-de-France, Champagne and Lorraine mostly).



Capitels from Gora are very much like the capitals from the Tomb of Queen Gertrude, Pilis church and from Topusko and Pannonhalma churches: similarities are seen in the choice of ornaments, their execution, and in the echinus and abacus.

Pilis, Cistercian church,
Tomb of Queen Gertrude

Pannonhalma, Benedictine
church

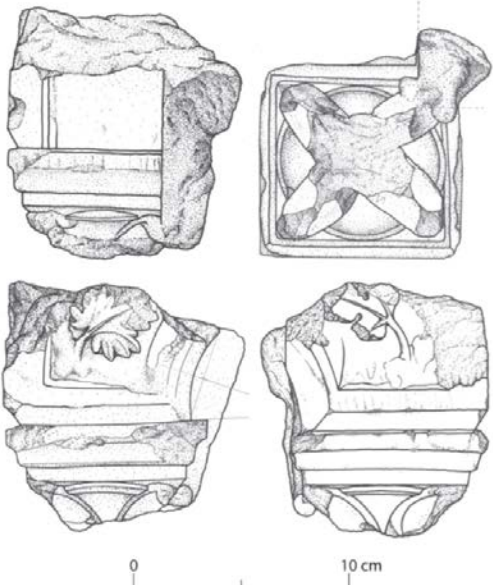
Topusko, Cistercian
church, southwestern
capitel



Pannonhalma, detail of lintel console of the Porta Speciosa



Topusko, Cistercian church: capital of the southern half-column (left), southern capital of the western facade (right), capital of the smaller western window (below).

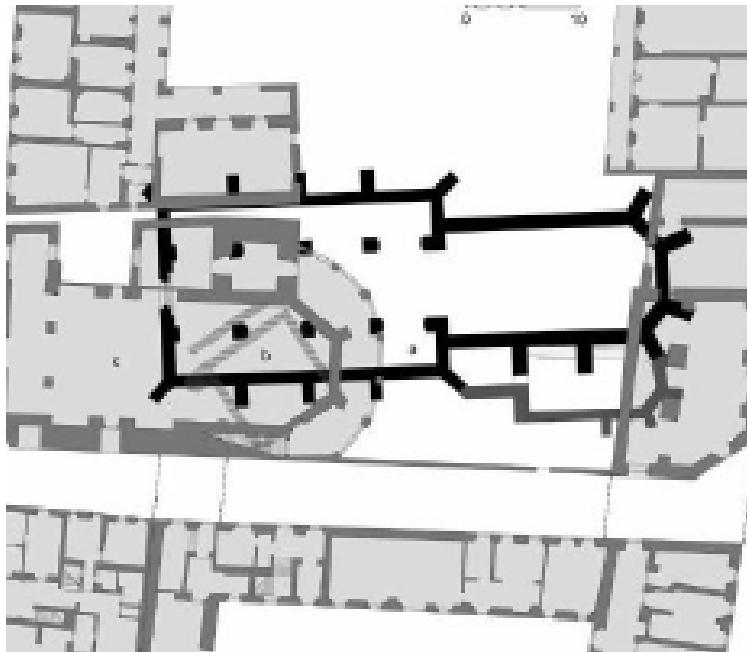
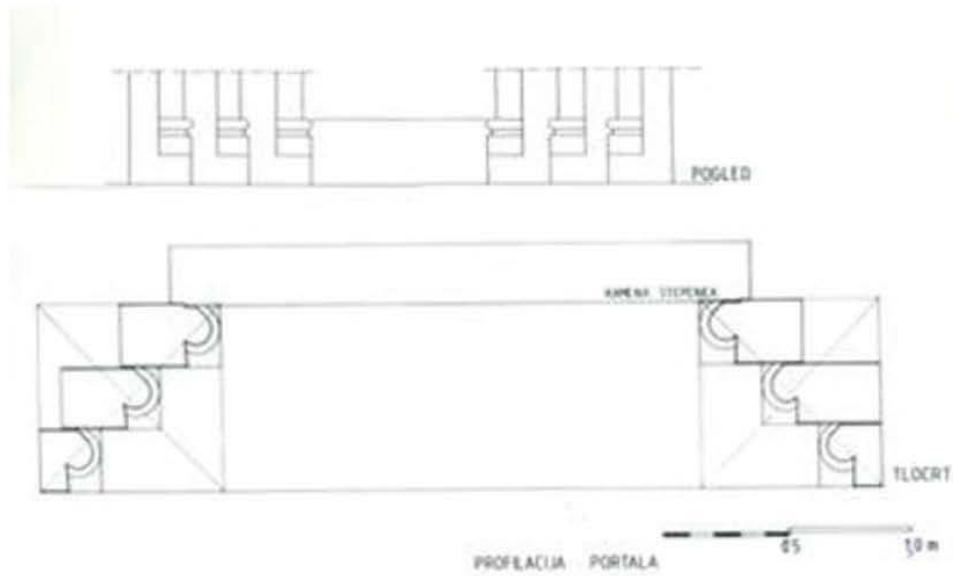


Pilis, Tomb of Queen Gertrude, upper corner fragments with detail of capital and arch (cat. 3.10)





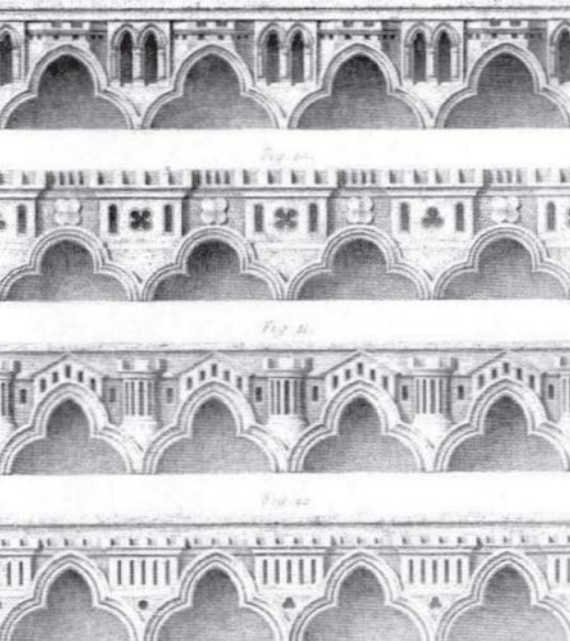
Traces of western portal in Topusko, Cistercian church (above) and Porta Speciosa, Panonhalma abbey (below): similarities are seen in the alternation of withdrawn and prominent columns or half-columns.



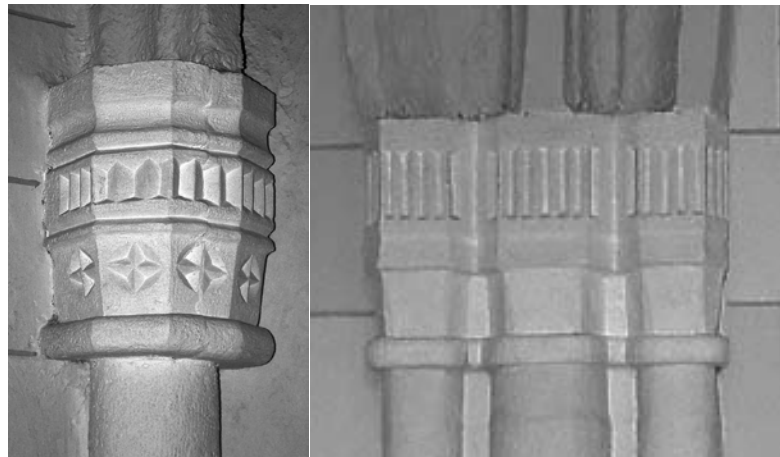
Western portal of Cistercian church in Osijek, most likely from the mid 13th century, today partially preserved in archaeological layer. Cistercian church in Osijek was a three-aisled basilica, while the elongated apse was presumably added when the church was used by the Augustinian monks, the first mention of which is from 1415.



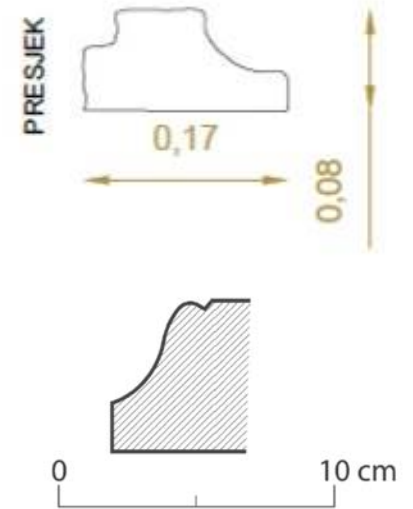
Pilis, Tomb of Queen Gertrude, fragment of a trefoil arcade (Cat. 3.12)



Reims Cathedral, Calixtus portal, drawing of baldachin zones, after Leblan



Brckovljani, St. Brcko Church (originally belonging to the Templars' and the Order of St. Sepulchre)



Profile from the Pakrac chapel and base platform of Tomb of Queen Gertrude.

Similarities with the Hungarian examples under the direct French influences (Reims, Chartres) are seen also in the capitals of the St. Brcko Church, which was originally share among the Templars' and the monks of the Order of St. Sepulchre: ornamental forms borrowed from architectural elements.

Imre Takács assumes that the sculptor of Tomb of Queen Gertrude studied in one of the Reims cathedral workshops, where he was an active member who mastered the complete, mature stylistic language of the workshop.



Prototype of this elegant, simple leaf decorations (Pilis and Gora) is to be found in 12th century early Gothic French examples (Reims and Chartres, among others). Imre Takács states that it appeared in Central Europe in the first decades of the 13th century in Pilis, Somogyvár, Pannonhalma nad Klosterneuburg. To that group we can add capitels form the Templar church in Gora.

Grape leaves filled the spandrels of the arcade of the Pilis tomb, the Porta Speciosa at Pannonhalma and the capitels form Topusko (Porta Speciosa was made by the workshop from Reims that operated in Pannonhalma prior to 1224). Among the drawings of Villard de Honnecourt, who was „sent” form Reims to Hungary, as Takács states, are the decorative motives seen in Pannonhalma. Takács connects the Gertrude’s tomb and Pannonhalma with the same workshop from Reims. Did the same workshop work at the Topusko church, whose building was of the same date as the Pannonhalma church?



Villard de Honnecourt (fol 5v; Hahnsloser 1972)



Esztergom griffe/spur

In analyzing French influences, Takács also takes into account the Francophile spirit and artistic milieu that prevailed in Hungary from the late 12th to the first half of the 13th century. A result of those artistic connections are palace chapel and cathedral in Esztergom, as well as the Pilis church, and, lastly, Topusko. As was said before, architectural sculpture preserved partially in Topusko and Pilis shows the same stylistic characteristics as the one from Pakrac nad Gora.

The Templar church in Gora from late 12th century is one of the earliest Templar churches in medieval Kingdom of Hungary and the earliest church in the Kingdom where the French type of military orders’ architecture was completely accepted and realized.

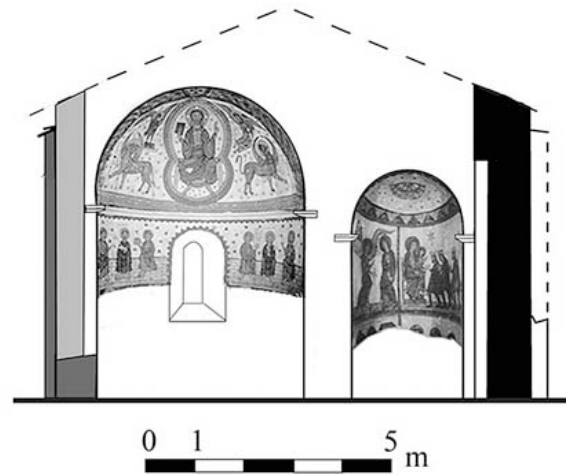
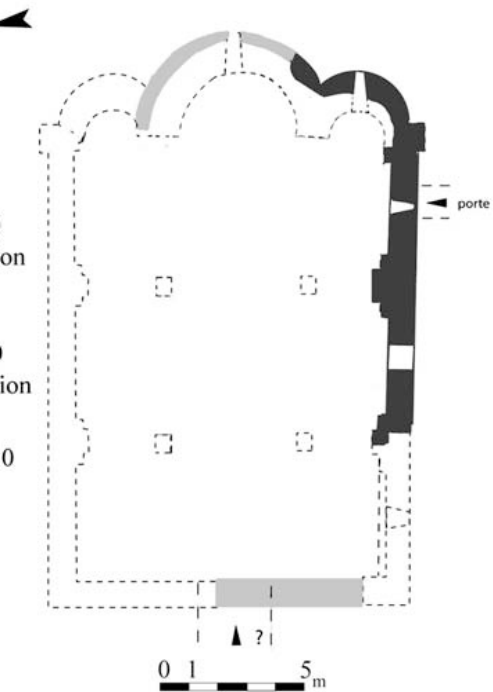
Hospitaller church in Koprivna as an example of adopting a local artistic tradition



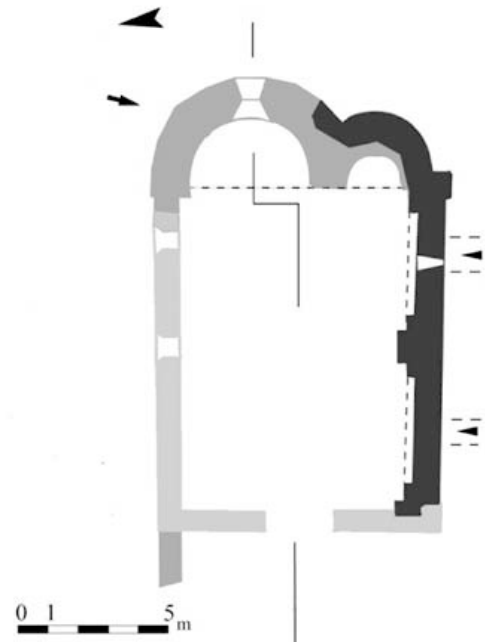
A simpler architectural type was used by the military orders in many village parish churches, where they accepted a local building tradition and, presumably, local craftsmanship: those were one-aisled churches with narrow apside, poorly adorned and articulated, while the lack of architectural sculpture was compensated by wall-paintings.

A fresco of Madonna with a child, angles and saints (St. George and St. Michael) in the sanctuary of the Hospitaller church in Koprivna is one of the most exquisite 13th century frescoes in today's Slavonia. It is interpreted as an example of Italo-Byzantine art, for which it is presumed that it was accepted in medieval Hungary with the coming of the Anjou dynasty. However, as this fresco is the first layer on the surface of the walls, it is earlier than around 1300, while the style can be connected with the acceptance of Italian style through French influences, i.e., through Hospitallers' import of artists and style.





Saint-Pierre de Camppublic (Beaucaire), Templar church



Templars gained possession over church Saint-Pierre-de-Camppublic in 1193: three-aisled church was modified into a church with a polygonal sanctuary (inside round) and a south apse. The Saint-Pierre-de-Camppublic Church served as a parish church (like Koprivna). The architecture of the Templar church demonstrates that the Templars accepted some elements of local tradition of building churches, one of which is the southern portal in the east end of the southern wall (typical for Provence).

ApSES were decorated with fresco paintings (now at the national gallery of Ireland in Dublin): in the south apse is the cycle of Virgin Mary. Paintings show Byzantine influence.

Examples described demonstrate that the art and architecture of military orders in today's Croatia show two socio-artistic currents: one is connected with the important commanderies inside the priory, where the direct import of French influences and workshops is discerned (Pakrac and Gora), while the other is connected to the minor commanderies, where occurred the acceptance of local building traditions (Koprivna).

Gora is one of the earliest Templar estate in medieval Kingdom of Hungary, in which, by the end of the 12th century, the Templars had estates only in Dalmatia (those were estates Vrana, Senj, Bojišće and Tinj); by 1209 they had settled in Slavonia also. Considering that Templars' preceptories in today's Hungary are of a later date than those in today's Croatia, it is not possible that the stylistic influences for development of earlier described architectural type in Croatia came from the center of medieval Hungarian Kingdom. Therefore, it can be assumed that the influences came directly from France, when foreign members of military orders acquired estates in today's Croatia.

The Hospitaller castle in Pakrac, including their chapel inside the city walls, was one of the earliest Hospitaller estate south of the river Drava – it served as a fort, but also as a mint, which testifies to its importance in the context of the Hospitaller Hungarian-Slavonian priory.

The importance of these two estates of military orders in today's Croatia was affirmed by their architectural and artistic significance and quality of style and craftsmanship, equal to the Early Gothic examples of art and architecture in Hungary.