

CALICES ET PATENAE FUNERALES AND THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH OF ST JOHN AT BRIBIR

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10.1484/M.DEM-EB.5.121645

The reason that motivated the discussion presented in this paper were the findings of chalices and patens recovered from medieval burials on the site Bribirska Glavica (antique Varvaria, medieval Breberium). To this discussion other similar findings from the territory of Middle Dalmatia are added, indicating that this was in fact practice that can be observed in other parts of Europe in the same period and that it was mostly connected to the burials of distinguished clerics. The chalices and patens from Bribir are explained using similar analogies and because they were found within religious architecture, it is assumed that important ecclesiastical figures were also included in those burials. This contributes to the development of the discussion about the chronology of the church of Sts Joachim and Anne, today used by the Serbian Orthodox Church. So far its chronological span was rather wide, but based on the latest archeological excavations of the church and its surroundings, we can conclude that it was a part of the medieval abbey of St John the Evangelist, known to us from the historical sources, and that it was built during the first half of the 14th century on the foundations of the earlier Late Antique and Early Medieval octofoil rotunda. Moreover, we also established that it served as a funerary church of the one of the branches of the powerful Šubić-Bribirski noble house.

Key words: *Late Middle Ages, calices et patenae funerales, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bribir, abbey of St John the Evangelist, Šubić Bribirski noble house*

Centennial archaeological investigations at Bribirska glavica have yielded myriad valuable medieval artefacts varying in character. Related research has been published continuously, with a significant contribution given by our colleague and friend Nikola Jakšić, to whom we dedicate this paper. Most of these artefacts are remains of buildings and stone monuments, utilitarian products and jewellery, weapons and warrior equipment, whereas items possibly belonging to movable inventories of former Bribir churches are very rare. In this paper, therefore, we will present two such examples. They are pewter chalices and patens from graves of eminent members of the church, unearthed during recent archaeological investigations on the location of modern-day church at the Bribir cemetery, built on the ruins of an eight-apsed late antique rotunda. One excavated grave is near the church façade, and the other inside, in its presbytery, close to the altar, set crosswise to the orientation of the church.

Grave 76 by the church front was found with no lids and partially damaged by a modern-age burial of grave 72, containing two infant skeletons (Fig. 2.1). Grave 76 contained one interred body, with modest remains of a chalice made from low-grade tin alloy in the middle-right side (Fig. 1). Among the rather small fragments of the chalice, only parts of its foot (Figs. 2.1–3) and a tubular-shaped bent sheet-bronze piece, probably once wrapped around the chalice stem (Fig. 2.4), were found together in the grave. It is not possible to determine the dimensions of the chalice. The sheet-bronze tubule is 2 cm long and its diameter is 1.6 cm.



Fig. 1. Correlations between graves 72 and 76 (photo: V. Ghica), the position of grave 76 (photoscan and layout: A. Di Miceli), and the stratigraphic position of grave 76 (drawing: V. Ghica) in the cemeterial-sacral complex with rotunda at Bribir

Grave 16 (Fig. 3) in the church presbytery, was found with no lids and filled with earth, but its contents were intact¹. It comprised skeletal remains of six adult bodies, a damaged pewter chalice and a whole paten (Fig. 4), as well as an iron belt buckle frame and around twenty clothes clasps (Fig. 5). During the excavation a Roman bronze coin was also found in the grave. It had ended up in it with backfill after removal of its lids. Given the number of bodies, there is no doubt that the grave saw some reuse, probably over several decades. It was in an interesting stratigraphic position (Fig. 6), not fully clarified by the end of the investigation. There exists a network of walls around and below this grave, not entirely defined. We can assume they are remnants of earlier medieval walled tombs. The bottom of the grave is about 1.5 m above the bed-rock, and its top around 0.70 m below the floor of the modern-day church. The stratigraphy also reveals that the grave was buried around 0.80 m above the probable level of the rotunda floor, so it clearly dates from a period between Late Antiquity and the modern age. We suppose that this find correlates to the time when the longitudinal church was built, i.e., in our opinion – the first decades of the 14th century, which will be elaborated below.

The chalice and paten from *grave 16* have been relatively well preserved. The paten is complete, while the stem of the chalice is broken and mostly lost (Fig. 4), but can be reconstructed based on the preserved elements. Its bowl (*cuppa*) is bell-shaped and undecorated, the stem (*stilus*) has a bi-conical node or knob (*nodus*), vertically divided in sixteen lobes. The stem lightly spreads mid-line to the base or foot (*pes*), which is softly rounded along the edge. Its whole surface is ornamented. The dominant motif is a series of six five-petal flowers with dished centre and thin hatches in-between

¹ V. GHICA – A. MILOŠEVIĆ – D. DZINO – N. URODA, Arheološki projekt "Varvaria / Breberium / Bribir" u 2015. godini, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, III, 43, Split, 2016, pp. 22–23, Fig. 18.



Fig. 2. Grave 76 with the position of the chalice (photo: Y. Béliez) and finds from the grave (photo: D. Popović and A. Milošević)

the flowers. The lower edge of the foot was flatly flared, but is mostly missing. It is presumed that it was 19 cm high, with a foot diameter of 10.6 cm, the biconical knob diameter on the stem of 5.3 cm, the bowl height of 6.5 cm, and its opening measuring 9.1 cm in diameter. The paten is made from tin-plate with a pressed circle in the centre, the 8.9 cm in diameter, which corresponds to the chalice bowl opening diameter, according to the liturgical practice of that time. The paten is not decorated, and its patent unevenly distributed small bulges are due to the inferior quality of its tin alloy and a lack of casting skills (bubbles?). Its overall diameter is 15.9 cm.

A chalice with paten was also found in a grave at Bribir in 1911 or 1912. The information on this find was cited by S. Gunjača after L. Marun's notes, indicating that some locals, apparently at odds with him, had been deliberately opening and destroying graves in his absence. Consequently, one priest's grave was also opened. It contained the chalice and paten, on which we have no other information². At that time a small Romanesque church at Vratnice was being excavated in the western part of Glavica, as well as a building north of the local cemetery at Bribir. Marun assumed they were remains of the Franciscan monastery and church of St Mary, and therefore it is likely that the mentioned grave with the chalice and paten had been located at one of those sites. When it comes to funeral chalices in medieval graves, it is quite interesting to note a piece of information from a written historical record, which gives to understand that in the then Croatia such items were not

²S. GUNJAČA, Referat u vezi predloga za savezno iskopavanje na Bribiru, *Zbornik zaštite spomenika kulture*, 3/1, Beograd, 1953, p. 142.



Fig. 3. Position of grave 16 in the cemeterial-sacral complex with rotunda at Bribir (layout: V. Ghica), a photoscan of the grave (Y. Béliez) and the positions of the chalice and paten in it (photo: Y. Béliez)

placed in priests' graves only, but also in those of secular dignitaries, who were buried according to a similar funeral ceremonial, seemingly wishing to retain their privileges after their earthly lives. Thus, in his last will and testament, brought by the abbot of the Bribir Franciscan monastery to the Skradin chapter for confirmation in 1498³, Viceban James II of Bribir (ca. 1375–1456)⁴ bequeathed movable property and funds for renovation and repair of the churches of St Mary and Holy Salvation at Bribir, as well as 20 florins for purchase of a chalice and the same sum for a priest's robe, both intended for his grave (*arca*)⁵. Joint chalice-and-paten finds – moreover, with patens which might have been

³ The first will was made before the Knin chapter in 1441; the other one dates from 1456, and its translation and transcription, since it had been made in the Croatian language and Glagolitic script, was certified by the Skradin chapter in 1498. Cf. I. BOJNIČIĆ, *Jakov Bribirski od plemena Šubić*, *Vjestnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog zemaljskog arhiva*, 1, Zagreb, 1899, pp. 86–87, doc. Nos. 5 and 7.

⁴ Jacob II, son of Paul IV Banić from the Nikolić lineage, one of the Šubić family branches, died with no offspring as the last member of the main family branch of the Bribir dukes. He concluded a succession agreement with his cousins from the Zrinski lineage before the *Zagreb chapter*. After his death all his properties in Bribir and its surroundings were inherited by the Duke Petar II Zrinski (d. 1493) and his sons. I. BOJNIČIĆ, *op. cit.* (n. 3), p. 87, doc. No. 5; M. ANČIĆ, *Parba za dio naslijeđa banovca Jakova Šubića Bribirskog*, *Radovi Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Zadru*, 36, Zadar, 1994, pp. 309–352.

⁵ S. GUNJAČA, *Referat u vezi predloga*, pp. 138–139; I. BOJNIČIĆ, *op. cit.* (n. 3), pp. 86–87, doc. No. 7. The will reads as follows: *...lego viginti florenos emere calicem ad arcam meam et indumentum sacerdotale ad eandem similiter pro viginti florenis...* There is no doubt that Jacob II of Bribir was buried in his family tomb in the church of St Mary at Bribir. Its headstone with the crest of the Šubić family has been preserved. It is interesting to note that the term *arca* was used for this grave, which indicates that it had had an arcosolium above it, approximately like the one from our proposed reconstruction in: A. MILOŠEVIĆ, *Varvaria – Breberium – Bribir: the Past and the Monuments*, Split, 2015, p. 21.



Fig. 4. Pewter chalice and paten from grave 16
(photo: Z. A. Alajbeg)



Fig. 5. Bronze belt buckle frame and clothes clasps
from grave 16 (photo: A. Milošević)

used as chalice covers – have not been frequently found in medieval graves in Dalmatia. We know of only one such set from an unknown site, kept in the *Museum of Croatian Archaeological Monuments* in Split, and of chalices from Asseria and Lepuri, as well as one, probably modern-age, from Solin. Since the majority of those for which we know how they were discovered have been found in graves, we can make the same assumption about the so-called, we can assume that such cases also regard the so-called *calices et patenae funerales* or *sepulchrales*, viz. chalices and patens reserved for funeral rites, a common practice in burials of church dignitaries in various parts of medieval Europe, particularly in the 11th and 12th centuries⁶. Given the material from which they are made, they were probably not used in Eucharistic liturgy, since only chalices and patens from precious metals were allowed for church services. In exceptional cases the use of bronze or tin vessels was tolerated in the most modest churches with bishop's permission⁷; some historical sources reveal that equipment made from such materials was indeed used in church services (*...et aliam crucem de stagno...et aliam calicem et patenam stagnatas...*)⁸. Since the dimensions of the Bribir chalices and patens are fitting for the Eucharist service, we are of the opinion that they were made for funeral purposes only, since the Bribir church at that time could not be regarded as modest in any way. A number of charters, mostly testamentary, bequeathed not only landed and various movable property to the Bribir churches, but also funds for procurement or making of valuable church inventory. Chalices are repeatedly mentioned in such cases.

⁶ Historical sources confirm the practice of placing chalices in priests' graves (J. MARZOHL – J. SCHNELLER, *Liturgia Sacra: Oder Die Gebräuche Und Alterthümer Der Katholischen Kirche Sammt Ihrer Hohen Bedeutung...* Vol. 3, Luzern, 1837, pp. 223–224). There are even recorded cases of symbolic use of wooden or wax chalices instead of metal ones (*Ibid.*, Vol. 5, pp. 1003–1005). A leather chalice was placed in the grave of a bishop in the church of St Stephen in Mainz (V. H. ELBERN, *Der Eucharistische Kelch im Frühen Mittelalter*, Berlin 1964, pp. 46–48, fn. 159, Fig. 57). For general and detailed information on liturgical and funeral chalices and patens in Christianity through the centuries, cf. CH. ROHAULT DE FLEURY, *La Messe. Etudes Archéologiques sur ses Monuments*, Vol. 4, Paris, 1888, pp. 45–153 (on chalices), pp. 155–167 (on patens), and V. H. ELBERN, *Der Eucharistische Kelch*, pp. 34–57.

⁷ J. P. MIGNE, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie sacrée*, Paris, 1862, pp. 577–582.

⁸ This description of the altar in the Freising basilica originates from Erchambertus (d. 855), a local bishop. Cf. J. VON SCHLOSSER, *Schriftquellen zur Geschichte der Karolingischen Kunst*, Wien, 1892, p. 160.

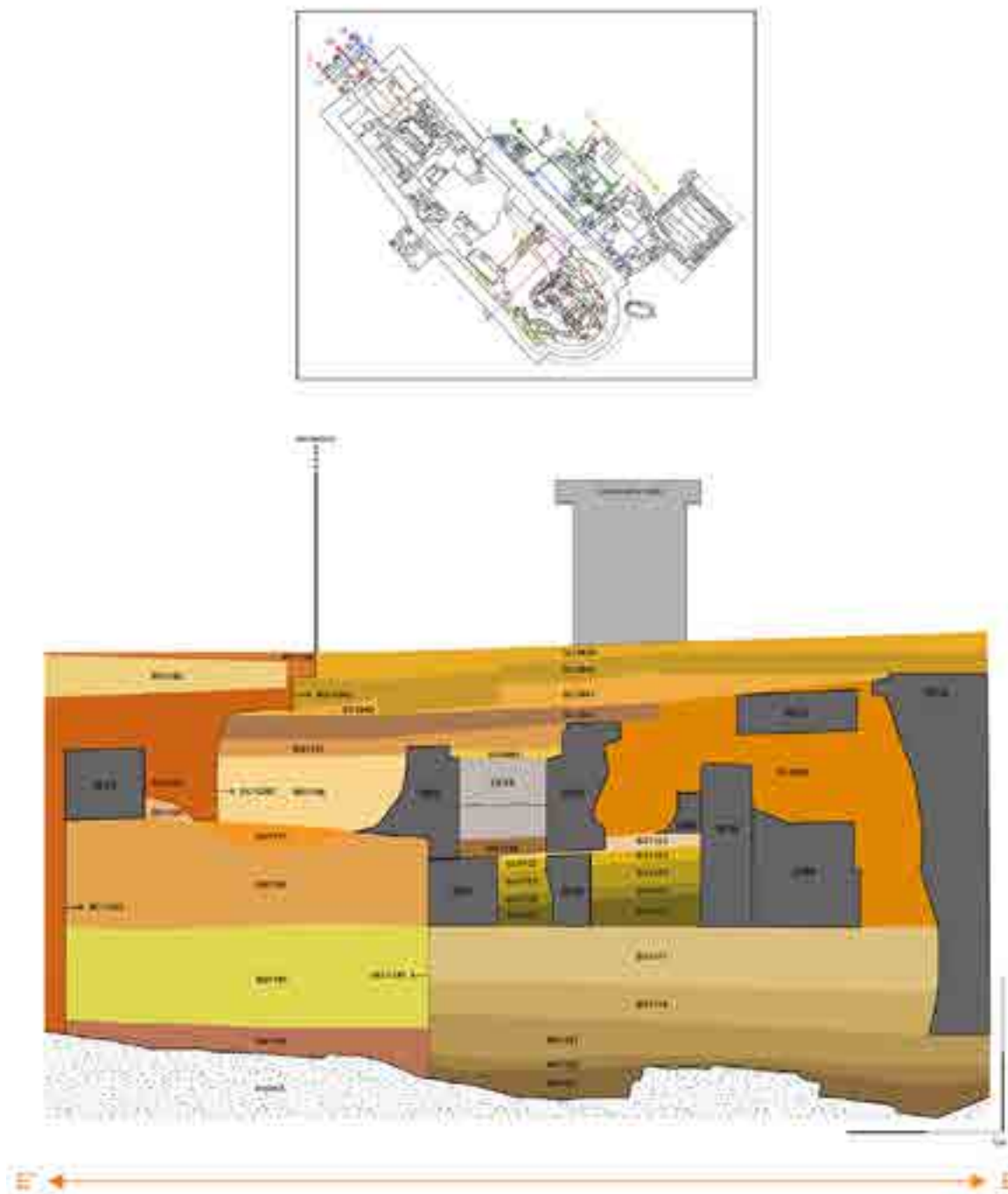


Fig. 6. Stratigraphic position of grave 16 (according to: V. Ghica)

For instance, in 1370 Ivan Besida, Duke of Bribir, bequeathed *...tres ciffos argenteos...* to be converted into a chalice for the church of St Mary⁹; in 1383 Dabrul Nikolić, the Duke of Zadar from the Šubić lineage of Bribir, had a chalice made from the family silver for the church of St John¹⁰; the afore-mentioned James II of Bribir bestowed ten florins, also for purchase of a chalice for the main altar in the

⁹ *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, Vol. 14, Zagreb, 1916, p. 279, doc. No. 202; S. GUNJAČA, Referat u vezi predloga, p. 138.

¹⁰ *Codex diplomaticus*, 16, Zagreb, 1976, p. 336, doc. No. 269; S. GUNJAČA, Referat u vezi predloga, p. 139.

same church¹¹. It was recorded in the Bribir Necrology that the Bribir Duke Grgur Stipanov had also donated a silver cross and chalice to the church of St Mary in 1384¹². A chalice was also indirectly mentioned in 1346, in the generous testament of Paul II, son of the Croatian Ban Paul I of Bribir, bequeathing to the church of St Mary at Bribir, *inter alia*: ...*item to aliam super altare laboratam cum serico*¹³.... Tomazina de Georgiis, a noblewoman from Zadar and the widow of Budislav Šubić, Duke of Bribir, hired goldsmith Stjepan Crnotić from Zadar in 1401 to forge her a silver chalice, to be gilded and adorned with enamel work¹⁴.

The foot of the pewter chalice from Solin was found during the development of the Jadro riverbanks and its dredging, next to the ruins of the late antique and medieval church of St Peter and Moses (the so-called Hollow Church [Šuplja crkva]). Only a major part of the foot and its stem below the bowl have been preserved (Fig. 7). Only the flared edge of the foot is decorated with a series of small hanging separate pentagons with an oak leaf in the middle. Above this edge there are two parallel wide flutes; another single one separates the top edge of the foot from the teardrop stem. The stem is 9.7 cm in diameter and 6.7 cm in height with the rest of the stem. We assume that it dates from the 17th or 18th century. Even though it is chronologically beyond the scope of our topic, we are presenting the information on this find for the sake of comprehensiveness with respect to such known discoveries in Dalmatia.



Fig. 7. Foot of the pewter chalice from Solin (photo: Z. A. Alajbeg)

A fragment of a pewter chalice stem and a complete well-preserved glass bottle were found in a grave (Figs. 9.1–2) in Lepuri near Benkovac¹⁵, south of the late medieval church of St Martin (Fig. 8). The grave is part of a cemetery started in the first late medieval phase between the 14th-century church and the ruins of earlier sacred structures at the site. The chalice stem has been preserved in its entire height (Fig. 9.1). In its upper zone there is a flattened biconical unornamented knob. The stem is 5.4 cm high, while the knob is 3.1 cm in diameter. Its remains are not sufficient for any chronological dating. Along with the remnants of the chalice, the mentioned bottle made from transparent greenish glass was also discovered in the grave (Fig. 9.2). Its flared base is in the shape of a deformed circle, quite bevelled in the centre, almost through the entire biconical body which is divided in vertical lobes. The body shoulders a long gracious neck ending in a flared thick lip. Approximately in the middle of the neck there is a hol-

¹¹ S. GUNJAČA, Referat u vezi predloga, p. 139.

¹² S. ZLATOVIĆ, Bribirski nekrolog XIV. i XV. vieka, *Starine JAZU* 21, Zagreb, 1889, p. 84 (...*unam crucem argenteam et calicem pro anima sua et suorum*).

¹³ Š. LJUBIĆ, *Listine o odnošajih između južnog Slavenstva i Mletačke republike*, Vol. 2, Zagreb, 1870, doc. No. 672, p. 419; V. KLAJČ, *Bribirski knezovi od plemena Šubić do god. 1347.*, Zagreb, 1897, p. 154; S. GUNJAČA, Referat u vezi predloga, p. 138.

¹⁴ C. FSKOVIĆ, *Zadarski sredovječni majstori*. Split, 1959, p. 125, fn. 770.

¹⁵ N. JAKŠIĆ, Arheološka istraživanja razorene crkvice sv. Martina u Lepurima kod Benkovca, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, III, 27, Split, 2000, pp. 189–200.



Fig. 8. Plan of architectural remains with the church of St Martin in Lepuri (after: N. Jakšić)



Fig. 9. Stem of the pewter chalice and the glass bottle from Lepuri (photo: Z. A. Alajbeg)

low flattened biconical widening. We take it that the bottle is of Venetian or central European origin from the 13th–14th century, with typological roots in the eastern Mediterranean. Therefore, it can be used to indirectly date the chalice from the grave. The base of the bottle is 6.1 cm in diameter and 2.1 cm in height; the biconical body is 8.9 cm in diameter; the neck is 8.6 cm high, while the neck knob is 3.5 cm in diameter. The overall height of the bottle is 15.3 cm. We assume that it was placed in the grave together with the chalice as a liturgical item, and that it had been used as a water or wine container in the Eucharist service¹⁶.

The chalice and paten from an unknown site, today kept in the Museum of Croatian Archaeological Monuments in Split, most likely also originate from a grave. They are not decorated (Fig. 10). Like all other such finds covered in this paper, they are made from cast tin alloy. The chalice has a bell-shaped bowl, considerably concaved at the joint with the stem (Fig. 10.2). The stem is slightly conical and the upper zone of its knob is divided in four zones by shallow horizontal flutes. Only the outer rim of the chalice foot has been preserved. On the other hand, most of the paten has survived. There is a recess in its central part, the diameter of which matches that of the bowl opening. Its preserved dimensions are 13.7 by 12.5 cm, while the central recess is 10.4 cm in diameter. The entire preserved chalice is 12.1 cm high and the bell-shaped

bowl accounts for 5.7 cm of its height. The bowl opening is 10.7 cm in diameter. The foot ring is 10.4 cm in diameter. This find is typologically quite similar to that from *grave 16* at Bribir, so we can assume that they are chronologically more or less simultaneous.

Two interesting pewter chalices were found in 1897 in two graves near the church of the Holy Ghost at the hillock in Podgrađe near Benkovac (Roman *Asseria*). The first was discovered by the parish priest of Perušić. The report on this find indicated that it was rather damaged and had been uncovered in a grave with a body¹⁷. The other chalice was unearthed by L. Marun during his continued in-

¹⁶ Arguably, such an example is the glass chalice from the grave in the presbytery of the Berceto Cathedral (in the province of Parma) from the early 16th century. For this and other finds of similar character in Europe, cf.: M. UBOLDI, Il calice vitreo del Duomo di Berceto: una puntualizzazione, in: *Dall'Appennino a Luni tra tarda Età romana e Medioevo* (S. Lusardi Siena, G. Legrottaglie, Eds.), Milano, 2016, pp. 239–259.

¹⁷ Izvještaj Upraviteljstva hrvatskoga starinarskoga društva u Kninu o društvenom radu i napretku kroz zadnji tromjesec, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, 3/3–4, Knin, 1897, p. 163.



Fig. 10. Pewter paten and chalice from an unknown site, kept in the Museum of Croatian Archaeological Monuments in Split (photo: Z. A. Alajbeg and A. Milošević)

vestigations at the same site. This one was also quite fractious and completely unornamented. The description noted that both chalices were quite similar in shape and dimension, and that "...they had rusted and become so fragile that they broke into tiny pieces during the excavation and transport..." In the news on the finds there was no mention of patens, but it is very likely that they were parts of the grave unit. However, they were not recognised in the pewter debris.

The chalice from Asseria which had been found first was published in detail by F. Radić (Fig. 11)¹⁸. In the article he also described stratigraphic relationships of the graves with chalices, and noted that they had been lying on a paved work of an ancient Roman building in the lowest of the three layers with medieval graves. Other graves in the same layer contained jewellery and spurs that "...date to the ninth century..."¹⁹, which can serve as an estimated date of the chalice.

As to the specimen which had been found first and then published by Radić, the conical foot and the stem with knob in the upper section, divided in sixteen vertical lobes, survived to a large extent, whereas the size and shape of the bell-shaped bowl were reconstructed in a drawing according to the preserved fragments.

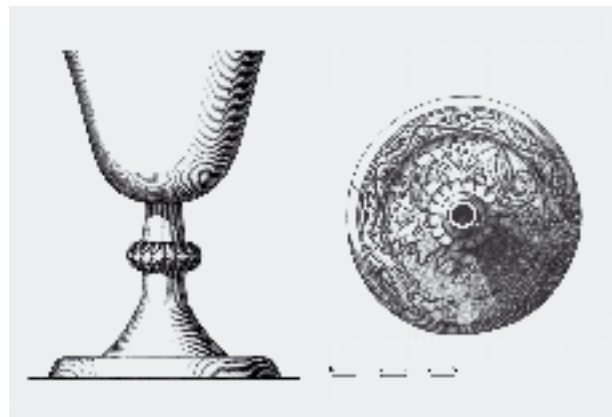


Fig. 11. Reconstruction of the pewter chalice and foot from Asseria (after: F. Radić)

¹⁸ F. RADIĆ, Dva starokršćanska grobna kositrena kaleža iz Podgrađa (Asseria) kod Benkovca, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, 6/3-4, Knin, 1901, pp. 101-105.

¹⁹ F. RADIĆ, Dva starokršćanska grobna kositrena kaleža, p. 101.



Fig. 12. Foot of the chalice from Asseria with some examples of similar ornaments on stone sculptures:

1. foot of the chalice (after: S. Gunjača); 2. fragment of the altar screen gable from the church of St Mary in Biskupija near Knin, 11th century (photo: A. Milošević); 3. detail of the pluteus of the altar screen from Constantinople in the Bode Museum in Berlin, 12th century (photo: A. Milošević); 4. fragment of the altar screen gable from Kotor, 11th century (photo: A. Milošević)

Furthermore, S. Gunjača published a photograph of the chalice, with a note that it was a find from Bribir (Fig. 12.1)²⁰. It is realistic to suppose that this item had been transferred from Asseria to nearby Bribirska glavica at one point, under unknown circumstances, and stored in the local museum collection. This is where it had been photographed with the finds from Bribir, which led Gunjača to an erroneous conclusion²¹. The foot of this chalice has perished since the whole Bribir collection was either looted or destroyed during World War II. Therefore, the only documents on this find are Radić's information with his description and drawing, and Gunjača's photograph.

The whole surface of the foot of the chalice from Asseria is decorated, and therefore this specimen belongs to the so-called *calices immaginati*. Along the periphery of the foot there is a relief tendril with acanthus trefoils. At the joint of the trefoils and tendril there is a small relief bud. The whole tendril is framed with a double relief strip from both sides. On the surface, between the plant tendril and the foot base, there are figural motifs divided in four sections separated with stylized trees, each with three branches and leaves shown by small bulges, mainly arranged as six-leaved flowers of different sizes. The published drawing and photograph do not offer sufficient information for our further elaboration of Radić's work, so we will use his description. Radić thus noted that the sections between the trees contained symbolic busts of the four Evangelists, symmetrically arranged in facing pairs: Luke and John, Mark and Matthew. Luke and John are depicted in full profile, with smaller heads, whereas Mark and Matthew's heads are larger and in half-profile. Three animal busts, symbolizing Evangelists, have their wings raised, represented by three or four parallel curved feathers. The upper parts of Matthew's wings are visible, turned downwards. All figures have halos over their heads. Closed Gospels, held by Luke and John, are perceptible in front of them, resting on their legs. As to Mark's lion, only the top section of his head with ears and the halo, as well as three feathers from the right wing and three from the left one have been preserved. Matthew is in a long-sleeved tunic and his right hand is raised toward the Gospel. All figural depictions are made with thin, simple relief lines, in which Radić saw a stylistic reflection of art from the second half of the tenth century,

²⁰ S. GUNJAČA, Strateško i historijsko-arheološko značenje Bribira, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, III, 10, Split, 1968, p. 211, Fig. 3.

²¹ Perhaps he was led to such a conclusion by Marun's record on the chalice and paten found in a grave at Bribir in 1911 or 1912 (see fn. 2).

as evident on the stone reliefs from the Split baptistry of St John or the plutei from the church of St Nediljica in Zadar. Here he also sensed a possibility for an assumption that the chalice had been made by a local artisan²². A good basis for the dating of the chalice is provided by the tendril on the periphery of its foot, similar to those on early Romanesque reliefs, such as, for instance, the ones found in the church of St Mary at Crkvina in Biskupija near Knin²³, in the St Tryphon Cathedral in Kotor²⁴ and elsewhere outside of Dalmatia²⁵ (Figs. 12.2–3). Therefore, we propose that the chalice from Asseria be dated to the 11th–12th centuries.

So far we have presented all finds of pewter chalices and patens from medieval Dalmatia known to us. Presumably, there are other museum collections in the broader east Adriatic littoral that keep specimens yet to be published and evaluated²⁶.

Chalices and patens have also been found in graves of medieval church dignitaries in other parts of Europe²⁷, mostly dating from the period ranging from the eighth/ninth to the 15th centuries, albeit with some chronological exceptions in archaeological practice²⁸. Such is the case, for instance, with the small chalice with paten, found in a grave, most likely of a bishop, from the seventh century in the cathedral of S. Lorenzo in Aosta (Fig. 13.8)²⁹, and another silver chalice (6.95 cm high) with paten

²² F. RADIĆ, *Dva starokršćanska grobna kositrena kaleža*, p. 105.

²³ The fragment is kept in the *Museum of Croatian Archaeological Monuments in Split (Zbirka kamenih spomenika/Collection of Stone Monuments, Inv. No. 7)*.

²⁴ Different dating has been proposed for the fragment of the Kotor pluteus. M. Abramčić and Lj. Karaman believed it was from the eighth century. Cf. M. ABRAMIĆ, *Quelques reliefs d'origines ou d'influences byzantines en Dalmatie*, in: *L'art byzantine chez les Slaves II*, Paris, 1932, p. 330; LJ. KARAMAN, *O spomenicima VII. i VIII. stoljeća u Dalmaciji i o pokrštenju Hrvata, Vjesnik Hrvatskog arheološkog društva*, 22–23, Zagreb, 1941–1942, pp. 93–94. Most other authors have assumed that it dates from the 11th century. Cf. cat. No. 34, M. For more details see: *Zagovori svetom Tripunu*, p. 111.

²⁵ The example we are referring to is the altar screen from Constantinople (12th century), now in the *Bode Museum* in Berlin, (*Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, Inv. No. 3250*).

²⁶ We have no reliable information to confirm that the 14th-century chalices, which I. Bach wrote about, are in fact grave finds. One was found in Dalmatop. citia, and is now kept in the *Museum of Applied Arts* in Vienna; another one was unearthed in the town of Vođenica in Bosnia (today in the *Museum of Arts and Crafts* in Zagreb); the third one, of unknown origin, is in Đakovo (I. BACH, *Tri kaleža iz četrnaestog stoljeća, Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji*, 18/1, Split, 1970, pp. 39–51).

²⁷ In this regard, it is also interesting to note headstones for church dignitaries, depicting the dead with chalices in their hands. There are several such examples in the Trento Cathedral, one in the cloister of the Bressanone Cathedral (in the province of South Tyrol), depicting the clergyman Joseph Ripper (d. 1539) on a catafalque with a chalice in his hands folded across his stomach (cf. M. UBOLDI, *Il calice vitreo*, pp. 252–253, Fig. 12).

²⁸ Our information on funeral chalices with patens from European sites is based on the following: F. VAN MOLLE, *Notes sur quelques calices funéraires du XI^e siècle en France et en Belgique, Les Monuments historiques de la France* 12, Paris, 1966, pp. 113–119; S. FRANCIS, *Calices funéraires du XI^e siècle, Bulletin Monumental*, 124/4, Paris, 1966, pp. 426–427; M. BEGHELLI – J. PINAR GIL, *Corredo e arredo liturgico nelle chiese tra VIII e IX secolo, Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums*, 60, Mainz, 2013, pp. 719–723.

²⁹ R. PERINETTI, *Le tombe privilegiate della chiesa di S. Lorenzo ad Aosta*, in: *L'Inhumation privilégiée du IV^e au VIII^e siècle en Occident. Actes du colloque tenu à Créteil (Paris) les 16–18. 03. 1984*, Paris, 1986, pp. 143–146; R. PERINETTI, *Le sepolture nella chiesa di San Lorenzo ad Aosta*, in: *Sepolture in Sardegna dal IV al VII secolo. IV Convegno sull'Archeologia Tardoromana e Medievale* (Cagliari, 27–28 giugno 1987), Oristano, 1990, pp. 335–382, Figs. 12–15, 21; M. BEGHELLI – J. PINAR GIL, *In ecclesia iuxta cancelos. Sulla composizione del corredo liturgico nelle chiese altomedievali*, in: *Oro sacro. Aspetti religiosi ed economici da Atene a Bisanzio* (I. Baldini, A. L. Morelli, Eds.), Bologna, 2014, pp. 230–231, Fig. 5. The date is not binding since it is derived from the context of the whole cemetery. For the Aoste chalice dating to the eighth–ninth centuries, cf. CH. BONNET, *Calices et patènes en étain retrouvés dans quatre sépultures du haut Moyen Âge, Bulletin de la Société académique religieuse et scientifique Saint Anselme*, 49, Aoste, 1979, pp. 39–48; C. TREFFORT, *L'Eglise carolingienne et la mort: christianisme, rites funéraires et pratiques commémoratives*, Lyon, 1996, p. 60. The earliest known historical confirmation of the practice of placing chalices in graves with the dead dates from the very end of the eighth or the beginning of the ninth century. Its author was Amalarius of Metz. For this information, cf. M. UBOLDI, *Il calice vitreo*, p. 253, fns. 33–34.



Fig. 13. Funeral chalices and patens from graves in Europe: 1.–4. Rome, 11th–12th centuries (*Sts Cosmas and Damian, St Felix, the Vatican treasury, after: Ch. Rohault de Fleury*); 5. Huy in Belgium, 11th century (*after: Ph. George*); 6. treasury of the Reims Cathedral in France, 1033 (*after to: F. van Molle*); 7. Gerona in Catalonia, ninth/tenth centuries (*after: G. Roura*); 8. Aosta in Italy, seventh or eighth/ninth centuries (*after: Ch. Bonnet and M. Beghelli – J. Pinar Gil*); 9. Alise-Sainte-Reine in France, eighth–ninth centuries (*after to: P. Wahlen*)

(dia 6.75 cm) in the grave of Bishop Nicolas Bousmard (1576–1584) from the cathedral of Verdun. Typological analyses of these finds revealed that they were in fact earlier specimens, presumably taken from a grave dating to the 11th/12th centuries in the same church³⁰.

Chalices and patens from graves in Europe are mainly made from precious or gold-plated semi-precious metals. Those of regular size are considered to have been used in liturgical service before being

³⁰ F. VAN MOLLE, *Notes sur quelques calices funéraires*, pp. 115–116, Fig. 108; S. FRANCIS, *Calices funéraires*, p. 426.

placed in graves³¹. Since a number of them are considerably smaller than the standard size, it is assumed that they are symbolic specimens made strictly for sepulchral purposes³².

Quite a few such artefacts from medieval Europe were found by the end of the 19th century (Figs. 13.1–4)³³. Some of them were systematically processed during the 20th century³⁴, while we will provide references to but a select few interesting examples in order to illustrate the topic at hand. One such item is the 7.5 cm high silver chalice in the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum. It belonged to Bishop Bernulphus of Utrecht (d. 1054). The chalices and patens from the Bremen Cathedral were found in four tombs: in Archbishop Liemar's grave there was a silver chalice (7 cm in height) and a paten (dia. 4–4.3 cm), while the grave of an unknown archbishop from the 11th century contained a silver chalice (9 cm high) and a paten (dia. 5.4 cm)³⁵. One chalice comes from the grave of bishop Hertpertus (d. ca. 972) of Müstair³⁶, and another small bronze gold-plated one from the 11th century (6.5 cm high) from Hexham Abbey in England³⁷. One silver chalice (10.9 cm in height) from the same period was discovered in the grave of abbot Reingard (d. 1105) in the Benedictine abbey of Siegburg near Bonn³⁸; three chalices with patens were found in the Trier Cathedral: one gold chalice (5 cm high) with a paten (dia. 4,6 cm) was in the grave of Archbishop Ruodbert (d. 956), another gold set (a chalice 5 cm high and a paten 5 cm in diameter) in the grave of Archbishop Popp (d. 1047), and a silver chalice (6.7 cm in height) and paten (dia. 7 cm) in the grave of Archbishop Udo (d. 1078)³⁹. A silver chalice (6.5 cm high) and paten were also placed in the grave of Pope Clement II (d. 1047), buried in the Bamberg Cathedral, while the treasury of the cathedral holds yet another silver chalice (7.2 cm in height) and paten (dia. 8.3 cm), probably from the 12th-century grave of Bishop Eberhard II⁴⁰. The church treasury in Hildesheim keeps small silver chalices and patens from five graves of local bishops, ranging from the 10th to the 12th centuries⁴¹. Such grave goods have also been recorded in two cases from the Reims Cathedral. The grave of Archbishop Gervasius (1055–1067) contained a silver, partially gold-plated, chalice with two handles (9 cm in height) and a paten (dia. 8.5 cm), while the grave of Archbishop Ébale de Rouci (1021–1033) comprised one lead chalice (Fig. 13.5)⁴². Several examples have also been found in Belgium. A gold-plated silver

³¹ For instance, such could be the entirely decorated silver gold-plated chalice and paten from the grave of Archbishop Hubert Walter (d. 1205) in the Abbey Church of Canterbury (cf. C. SCOTT ROBERTSON, *Burial-places of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 20, Canterbury, 1893, pp. 286–288) or the more luxurious gold chalice (13.2 cm in height) and paten (dia. 15 cm), decorated with filigree, inserted jewels and enamelled, from the grave of bishop Guzelin (d. 962), today in the treasury of the Nancy Cathedral (V. H. ELBERN, *Der Eucharistische Kelch*, pp. 34, 72, Figs. 36, 120).

³² S. FRANCIS, *Calices funéraires*, p. 426; F. VAN MOLLE, *Notes sur quelques calices funéraires*, p. 114.

³³ CH. ROHAULT DE FLEURY, *La Messe*, pp. 95–145. This work also presents quite a number of other funeral chalices with patens found in Europe, dating from the eighth to the sixteenth centuries.

³⁴ J. BRAUN, *Das christliche Altargerät in seinem Sein und in seiner Entwicklung*, München, 1932; V. H. ELBERN, *Der Eucharistische Kelch*; F. VAN MOLLE, *Notes sur quelques calices funéraires*, pp. 113–119.

³⁵ V. H. ELBERN, *Der Eucharistische*, pp. 52–53, 68, Figs. 69, 122; M. BEGHELLI – J. PINAR GIL, *Corredo e arredo liturgico*, p. 723, Figs. 19.2–5.

³⁶ M. BEGHELLI – J. PINAR GIL, *Corredo e arredo liturgico*, pp. 722–723, Fig. 19.9.

³⁷ V. H. ELBERN, *Der Eucharistische Kelch*, pp. 48, 69, Fig. 63; M. RYAN, *Insular chalices and the Tassilo-Liutpirc Chalice*, in: *Der Tassilo-Liutpirc-Kelch im Stift Kremsmünster* (E. Wamers, Ed.), Frankfurt, 2019, pp. 291–292.

³⁸ F. VAN MOLLE, *Notes sur quelques calices funéraires*, p. 114.

³⁹ M. BEGHELLI – J. PINAR GIL, *Corredo e arredo liturgico*, pp. 722–723, Fig. 19.7; V. H. ELBERN, *Der Eucharistische Kelch*, pp. 44–46, 74–75, Figs. 54–56, 121.

⁴⁰ CH. ROHAULT DE FLEURY, *La Messe*, pp. 119–120; S. MÜLLER CHRISTENSEN, *Das Grab des Papstes Clemens II. im Dom zu Bamberg*. München, 1960, p. 95; V. H. ELBERN, *Der Eucharistische Kelch*, pp. 51, 67, Figs. 67–68.

⁴¹ V. H. ELBERN, *Der Eucharistische Kelch*, pp. 47–48, 69–70, Figs. 58–62.

⁴² S. FRANCIS, *Calices funéraires*, p. 426; F. VAN MOLLE, *Notes sur quelques calices funéraires*, pp. 114–115, Fig. 105.

chalice (5.8 cm high, missing the foot and a part of the stem) and a paten with Manus Dei in the centre (dia. 7.1 cm) were placed in the grave by the body of abbot Fulbert (1039–1066) in the Saint Bavo's Cathedral in Ghent⁴³, whereas two interesting finds originate from graves in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Huy. A small bronze chalice (7.1 cm high) was found in the grave of Théoduin, Archbishop of Liège (1048–1075)⁴⁴; another grave was excavated in the same chronological horizon, containing a small silver chalice (8.8 cm in height) and paten with a motif of the Lamb of God and the words *Agnus Dei*⁴⁵ inscribed on its central disc.

Some European finds are made from tin alloy and lead, like our local examples. We have already mentioned the chalice and paten of that kind from the church of S. Lorenzo in Aosta (Fig. 13.8)⁴⁶. Two other chalices with patens were also found in graves from the eighth–ninth centuries in France. A lead chalice and paten with a motif of Manus Dei on the central disc and an inscription of master Oddo (*Oddo me fecit*, sl. 13.9) were unearthed in the monastery church of Ste. Reine in the town of Alise (Roman *Alesia*, in the Côte-d'Or department)⁴⁷, and another set in the town of Saint-Rambert-sur-Loire (in the Loire department, Fig. 13.6)⁴⁸. The treasury of the Reims Cathedral holds the small lead chalice with damaged foot (6.7 cm in height), discovered in the grave of Archbishop Ébale (d. 1033)⁴⁹. The lead chalice from the first half of the 11th century from Hazleton in Gloucestershire, England, is also a grave find in all probability⁵⁰. Earlier European medieval examples also include two pairs of pewter chalices with patens from the end of the ninth or the beginning of the tenth century, found in the archbishops' tomb of the Gerona Cathedral (Fig. 13.7)⁵¹.

The discovery of graves with funeral liturgical vessels in the façade and presbytery of the church at the local cemetery of Bribirska glavica yet again prompted the matter of its dating. In the early years of reinvestigation of the cemeterial-sacral complex in the present-day cemetery of Bribir (Fig. 14), we believed that the church was a modern-period structure, adapted and built on the existing ruins of the rotunda in the early 18th century for the newly-arrived Orthodox population⁵². This situation was clarified during the 2016 investigation, when some ten graves were excavated outside the church, two of which proved to be important for the dating of its erection and the demolition of the rotunda (Fig. 15). *Grave 45* was excavated in the crest of the apse of the single-nave church. It was set against its wall in such a way that the external face of the wall had been used for its longer,

⁴³ F. VAN MOLLE, Notes sur quelques calices funéraires, pp. 117–118, Fig. 107.

⁴⁴ F. VAN MOLLE, Notes sur quelques calices funéraires, pp. 115–116; PH. GEORGE, De constructione – de consecratione ecclesiae Hoyensisi (1066), *Hortus artium medievalium*, 20/2, Zagreb – Motovun, 2014, pp. 525–526, Fig. 9 (the chalice is 7.1 cm high, the bowl opening is 6 cm in diameter, while the foot is 5.4 cm in diameter).

⁴⁵ [www.numeriques.be/images et histoires des patrimoines numerises](http://www.numeriques.be/images-et-histoires-des-patrimoines-numerises) (accessed: 26/11/2019).

⁴⁶ R. PERINETTI, Le sepolture nella chiesa, pp. 335–382, Figs. 12–15, 21; C. TREFFORT, *L'Eglise carolingienne*, 1996, p. 60.

⁴⁷ P. WAHLEN, Alesia – La basilique Sainte-Reine et la chapelle Saint Leger, *Mémoires de la Commission des antiquités du département de la Côte-d'Or*, 36/1990–1992, Dijon, 1996, pp. 127–128, Fig. 2.

⁴⁸ C. TREFFORT, *L'Eglise carolingienne*, p. 61, Fig. 7.

⁴⁹ V. H. ELBERN, *Der eucharistische Kelch*, pp. 54–55, 73, Fig. 72; F. VAN MOLLE, Notes sur quelques calices funéraires, pp. 114–116, Fig. 106.

⁵⁰ V. H. ELBERN, *Der eucharistische Kelch*, pp. 48, 76, Fig. 64.

⁵¹ G. ROURA, *Girona carolíngia. Comtes, vescomtes i bisbes (del 785 a l'any 1000)*, Girona, 1988, pp. 54–55.

⁵² V. GHICA – A. MILOŠEVIĆ – D. DZINO – N. URODA, Arheološki projekt "Varvaria / Breberium / Bribir" u 2014. godini, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, III, 42, Split, 2015, pp. 7–44; V. GHICA – A. MILOŠEVIĆ – D. DZINO – N. URODA, Arheološki projekt Varvaria u 2015, p. 11.

west side (Fig. 16). It also transpired that the grave was placed directly on the torn-down wall of the large east apse of the rotunda and its central counterfort, which makes it clear that the rotunda had already been considerably ruined at the time of burial of *grave 45*. Based on the finds from the grave, viz. no less than four skeletons (Fig. 17), it can be assumed that the burial, roughly from the 14th century, was intended for respectable inhabitants of Bribir. The other place of burial useful for dating of the single-nave church, i.e. *grave 60*, was excavated by the foundation of its south wall (Fig. 13). It was rather damaged by modern burials, and therefore only the lower legs with feet of a skeleton survived (Fig. 18). This grave, like the first one, was also placed directly against the church wall to utilise it for one of its shorter sides. Its stratigraphic position is also interesting (Fig. 19). Its bottom lies around



Fig. 14. Cemeterial-sacral complex with rotunda at Bribir, results of the investigations until 2018 (orthophotoscan: M. Žapčić)

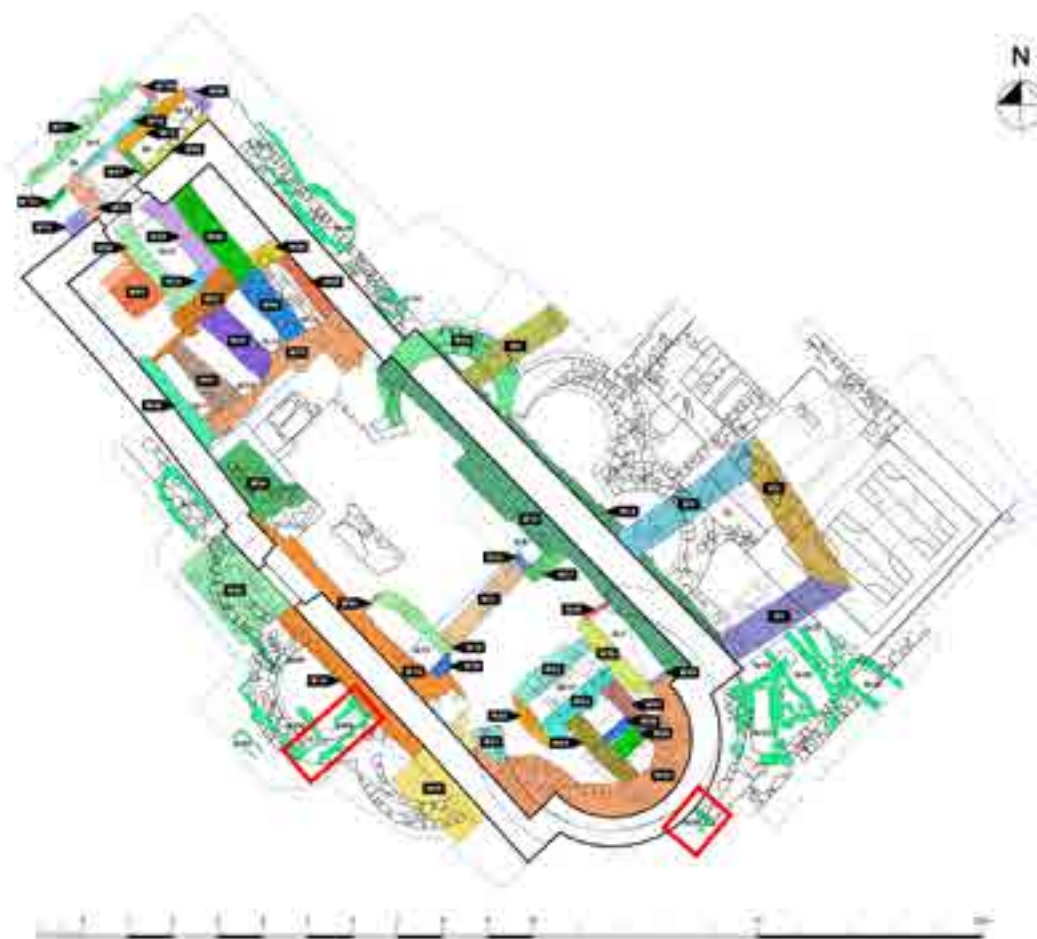


Fig. 15. Positions of graves 45 and 60 in the cemeterial-sacral complex with rotunda at Bribir (layout: V. Ghica)



Fig. 16. Grave 45 by the external face of the mediaeval church apse (photo: A. Milošević)

1.20 m above the strip foundation of the rotunda, at the junction of its two south apses, already in ruins at the time. The lid of the grave was flush with the strip foundation of the single-nave church, and directly below the threshold of the door, now walled-up, with arch lintel, in the south wall of the church. Since *grave 60* contained a pair of well-preserved spurs from the 14th century (Fig. 20) by the legs of the skeleton, it is very likely that this was a privileged burial, in line with the early medieval practice⁵³.

Graves 16, 45, and 60, which we have covered in this paper, prove beyond doubt that the present-day cemetery church at Bribir is indeed a late medieval structure. The stratigraphy of *graves 45* and *60* demonstrates that it existed at the time of the burials, and since the two graves are also laid over the apse walls of the late antique and early medieval rotunda, it is obvious that it was already rather devastated at the time. Such circumstances also aid in dating the graves containing pewter chalices with patens, which, in line with European grave finds, probably belonged to church dignitaries, most likely from the abbey to which the church belonged. Therefore, we can assume that the single-nave church with semi-circular apse dates from the 14th century, probably its initial



Fig. 17. Finds from grave 45 (photo: Z. A. Alajbeg)

⁵³ For instance, such are the examples in front of the entrances to the churches of St Mary in Biskupija near Knin and in Gornje Koljane. The grave at the entrance to the early medieval church of St Stephen in Peroj is an unambiguous find. For Peroj, cf. I. MATEJČIĆ *Sveti Stjepan – crkva s ožiljcima / Santo Stefano – una chiesa con le cicatrici*, Vodnjan / Dignano, 2013, p. 14.



Fig. 18. Grave 60 in front of the south wall entrance to the mediaeval church
(photo: A. Milošević, photoscan of the wall: A. Di Miceli)

decades, since it was the time of the rule of the two politically and economically most powerful members of the Bribir family of Šubić – Paul I (1245–1312), the Ban of Croatia and Lord of all of Bosnia, and his son Mladen II (1270–1343), the Ban of Croatia and Bosnia⁵⁴.

New archaeological information and this dating of today's cemetery church at Bribir raise the question of its dedication and reactivate the assumption that this is actually the abbey church of St John the Evangelist, as already presented in literature by S. Gunjača and M. Zekan. In his elaboration on this topic, S. Gunjača used a cartographic sketch from the early 18th century (Fig. 21); to avoid recounting his views, let us present them verbatim⁵⁵: "...While we are on the topic of church buildings, we will also address the most recent one we discovered, the fourth in line. It is a small single-nave church stretching to the south-west wall of the village cemetery, with an angular apse, and void of any specific features. The building is late mediaeval, with thick ashlar walls, and a few rampart blocks inserted in the foundations here and there. No architectural finds have been made, but the front part of the church has not been fully investigated. It follows that deeper excavations are in order.

⁵⁴ For general information on the Šubić family, see: V. KLAIĆ, *Bribirski knezovi od plemena Šubić do god. 1347.*, Zagreb, 1897; S. ANTOLJAK, Ban Pavao Bribirski – 'Croatorum dominus', *Radovi Instituta JAZU u Zadru*, 19, Zadar, 1972, pp. 5–62; N. KLAIĆ, Paulus de Breberio, banus Croatorum dominus et Bosne, *Arhivski vjesnik*, 17–18, Zagreb, 1975, pp. 409–423; D. KARBIĆ, *The Šubići of Bribir – A Case Study of a Croatian Mediaeval Kindred*. Thesis, Budapest, 2000; D. KARBIĆ, Šubići Bribirski do gubitka nasljedne banske časti (1322.), *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti HAZU*, 22, Zagreb, 2005, pp. 1–26. It would be more plausible to assume that the erection of the church of St John at Bribir was made possible by Paul I, who, together with his wife Urša, always stood out in terms of donations, financial support and construction of new church buildings. For example, in the capacity of an *instructor* for the Franciscan monastery with the church of St John the Baptist in the Skradin suburbium in 1299, or as a *fundator* for the Franciscan monastery with the church of St Mary in Dol at Bribir around 1300. He also generously supported the construction of the Clarisses' nunnery dedicated to St Elizabeth of Hungary, established by his sister, Duchess Stanislava, most likely during the 1270s. For more information, see: D. KARBIĆ, Utjecaj velikaškog roda Šubića na širenje i razvoj franjevacu u Hrvatskoj i Dalmaciji s posebnim osvrtom na skradinsko-bribirsko područje, in: *Zbornik o Pavlu Posiloviću* (P. Knezović, M. Šišak, M. Zenić, Eds.), Šibenik, 2001, pp. 147–166.

⁵⁵ S. GUNJAČA, *Strateško i historijsko*, pp. 210–211, drawing 2; S. GUNJAČA, *Nalaz srednjovjekovnih arhitektura*, pp. 238–239.

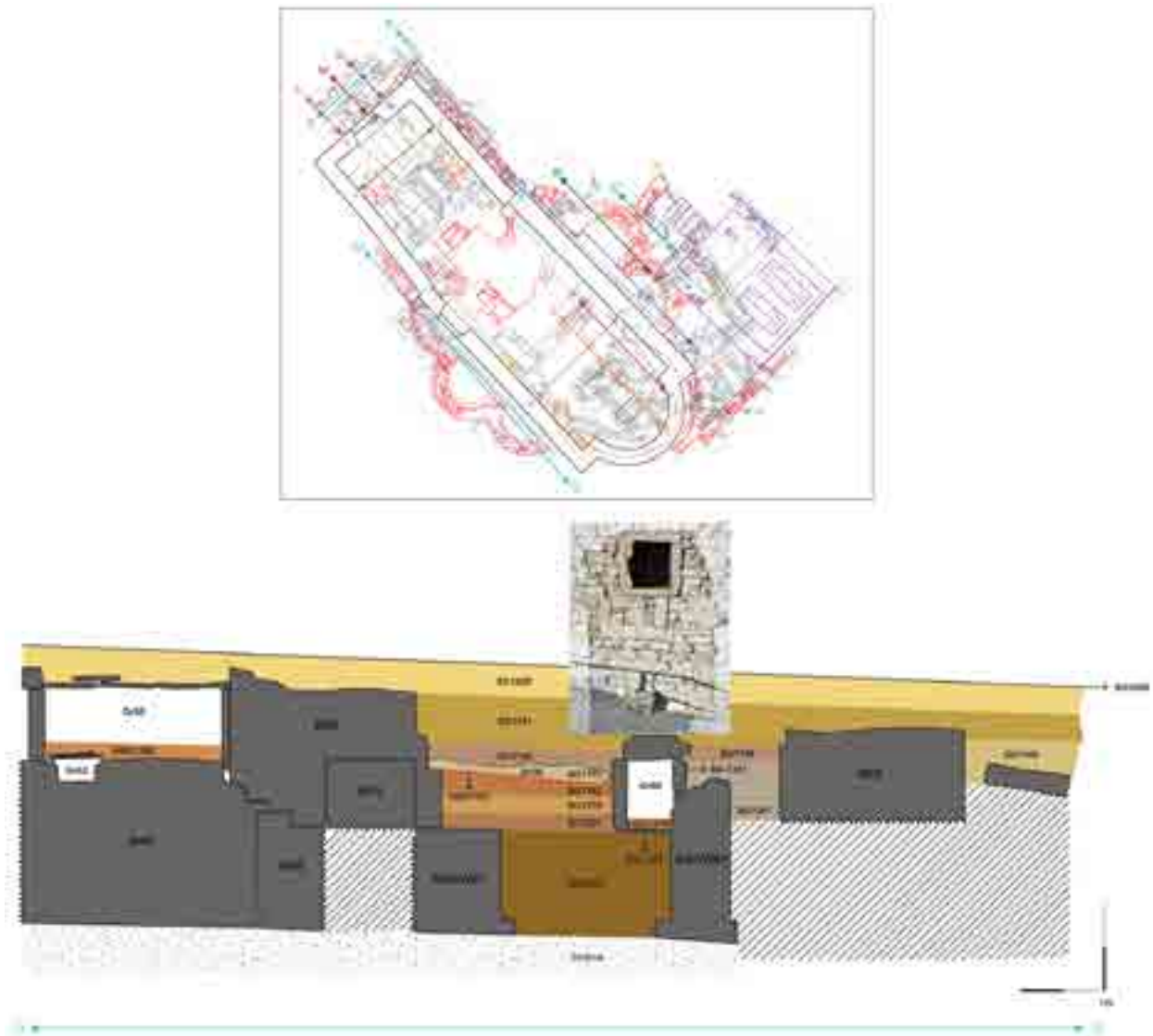


Fig. 19. Stratigraphic position of grave 60 (after: V. Ghica)

This small church has caused some confusion, given the topographic identification of the church of St. John, the sole church building in the sketch map from the 18th century, in which it is explicitly marked as Chiesa di S. Zuanne. Namely, the point is that it is quite close to the remains of the church we discovered under the Orthodox parish church. In the sketch, the church of St. John is drawn to the east of the fortification on the Glavica hill-top, which makes it impossible to tell which of the two discovered churches was dedicated to St. John. The sketch map does not even reveal the shape of the church, which could help identify it. That is to say, it is drawn as a plain square, merely to mark the position, and this vague shape can therefore denote both churches. In addition, there is no scale in the sketch to help determine the exact positions. Since not even the fortification is marked in the sketch in its actual shape, it is evident that the structures were arbitrarily drawn on the paper. What matters to us the most is that the orientation of the church of St. John in relation to the fortification has been established, including the average distance, which determines the Glavica area on which it stood.

Another factor will help us overcome this dilemma, viz. the historical piece of information that the church of St. John belonged to an abbey, known to have received rich donations, and it is only logical that such an abbey, a wealthy one at that, was not represented by the small church near the cemetery, but rather the larger one. This larger one is in fact the one below the Orthodox parish church in the midst of the cemetery, and therefore – until another church is discovered in the vicinity of these two – I take it that this one was dedicated to St. John...”



Fig. 20. Mediaeval iron spurs from grave 60 (photo: Z. A. Alajbeg)

Gunjača, therefore, assumed that the rotunda, albeit somewhat dilapidated, had survived until the early 18th century, and that the marking on the map indeed referred to the church of St John at Bribirska glavica. His opinion was also our landmark when we initiated the reinvestigation of the whole complex, which was also aiming to either prove or disprove M. Zekan's conclusions. Namely, M. Zekan broached this question again after removal of mortar on the inside and outside of the church⁵⁶. This is when new details emerged, previously not visible, which facilitated a new debate about this structure. Relying on the archaeology of its walls and the written historical documents from the 18th century as published by the assiduous V. Kapitanović⁵⁷, Zekan concluded that the present-day cemetery church of Bribir had in fact been the medieval abbey church of St John⁵⁸. Our investigation has essentially confirmed the bulk of such assumptions.



Fig. 21. Sketch map with the church of St John at Bribir, early 18th century (after: S. Gunjača)

In addition, we are now much more capable to interpret the sketch map as pointed out by S. Gunjača. It clearly shows the complex with the church of St John to the east of the then already ruinous fortress, which in turn is marked only by a note reading *Fortezza destrutta*. This trapezoidal fortification with a round tower at the junction of its walls was built during the Ottoman-Venetian wars along the western edge of Tjeme at Glavica. The sketch of the complex with the church of St John (*Chiesa di S. Zuanne*), properly positioned in terms of the principal points of the compass, comprises markings of several other structures. The church itself is elongated, with a triangular jut on its east side, supposedly denoting its semi-circular apse. To the north of the church there is a small square, which can be interpreted as a mausoleum with two sarcophagi, probably still visible back in the 18th century. It was subsequently

⁵⁶ M. ZEKAN, Bribir – ubicacija crkve sv. Ivana i prilog atribuciji nekih kamenih spomenika, *Dani Stjepana Gunjače*, 2, Split, 2012, pp. 165–175.

⁵⁷ V. KAPITANOVIĆ, Skradinski biskupi i građevine u porječju Krke u 18. stoljeću prema arhivskim spisima, *Titius*, 1, Split, 2008, pp. 45–46.

⁵⁸ T. Burić offered his opinion that the church of St John was a small single-nave Gothic church with an angular apse by the south-west wall of the Bribir cemetery, in: T. BURIĆ, Ranosrednjovjekovna skulptura s Bribira, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, III, 16, Split, 1986, pp. 121–123.

buried during the 18th century, when the area around the church became a new cemetery, partly covered by a mortuary added to the north side of the church. It was rediscovered in 1969 and investigated in 1979. The 2016–2017 excavations made it possible to produce a more coherent interpretation of the square with a circle in its centre by the church façade, which is to say, the approximate location where a large tomb was excavated. It was covered with a monolithic slab with profiled bottom (Fig. 22.2) and had



Fig. 22. Late antique tomb in front of the present-day Orthodox parish church at Bribir (photo: Z. A. Alajbeg and V. Ghica, photoscan: A. Di Miceli)

a side stepped entrance in its western part (Fig. 22.3). It is a late antique tomb of the "a pozzo" type, plastered inside, deeply entrenched in bed-rock, with lids originally flush with what was then the surface of the floor. We assume that it was made in memory of someone special, as indicated by a wide chamfer on the slab above the entrance (Fig. 22.1). The results of archaeological investigations have shown that it had continued to be used in the Middle Ages. It was partly damaged in the first half of the 18th century and subsequently completely overlaid by graves of that era. The tomb is surrounded by the excavated and as yet completely undefined walls 104 and 107, but also by the fragments of columns with bases, which suggest that at one time it had been part of some architecture (Figs. 23.1–2), visible until the 18th century, and marked on the aforementioned sketch map as such.



Fig. 23. Walls 104 and 107, south of the late antique tomb (orthophoto: Z. A. Alajbeg)

The abbey church of St John is therefore an important religious building of medieval

Bribir. According to historical documents, we know that it was the see of the Bribir archpresbyter, first mentioned in written sources in 1229⁵⁹. It is likely that the very see of this archpresbyter of the church of St John at Bribir was in the octofoil rotunda, which was still in use at the time. This information could also be a direct confirmation of its dedication in the early Middle Ages. The see of the other archpresbyters, occasionally mentioned during the 14th and 15th centuries (Ambrosius, 1308; Andrew, 1338; Ivan Dojmi, 1463) was most likely already located in the single-nave single-apse church. It is also known that the dukes of Bribir were its patrons and looked after it following its construction⁶⁰. Furthermore, St John is one of the two heavenly protectors of the Šubić family, the other being St Mary. This was indicated in the foundational document of Ban Paul I when the monastery of St John the Baptist was established near Skradin in 1299 (...*beatum Joannem Baptistam pro*

⁵⁹ F. SMILJANIĆ, Neka zapažanja o teritoriju i organizaciji Bribirske županije u srednjem vijeku, *Povijesni prilozi*, 25, Zagreb, 2003, pp. 23–24, fn. 123 (...*dominus presbiter Johannes Doymi, archipresbiter ecclesie sancti Johannis de Briberio*, according to information from 1463). – *Codex diplomaticus*, 3, p. 316, doc. No. 281 (...*R. archipresbiterum de Berberio*, as member of the court deciding on the demarcation between the Vrana Templars and the monastery in Rogovo in 1229).

⁶⁰ In the mid-15th century Jacob II Nikolić of Bribir, Croatian Viceban, hired Vidul Ivanov, the builder from Zadar, for major construction works on the church of St Mary at Bribir (E. HILJE, *Zadarski graditelj Vidul Ivanov i njegovi sinovi*, *Radovi Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Zadru*, 47, Zadar, 2005, pp. 149–190, doc. Nos. 7, 11). In the course of the works he was also entrusted with some small-scale tasks on the church of St John (C. FISKOVIĆ, *Zadarski sredovječni majstori*, p. 72, fn. 430). We assume that his engagement can be distinctly seen in the renovated foundations of the south wall of the church, resting on soft fill soil and partly over the demolished walls of the rotunda. At this point two large aabutments were added to this wall, similar to those annexed to the side walls of the church of St Mary as supports. They might also be Vidul's work, rather than an annex from Turkish times as generally assumed (S. GUNJAČA, *Nalaz srednjovjekovnih arhitektura*, pp. 236–237). In addition to other works on the church of St Mary, there might have been a need to structurally reinforce it and finish the vaulting, loaded with similar structural elements made in 1415 by Petar Radmilov, a master builder from Šibenik (C. FISKOVIĆ, *Zadarski sredovječni majstori*, p. 71).

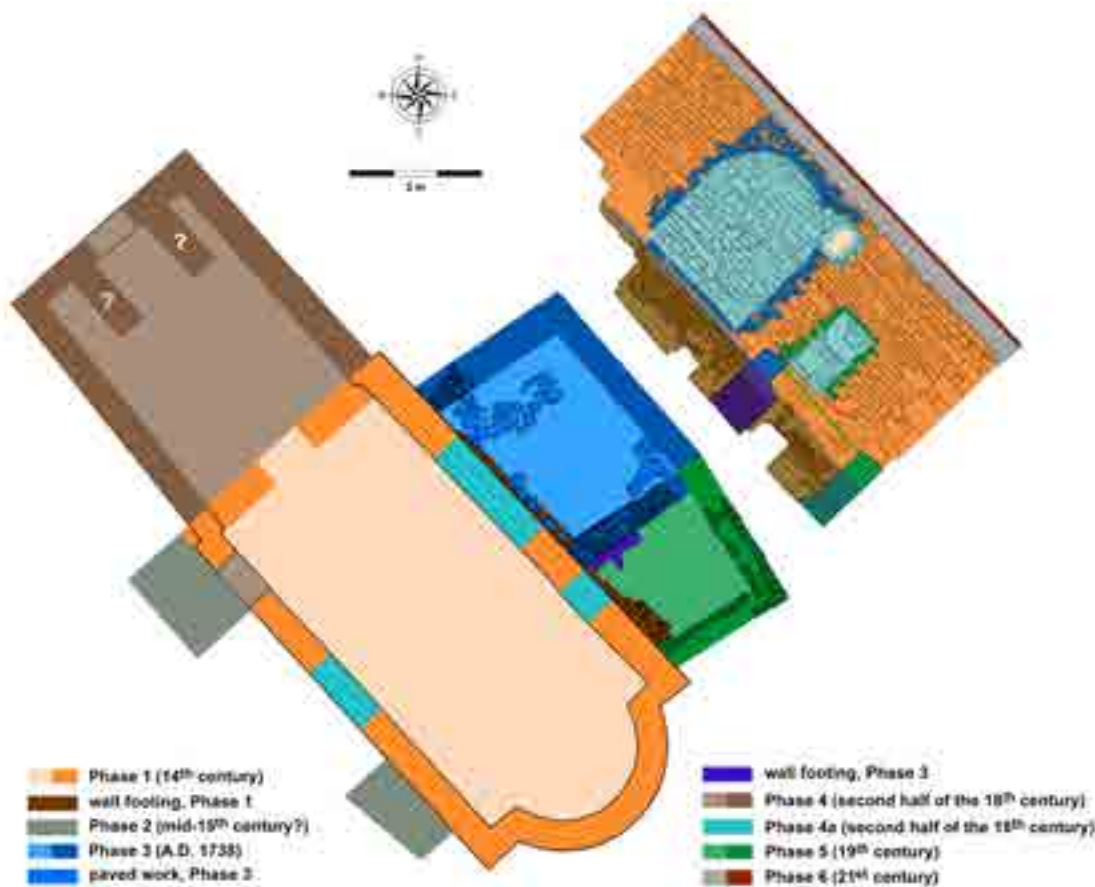


Fig. 24. Construction phases of the mediaeval abbey church of St John the Evangelist at Bribir, with a view of its north longitudinal wall (interpretation: A. Milošević)

nostro heredumque nostrorum patrono et domnio...)⁶¹. It also confirmed that the Šubić family could have influenced the selection of priests serving in the church of St John at Bribir. On that score, it would also be interesting to note the information from 1491, revealing that a priest from that church refused to take part in the synod of Skradin, claiming he was not obliged to attend, since he had been appointed parish priest by the dukes of Bribir, rather than church authorities⁶². Therefore, in the 14th and 15th centuries the church of St John was also the seat of the Bribir parish⁶³, for which it was receiving valuable donations, both movable and immovable⁶⁴.

This once wealthy Bribir abbey and its church of St John the Evangelist were found in ruins by D. Farlati in 1690. The Skradin bishops' efforts to repair it and re-establish its purpose were not successful, since the whole area had been laid to waste demographically and economically following the Venetian-Ottoman wars in the late 17th and the early 18th centuries. Consequently, it can be concluded that this exact structure was refurbished by the Bribir Orthodox population for their own

⁶¹ Š. LJUBIĆ, *Listine o odnošajih između južnoga Slavenstva i Mletačke republike*, Knj. 1, Zagreb, 1868, p. 190, doc. No. 279.

⁶² D. FARLATI, *Illyricum sacrum*, Vol. 4, Venezia, 1769, p. 25; S. GUNJAČA, Referat u vezi predloga, p. 139.

⁶³ Farlati's information on the 1397 appointment of the Knin canon Bartul as parish priest of the church of St John in the town of Bribir was cited by Gunjača (cf. D. FARLATI, *Illyricum sacrum*, p. 20; S. GUNJAČA, Referat u vezi predloga, p. 139).

⁶⁴ In this vein, in 1383 Duke Dobruš Nikolić bestowed donations in his will on the then parish church of St John at Bribir, in addition to other Bribir churches (*Codex diplomaticus*, 16, p. 336, doc. No. 269).

religious needs in the first half of the 18th century. After obtaining a permission from Vicencije Bragadin, the bishop of Skradin, in 1738, those new inhabitants of Bribir were allowed to add a new chapel with altar next to the church of St John, so that they can hold their services according to Greek liturgy⁶⁵. Shortly after its erection, this chapel was torn down in the second half of the 18th century, most of its openings were walled up and the church was extended westward, so that the whole of its west façade was removed. We also assume that there were plans to build a bell tower on the façade of this new elongated structure in the axis of the church. However, this never came to fruition, except for the massive foundations. The building as such, re-dedicated to Sts. Joachim and Ann, is still standing. The medieval church of St John the Evangelist thus remains the only historic building which has survived all turbulent events from the Bribir past.

Today we are able to view the church at the Bribir cemetery in a totally new light. We can also regard its alleged building phases, from its erection on the ruins of the rotunda in the first decades of the 14th century all the way to the more recent construction operations during the 18th, 19th and 21st centuries (Fig. 24), which mainly contributed to its decadence. One of the tasks of our investigation under the international *Varvaria – Breberium – Bribir* archaeological project was its refurbishment for the purpose of a future archaeological park at Bribirska glavica. To that end, all excavated and investigated architecture around it was promptly conserved, the floor in the church repaired, the bell-gable on its façade reconstructed (Fig. 25)⁶⁶, all



Fig. 25. New paving in the interior and the restored bell-gable on the façade of the present-day Orthodox parish church of Sts Joachim and Ann at Bribir (photo: A. Milošević)



Fig. 26. Inadequate conservation treatment of external faces of the walls on the present-day Orthodox parish church of Sts Joachim and Anna at Bribir (photo: A. Milošević)

⁶⁵ For more information on events from that time, see: N. MILAŠ, *Spisi o istoriji pravoslavne crkve u dalmatinsko-istrijskom vladicianstvu od XV do XIX vijeka.*, Zadar, 1899; M. JAČOV, *Venecija i Srbi u Dalmaciji u XVIII veku*, Zemun, 1987; V. KAPITANOVIĆ, *Skradinski biskupi*, pp. 33–52; V. KAPITANOVIĆ, *Religiozni život i međusobni odnosi katolika i pravoslavnih na području Skradinske Biskupije*, *Titius* 4, Split, 2011, pp. 57–98; M. ZEKAN, *Bribir – ubikacija crkve sv. Ivana*, pp. 165–175.

⁶⁶ V. GHICA – A. MILOŠEVIĆ – D. DZINO – N. URODA, *Arheološki projekt "Varvaria / Breberium / Bribir" u 2016. godini*, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, III, 44–45, Split, 2018, pp. 44–47.

of which would not have been possible without the support and understanding of the *Serbian Orthodox Church* in Dalmatia, now in charge of the church. Unfortunately, our efforts were not recognised by conservators of the Šibenik office, who have recently allowed its plastering, so that all historical layers which were visible in the structures of its walls are now completely imperceptible (Fig. 26). Therefore, another aim of this text and its appurtenant documents is to educate them, so that they can better understand the significance of this monument and the topics concerning it, and redress this inadequate and intolerable situation.

Translation from Croatian: Denis Gracin

***Calices et patenae funerales* i srednjovjekovna crkva Sv. Ivana na Bribiru**

Povod za raspravu u ovom tekstu su nalazi kaleža i patene koji su bili priloženi uz pokojnike u grobovima srednjeg vijeka na Bribirskoj glavici (antička *Varvaria*, srednjovjekovni *Breberium*). Raspravi su dodani i drugi takvi nalazi iz srednje Dalmacije, a pokazalo se da je riječ o pogrebnoj praksi kakva je u to vrijeme bila prisutna i vrlo raširena u drugim dijelovima Europe, gdje je u pravilu bila povezana s ukopima crkvenih uglednika. S tim analogijama objašnjeni su i kaleži s patenama u grobovima na Bribiru, a kako su nađeni u sklopu sakralne arhitekture pretpostavljeno je da pripadaju grobovima crkvenih uglednika.

S tim u vezi ponovo je otvoreno i pitanje kronologije same crkve koju, s titularom Sv. Joakima i Ane, danas koriste vjernici pravoslavne vjeroispovijesti. Njezino datiranje, naime, do sada se kretalo u vrlo širokom vremenskom rasponu. Temeljem najnovijih arheoloških istraživanja crkve i njezina neposrednog okoliša, utvrđeno je da se ta građevina, dijelom adaptirana u 18. stoljeću, uistinu nalazila u sklopu srednjovjekovne opatije Sv. Ivana Evanđelista, poznate iz povijesnih izvora, da je sagrađena u prvoj polovini 14. stoljeća nad ostacima kasnoantičke i ranosrednjovjekovne osmerolisne rotonde te da je jednim dijelom služila i kao cemetrijalna crkva nekom od rodova moćnih i utjecajnih Šubića Bribirskih.

Ključne riječi: *kasni srednji vijek, calices et patenae funerales, Hrvatska, Dalmacija, Bribir, opatija Sv. Ivana Evanđelista, plemićki rod Šubića Bribirskih*