

# Bela - ivanovački burg na Ivanščici

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**Belaj, Juraj**

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# Bela - ivanovački burg na Ivanščici

## *Bela – a burg of the Knights Hospitaller at Ivanščica*

Prethodno priopćenje  
Srednjovjekovna arheologija

Report  
Medieval archaeology

JURAJ BELAJ  
Institut za arheologiju  
Ulica grada Vukovara 68  
HR – 10000 Zagreb  
juraj.belaj@iarh.hr

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*U radu se raspravlja o burgu Beli na Ivanščici, nekadašnjem utvrđenom središtu preceptorata te potom kastelanata vitezova ivanovaca. Lokalitet je rekognosciran, na temelju čega se donosi opis materijalnih tragova burga te njegov prvi precizniji tlocrt. Zbog do sada neprovedenih arheoloških istraživanja, podaci se u tekstu nadopunjuju s pregledom i analizom pisanih dokumenata, toponimije i predaja. Pobija se teza o postojanju branič-kule kružnog tlocrta, njezini se navodni “ostaci” pripisuju cisterni, dok se masivna branič-kula četvrtastog tlocrta pretpostavlja u južnome dijelu dvorišta. Na temelju prikupljenih pokazatelja predlaže se datacija nastanka ovoga kamenog burga u početak 13. ili na kraj 12. stoljeća.*

*Ključne riječi: burg, viteški redovi, ivanovci, srednji vijek, Pusta Bela, Ivanščica*

*The paper discusses the burg of Bela at Ivanščica, a former fortified centre of the preceptory and subsequently a kastelanat of the Knights Hospitaller. The site was surveyed, which served as the basis for a description of the material remains of the burg as well as its first detailed ground-plan. Considering that no archaeological excavations have been carried out so far, the information in the text is supplemented by a review and study of written documents, toponymy and traditions. The thesis about the existence of a defensive tower of a circular ground plan is refuted; its alleged “remains” are attributed to a cistern, while the massive defensive tower of a rectangular ground plan is tentatively placed in the southern part of the courtyard. Based on the collected indicators the date put forward for the creation of this stone burg is the beginning of the 13th or the end of the 12th century.*

*Key words: burg, knightly orders, Knights Hospitaller, Middle Ages, Pusta Bela, Ivanščica*

### UVOD

Poznato je da su ivanovci dobivali velike posjede od kraljeva, hercegâ, banova i drugoga plemstva. Organizirali su ih u preceptorate (preceptorije) ili kastelanate (baulije ili komanderije, komende). Takvom organizacijskom jedinicom upravljao je preceptor (nalogodavac odnosno zapovjednik), komandator ili kaštelan koji je redovito boravio u sjedištu preceptorata, *domusu* (kući) odnosno *kaštelu*, ukoliko je bila riječ o utvrđenom gradu (Dobronić 1984a:90). Upravo je takav slučaj bio s Belom. Srednjovjekovni burg Bela (sl. 1), danas poznatiji kao Pusta Bela, bio je ivanovački utvrđeni grad u sjeveroistočnome dijelu Ivanščice i, barem neko vrijeme, središte preceptorata koji je po njemu i dobio ime. Njegova važnost kao ivanovačke utvrde očituje se i po tome što je u povijesnim dokumentima vrlo brzo funkciju *preceptora* zamijenila ona belskoga *kaštelana*. On očito nije bio samo upravno središte, nego važan strateški objekt.

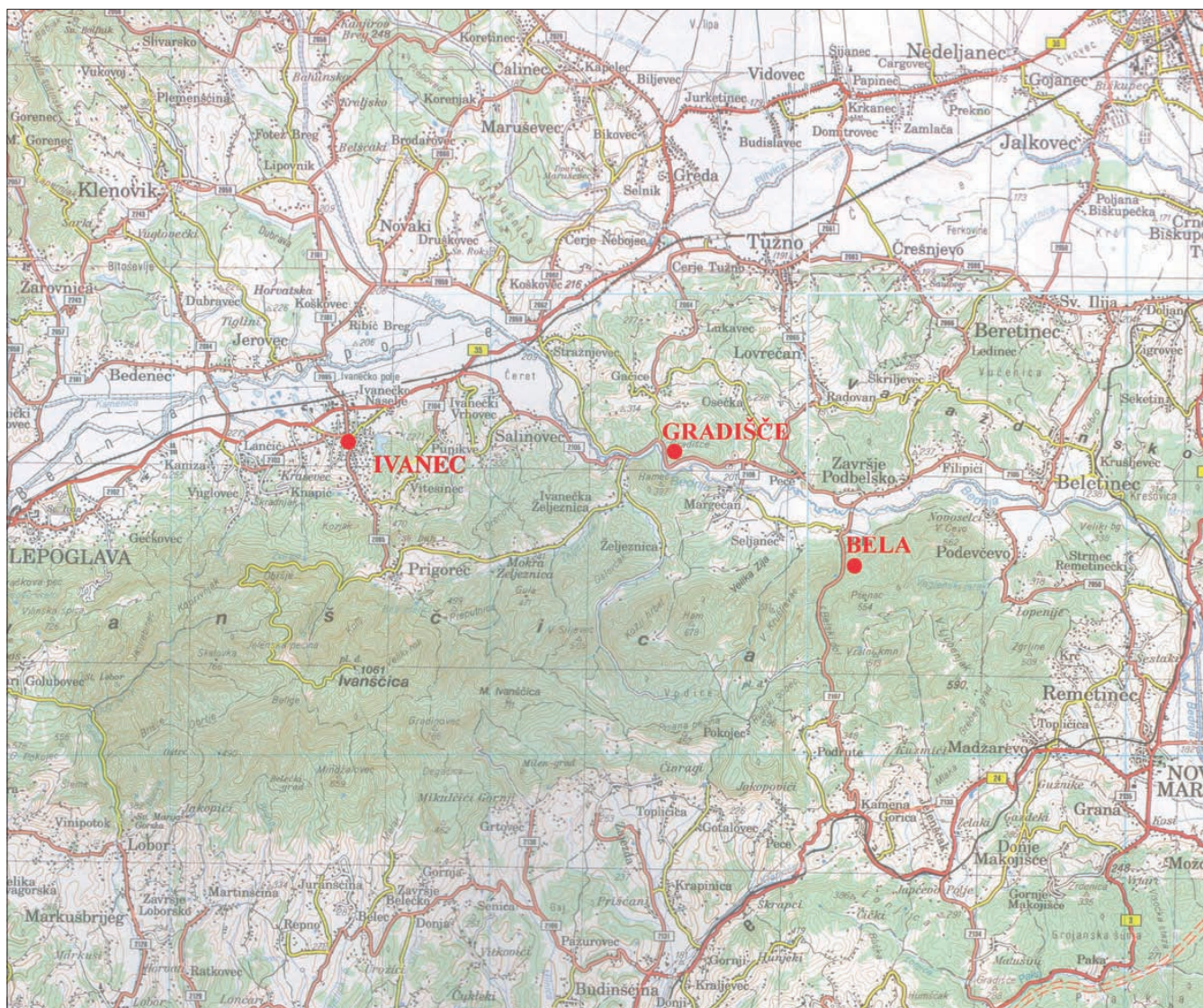
Nažalost, zbog kompleksnosti i stanja toga burga te zbog pomanjkanja ozbiljnijih sredstava, do sada nije provedeno sustavno arheološko istraživanje njegovih ruševina. Zbog toga je ovaj rad temeljen na ostalim izvorima podata-

### INTRODUCTION

It is known that the Knights Hospitaller received large estates from kings, *hercegs*, *bans* and other nobility. They organized them into preceptorates or *kastelanats* (*baulije* or *commanderies*, *komende*). An organizational unit of that kind was managed by a preceptor (order-issuing authority, that is, commandant), commander or castellan who regularly resided in the centre of the preceptory, a *domus* (house) or a citadel, if the town was fortified (Dobronić 1984a:90). Bela was precisely such a case. The mediaeval burg of Bela (Fig. 1), presently better known as Pusta Bela, was a fortified town of the Knights Hospitaller in the northeastern part of Ivanščica and, at least during a certain period, the centre of the preceptory named after it. Its importance as a Hospitallers' fort is reflected also in the fact that historical documents reveal that the role of the *preceptor* was soon replaced by that of the *castellan* of Bela. It was certainly not merely an administrative centre but also an important strategic point.

Unfortunately, due to the complexity and state of that burg, as well as the lack of substantial means, no systematic





Sl. 1 Karta područja belskog preceptorata s naznačenim ključnim ivanovačkim lokalitetima  
Fig. 1 A map of the area of the Bela preceptory with marked key sites of the Hospitallers

ka o Beli: na rijetkim pisanim dokumentima često dvojbene autentičnosti, na toponimiji i predajama, te na rezultatima istraživanja drugih autora. Obogaćen je temeljitim terenskim pregledom koji je iznjedrio prvi precizniji tlocrt utvrde Bela i opis njezinih ruševina. Ostaje nada, a tome želi pridonijeti i ovaj rad, da će se u budućnosti poduzeti sustavna arheološko-konzervatorska istraživanja burga.

### SMJEŠTAJ

Ruševine burga Bele nalaze se na sjeveroistočnim obroncima gore Ivanščice, jugozapadno od Varaždina, na brdu koje puk naziva *Ivanuševo brdo*, kako je još zabilježio Kukuljević (1886a, 46-47), odnosno *Ivanoš* ili pak *Pusta Bela*, kako je to potvrdilo etnološko istraživanje mještana okolnih sela (Belaj 2005a, 17-18). Burg se nalazi na n.v. od 375 m, a relativna visina mu je oko 180 m (selo u podnožju je na 196 m n.v.) (sl. 2).

Burg je izgrađen na vrlo teško dostupnome vrhu - nije riječ o grebenu koji bi s jedne strane bio lako dostupan, kao što je čest slučaj s mnogim drugim srednjovjekovnim utverdama. Stoga mu se moglo prići jedino kružno. Po svojem

archaeological excavations of its ruins have been conducted so far. This is why this paper is based on other sources of information on Bela: rare written documents of often dubious authenticity; toponymy and traditions, as well as results of investigations by other authors. It has been enriched by a thorough field survey that yielded the first more detailed ground-plan of the Bela fort together with a description of its ruins. We are left with the hope, and it is also the intention of this paper to contribute to this, that systematic archaeological-conservation investigations of the burg will take place in the future.

### THE POSITION

The ruins of the Bela burg lie on the northeastern slopes of the Ivanščica mountain, southwest of Varaždin, on a hill called *Ivanuševo Brdo* by the folk, as documented already by Kukuljević (1886a, 46-47), also *Ivanoš* or even *Pusta Bela*, as confirmed by the ethnological research among the residents of neighbouring villages (Belaj 2005a, 17-18). The burg lies at 375 m a.s.l., at a relative height of around 180 m (the village at its foot is at 196 m. a.s.l.) (Fig. 2).



nepristupačnom položaju Belu bismo mogli svrstati u skupinu najstarijih burgova iz 12. i početka 13. stoljeća (Horvat 1996, 180).

Smješten je tako da dobro nadzire i štiti drevni prolaz gorske ceste preko istočnoga dijela Ivanščice, od Podruta i Gotalovca prema današnjem selu Beli, što je vjerojatno bila njegova prvobitna funkcija. Taj prastari put, koji je povezivao doline Bednje i Krapine, tj. putove koji su ih pratile, odnosno koji je spajao varaždinsku regiju s krajem južno od masiva Ivanščice, prema obiteljskoj predaji još je do Prvoga svjetskog rata bio prometnicom kojom su Varaždinci hodočastili, što u kočijama a što pješice, u Mariju Bisticu (pravcem Varaždin – Biškupec - Sv. Ilija – Bela – Podrute – Hrašćina - Marija Bistrica).

Ovaj put prati potok Belščina. Kod promišljanja srednjovjekovnoga gospodarstva ovoga kraja (belskog preceptorata napose), valja imati na umu Kukuljevićevu zabilješku o snazi potoka Belščine koji teče *toli silnim tiekom, da u daljini od 1/4 sata može tjerati pet mlina* (Kukuljević 1886a, 46-47).

Danas ovo područje administrativno pripada općini Novi Marof, iako tijekom povijesti nije gravitiralo novomarofskome prostoru, već je uvijek činilo cjelinu s Ivancem. Koliko god nam, naime, dokumenti dopuštaju pratiti povijest ovoga kraja, uvijek je Bela bila sastavni dio velikog vlastelinstva koje je po njoj dobilo i ime. Tako je bilo sve od vremena Ivanovaca, a za pretpostaviti je da to odražava i stariju situaciju. Ivanovci su na području preceptorata, osim utvrde Bele, imali još svojih objekata: prvenstveno veliku utvrdu Gradišće (Belaj 2005b) te nekoliko manjih kaštela. Jedan od njih se najvjerojatnije nalazio u današnjem Ivancu (Belaj 2006). Zbog promjene načina života, strateških i gospodarskih prilika tijekom renesanse, burg Bela gubi svoje značenje, a istodobno raste važnost kaštela u Ivancu.

## IME

Ime ovoga burga moglo bi upućivati na bjelinu njegovih zidina i u raznim je oblicima vrlo čest u Hrvatskoj kao i u drugim zemljama, naseljenima slavenskim narodima. U okvirima razmišljanja o dualizmu u starih Hrvata postoje i druga, ne baš uvjerljiva tumačenja *bijelih* toponima, no takvi toponimi tada uvijek zahtijevaju svoju *crnu* opreku u prostoru, a što kod Bele nije vidljivo. U puku, logično, prevladava mišljenje da je ime utvrdi dao kralj Bela IV. koji kao da ju je sagradio i u njoj obitavao (Belaj 2005a, 48), što nije do li pučka etimologija. Najvjerojatnije je ime izvedeno od praslavenskoga *\*bělъ*, što je pak iz indoeurospkoga korijena *\*bhel(H)-* "sijati, sjajan, bijel". Napomenimo da je to ime poznato i u Sloveniji i u austrijskoj Koruškoj/Kärnten kao i u drugim slavenskim zemljama (Srbiji, Makedoniji, Bugarskoj, Češkoj, Slovačkoj ...) kao hidronim *Bela* (u Koruškoj i njemački *Vellach*), vjerojatno zbog boje vode. Iz tih su hidronima zatim izvedena i imena naselja poput *Bela*, *Podbela*. Gdje god postoji naselje imenom *Bela*, obično je uza nj brzi potok ili rijeka istoga imena, pa valja pretpostaviti kako su naselja većinom dobila imena po vodotocima. Isto bi mogao biti slučaj i kod naše *Bele* ispod koje teče potok *Belščina*, no ime *Belščina* (ako nije došlo do njegova preoblikovanja) sigurno je izvedenica od *Bela*. To osnažuje i činjenica da je

The burg has been erected on an all but inaccessible peak – not a ridge with easy access from one side, as is often the case with many other mediaeval fortifications. It could therefore only be approached by going around it. Its inaccessible position leads us to classify Bela among the group of the earliest burgs from the 12<sup>th</sup> or the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Horvat 1996, 180).

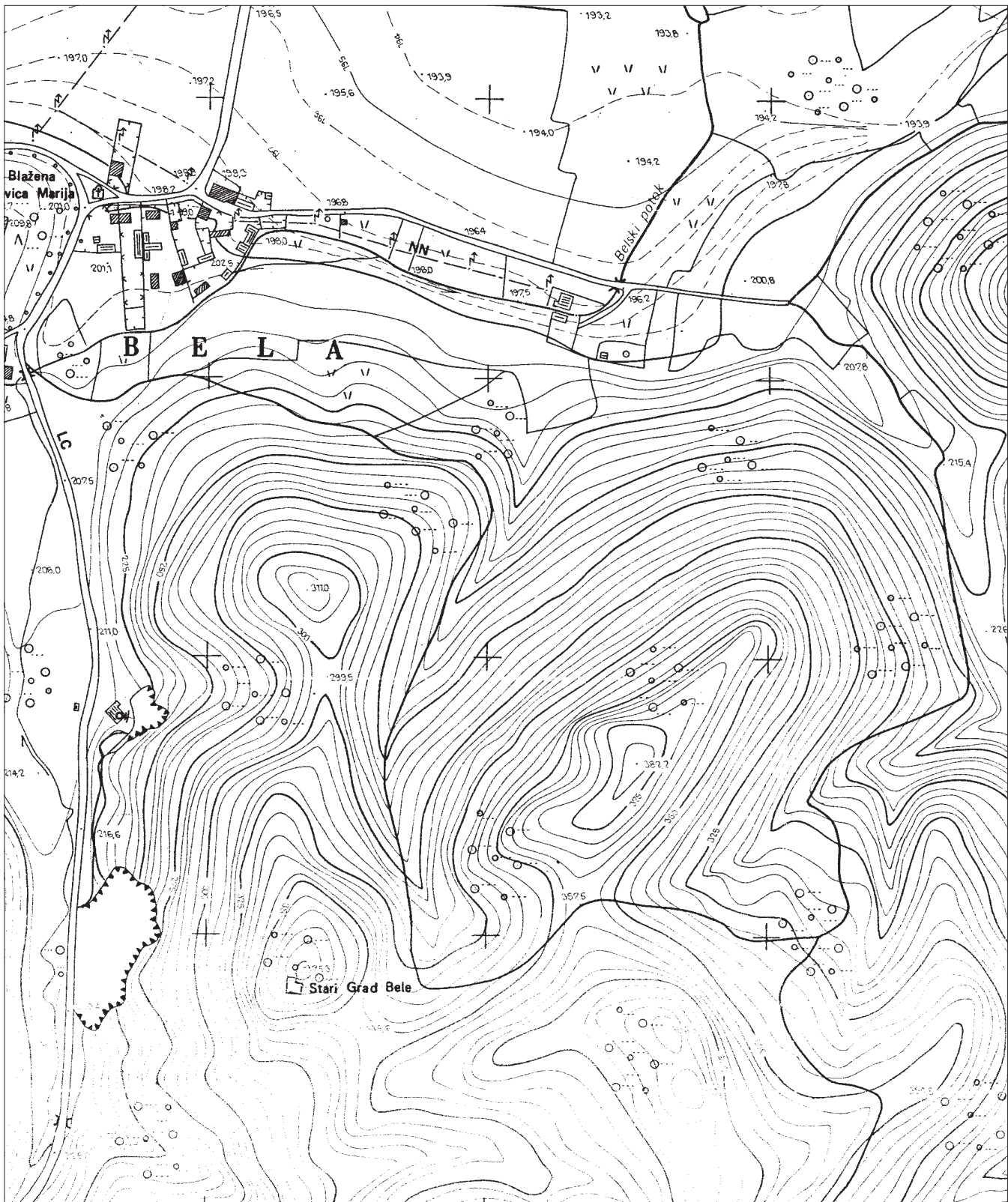
It is situated in such a way that it oversees and guards the ancient passage of a mountain road over the eastern part of Ivanščica, from Podrute and Gotalovac towards the present-day village of Bela, which had probably been its original function. This ancient road, which connected the valleys of the Bednja and Krapina rivers, i.e. the trails that followed them, and which also connected the Varaždin region with the land south of the Ivanščica massif, had – according to family tradition – up until World War I been the communication used by the Varaždin folk, by carriage or foot, for the pilgrimage to Marija Bistrica (following the route Varaždin – Biškupec - Sv. Ilija – Bela – Podrute – Hrašćina – Marija Bistrica).

This route is followed by the Belščina stream. In considering the mediaeval economy of this area (the Bela preceptory in particular), one should bear in mind Kukuljević's note about the power of the Belščina stream, whose *current is so strong, that it can drive five watermills at a quarter of an hour's distance* (Kukuljević 1886a, 46-47).

This area presently belongs to the Novi Marof municipality, even though throughout its history it did not gravitate to the Novi Marof area, but had always formed a whole with Ivanec. As much as the documents allow us to follow the history of this land, Bela had always formed part of the large estate, which was named after it. This was the situation from the time of the Hospitallers, and the same probably holds true for the situation before that as well. In addition to Bela, the Hospitallers possessed other structures in the territory of the preceptory: first of all, the large fort of Gradišće (Belaj 2005b) as well as several smaller citadels. One of those was probably located in the present-day Ivanec (Belaj 2006). Due to the changed way of life, the strategic and economic circumstances during the Renaissance, the Bela burg gradually lost its importance, while at the same time that of the Ivanec citadel grew.

## THE NAME

The name of this burg might hint at the whiteness of its walls; in various forms, it is frequently found in Croatia as well as in other countries settled by Slavonic peoples. In the context of considerations regarding the dualism among ancient Croats there are other, not entirely convincing, interpretations of *white* toponyms, which in those cases regularly require its *black* counterpart in the space, which is not obvious in the case of Bela. Among the folk, which is logical, the opinion prevails that the fort was named by King Bela IV, who supposedly built it and resided there (Belaj 2005a, 48), which is nothing but popular etymology. The name is in all likelihood derived from ancient Slavonic *\*bělъ*, which in turn comes from the Indo-European root *\*bhel(H)-* - "to shine, shiny, white". Let us mention that the name is known



Sl. 2 Burg Bela na topografskoj karti (1:5000)  
Fig. 2 The Bela burg on a topographic map (1:5000)



Sl. 3 Pregradni zid vidljiv nakon urušenja sjevernoga zida burga (snimio J. Belaj)

Fig. 3 A partition wall visible after the collapse of the northern wall of the burg (photo by J. Belaj)

na Jozefinskom vojnom zemljovidu ovaj potok imenovan *Bisticza* (Valentić, ur. 2005, karta sekcije 8).

Danas, nažalost, ne znamo kada su i od koga ivanovci dobili ovaj veliki posjed. No pogledamo li neke značajke belskog preceptorata, čije se sjedište nalazilo u ovome burgu i po kojem je čitav preceptorat dobio ime, nameće nam se još jedan mogući izvor imenu Bele. Upada u oči, naime, veličina belskog preceptorata, koji je tada bio jedan od najvećih u Varaždinskoj županiji (Kukuljević 1886a, 47). Opseg posjeda rekonstruiran je na temelju popisa posjeda iz vremena ivanovačkih nasljednika (Belaj 2005a, 45-47). I upravo ta veličina posjeda podsjeća na situaciju na Medvednici, gdje je kralj Ladislav povjerio Akama veliki posjed s obje strane Medvednice radi vojničke organizacije županije i zaštite novoosnovane biskupije u Zagrebu (o tome više: Klaić 1976, 256; 1982, 25,57,296). Budući da su, kako izgleda, Ake bili i prvi župani Zagrebačke županije (Klaić 1982, 29), nameće se pretpostavka da je slična situacija mogla biti i na prostoru zapadnog dijela Varaždinske županije. Možda je kralj doveo iz Mađarske nekoga velikaša i darovao mu posjede na Ivanščici, kako bi na taj način osigurao zapadnu granicu svojega kraljevstva (blizu njemačkih zemalja oko Ptuja, koje su u povijesti često bile problematične u mađarsko-njemačkim odnosima). Moguće je da je taj velikaš ujedno bio i župan Županije varaždinske. Ove pretpostavke djelomično osnažuje sličnost imena burga i posjeda *Bele* s imenom prvoga (poznatog) župana varaždinskog *Belee*, spomenuta u ispravi kralja Bele III. iz 1181. godine (Težak 1999a, 13). Naravno, bez povijesnih dokumenata nikada nećemo doznati što se doista dogodilo, ali smijemo li pretpostavljati na temelju onoga čime raspoložemo, možemo zamisliti sljedeći scenarij: kralj dariva župana velikim posjedom, slično kako to čini kraj Zagreba, i iz sličnih motiva. Iz određenih razloga (izumrće loze, nevjera ...) posjed se vraća u kraljev fisk te ga on daruje viteškome redu, opet iz istih razloga (čuvanje osjetljive granice). Slično kao što kralj Andrija II. oduzima zemlju Sv. Martina varaždinskome županu Krakonu i daje je templarima (Klaić 1982:50). Moguće je da s posjedom iva-

also in Slovenia and in Kärnten in Austria, as well as in other Slavonic countries (Serbia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia...) as a hydronym – *Bela* (in Kärnten also in German – *Vellach*), probably on account of the colour of the water. These hydronyms subsequently gave rise to the names of places such as *Bela*, *Podbela*. Wherever there is a settlement named *Bela*, it is usually accompanied by a rapid stream or a river of the same name, so it can be assumed that settlements were as a rule named after watercourses. The same could be the case with our *Bela*, below which runs the *Belščina* stream, which (unless it underwent transformations) is certainly a derivation from *Bela*. This is corroborated by the fact that on a military map from the time of emperor Joseph this stream bears the name of *Bisticza* (Valentić, ed. 2005, map of section 8).

We do not know at present, unfortunately, who and when gave the Hospitallers this large estate. However, if we look at certain features of the preceptory of Bela, whose seat lay in this burg and which gave its name to the entire preceptory, another possible source for the name of Bela presents itself. One is struck by the size of the Bela preceptory, at that time one of the largest in the Varaždin county (Kukuljević 1886a, 47). The perimeter of the estate has been reconstructed on the basis of the list of estates from the time of the Hospitallers' successors (2005a, 45-47). It is precisely this size of the estate that brings to mind the situation at Medvednica, where King Ladislaus conferred a large estate on both sides of Medvednica upon the Aka family for the purpose of military organization of the country and the protection of the newly-established diocese in Zagreb (more about this: Klaić 1976, 256; Klaić 1982, 25,57,296). Taking into consideration that the Akas were apparently the first *župans* (county rulers) of the Zagreb County (Klaić 1982, 29), the possibility presents itself that things may have been similar in the area of the western part of the Varaždin County. Perhaps the king brought a nobleman from Hungary and gave him estates at Ivanščica, to secure in that way the western border of his kingdom (in the vicinity of German lands around Ptuj, which were during history often a bone of contention in Hungarian-German relations. These assumptions are partly reinforced by the similarity in the name of the burg and estate of *Bela* with the name of the first (known) *župan* of Varaždin, *Belea*, mentioned in the 1181 document by King Bela III (Težak 1999a, 13). Naturally, without historical documents we shall never know for certain what really happened, but if we are allowed to speculate on the basis of what we have, we can imagine the following scenario: the king gave a large estate to the *župan*, similar to what he had done near Zagreb, and with similar motivation. For certain reasons (extinction of the lineage, infidelity...) the estate returned to the king's fisc and he bestowed it on the knightly order, again for the same reasons (the defense of a sensitive border). Similar to this, King Andrija II confiscated the land of St. Martin from the *župan* of Varaždin, Krakon, and gave it to the Templars (Klaić 1982, 50). It is possible that together with the estate, the Hospitallers (and perhaps the Templars before them?) received the fort of Bela, which (again, perhaps) preserved in its name the memory of the previous





Sl. 4 Profilirani kamen (snimio J. Belaj)  
Fig. 4 A profilled stone (photo by J. Belaj)

novci (prije i templari?) dobivaju i utvrdu Belu koja u svojem imenu (opet možda) čuva uspomenu na prijašnjeg vlasnika ili čak graditelja. No budući da je naziv *Bela* u mnogim oblicima vrlo čest u slavenskim zemljama, možda je navedena sličnost imena tek slučajnost. Ipak, to ne bi bio usamljen slučaj da posjed, pa i utvrđeni grad na njemu, dobije svoje ime po svojem značajnom posjedniku.

Ovdje valja spomenuti i *Belu* u turčianskoj županiji, danas u Slovačkoj, gdje je naš burg pogrešno ubicirao povjesničar redovništva u Mađarskoj, Damianus Fuxhoffer (1803). O toj Beli, kao i o Fuxhofferovoj zabuni, bit će još riječi u raspravi o Beli i templarima.

Također se treba osvrnuti i na *Bijelu* kod Pakraca (na potoku *Stančevac* ili *Bijela*), s kojom je Belu na Ivanščici zamijenio Laszowski kada je govorio o naslovu opata Sv. Margarete od Bele, što ga je u 17. st. naslijedio veliki prepozit Kaptola zagrebačkoga (Laszowski 1903/1904, 10; ispravio ga je Ostojčić 1965, 57; Dobronić 1984b, 22; no na to je upozoravao već Kukuljević 1886b, 61).

I pod Ivanščicom ima više *Bela*. Kao prvo, to je urušeni burg iznad *Belskoga dola* o kojem govori ovaj rad, i kojeg puk, jer je napušten, zove *Pusta Bela*. Tako složeni nazivi česti su u ovim krajevima (primjerice, *Pusti Lobor*, *Pusta Barbara* na Malome Kalniku), ali i u drugim slavenskim zemljama. Najviše je primjera u Slovačkoj, osobito se ističe Pusti Hrad – Zvolin, a ima ih i u Češkoj, Sloveniji, Srbiji, Crnoj Gori, Poljskoj ..., pa i u Rumunjskoj.<sup>1</sup>

*Bela* se zove i malo selo pod Pustom Belom na odvojkju ceste Podrute – Završje prema Margečanu, a isto ime nose i dva dvorca, jedan odmah zapadno od sela Bela (Nova ili Gornja Bela), a drugi dalje uz cestu prema Margečanu (Stara ili Donja Bela). Oba su poznata i po imenima *Podbela* I. i II. U razdoblju koje nas zanima još nisu postojali noviji dvorovi u nizini, a i današnja Pusta Bela još nije bila pusta, pa se u onodobnim dokumentima ime Bela odnosi na današnju Pustu Belu. Stoga se u ovome tekstu za ivanovački burg rabi samo ime *Bela*.

Do u novije doba margečansku su župu službeno zvali župa Bela.

<sup>1</sup> Orijentacije radi, pretraživač na stranici [www.geonames.org](http://www.geonames.org) za toponim "Pusta" u naprednom traženju za Europu daje 163 rezultata.

owner, or even the constructor. Still, considering that the name *Bela* in various forms is quite frequent in the Slavonic countries, the mentioned similarity of names might be a mere coincidence. Nevertheless, this would not be the sole example of an estate, or even a fortified town in it, being named after an important owner.

We ought to mention here also *Bela* in the Turiec county, presently in Slovakia, where Damianus Fuxhoffer (1803), a historian of religious orders in Hungary, wrongly placed our burg. More will be said about this *Bela*, as well as Fuxhoffer's mistake, in the discussion about *Bela* and the Templars.

*Bijela* near Pakrac (on the *Stančevac* or *Bijela* stream) likewise deserves consideration. Laszowski confused it with the *Bela* at Ivanščica when he spoke about the title of the abbot of St Margaret of *Bela*, succeeded in the 17<sup>th</sup> cent. by the grand preceptor of the Zagreb College of Canons (Laszowski 1903/1904, 10; corrected by Ostojčić 1965, 57; Dobronić 1984b, 22; but attention had been drawn to this already by Kukuljević 1886b, 61).

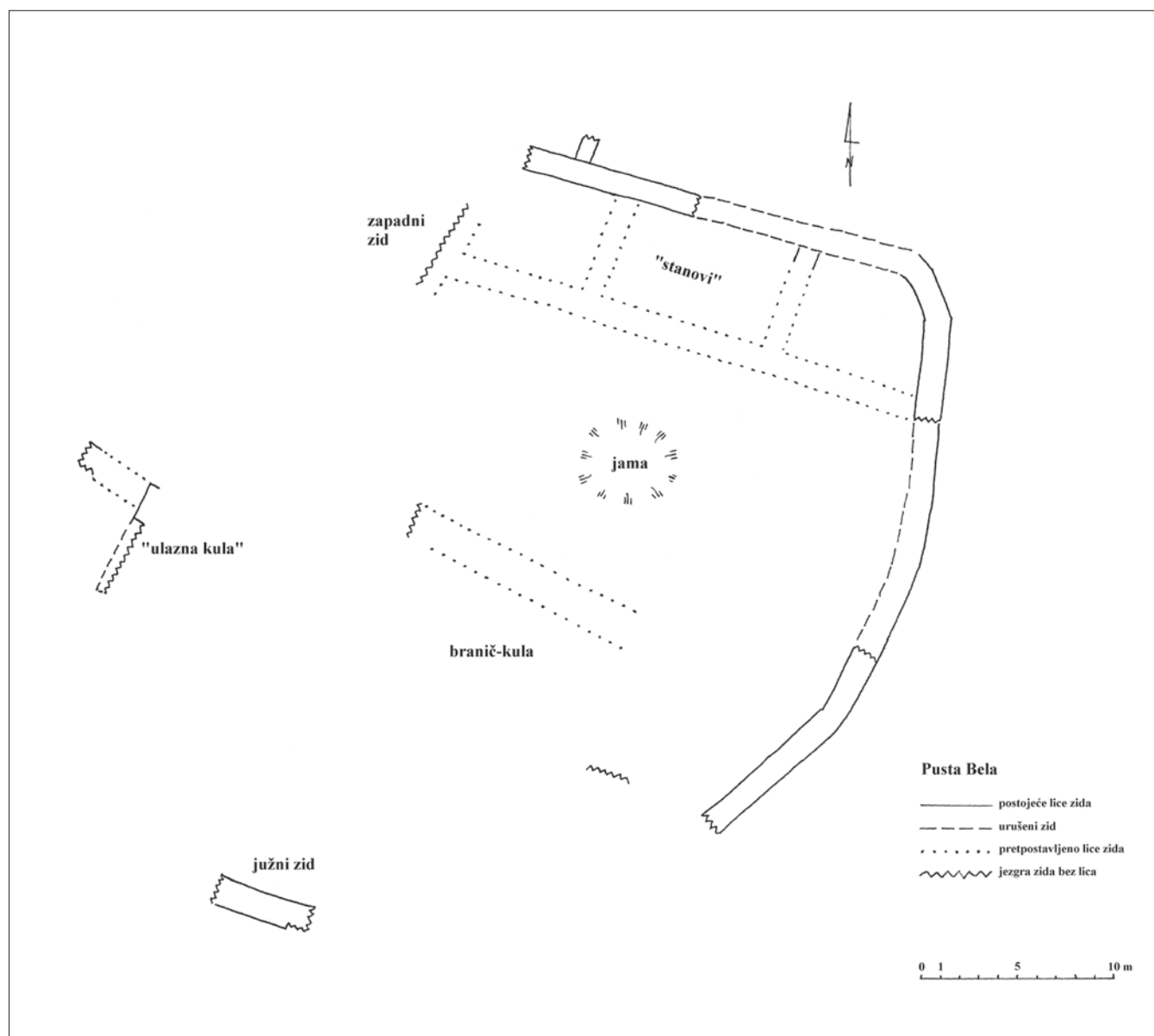
There are several *Belas* below Ivanščica as well. Firstly, a collapsed burg above *Belski Dol*, discussed in this paper, and called *Pusta Bela* in the folk, on account of its deserted state. Such combinations of names are frequent in these lands (for instance, *Pusti Lobor*, *Pusta Barbara* on Mali Kalnik), but also in other Slavonic countries. Most examples are found in Slovakia, where Pusti Hrad – Zvolin is particularly prominent, but can also be found in the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Serbia, Montenegro, Poland..., even Romania.<sup>1</sup>

*Bela* is also the name of a small village below Pusta Bela on a side road of the Podrute – Završje road in the direction of Margečan, and the same name is shared by two manor houses, one immediately west of the *Bela* village (Nova or Gornja Bela), and the other further down the road toward Margečan (Stara or Donja Bela). Both are known also as *Podbela* I and II. In the period we are interested in there were still no manors of recent date in the plain, and present-day Pusta Bela was not deserted (Cro. *Pusta*) yet, so the *Bela* in the documents of the time refers to present-day Pusta Bela. This is why in this text we use only the name *Bela* for the burg of the Hospitallers.

The parish of Margečan had been officially called the *Bela* parish up until recently.

There is a number of indicators that the Hospitallers had a church of their own here dedicated to St Margaret (*Sv. Margareta*; the name *Margeta* is the local variant of the name Margaret). It is mentioned in the documents for the first time in 1431 as a Hospitallers' church *pod Belom* (below *Bela*) (Archives of the CASA D-X-73). Lukinović supposes that the choice of the term "church" and not "chapel" is a sign that it was a parish church (1998, 34). In a financial transaction from 1521 there is a mention of a Hospitallers' *monastery* (sic!) of St Margaret in *Bela* (Kukuljević, 1886b, 39). L. Dobronić believed that the mediaeval church did not stand at its present position, but that it was either located within the Hospitallers' fort at present-day Gradišće, disappearing together with it, or within the *Bela* burg, from where

<sup>1</sup> For orientation, the browser at the address [www.geonames.org](http://www.geonames.org) yielded 163 records in the advanced search for Europe for the toponym "Pusta"



Sl. 5 Tlocrt burga Bele  
Fig. 5 A ground plan of the Bela burg

Više je pokazatelja da su još ivanovci ovdje imali svoju crkvu posvećenu sv. Margareti (ime *Margeta* lokalna je inačica imena Margareta). Prvi se put u dokumentima spominje 1431. godine kao ivanovačka crkva *pod Belom* (Arhiv HAZU D-X-73). Lukinović pretpostavlja da izabrani izraz "crkva", a ne "kapela", znači da je riječ o župnoj crkvi (1998, 34). Godine 1521. u jednoj se financijskoj transakciji govori o hospitalskom *samostanu* (sic!) Sv. Margarete u Beli (Kukuljević, 1886b, 39). L. Dobronić je smatrala da se srednjovjekovna crkva nije nalazila na današnjem položaju već da je bila ili u sklopu utvrde ivanovaca na današnjem Gradišću te je nestala zajedno s njom, ili unutar burga Bele pa je, tek kada je Bela bila prepuštena propadanju, preseljena u dolinu (1984b, 22). Zanimljivo je napomenuti da je prvi iz povijesnih izvora poznati preceptor Bele bio *frater Margarita*, pa postoji mogućnost da je on odabrao titulara crkve, no i crkva ivanovaca u Csurgóu, sjedištu preceptorata koji je nesumnjivo imao veze s Belom, također je bila posvećena sv. Margareti.

it would be moved to the valley after Bela was abandoned (1984b, 22). It is interesting to mention that the first historically documented preceptor of Bela was *frater Margarita*, so there is a possibility that he chose the patron saint of the church; however, the Hospitallers' church in Csurgó, the seat of a preceptory that was indisputably related to Bela, was also dedicated to St Margaret.

#### WRITEN SOURCES

Before we present the visible remains of the burg, we should look at other sources that give us more or less reliable information about Bela, first of all, historical sources. The most extensive accounts date to the period after the Hospitallers had left Croatia, the earliest come from the time of the management of the fort, while the more remote periods are referred to by occasional unreliable accounts and one, in all probability, inaccurately dated document that associates Bela with the Knights Templar.





Sl. 6 Južni dio istočnoga zida (snimio J. Belaj)  
Fig. 6 The southern part of the eastern wall (photo by J. Belaj)

### PISANI IZVORI

Prije prikaza vidljivih ostataka burga treba pogledati i druge izvore koji nam o Beli donose više-manje pouzdane podatke. U prvome redu to su povijesni izvori. Najopširniji su iz vremena nakon odlaska ivanovaca iz Hrvatske, najstariji potječu iz vremena a gospodarenja utvrdom, dok se na starija razdoblja referiraju tek poneke nepouzdanе predaje i jedna, prema svemu sudeći, krivo datirana isprava koja Belu povezuje s templarima.

### BELA I TEMPLARI

Pitanje templarske nazočnosti u ovim krajevima prisutno je već dugo u literaturi. No korijeni se skrivaju duboko u predajama. Priča se da je engleski kralj Rikard Lavljega Srca, na povratku iz trećega križarskog rata, krajem 12. stoljeća, prošao kroz hrvatske krajeve. Ta se priča vezuje uz Dubrovnik, Zadar, pa i Belu (Nadilo 2004, 233). Kada bi te priče odražavale povijesnu istinu, onda bi Bela postojala još u 12. stoljeću, što nas ne bi ni začudilo.

Prvi je Belu s templarima povezoao povjesničar redovništva u Mađarskoj, Damjan Fuxhoffer (1803). No on je našu Belu smjestio u Slovačku (Dobronić 1984b, 22). Ipak, o nazočnosti templara u Slovačkoj nema tragova u povijesnim izvorima (Ruttkay 1996, 179).

Drugi koji je unio zabunu bio je mađarski povjesnik György Fejér. On je u svojem diplomatskom zborniku (Fejér CD II, 188) objavio dokument koji svjedoči o nazočnosti templara u Beli još 1165. godine, što bi odgovaralo pučkoj predaji o boravku Rikarda Lavljega Srca na Beli. Fejérov je podatak u hrvatsku historiografiju unio Ivan Kukuljević (bez približega navoda o izvoru), ali s primjetnim oprezom:

*Ako smiemo vjerovati jednoj po Fejeru veoma pogriješno priobćenju listini, to su templari jur g. 1165. posjedovali i grad Belu kod Varaždina. U toj listini spominje se neki Guillelmus dictus Althanis (ili Althaviz) kao preceptor od Čurova u šumskoj županiji, zajedno kao kastelan belski (u listini stoji pogriješno Capellanus)* (Kukuljević 1886a, 12).

Taj su podatak nekritički preuzeli Emil Laszowski (1903/1904, 1) i Gjuro Szabo (1939, 77), a obojica su kao



Sl. 7 Ostatak južnog zida, vanjska strana (snimio J. Belaj)  
Fig. 7 The remains of the southern wall, the exterior (photo by J. Belaj)

### BELA AND THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

The issue of the Templars' presence in these lands has been present in the literature for a long time, but the roots are hidden deep in the legends. A story goes that the English king Richard the Lionheart, when returning from the Third Crusade, at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, passed through Croatian lands. The story is connected with Dubrovnik, Zadar, as well as Bela (Nadilo 2004, 233). If these stories reflected a historical truth, this would mean that Bela existed as early as the 12<sup>th</sup> century, which would not come as a surprise to us.

Bela was first brought into connection with the Templars by a historian of religious orders in Hungary, Damjan Fuxhoffer (1803), but he located our Bela in Slovakia (Dobronić 1984b, 22). However, there is no trace in historical records of the presence of the Templars in Slovakia (Ruttkay 1996, 179).

The second person to bring confusion was the Hungarian historian György Fejér. In his *Codex Diplomaticus* (Fejér CD II, 188) he published a document bearing testimony to the presence of the Templars in Bela as far back as 1165, which would fit into the popular tradition about Richard the Lionheart's sojourn in Bela. Fejér's information entered the Croatian historiography through Ivan Kukuljević (without detailing the source), but with apparent caution:

*If we are to believe a charter that was quite inaccurately published by Fejér, the Templars had in 1165 in their pos-*

godinu navela 1163. (Pogreška se vjerojatno dogodila Laszowskome, a Szabo ju je nekritički prepisao).

Navod se čvrsto uvukao u historiografiju te se u literaturi često spominje templarska prisutnost u Beli.

Da je Kukuljevićeva sumnja bila opravdana, pokazala je tek Lelja Dobronić (1984b, 17):

*Naime, "frater Guillelmus de Abaviz", "dictus Altany" ili "Altanyz" bio je kaštelan Bele i poglavar ivanovačkog sjedišta Čorgoa 1335. i 1357. godine, a kaštelan Bele i poglavar ivanovaca u Glogovnici i Božjakovini (castellanus noster de Bela et perceptor de Glogonicha et de sancto Martino) 1361. godine.*

Kaštelan Bele toga imena (neujednačeno zabilježena u izvorima), ivanovac, javlja se od 1350. do 1376. godine u više raznih isprava, ponekad ujedno i kao preceptor Csurgóa, Glogovnice i Svetoga Martina. Godine 1350. zapisan je kao *Guilielmus Altanis*, 1355. kao *Gillermus de Abaviz*, 1357. *Guillelmus dictus Altany*, 1361. *Gwyllermus de Altanyz*, 1371. *Gilermus de Altauic*, 1375. *Guillelmus de Alcavyz*, a 1376. samo kao *Gylermo* (prema Dobronić 1984a, 183).

Prema L. Dobronić, činjenica da je u izvorima zabilježen kaštelan Bele toga imena i predikata od sredine 14. stoljeća, i to kao ivanovac, pobija vjerodostojnost podatka da su u 12. stoljeću Belu posjedovali templari.

No premda se pretpostavka L. Dobronić čini ispravnom, opreza radi treba upozoriti kako sama činjenica da je vitez-redovnik nekoga imena bio zabilježen u neko određeno vrijeme, još ne znači da u neko drugo vrijeme nije mogao djelovati vitez slična imena i predikata. U nas je tijekom 13. stoljeća ime *Guillelmus* (Guillermo = Vilim, Wilhelm i sl.) u različitim oblicima bilo jedno od češćih i kod templara i kod ivanovaca, a bilo je u ono doba općenito vrlo popularno (Belaj 2005a, 52). Slično vrijedi i za predikat *Althanis* (ili *Althaviz*). On se može odnositi ili na *Autise* - rijeku u departmanu Vendée ili *Alta villu* kod Aspremonta ili u departmanu Marne, sve u Francuskoj (Graesse et al. 1972). Naime, isti se predikat javlja i kod nekog Taddeusa de *Altitio*, koji je živio oko godine 1336. upravo u burgu Beli (Dobronić 1984a, 138,114; Dobronić 1984b, 96). Otvara se pitanje, smijemo li nakon svega izrečenoga potpuno odbiti mogućnost da je i prije mogao u Beli djelovati kaštelan (ili kapelan) toga imena? U suprotnome, čini se da postoje dvije vjerojatne mogućnosti: ili je Fejér krivo datirao ispravu, ili je riječ o kasnijem falsifikatu. Možda bi detaljnija analiza te isprave mogla odgonetnuti je li ona krivotvorena, i ako je, u čiju korist i kada.

Iako je Kukuljević posumnjao u vjerodostojnost isprave koju je objavio Fejér, ipak navodi i Belu (*grad sa samostanom*), kao i *Ivanec s kapelom*, među dobrima koja su templari držali u Hrvatskoj (1886a, 36). Čini se da to mišljenje nije izgradio samo na toj jednoj ispravi, jer piše da ima *tragova da su ovdje svoj posjed imali također templari ...* (1886a, 46). Nažalost, te tragove ne navodi.

U prilog templarskoj nazočnosti u ovome kraju govore i neke pribilježene usmene predaje vezane uz Gradišće i Ivanec, ali i uz neka udaljenija mjesta (npr. Remetinec, Belec, Lobor ...; Belaj 2005a) pa, barem za sada, ne možemo u potpunosti ni prihvatiti niti odbaciti templarsku prisutnost u Beli, odnosno u njezinoj okolini.

*session also the town of Bela near Varaždin. The charter mentions one Guillelmus dictus Althanis (or Althaviz) as the preceptor of Čurovo in the forest county, at the same time as the castellan of Bela (erroneously written Capellanus in the charter) (Kukuljević 1886a, 12).*

This piece of information was uncritically taken over by Emil Laszowski (1903/1904, 1) and Gjuro Szabo (1939, 77), and both cited the year as 1163 (the mistake was probably Laszowski's, and Szabo copied it uncritically).

The quotation became deeply rooted in the historiography and the Templars' presence in Bela is frequently mentioned in the literature.

It was only Lelja Dobronić who demonstrated that Kukuljević's reservation was justified (1984b, 17):

*"Frater Guillelmus de Abaviz", "dictus Altany" or "Altanyz" was the castellan of Bela and ruler of the Hospitallers' seat of Čorgo in 1335 and 1357, while he was the castellan of Bela and the ruler of the Hospitallers in Glogovnica and Božjakovina (castellanus noster de Bela et perceptor de Glogonicha et de sancto Martino) in 1361.*

A castellan of Bela with that name (ununiformly documented in the sources), a Hospitaller, appears in several diverse documents between 1350 and 1376, at times also in the role of the preceptor of Csurgó, Glogovnica and Sveti Martin. In 1350 he was documented as *Guilielmus Altanis*, in 1355 as *Gillermus de Abaviz*, in 1357 as *Guillelmus dictus Altany*, in 1361 as *Gwyllermus de Altanyz*, in 1371 as *Gilermus de Altauic*, in 1375 as *Guillelmus de Alcavyz*, while in 1376 only as *Gylermo* (after Dobronić 1984a, 183).

In L. Dobronić's opinion, the fact that a castellan of Bela with that name and predicate was mentioned in the sources from the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century, and as a Hospitaller at that, refutes the authenticity of the information that in the 12<sup>th</sup> century Bela had been in the possession of the Templars.

However, even though L. Dobronić's assumption appears correct, we should state as a precaution that the fact itself that a knight-monk with a certain name was documented at a certain time, does not automatically mean that a knight with a similar name and predicate could not have been active in another time. In 13<sup>th</sup> century Croatia, the name *Guillelmus* (Guillermo = Vilim, Wilhelm etc.) in various forms was one of the more frequent names among both the Templars and the Hospitallers, and in fact it was quite popular in general at that time (Belaj 2005a, 52). The case is similar with the predicate *Althanis* (or *Althaviz*). It may refer to either *Autise* – a river in the department Vendée, or *Alta Villa* near Aspremont or the one in the department of Marne, all of them in France (Graesse et al. 1972). The same predicate appears with one Taddeus de *Altitio*, who lived around 1336 precisely in the Bela burg (Dobronić 1984a, 138,114; Dobronić 1984b, 96). The question presents itself, can we, after all that has been said, entirely refute the possibility that there may have been a castellan (or a chaplain) with that name in Bela even before that? If it was not so, two scenarios are probable: either Fejér incorrectly dated the document, or it is a later fabrication. Perhaps a more detailed analysis of the document would unravel whether it was falsified, and if it was, on whose behalf and when.





Sl. 8 Ostatak južnog zida, unutarnja strana (snimio J. Belaj)  
Fig. 8 The remains of the southern wall, the interior (photo by J. Belaj)

### EKSKURZ O BLATNICI

Sada se treba vratiti Fuxhofferu zbog jedne izuzetne zanimljivosti na koju nije skrenuta dovoljna pozornost. Naime, kada on govori o Beli, piše da je titulu njezina kaštelana imao preceptor Csburga u južnoj Mađarskoj (što se, zapravo, odnosilo na "našu" Belu) i navodi da je Bela bila templarska zajedno s obližnjom Blatnicom (Fuxhoffer 1803; Dobronić 1984b, 22). Prema Fuxhofferu, vidljive su bile i ruševine grada na oba lokaliteta koje je on ubicirao u Slovačku (Belaj 2005a, 54).

Još je L. Dobronić ispravno pokazala da se Bela nije nalazila u Slovačkoj već na Ivanšćici, no na spominjanje Blatnice nije se osvrnula. No ako je Fuxhoffer i pogriješio kod ubikacije obaju lokaliteta, još ne znači da je nužno morao pogriješiti pripisujući Belu i Blatnicu templarima umjesto ivanovicima. Pa ako je pogriješio i u tom pogledu, ostaje problem Blatnice koju Fuxhoffer najvjerojatnije nije izmislio. Postoje dvije mogućnosti. Jedna, da je tragajući po Slovačkoj za Belom, čuo za tamošnji Blatnički grad, pa je onda zamislio kako je i on pripadao templarima (što je već malo vjerojatno), a druga, da je u podacima kojima je raspolagao, naša Bela bila povezana s Blatnicom, dakako, ne sa slovačkom. To bi značilo kako se u blizini naše Bele nalazila još jedna utvrda, "Blatnica", koja je pripadala istome redu kao i Bela, a o kojoj danas više ne znamo ništa.

Ako je to tako bilo, a pretpostavka se čini mogućom, pitanje je koja je to utvrda bila. U neposrednoj blizini naše Pu-

In spite of the fact that he doubted the genuineness of the document published by Fejér, Kukuljević nevertheless mentioned both Bela (*the town with a monastery*) and Ivanec (*with a chapel*), among the properties of the Templars in Croatia (1886a, 36). Apparently he did not base that opinion on that one document only, because he wrote that there was *evidence that the Templars also had their estate there...* (1886a, 46). Unfortunately, he fails to give details of any such evidence.

Certain recorded oral traditions connected with Gradišće and Ivanec, but also with some more remote places (e.g. Remetinec, Belec, Lobor ...; Belaj 2005a) also speak in favour of the presence of the Templars in this area, so at least for now, we can neither entirely accept nor refute the Templars' presence in Bela, or in its surroundings.

### AN EXCURSUS ON BLATNICA

We should now return to Fuxhoffer for an exceptionally interesting fact that did not receive enough attention. When he speaks of Bela, he states that the title of its castellan was held by the preceptor of Csburg in southern Hungary (which, in fact, referred to "our" Bela) and mentions that Bela belongs to the Templars, same as nearby Blatnica (Fuxhoffer 1803; Dobronić 1984b, 22). According to Fuxhoffer, the ruins were visible on both those sites, which he located in Slovakia (Belaj 2005a, 54).

Already L. Dobronić accurately demonstrated that Bela was not in Slovakia, but at Ivanšćica, but she did not offer a comment on the mention of Blatnica. Still, even if Fuxhoffer had been wrong in locating both sites, this still does not mean that he was necessarily wrong in attributing Bela and Blatnica to the Templars instead of the Hospitallers. And even if he was wrong about this as well, there still remains the issue of Blatnica, which Fuxhoffer most likely did not simply invent. Two possibilities are imaginable. First, that in his search for Bela around Slovakia, he heard of the local Blatnički Grad, which he then imagined to have also belonged to the Templars (which is not very probable), and second, that in the information he disposed with, our Bela was connected with Blatnica, naturally, not the Slovakian one. This would mean that there was another fort in the vicinity of our Bela – "Blatnica" – which belonged to the same order as Bela, of which we today know nothing about.

If that is how it was, and the possibility seems plausible, the question is which fort this was. Traces of a fort of an unknown name, not mentioned in any document and called *Gradišće* in the folk, lie in the immediate vicinity of our Pusta Bela and, consequently, it first springs to mind. However, neither the examination of topographic maps nor the survey among the local residents gave the researchers anything that would help them connect Gradišće with the toponym *Blatnica* (Belaj 2005a, 54). Considerable differences between Bela and nearby Gradišće point to the various and complementary functions of the two forts, understandably, if they indeed served the same masters at the same time. While Bela may have been a secure and comfortable seat of the preceptor, or the castellan, with the necessary premises for storing equipment and food for the requirements of the





Sl. 9 Zapadni zid (snimio J. Belaj)  
Fig. 9 The western wall (photo by J. Belaj)

ste Bele postoje tragovi jedne utvrde nepoznata imena, bez spomena u dokumentima, u puku zvana *Gradišće*, pa je to neizbježno prva asocijacija. No ni na topografskim kartama niti ispitujući okolno stanovništvo istraživači nisu pronašli ništa što bi *Gradišće* povezivalo s toponimom *Blatnica* (Belaj 2005a, 54). Velike razlike između Bele i nedalekoga *Gradišća* upućuju na različite i komplementarne funkcije tih dviju utvrda, dakako, ukoliko su doista istodobno služile istim gospodarima. Dok je Bela mogla biti sigurnim i udobnim sjedištem preceptora, odnosno kaštelana s prijeko potrebnim prostorima za skladištenje opreme i hrane za potrebe samoga burga, utvrda na *Gradišću* mogla je biti nešto poput majura u kojem su se spremali prinosi s područja cijeloga preceptorata. U slučaju potrebe mogla je poslužiti i kao sigurni zbjeg za okolno stanovništvo (Belaj 2005a, 112-114).

Također, možemo razmišljati i o mogućnosti povezivanja imena *Blatnica* s *Bolotynom*, predmongolskim kastrumom koji se nalazio negdje u široj okolici Sv. Ilije (Heller ga smješta na područje *Zamlače* nedaleko *Vidovca*; Heller 1977, 15). On se spominje u listini iz 1236. godine (CD IV, 20-22), u kojoj se opisuju granice nekih zemalja prigodom njihove prodaje. Jedna od opisanih granica ide prema *populis castri qui vocatur Bolotyn* (dakle, već tada "razrušenoj<sup>2</sup> tvrđavi koju zovu *Bolotyn*"). Poznatija imena u listini su *Beletinec*, rijeka *Bednja* i *Obrež* (danas Sv. Ilija). Nije posve isključeno da je i područje *beletinečke* župe u ranijoj fazi pripadalo *ivanovačkome* posjedu (Belaj 2005a, 188). O razlozima nenavođenja župa s područja *belskoga* preceptorata u najstarijem poznatom popisu župa iz 1334. godine, od kojih su neke gotovo sigurno tada postojale, no pod *ivanovačkom* jurisdikcijom, objavljen je rad u prošleme broju *Priloga* (Belaj 2008).

#### BELA I IVANOVCI

Iako je uvriježeno mišljenje da je *Selo ivanovaca* kraj *Varaždina* spomenuto u ispravi iz 1201. godine pripadalo *Belskom* preceptoratu, najnovija su istraživanja pokazala kako je ono vjerojatnije ipak pripadalo u literaturi osporavanome *varaždinskom* preceptoratu (Belaj 2001, 39-45). Prema tome,

2 Ako je ispravno pridjev *populis* dovoditi u vezu s glagolom *populo*, 1., u značenju "harati, plijeniti, pljačkati".



Sl. 10 Zid kod pretpostavljenog ulaza u burg (snimio J. Belaj)  
Fig. 10 The wall at the presumed entrance into the burg (photo by J. Belaj)

burg itself, the fort at *Gradišće* may have been a farmstead of sorts, which stored the contributions from the entire territory of the preceptory. In the case of need, it may have served also as a secure refuge for the neighbouring population (Belaj 2005a, 112-114).

We can also think about the possibility of connecting the name *Blatnica* with *Bolotyn*, a pre-Mongol castrum located somewhere in the wider surroundings of Sv. Ilija (*St. Elias*; Heller places it in the area of *Zamlače*, not far from *Vidovec*; Heller 1977, 15). It is mentioned in a charter from 1236 (CD IV, 20-22), which contains a description of the borders of certain estates at the time of their selling. One of the described borders leads toward *populis castri qui vocatur Bolotyn* (i.e., at that time the already "destroyed"<sup>2</sup> fort called *Bolotyn*). Among the more familiar names in the charter there are *Beletinec*, the *Bednja* river and *Obrež* (presently Sv. Ilija). It cannot be entirely excluded that the territory of the *Beletinec* parish in the earlier phase also belonged to the estate of the Hospitaliers (Belaj 2005a, 188). As for the reasons why the parishes from the territory of the *Bela* preceptory, some of which almost certainly existed at the time, but were under the jurisdiction of the Hospitaliers were not included in the earliest known list of parishes from 1334, they were presented in a paper published in the previous volume of the *Prilozi* journal (Belaj 2008).

#### BELA AND THE KNIGHTS HOSPITALLER

Even though it is generally held that the *Village of the Hospitaliers* near *Varaždin* mentioned in a document from 1201 belonged to the *Bela* preceptory, the latest studies demonstrated that it is more likely that it belonged to the *Varaždin* preceptory, which is questioned in the literature (Belaj 2001, 39-45). Therefore, the earliest note that mentions the Hospitaliers (that is, the Crusaders) in this area comes from 1209, when King Andrew II, while granting privileges to the town of *Varaždin*, registered also the borders of the municipal land. It is mentioned in the description of the

2 If it is correct to bring the adjective *populis* into connection with the verb *populo*, 1., with the meaning of "ravaging, seizing, plundering".





Sl. 11 Zid zapadno od pretpostavljenog ulaza (snimio J. Belaj)  
Fig. 11 The wall west of the presumed entrance (photo by J. Belaj)

najstarija vijest koja spominje ivanovce (odnosno križnike) u ovome kraju potječe iz 1209. godine. Tada je kralj Andrija II. prilikom davanja povlastica gradu Varaždinu zabilježio i granice gradske zemlje. U opisu zapadne međe spominje se da granica *tendit ad magnam viam per quam itur ad terram cruciferiorum* (CD III, 90 doc. 75). Iz konteksta se jasno vidi da je ova "velika cesta koja vodi u zemlju križara" vodila iz Varaždina prema zapadu. Ova se cesta češće spominje u ispravama kojima su se ove povlastice potvrđivale (primjerice, 1220. i 1407. godine; Tanodi 1942). Tu ispravu neki smatraju kasnijim falsifikatom, pa joj valja prići s oprezom. No i takve se isprave, koje mogu u pravnome smislu biti falsifikati, obično oslanjaju na prilike i događaje koji su vjerodostojni (ako je pokušano novom listinom nadoknaditi staru, propalu) ili barem vjerojatni. Tako Nada Klaić, primjerice, smatra da povijesni sadržaj odgovara istini, premda je sama isprava sastavljena kasnije (Klaić 1976, 298-299).

Nažalost, ni jedna isprava ne govori ništa ni o vremenu ili okolnostima stjecanja posjeda, niti o podrijetlu ili vremenu gradnje burga, tako da su nam u ovome slučaju dolazak ivanovaca i počeci njihova života u promatranome području ostali nepoznati.

Osim u sumnjivoj Fejérovovoj ispravi iz 1165. godine, prvi se put susrećemo s imenom Bele godine 1275., kada se spominje *frater Margarita, preceptor de Bela* (CD VI, 137 doc. 123). I izvor iz 1293. godine spominje preceptora Bele, 1321. se navodi *preceptor sive castellanus de Bela*, a od 1322. godine spominju se samo kaštelani Bele. Popis svih precep-

western boundary that the border *tendit ad magnam viam per quam itur ad terram cruciferiorum* (CD III, 90 doc. 75). It is evident from the context that this "big road leading to the land of the Crusaders" led from Varaždin westwards. This road is frequently mentioned in the documents that reaffirmed these privileges (e.g. in 1220 and 1407; Tanodi 1942). This document is believed by some to be a later fabrication, and we should therefore approach it with caution. Nevertheless, even such documents, which can be fabrications in the legal sense, are usually founded on circumstances and events that are genuine (for instance if a new charter is issued as an attempt to substitute the old one that was lost) or at least probable. Thus Nada Klaić, for instance, thinks that the historical content is genuine, although the document itself was composed at a later date (Klaić 1976, 298-299).

Unfortunately, not one document says anything about the time or circumstances of the acquisition of the estate, or about the origin or the time of construction of the burg, so that in this case the arrival of the Hospitallers and the beginnings of their life in the area under study have remained unknown. Apart from Fejér's dubious document from 1165, we encounter the name of Bela for the first time in 1275, when *frater Margarita, preceptor de Bela* (CD VI, 137 doc. 123) is mentioned. A source from 1293 also mentions a preceptor of Bela, in 1321 *preceptor sive castellanus de Bela* is mentioned, while from 1322 only castellans of Bela are mentioned. An attempt at creating a list of all preceptors and castellans with the sources was made by L. Dobronić (1984a, 183).

It seems that Bela was assigned an additional important role in the Order. At first conceived as the fortified seat of a territory, it became an important defensive point in the frequent military confrontations and wars with the "Teutons" and the German Empire. Such an opinion was expressed already by Kukuljević, who believed that the burg (citadel) of Bela was a frontier fort against the Germans (*Theutonicos*) and therefore one of the principals of the knights of St John was always simultaneously the castellan of the town of Bela (1886a, 47).

At the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, while battles raged for the Croatian-Hungarian throne, which the Hospitallers entered as natural allies of the Pope, their burg of Bela sustained damage. *The loss of the town of Bela, which was a sort of a guardian of the entire Zagorje region, was a heavy blow both to the Hospitallers and the other supporters of Charles Robert ...* (Laszowski 1903/1904, 2). After the death of Andrija III, the Hospitallers with their head Philip of Granana took the side of Charles Robert (Cro. Karlo Robert), a protégé of the Pope. The Bela burg was conquered by Henrik and Ivan of Güssing, sons of the former *ban* Henrik, in alliance with German troops. They, in turn, took the side of Ladislaus and, later, Otto of Bavaria. They caused him considerable damage in the process (Kukuljević 1886a, 48; Laszowski 1903/1904, 2; Adamček s.a. 81; Dobronić 1984a, 114; Lukinović 1998, 22-23; Belaj 2001, 53; 2005a, 37-38).

Bela was soon reconquered by Nikola, the son of Petar of Ludbreg, who returned it to the Hospitallers, repairing the burg at the same time at his own expense (Kukuljević



Sl. 12 Pogled na ostatke branič-kule (snimio J. Belaj)  
Fig. 12 A view to the remains of the defensive tower (photo by J. Belaj)

tora i kaštelana s izvorima pokušala je sastaviti L. Dobronić (1984a, 183).

Izgleda da je Bela dobila dodatnu važnu ulogu u Redu. Isprva zamišljena kao utvrđeno sjedište jednoga područja, ona postaje važnom obrambenom točkom u čestim oružanim sukobima i ratovima s "teutoncima" i Njemačkim Carstvom. Tako je razmišljao već Kukuljević koji je smatrao da je burg (kaštel) Bela bio pogranična utvrda prema Nijemcima (*Theutonicos*) te stoga bijaše jedan od poglavica vitezova sv. Ivana uvijek zajedno i kastelan grada Bele (1886a, 47).

Početak 14. stoljeća, dok su bjesnile borbe za hrvatsko-ugarsko prijestolje, u koje su se umiješali i ivanovci kao prirodni papini pristaše, stradao je i njihov burg Bela. *Gubitak grada Bele, koji bijaše u neku ruku branikom cijelog Zagorja, bijaše težak udarac i po hospitalce i po ostale pristaše kralja Karla Roberta...* (Laszowski 1903/1904, 2). Ivanovci su sa svojim poglavarom Filipom od Granane nakon smrti Andrije III. stali uz Karla Roberta, papina štićenika. Burg Belu su, u savezu s njemačkim četama, osvojili Henrik i Ivan od Güssinga, sinovi bivšega bana Henrika, koji su pak pristali uz Vladislava te, kasnije, Otona Bavorskoga. Pritom su mu nanijeli velike štete (Kukuljević 1886a, 48; Laszowski 1903/1904, 2; Adamček s.a. 81; Dobronić 1984a, 114; Lukinović 1998, 22-23; Belaj 2001, 53; 2005a, 37-38).

Uskoro je Belu nazad osvojio Nikola, sin Petra Ludbreškoga te je vratio ivanovcima, popravivši istodobno o svojem trošku burg (Kukuljević 1886a, 48; Laszowski 1903/1904, 2). Zauzvrat je od ivanovaca dobio neke posjede oko Ludbrega i Prozorja.

I u nekim dokumentima koji se odnose na belske posjede ima spomena ovih ratnih zbivanja. Ivan "Dijete" dobio je posjed Tužno 1306. godine (Fejér CD VIII/1, 202; Kukuljević 1886a, 47) zbog svojih zasluga u obrani Bele (Lukinović 1998, 23-25). Kada je trideset godina kasnije taj posjed potvrđen njegovome sinu, županu Bedi, u listini se spominje i rat koji se vodi protiv Nijemaca. Istaknute su Bedine zasluge u obrani grada Bele, njegovih podložnika i granica prema Njemačkoj te se izražava nada da će nastaviti s obrambenim aktivnostima (Fejér CD VIII/4, 204; CD X, 285 doc. 216; Kuku-

1886a, 48; Laszowski 1903/1904, 2). In return, he received from the Hospitallers certain estates around Ludbreg and Prozorje. Some documents referring to the Bela estates also mention these wartime events. Ivan "the Child" acquired the Tužno estate in 1306 (Fejér CD VIII/1, 202; Kukuljević 1886a, 47) for his merits in the defense of Bela (Lukinović 1998, 23-25). When thirty years later that estate was reaffirmed to his son, *župan* Beda, the charter mentions also a war waged against the Germans. It highlights Beda's merits in the defense of the town of Bela, its subjects and the borders toward Germany, and it expresses the hope that defensive activities would continue (Fejér CD VIII/4, 204; CD X, 285 doc. 216; Kukuljević 1886a, 51; Dobronić 1984a, 114).

Perhaps the mentioned confrontation motivated Pope Clement V to order the Bishop of Esztergom on 21<sup>st</sup> December 1307 *to never let the master and the knights of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem be persecuted, against whom certain possible adversaries have risen* (Theiner 1859/I, 422. after Kukuljević 1886a, 47).

That the circumstances along the Styrian border were not entirely stable even later, is hinted at by a document from 1421, which refers to the year 1396, in which it is said that *libera villa Sancti Iohannis* (Ivanec) sustained a lot of damage from certain enemies (Hrg, M. 1975a), that is rivals, envious persons (Matijević-Sokol 1997, 25).

The Hospitallers from Bela are mentioned in the documents mostly as neighbours when borders of certain estates are described. There is also mention of their confrontation and reconciliation with the owners of Grebengrad. Certain documents are also preserved that speak of parts of the Hospitallers' estate being given as gifts to the praedials, specifically those that lay on or along the very northern border of the Hospitallers' estate, in the lowland part. It is interesting that a document from 1304 mentions "an old custom of the dominium of Bela". Also, certain lands in the vicinity of Ludbreg were under Bela's authority – these were probably estates that had remained from their former preceptory with the seat in Ludbreg (*in Bynna*; Belaj 2003).

An exceptional and unusual occurrence is the appearance of the title of the *prior* of Bela, used in 1396 by Ivan of Paližna the Younger (*frater Johannes de Palisna, prior de Bela*; HDA, NRA fasc. 207 no. 26). L. Dobronić thinks that it is not probable that he received that title properly, from the administration of the order (Dobronić 1984a, 133,183). Mirjana Matijević-Sokol supposes that at that time, when the connections between the Hospitallers' seat and the priory of Croatia and Hungary started breaking (as shown by L. Dobronić 1984a, 133-134), *individuals take advantage of the situation and aspire to the honour of the prior, which carries with it considerable material gains* (Matijević-Sokol 1997, 25). In her opinion, Ivan Paližna the Younger issued this document with the aim of securing material goods for himself, and thinks it possible that he appeared as the master of Bela, while the title of prior in his heading *is merely a memory of what was perhaps an arbitrary act* (1997, 26). Neven Budak thinks that Ivan Paližna the Younger became the preceptor of Bela after he had been forced to resign as the prior of Vrana in 1396, but that this did not stop him from titling



ljević 1886a, 51; Dobronić 1984a, 114).

Možda je navedeni sukob naveo papu Klementa V. da 21.12.1307. godine naloži ostrogonskomu biskupu *neka ni-pošto ne dopusti proganjati meštra i viteze reda hospitala sv. Ivana jerusolimskog, proti kojim bijahu se podigli neki mogu-ći neprijatelji* (Theiner 1859/I, 422. prema Kukuljević 1886a, 47).

Da prilike uz štajersku granicu ni kasnije nisu bile posve stabilne, može se naslućivati i iz dokumenta iz 1421., koji se odnosi na 1396. godinu, u kojem stoji da je *libera villa Sancti Iohannis* (Ivanec) pretrpjela dosta štete od nekih neprijatelja (Hrg, M. 1975a), odnosno takmaca, zavidnika (Matijević-Sokol 1997, 25).

Belski ivanovci se u ispravama uglavnom spominju kao susjedi prigodom opisivanja granica nekih posjeda. Spominje se i njihov sukob te mirenje s grebengradskim vlasnicima. Očuvane su i pojedine isprave koje govore o darivanju dijelova ivanovačkih posjeda predijalcima, i to onih koji su se nalazili na ili uz samu sjevernu granicu ivanovačkoga posjeda, u nizinskome dijelu. Zanimljivo da se u ispravi iz 1304. godine navodi "stari običaj dominija Bele". Također, neke su zemlje u blizini Ludbrega potpadale pod Belu - vjerojatno su to posjedi preostali od njihova nekadašnjeg preceptorata sa sjedištem u Ludbregu (*in Bynna*; Belaj 2003).

Iznimna je i neobična pojava titule *piora* Bele, kojom se 1396. godine *kitio* Ivan od Paližne mlađi (*frater Johannes de Palisna, prior de Bela*; HDA, NRA fasc. 207 br. 26). L. Dobronić smatra kako nije vjerojatno da je on taj naslov dobio propisno, od uprave reda (Dobronić 1984a, 133,183). Mirjana Matijević-Sokol pretpostavlja da u to vrijeme, kada pucaju veze između središta ivanovaca i priorata Hrvatske i Ugarske (kako je to pokazala L. Dobronić 1984a, 133-134), *pojedinci koriste situaciju i posežu za priorskom čašću koja nosi znatna materijalna dobra* (Matijević-Sokol 1997, 25). Smatra kako je Ivan Paližna mlađi izdao ovu ispravu kako bi osigurao materijalna dobra za sebe, te kako je moguće da se javlja kao gospodar Bele, a titula *piora* je u njegovu naslovu *samo sjećanje na jedan možda i samovoljni čin* (1997, 26). Neven Budak smatra da je Ivan Paližna mlađi, nakon što je morao odstupiti s mjesta vranskoga *piora* 1396. godine, postao belskim preceptorom, ali ga to nije spriječilo da sam sebe naziva *piorom* Bele. Ističe kako je u vrijeme nakon smrti kralja Ljudevita Velikoga među ivanovcima u Hrvatskoj i drugdje u kraljevstvu, nastala takva situacija u kojoj je bilo moguće da si prisvoji i *pioratska* dobra kao i samu titulu (Budak 2001, 288). Kada Albert de Nagmihal, *pior vranski i ban kraljevina Dalmacije i Hrvatske*, potvrđuje Ivanove povlastice Ivancu, naziva Ivana *piorom*, no ne izrijeком *piorom* Bele, a kako ga naziva svojim predšasnikom, djeluje da ga pod tim pojmom smatra *piorom vranskim*. Lukinović rješava ovu dvojbu bez previše objašnjavanja. On za Ivana od Paližne mlađeg jednostavno prihvaća da je bio *pior belskog samostana* (1998, 23).

### BELA NAKON IVANOVACA

Još od Ivana Paližne mlađega (Dobronić 1984a, 125-133), odnosno već od 1380-ih kada se prekidaju veze našega *piora* sa središtem ivanovaca, status Bele i belskog *precep-*

himself prior of Bela. He points out that in the time following the death of King Louis the Great, the situation among the Hospitallers in Croatia and elsewhere in the kingdom was such that it was possible for him to appropriate both the material goods and the very title of prior (Budak 2001, 288). When Albert de Nagmihal, *the prior of Vrana and the ban of the Kingdoms of Dalmatia and Croatia*, confirms Ivan's grants to Ivanec, he calls Ivan a prior, but not specifically prior of Bela and, considering that he refers to him as his predecessor, it appears that by that term he understands *prior of Vrana*. Lukinović solves this doubt without much explanation. He simply accepts that Ivan of Paližna was *prior of the monastery of Bela* (1998, 23).

### BELA AFTER THE HOSPITALLERS

Starting already from the time of Ivan Paližna the Younger (Dobronić 1984a, 125-133), that is already from the 1380s when the ties between our priory and the Hospitallers' seat were severed, the status of Bela and the Bela preceptory, that is to say *kastelanat*, is not entirely clear. It is generally mentioned in the literature that Bela was "privatized" in 1434 or 1439 by prior Matko Talovac (Kukuljević 1886b, 13 seq.; Szabo 1920, 85-86).

Laszowski claims that *after the death of King Albert (1439) Matko Talovac occupied the town of Bela for himself, and started ruling it as if it were his*. Further, that *Matko Talovac cut off (sic!) the town and estate of Bela from the priory of Vrana*. And, that ... *around 1460 one bishop Kotran pledged the town of Bela to one Antun Holnekar* ... Talovac soon drove him out of Bela, and again established his authority in the town (1903/1904, 4-5).

The former properties of the Hospitallers around Bela and Ivanec next fell into the hands of the counts of Celje, who were succeeded by Jan Vitovec, and he in turn was succeeded by his sons Juraj, Ivan and Vilim. Laszowski (1903/1904, 4) mentions that King Matthias stayed in Bela in 1480, but he says nothing about where that information came from. In 1481 the burg of Bela was destroyed in a fire.

That *Must... have been a great fire that affected also the part inhabited by his owners, because the fire burned both the grants and other documents deposited there for security by the Gotala from Gotalovac*" (Lukinović 1998, 25, quoting Laszowski 1903/1904, 4). In that year, according to a Paulist account, the Turks burned and destroyed the Paulist monastery in Lepoglava (Šaban 1977, 150). Starting with 1470, the recurring raids by Turkish troops to the west were causing a lot of damage. The years around the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century were particularly harsh, but after that the situation grew calmer. It is fairly likely that the 1481 fire was among the damage caused by the Turks.

Then in 1489 Jakob Székely snatched the Bela burg for King Matthias Corvinus, who gave it to his son Ivan (also known as *Ivaniš* in the historical literature). Laszowski (1903/1904, 4-5) says that following the 1481 fire a new town was built in the plain, *today called the older Bela, which has a round tower on each corner*.

A dungeon in Bela is mentioned in 1552, which received certain participants in the quarrels between people from

torata, odnosno kastelanata, nije sasvim jasan. U literaturi se općenito navodi da je Belu "privatizirao" 1434. ili 1439. godine prior Matko Talovac (Kukuljević 1886b, 13 i d.; Szabo 1920, 85-86).

Laszowski tvrdi da je *Matko Talovac poslije smrti kralja Alberta (1439.) zaokupio grad Belu za sebe, te uze njime vladati kao da je njegov. Pa zatim da je Matko Talovac ocijepio (sic!) grad i imanje belsko od priorata vranskoga. Te, da ... oko g. 1460. založi neki biskup Kotran grad Belu nekome Antunu Holnekaru ... Talovac ga je uskoro istjerao iz Bele, te opet zavlađao gradom* (1903/1904, 4-5).

Zatim su bivša ivanovačka dobra oko Bele i Ivanca pala u ruke Celjskima koje je naslijedio Jan Vitovec, a njega njegovi sinovi Juraj, Ivan i Vilim. Laszowski (1903/1904, 4) navodi da je godine 1480. u Beli boravio kralj Matija, no ne spominje odakle mu taj podatak. Godine 1481. burg Bela je izgorio.

To je *Morao... biti veliki požar koji je zadesio i onaj dio gdje su stanovali njegovi vlasnici, jer su u njemu "izgorjeli i povlastice i ostali spisi koje su ondje radi sigurnosti pohranili Gotali iz Gotalovca"* (Lukinović 1998, 25, pozivajući se na Laszowskoga 1903/1904, 4). Te su godine, prema pavlinskoj predaji, Turci spalili i razorili pavlinski samostan u Lepoglavi (Šaban 1977, 150). Turske su satnije još od 1470. godine u više navrata prodirale prema zapadu i nanosile štetu. Opake su bile godine, primjerice, oko sredine 16. stoljeća, no onda se situacija primirila. Lako je moguće da je požar, koji se zbio 1481., jedna od šteta koju su prouzročili Turci.

Potom je 1489. Jakob Székely preoteo burg Belu za kralja Matiju Korvina koji ga je darovao sinu Ivanu (u povijesnoj literaturi poznat i kao *Ivaniš*). Laszowski (1903/1904, 4-5) kaže da je nakon požara od godine 1481. dolje u ravnici izgrađen novi grad koji danas zovu *starijom Belom* i koji ima na svakom uglu jednu okruglu kulu.

Godine 1552. spominje se tamnica u Beli, u koju su odvedeni neki sudionici svađa između Ivančana i Vuglovčana (Hrg. 1975b, 131). Szabo, doduše, kaže da se već godine 1553. izričito spominje *dirutum castrum Bela. Pod gradom nastadoše dva dvora. Jedan sad sasvim napušten ima dvije okrugle kule, a drugi, sada sijelo bar. Ožegovića, pokazuje se kao masivna zgrada, okružena zidom, koji ima na četiri ugla četiri omanje okrugle kule* (Szabo 1920, 85-86). Laszowski, pak, navodi kao godinu kada je Bela bila *dirutum castrum* 1653. (Laszowski 1903/1904, 11). Budući da Szabo prepisuje podatke od Laszowskoga, valja pretpostaviti kako se Szabo zabunio.

Razlog više za tu pretpostavku je i opis Bele iz 1606. godine, ukoliko se on odnosi na burg, a ne na renesansni kaštel podignut u nizini. Opis potječe iz vremena kada ivanovaca već dulje vrijeme ovdje nije bilo, a nastao je kada su članovi obitelji Petheö de Gerse dijelili svoj posjed (*castrum ipsorum Bela & Castelli luancz et Curia Czerye ... in comitatu Varasdinensi ...*) na šest dijelova (HDA, NRA fasc. 205 br. 21). Pa iako je do tada ivanovački burg zasigurno pretrpio brojne nadogradnje, i zbog toga što su se utvrde već odavna počele prilagođavati za protutursku obranu, tom opisu ipak valja posvetiti dužnu pozornost. Izvori nam, naime, ne donose nikakve podatke o izgledu Bele u doba ivanovaca, pa je ovo možda najstariji poznati opis ovoga burga, a i pojedini objekti koji se u njemu spominju zacijelo pripadaju iva-

Ivanec and from Vuglovec (Hrg. 1975b, 131). True, Szabo says that *dirutum castrum Bela* was specifically mentioned already in 1553. *Two castles were built below the town. One of those, today completely deserted, has two round towers, while the other, presently the seat of bar. Ožegovića, stands as a massive building, surrounded by a wall, which has four smaller round towers on each of its four corners* (Szabo 1920, 85-86). Laszowski, on the other hand, speaks of 1653 as the year when Bela was a *dirutum castrum* (Laszowski 1903/1904, 11). Considering that Szabo copied information from Laszowski, this was presumably Szabo's mistake.

An additional reason for that assumption is the 1606 description of Bela, if it refers to the burg and not the Renaissance citadel erected in the vicinity. The description comes from the time when the Hospitallers were already a thing of the remote past, and it was created when the members of the Petheö de Gerse family were dividing their estate (*castrum ipsorum Bela & Castelli luancz et Curia Czerye ... in comitatu Varasdinensi ...*) into six parts (HDA, NRA fasc. 205 no. 21). Therefore, even though until that time the burg of the Hospitallers certainly underwent numerous building additions, among other things also because the forts had for a long time before that started being adapted for the defense against the Turks, this description should nevertheless be given due attention.

There is no information in the sources about the appearance of Bela at the time of the Hospitallers, so this is perhaps the oldest known description of that burg, and certain structures mentioned within it surely belong to the Hospitallers' legacy. In this document the guards accommodated in Bela are also mentioned. The document has already been commented on by several authors (Kukuljević, Laszowski, Dobronić, Kraš, Belaj and Tkalčec).

Let us take a look at the more important parts of the document from the archives.

The document first mentions, in "the above mentioned town of Bela" the residences of the dividers, Grgur Petheö and Ivan and Kristofor Petheö, a room with heating (*hippocaustum*), a kitchen, a bakery, a kitchen "where the fort guards presently reside", the fort tower, "cellars in the lower part of (i.e. below) the room in the attic, called *čordak* by the folk" (*cellarii ac inferiori parti carnaculi vulgo chordak dicti*), added adjacent to the façade of the later added stone houses, next to which are stairs or steps leading into the upper quarters, and a "wooden house, formerly a bathroom" (*domuncula antiqua olim balniatoria dicta*), called a pantry or *čordak*, added to the part of Juraj Petheö, and generally thought to have been put there by Gabriel below that tower that was built in the centre of the fort, except that cellar that leans against that tower.

There is also a mention of *expugnaculum* (a walled zone in front of the burg gate, otherwise *propugnaculum*, Germ. *Zwinger*) and "a white rectangular stone" (*quidam lapidi album quadratum*) linked with the Hospitallers by later researchers.

While Kukuljević (1886b, 64), Laszowski (1903/1904, 9) and Dobronić (1984b, 99) thought that this description refers to the Bela burg, Marijan Kraš, even though familiar





Sl. 13 Zid uz branič-kulu (snimio J. Belaj)  
Fig. 13 The wall next to the defensive tower (photo by J. Belaj)

novačkoj baštini. U tom se dokumentu spominju i stražari smješteni u Beli. Na njega su se već osvrnuli pojedini autori (Kukuljević, Laszowski, Dobronić, Kraš, Belaj i Tkalčec).

Pogledajmo bitnije dijelove arhivskog spisa.

Spis prvo spominje u "gore rečenom gradu Beli" stanove diobenika, Grgura Petheöa te Ivana i Kristofora Petheö, izbu s peći (*hipocaustum*), kuhinju, pekarnicu, pa kuhinju "gdje sada stanuju tvrđavni stražari", tvrđavnu kulu, pa "podrume u donjem dijelu (tj. ispod) prostorije u potkrovlju, pučki zване čordak" (*cellarii ac inferiori parti carnaculi vulgo chordak dicti*) prizidane uz pročelje nadograđenih kamenih domova, do kojih su skale ili stube po kojima se ide u gornje stanove, te "drevna kućica, nekoć kupaonica" (*domuncula antiqua olim balnatoria dicta*), zvana smočnica (sušnica?) ili čordak, dodana dijelu Jurja Petheöa, a prema općem mnijenju postavio ju je Gabrijel pod onu kulu koja je usred tvrđave izgrađena, osim onoga podruma koji je tome tornju prislonjen".

Spominje se još i *expugnaculum* (obzidani prostor pred vratima burga, inače *propugnaculum*, njem. *Zwinger*) te "neki bijeli četvrtasti kamen" (*quindam lapidi album quadratum*) što su ga kasniji istraživači povezivali s ivanovcima.

Dok su Kukuljević (1886b, 64), Laszowski (1903/1904, 9) i Dobronić (1984b, 99) smatrali da se ovaj opis odnosi na burg Belu, Marijan Kraš, premda poznaje spomenute rasprave, taj opis povezuje sa "starijom" nizinskom Belom (1996, 37-38). I Tatjana Tkalčec, zbog upotrebe naziva *arx*, vjeruje kako se opis ne odnosi na burg Belu, već na renesansno zdanje tipa kaštel za koje vjeruje da ga je obitelj Petheö de Gerse, po-

with the mentioned discussions, associates that description with the "older" lowland Bela (1996, 37-38). Tatjana Tkalčec also, on account of the use of the term *arx*, believes that the description relates not to the burg of Bela, but to a Renaissance building of the citadel type, which she believes that the Petheö de Gerse family, like the citadel of Ivanec, had already earlier erected in the plain (Tkalčec 2008).

The fact that the description makes clear that there had already been a number of building additions on the fort indeed need not be an argument that this was Pusta Bela, because the Petheö family had been present there for around four generations. Therefore, they could have erected a new citadel in the plain long before that, like they had done in Ivanec (Belaj 2006). Even though the inspection of the original does not make it easy to assess as to which *castrum Bela* was referred to, it seems that the mention of "a tower in the middle of the town" (*illa turris que in medio arcis extracta est*), and of "a walled zone in front of the burg gate" *Marusana' seu expugnaculum*) point more to the burg, present-day Pusta Bela. A storied stone structure consisting of three rooms on each storey ("quarters") fits into this picture, which will become obvious from a description of the presently visible remains of the burg. The main problem consists in the mention of a second tower (the first one mentioned), on which those "quarters" lean. Can we expect its remains in the presently undetermined northwestern corner of the burg? There remains, therefore, another possibility: that the "lowland Bela" was described in 1606, and that since then it underwent substantial transformations due to which we today cannot recognize the mentioned elements.

#### VISIBLE REMAINS OF THE BURG (PRESENT STATE)

Szabo visited the ruins of Bela in the time around World War I and he briefly described the situation at the time: *Much of the surrounding wall has remained preserved, the place where the entrance stood is still visible, but the interior is all a heap of stones* (1920, 85-86). The today's picture is even worse. A large part of the northern wall collapsed in 2004, and the entire site has long been covered by undergrowth and woods. No archaeological excavations have been carried out at the site, so that we are lacking the most important source about the life in the fort.

To this day only the remains of individual fortification walls have remained visible, and also discernible are several partition walls in the interior of the burg, as well as walls probably belonging to a defensive tower (donjon).

The fortifications have been preserved at places up to the height of around 7 m (the outer face), while at other places they collapsed to such a state that not even the direction in which they extended is discernible any longer.

A salient feature is the quantity of construction waste within the perimeter of the fortification. Some interior walls are preserved in the height from three to four metres, if not more. It is impossible to offer any more exact assessments also due to the fact that we cannot be certain about the appearance of the top of the hill itself, that is, by how much the hilltop surpasses the ground level at the outer face of the fortification.





Sl. 14 „Velika jama”, vjerojatni ostatak cisterne (snimio J. Belaj)  
Fig. 14 “The large pit”, the probable remains of the cistern (photo by J. Belaj)

put ivanečkoga kaštela, već prije podigla u nizini (Tkalčec 2008).

To što je iz opisa vidljivo da je na utvrdi poduzeto već mnogo dogradnji doista ne mora biti argument da je riječ o Pustoj Beli, jer su Petheövcu ovdje prisutni već oko četiri generacije. Dakle, već su mnogo prije mogli podići novi kaštel u nizini, kao što su to učinili u Ivancu (Belaj 2006). Iako je teško uvidom u izvornik procijeniti o kojem je *castru Bela* riječ, čini se da spomen “kule posred grada” (*illa turris que in medio arcis extructa est*), te “obzidanog prostora pred vratima burga” (*Marus ana’ seu expugnaculum*) ipak više ukazuju na burg, današnju Pustu Belu. U takvu se sliku uklapa i kameni katni objekt koji se sastoji od po tri prostorije u svakoj etaži (“stanovi”), što će biti vidljivo kod opisa danas vidljivih ostataka burga. Glavni problem predstavlja spomen druge kule (prvospomenute), uz koju su ti “stanovi” bili prislonjeni. Možemo li njezine ostatke očekivati u danas nedefiniranom sjeverozapadnome uglu burga? Ostaje, dakle, ipak i druga mogućnost: da je to “nizinska Bela” bila opisana 1606. godine te da je od tada pretrpjela bitnije preinake zbog kojih se danas više ne prepoznaju navedeni elementi.

#### VIDLJIVI OSTACI BURGA (DANAŠNJE STANJE)

Szabo je obišao ruševine Bele u vrijeme oko Prvoga svjetskog rata i ukratko opisao tadašnje stanje: *Sačuvano se dosta okolnog zida, vidi se gdje je bio ulaz, ali unutrašnjost je sva rpa kamenja* (1920, 85-86). Današnja je slika još lošija. Godine 2004. urušio se veliki dio sjevernoga zida, a cijeli je lokalitet već odavna zarastao u grmlje i šumu. Arheološka istraživanja na lokalitetu nisu provedena, tako da smo uskraćeni za najvažniji izvor podataka o životu u utvrdi.

Do danas su ostali vidljivi samo ostaci pojedinih zidova bedema, a nazire se još nekoliko pregradnih zidova u unutarnjosti burga te zidovi, najvjerojatnije, branič-kule (donžona).

Bedemi su mjestimično očuvani u visini od oko 7 m (s vanjske strane), a mjestimično već toliko urušeni da se ne nazire ni smjer njihova pružanja.

U oči upada količina urušene šute unutar perimetra be-

The last collapse took place in 2004, when the northern burg wall caved in under the weight of a several metre thick layer of construction waste (Fig. 3). In line with the saying that “there is good in every evil”, this last collapse offered us certain interesting facts. It revealed a clear cross-section of the fortification wall, as well as that of a partition wall of a residential complex, which have remained preserved in the height of 2,75 m. In addition to this, the debris that collapsed down the hill slope yielded a profiled fragment made of sandstone (Fig. 4).

In 2005 the remains of the burg were measured and documented.<sup>3</sup> Difficult configuration of the terrain and extensive forest cover certainly brought about minor errors in measurements, but these remained within reasonable limits, meaning that the produced ground plan is sufficiently accurate (Fig. 5). An additional limiting factor for the ground plan lies in the very nature of what was measured: without at least shallow archaeological excavations, which would more precisely define lines of individual walls, even the most precise measurements can produce only “guesswork”. And even those excavations would require conservation of the excavated walls, to prevent the site from falling into an even worse condition.

#### THE FORM OF THE BURG

We can speak about the form of the burg only tentatively, due to the fact that not all the walls are visible any longer. Archaeological excavations would, among other things, most probably lead to a discovery of the foundations of the presently missing walls. Nevertheless, even the present remains leave an impression on explorers. In rough terms, it seems that we can say that the burg had more a polygonal than a trapezoidal ground plan. In any case, it was adapted to the terrain it was built on to the maximum. Together with a tentative “entrance part”, the exterior dimensions of the burg are around 43 (east-west) by 42 metres (north-south). This considerably exceeds the dimensions cited in the literature until now.

Judging by the terrain configuration, the interior of the burg may have looked like this: on the northern side, a sizeable multistoried residential complex, divided into three parts, was built adjacent to the fortification wall. The southern side of the courtyard probably contained a large rectangular defensive tower (donjon) with thick walls. In all likelihood it stood on its own in the courtyard, but this should be tested by excavations. Its northern wall, preserved perhaps up to more than 4 m in height, is very well discernible in the configuration of the terrain. (In spite of such a great presumed height of preserved walls, many walls at the site are barely discernible. While individual walls still tower several metres high, most of the walls are barely discernible in the terrain configuration). Analogies with contemporary towers lead us to suppose that this one was rectangular, but its more precise ground plan cannot be ascertained at present. It definitely wasn’t round, because its northern wall

<sup>3</sup> Besides the author, the survey and measurement of the burg was carried by Filomena Sirovica and Maja Šunjić, at that time senior undergraduates at the Department of Archaeology of the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb.

dema. Neki unutarnji zidovi su očuvani i u visini od tri do četiri metra, ako ne i više. Točnije procjene je nemoguće dati i zbog toga što ne možemo znati izgled samoga vrha brijega, odnosno koliko je viši vrh u odnosu na razinu s vanjske strane bedema.

Posljednje urušenje se dogodilo 2004. godine, kad je pod pritiskom višemetarskog sloja šute popustio sjeverni zid burga (sl. 3). Kako je „svako zlo za neko dobro“, tako nam je ovo posljednje urušavanje ponudilo i neke zanimljive podatke. Odlično se vidi presjek zida bedema kao i jedan od pregradnih zidova stambenoga kompleksa. Očuvani su u visini oko 2,75 m. Također je, u gomili urušnja koje se srušilo niz strminu brijega, otkriven i jedan profilirani ulomak izrađen od kamena pješčenjaka (sl. 4).

Godine 2005. izmjereni su i dokumentirani ostaci burga.<sup>3</sup> Zbog nepovoljne konfiguracije terena te izrazite pošumljenosti sigurno je došlo do manjih pogrešaka pri mjerenju, no one su u granicama tolerancije tako da je dobiveni tlocrt dovoljno vjerodostojan (sl. 5). Dodatno ograničenje tlocrta leži u samoj naravi mjerenoga. Naime, bez makar plitkih arheoloških iskopavanja, u kojima bi se točnije definirale linije pojedinih zidova, i najpreciznija mjerenja mogu prikazati samo „slutnje“. A i uz takva bi iskopavanja trebalo osigurati konzervaciju otkopanih zidova, kako se lokalitet ne bi doveo u još lošije stanje.

### OBLIK BURGA

Budući da više nisu vidljivi svi zidovi, o obliku burga možemo govoriti samo uvjetno. Arheološkim bi istraživanjima, između ostaloga, najvjerojatnije pronašli temelje zidova koji danas nedostaju. Ipak i današnji ostaci ostavljaju dojam na istraživača. U grubim crtama, čini se da možemo reći kako je burg imao više poligonalni negoli trapezoidni tlocrtni oblik. U svakom slučaju, maksimalno je prilagođen terenu na kojem je izgrađen. Zajedno s uvjetno nazvanim „ulaznim dijelom“, vanjske dimenzije burga su oko 43 (istok-zapad) x 42 (sjever-jug) metra. To je znatno više od dimenzija do sada navođenih u literaturi.

Sudeći prema konfiguraciji tla, unutrašnjost burga mogla je izgledati ovako: sa sjeverne strane je uz zid bedema bio dozidan oveci višekatni stambeni kompleks, podijeljen na tri dijela. U južnoj strani dvorišta vjerojatno se nalazila velika četvrtasta branič-kula (donžon) debelih zidova. Najvjerojatnije je stajala samostalno u dvorištu, no to bi trebalo provjeriti u iskopavanjima. Vrlo dobro se, u konfiguraciji tla, nazire njezin sjeverni zid koji je očuvan možda i više od 4 m visine. (Usprkos ovako velikoj pretpostavljenoj visini očuvanih zidova, na lokalitetu se mnogi zidovi tek naziru. Dok pojedini zidovi i danas strše i po nekoliko metara u visinu, većinu zidova jedino možemo nazrijeti u konfiguraciji tla.) Analogijama sa suvremenim kulama pretpostavljamo da je bila četvrtasta, no točniji tlocrt se zasad ne može ustanoviti. Kružnog tlocrta sigurno nije bila, jer je sjeverni zid ravan. Osobito je jako urušen njezin jugoistočni dio. Duž većega dijela istočnog zida burga danas se ne naziru nikakve grad-

is straight. The southeastern part is particularly badly ruined. Along the larger part of the eastern wall of the burg no constructions are discernible today, but the several-metre debris prevents us from definitely excluding this possibility, particularly if they were of insufficiently solid construction. Between the mentioned buildings, that is structures, in the middle of the burg, there was a courtyard. A round pit 4,5 m in diameter, which will be discussed in more detail later, stands precisely in the centre. The western part of the burg is difficult to reconstruct – it appears that precisely the western wall caved in first under the weight of the debris. The exact direction in which the wall stretched is also difficult to establish, let alone the buildings that may have stood next to it. It is important to mention that a short segment of the wall has remained preserved some ten metres to the west, on a considerably lower level than the line that at the first glance imposes itself as the western fortification line. It seems that this might be a part of the western wall, next to which interior partition walls are discernible, but also a wall added on the outer side. (A similar “exterior” wall is preserved also on the western part of the northern wall). It might just as well be a (later added) entrance tower. We shall never be able to ascertain what it really was without archaeological excavations.

Today, in contrast to Szabo, we cannot be certain about the place where the entrance to the burg stood. It certainly did not lie on the eastern or northern sides, because the fortifications there were preserved (until 2004) to a sufficient height. This disproves the claim that ... *The entrance ... is on the northern side of the town, which is the only one accessible, as on the other sides the hill slopes are very steep* (Dobronić 1984b, 101). We can consider, then, only the collapsed southern and western sides and the northwestern corner of the burg.

### A DESCRIPTION OF THE WALLS

The walls were generally built of stone. There are bricks in abundance everywhere, crumbled, in smaller or somewhat larger pieces – not one brick has been found complete so far. Bricks were often used for building, for leveling the courses in building, but also in later repairs – those later bricks are far brighter and seem softer. The older bricks are at places hard as stone (*prepeka* – *overfired bricks*), and darker, often gray, but only exceptionally black, burned. Brick length was impossible to ascertain as it was built into the walls crosswise only, while the other measures are 5-5,5 x 12-13 cm. Most bricks of these dimensions, found at mediaeval sites in Croatia, were created in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, even though similar dimensions can be found also in the buildings created as late as the 16<sup>th</sup> century (to which attention was drawn by Zorislav Horvat), so one should be careful about jumping to conclusions.

Walls were generally built from three parts, as customary: the outer and inner faces and the core of the wall. The wall faces were built with bigger and smaller pieces of hewn stone. When needed, stones were roughly trimmed only on the exterior. Regular ashlar were found only on the bends of the walls. The builders tried to lay stones in uni-

<sup>3</sup> U rekognosciranju i izmjeri burga uz autora ovoga rada sudjelovale su: Filomena Sirovica i Maja Šunjić, tadašnje apsolvence Odsjeka za arheologiju Filozoskog fakulteta u Zagrebu.



nje, no zbog višemetarskoga urušenja ne možemo sasvim isključiti njihovo postojanje, osobito ako su bile nesolidnije građe. Između navedenih građevina, odnosno objekata, u sredini burga, nalazio se dvorišni prostor. Točno u sredini nalazi se okrugla jama promjera oko 4,5 m, o kojoj će biti više riječi kasnije. Zapadni dio burga teško je rekonstruirati - čini se kako je pod pritiskom urušenja upravo zapadni zid prvi popustio. Teško je bilo što reći i o točnom smjeru pružanja zida, a pogotovo o eventualnim građevinama uza nj. Važno je napomenuti da je očuvan jedan kraći segment zida, desetak metara zapadnije i na bitno nižoj razini od linije koja se na prvi pogled nameće kao zapadna linija bedema. Čini se da bi moglo biti riječi o dijelu zapadnoga bedema, uz koji se naziru i unutarnji pregradni zidovi, ali i jedan zid dodan s vanjske strane. (Sličan "vanjski" zid je očuvan i na zapadnome dijelu sjevernoga zida). Isto tako, možda se radi i o (naknadno dodanoj) ulaznoj kuli. Bez arheoloških iskopavanja nećemo moći odrediti o čemu je doista riječ.

Danas, za razliku od Szaboa, ne možemo biti sigurni gdje se nalazio ulaz u burg. Sigurno se nije nalazio s istočne i sjeverne strane, jer su tamo bedemi (do 2004. godine) bili očuvani u dovoljnoj visini. To pobija tvrdnju da se ... *Ulaz ... nalazi na sjevernoj strani grada, s koje je jedino moguć pristup, jer su s drugih strana obronci brijega vrlo strmi* (Dobronić 1984b, 101). U obzir, dakle, dolaze urušene južna i zapadna strana te sjeverozapadni ugao burga.

#### OPIS ZIDOVA

Zidovi su građeni uglavnom od kamena. Posvuda ima puno opeke, izmrvljene, u manjim i nešto većim komadima - zasad nije uočena ni jedna čitava. Opeka je često korištena kod zidanja, za poravnavanje redova zidanja, ali i kod mlađih krpanja - ta mlađa opeka je znatno svjetlija i djeluje mekše. Starija opeka je ponegdje tvrda kao kamen (*prepeka*), i tamnija, nerijetko siva, no samo iznimno crna, izgorena. Dužinu opeke nije bilo moguće utvrditi jer je u zidove uzidana isključivo poprijeko, a ostale su dimenzije 5-5,5 x 12-13 cm. Većina opeka toga formata, pronađenih na srednjovjekovnim lokalitetima u Hrvatskoj, nastale su u 13. stoljeću, iako se slične dimenzije mogu pronaći i na građevinama nastalima tek u 16. stoljeću (na što je upozorio Zorislav Horvat), pa s konačnim zaključcima ipak treba biti oprezan.

Zidovi su, kako je to uobičajeno, uglavnom građeni iz triju dijelova: vanjskoga i unutarnjeg lica te jezgre zida. Lica zida građena su većim i manjim komadima lomljenoga kamena. Kamenje je po potrebi bilo grubo priklesano samo s vanjske strane. Pravilni su klesanci ustanovljeni samo na lomovima zidova. Graditelji su se trudili kamenje slagati u pravilne redove, kombinirajući veće i manje komade. Veće je kamenje "ulazilo" u zid i za više od 40 cm, a manje u prosjeku oko 20 cm. Mjestimično su za izravnavanje redova koristili i opeku, uglavnom nižući po nekoliko komada okrenutih bočnom stranom prema van. Opeke su ponekad korištene i umjesto manjega kamena za popunjavanje prostora između većih komada. Često su korištene i kod kasnijih krpanja zidova. Zidovi su s dvorišne strane bili ožbukani grubom žbukom, čiji se ostaci danas tek naslućuju.

Na južnome dijelu istočnoga zida se može vidjeti izuzet-

form courses, combining larger and smaller pieces. Larger blocks "entered" into a wall by as much as 40 cm or more, while in the case of smaller stones this was around 20 cm on average. Bricks were used at places for straightening the courses, mostly by arranging several bricks in line, laid with lateral side facing outwards. Bricks were occasionally used instead of smaller blocks for filling the space between larger blocks. They were also frequently used for later wall repairs. The walls on the courtyard side were plastered with coarse mortar, whose remains are barely discernible today.

Exceptionally nice and ordered stone courses can be seen in the southern part of the eastern wall (Fig. 6).

Two types of grooves are visible on the wall in the interior, courtyard side: larger rectangular grooves for wooden beams, and smaller round ones, which are visible from the outside and in the lower courses. Even though the mentioned rectangular grooves are generally arranged in more or less regular series, due to the insufficiently large surface of preserved walls their exact function cannot be ascertained.

The wall core is mostly filled with smaller pieces of broken stone, in addition to some brick fragments, abundantly covered with mortar. Therefore, we can say that the core was filled with the materials that could not be used for the building of a face. At several points it can be seen how a face separated from the core and collapsed, and it is sometimes a problem to guess the direction in which a wall stretched, because all that has remained visible of some of the walls is their amorphous core.

#### THE EASTERN WALL

Looking from outside, the eastern wall is the only one that has remained preserved in its entire length. However, at certain spots, above all around the middle, it bulges so much that it seems that the weight of the debris might soon set off its collapse. The interior level of the courtyard is several metres higher than the outer one, which points to the thickness of the debris layer. The wall still protrudes at two points in the northern part, as well as in the southern part, where one of the most representative remains of the preserved wall stands today. Completely ruined strips begin precisely at the joint with the northern wall and probably at the joint with the southern wall.

The present walking level within the perimeter of the walls, which is in all probability three to four metres higher than the one in the past, showed a uniform thickness of the wall at all places - 1,30 m. It seems that the existing walking level outside the fortifications generally corresponds to the historical one.

Judging by terrain configuration, a joint with the wall that closed the rooms leaning on the northern wall can be discerned adjacent to this wall.

#### THE NORTHERN WALL

The northern wall extends in a rather straight line. While at one side it takes a polygonal curve and joins the eastern wall, in the west it is so much ruined that not even its orientation is discernible any longer. Its eastern segment caved

no lijepo i uredno nizanje kamenja (sl. 6).

S unutarnje, dvorišne strane, na zidu su vidljive dvije vrste utora: veći pravokutni utori za drvene grede, te manji okrugli koji su vidljivi izvana i u nižim slojevima. Iako se navedeni pravokutni utori uglavnom nižu u manje-više pravilnim nizovima, zbog premale površine očuvanih zidova nije sa sigurnošću moguće utvrditi njihovu točnu namjenu.

Jezgra zida je uglavnom ispunjena sitnijim komadima lomljenoga kamenja, uz ponešto ulomaka opeke, obilno zalivenih mortom. Dakle, možemo reći da su u jezgru ubacivani materijali koji se nisu mogli koristiti za gradnju lica. Na više se mjesta može vidjeti kako se lice odvojilo od jezgre i urušilo, a ponekad je problem uopće pretpostaviti smjer pružanja zida jer je danas od pojedinih zidova vidljiva samo amorfnja jezgra.

### ISTOČNI ZID

Gledano izvana, istočni je zid jedini ostao očuvan u cijeloj dužini, no na nekim mjestima, osobito pri sredini, već je toliko ispupčen da izgleda kako bi pod pritiskom urušenja i on uskoro mogao popustiti. Unutarnja razina dvorišta nekoliko je metara viša od vanjskoga, što ukazuje na debljinu sloja urušenja. Zid još uvijek strši u sjevernome dijelu na dva mjesta, te u južnome dijelu, gdje je danas jedan od najreprezentativnijih ostataka očuvanoga zida. Potpuna urušenja počinju točno na spoju sa sjevernim zidom te vjerojatno upravo na spoju s južnim zidom.

Na današnjoj hodnoj razini unutar perimetra zidova, koja je najvjerojatnije tri do četiri metra viša od nekadašnje, posvuda je utvrđena ista debljina zida - 1,30 m. Čini se kako današnja hodna razina s vanjske strane bedema uglavnom odgovara i nekadašnjoj hodnoj razini.

Sudeći prema konfiguraciji tla, uz ovaj se zid bedema nazire spoj sa zidom koji je prema dvorištu zatvarao prostorije prislonjene uza sjeverni zid.

### SJEVERNI ZID

Sjeverni se zid pruža poprilično ravno. Dok s jedne strane poligonalno skreće te se spaja s istočnim zidom, sa zapadne je strane razrušen u tolikoj mjeri da mu se ne nazire ni daljnji smjer. Njegov istočni dio popustio je pod pritiskom debelog sloja urušene šute u ljeto 2004. godine.

Središnji dio sjevernog zida (zapadno od urušenja) jedini od svih vidljivih zidova burga ostavlja dojam kao da je naknadno ojačavan podebljavanjem. Djeluje kao da nema jezgru već da je u početku postojao samo tanji zid debljine 65 - 70 cm, građen lomljenim kamenjem. Ovdje se kamenje obaju lica praktički dodirivalo te klasična jezgra ni ne postoji, samo su omanji međuprostori ispunjavani sitnijim komadima opeke i lomljenoga kamenja. Čini se kako je taj zid naknadno podebljan s vanjske strane za oko pola metra, tako da je na "donjoj razini" debeo oko 115 cm. I danas se vidi ravna linija koja se proteže uzduž očuvanog vrha zida. Sjeverni dio ovoga zida se od ostalih razlikuje i po materijalu korištenome za građu - zidan je manjim komadima kamenja, čak ne lomljenoga, nego zaobljenog. Zbog prvobitne debljine zida nameće se pomisao kako je možda riječ o najstarijoj očuvanoj fazi burga, o ostatku bedema koji je opasavao

in under the weight of the thick layer of collapsed rubbish in the summer of 2004.

The central segment of the northern wall (west of the collapsed strip) is the only visible wall of the burg that leaves the impression that it had been reinforced by thickening at a later date. It does not seem to contain a core, but that in the beginning there was only a thinner wall 65-70 cm thick, built of broken stone. Here the stones of both faces virtually touched and a core in the classical sense is entirely missing, except that minor interspaces were filled with smaller pieces of bricks and broken stone. It seems that this wall was subsequently thickened on the outside by around half a metre, so that its "lower level" is around 115 cm thick. A straight line stretching along the preserved top of the wall is still visible today. The northern part of this wall is distinguished from the other parts also by the material used in its construction - it was built with smaller pieces of stone, which were not even hewn, but rounded. The original breadth of the wall leads one to think that it may have represented the earliest preserved phase of the burg, a remnant of the fortification that surrounded the central defensive tower. The stone burgs created towards the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. from the time before Bela IV's systematic defense of the Croatian-Hungarian kingdom, are characterized precisely by such choice of hardly accessible cliffs, which at the same time functioned as natural fortifications, and by small breadth of the walls, most often around 70 cm. Examples of such burgs include: Mali Kalnik, Okić, Hreljin, Ozalj, Kurjak and Mogorić (Horvat 1996, 180).

On the other hand, looking at the appearance of the wall, a contrary possibility also comes to mind: that that segment of the fortification wall was repaired in a hurry with material of inferior quality, and that it was thickened at a later date. Could in that case this be a testimony to the activity of master Nikola of Ludbreg from the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century?

After the mentioned collapsed strip the profile of the wall clearly revealed one of the partition walls (Fig. 3) in its full present height (2,75 m), around 95 cm thick. With regard to the terrain configuration within the fortification perimeter, another partition wall of this kind can be discerned more to the west, parallel to this one, while to the south one discerns a courtyard wall of these rooms. These are most likely the walls of the rooms that leaned against the northern wall of the burg. The preserved height of the walls allows us to think that this represented a residential part that was at least one storey high. As it seems that it had three rooms on each floor (see Fig. 5), it irresistibly recalls the mentioned description of Bela from 1606.

The entire space of these rooms is filled with a layer of construction waste almost three metres high.

The remnants of a wall leading perpendicularly away from the fortification wall is visible on its outside.

### SOUTHERN WALL

Little has remained today of the southern wall, merely one, around 5 m long segment, at the place where the existing marked mountaineering path ascends into the burg.



središnju branič-kulu. Naime, kamene burgove nastale krajem 12. i početkom 13. stoljeća, tj. iz vremena prije sustavne obrane hrvatsko-ugarskog kraljevstva Bele IV., karakterizira upravo ovakav smještaj na teško pristupačne litice, koje su samim time bile i prirodne utvrde, te mala debljina zidova, najčešće oko 70 cm. Primjeri takvih burgova su: Mali Kalnik, Okić, Hreljin, Ozalj, Kurjak i Mogorić (Horvat 1996, 180).

S druge strane, promatrajući izgled zida, nameće se i suprotna mogućnost: da je taj dio zida bedema popravljan u žurbi manje kvalitetnim materijalom, te naknadno podebljavan. Bi li to tada moglo biti svjedočanstvo aktivnosti majstora Nikole Ludbreškoga s početka 14. stoljeća?

Nakon spomenutog urušavanja u profilu se jasno pokazao jedan od pregradnih zidova (sl. 3) u svojoj današnjoj visini (2,75 m), debljine oko 95 cm. Prema konfiguraciji tla unutar perimetra bedema zapadnije se može nazrijeti još jedan takav pregradni zid, paralelan s ovim, dok se južnije nazire dvorišni zid ovih prostorija. Najvjerojatnije se radi o zidovima prostorija koje su bile prislonjene uza sjeverni zid burga. Prema očuvanoj visini zidova možemo pretpostaviti kako je riječ o stambenome dijelu koji je imao barem jedan kat. Budući da se čini kako je imao tri prostorije po etaži (vidjeti sl. 5), neodoljivo podsjeća na spomenuti opis Bele iz 1606. godine.

Sav prostor ovih prostorija ispunjen je gotovo trometarskim slojem šute.

S vanjske strane zida bedema vidljiv je ostatak zida koji se od njega okomito udaljuje.

### JUŽNI ZID

Od južnoga je zida do danas ostalo malo očuvano, tek jedan, oko 5 m dugačak dio, tamo gdje se današnja markirana planinarska staza uspinje u burg. No očuvan je u popriličnoj visini, s unutarnje strane oko 5 m (sl. 7), a s vanjske oko 8 m (sl. 8). Debljina zida je oko 130 cm.

U središnjem se dijelu zida s unutarnje strane vidi okomita linija koja indicira nekakvo prislanjanje ili okomiti spoj zidova.

Zapadni je rub ovoga ostatka zida danas okomito "odsječen" i nažalost, upravo kao ni kod sjevernoga zida, ne vidi se njegov daljnji smjer, odnosno ne znamo je li se zid baš tu lomio prema sjeveru - sjeverozapadu ili se još neko vrijeme nastavljao u istome pravcu. (Na mjestu sjeveroistočnoga ugla burga, gdje se zid tek nedavno urušio, točno znamo da je puknuo na mjestu loma zida). Na istočnoj se strani jezgra ovoga zida može pratiti još malo dalje od njegova lica. Na ovome se mjestu dobro može vidjeti kako se kamenje lica odvaja od jezgre.

Istočnije je situacija još zamršenija. Zbog velike kosine ispunjene odronjenom šutom otežano je i samo kretanje, a vrh strmine gusto je obrastao. Strmina je vrlo sipljiva. Ipak se i ovdje mogu uočiti pojedini segmenti, vjerojatno pregradnih, zidova. Oko 4 m zapadnije od kraja istočnoga zida u jednome se od "džepova" nazire kompaktna jezgra zida vezana žučkastom žbukom, a zapadnije, na neznatno nižoj razini, vidljiva je gromada vezana sivkastijom žbukom. Čini se kako pripadaju istome zidu. Manje je vjerojatno da se čitava zapadnija gromada odnekud odronila i tu pala, no ne

However, it is preserved rather high, around 5 m in the interior (Fig. 7), and around 8 m in the exterior (Fig. 8). The breadth of the wall is around 130 cm.

A vertical line indicating a leaning of sorts or a vertical wall joint is visible in the interior of the central part of the wall.

The western edge of this remnant of the wall is vertically "cut" today and, unfortunately, like in the case of the northern wall, its further course is invisible, i.e. we don't know whether this was the very point where the wall curved north-northwest or it continued in the same direction for a while longer. (At the northeastern corner of the burg, where the wall only recently collapsed, we know for certain that it broke at the point where the wall changes direction). At the eastern side the core of this wall can be followed even a bit longer than its face. At this position it can be clearly seen how the face stones separate from the core.

The situation further east is even more tangled. The precipitous slope filled with collapsed debris impedes movement, and the top of the slope is covered with thick growth. The incline is very loose. In spite of all that, certain segments are perceptible even here, most probably belonging to partition walls. Around 4 m to the west of the end of the eastern wall, a compact core of the wall, bound with yellowish mortar, is visible in one of the "pockets", while to the west, at a slightly lower level, a stone block bound with grayish mortar can be seen. They give impression of belonging to the same wall. It is less probable that the entire westerly block precipitated from somewhere and ended at that spot, even though this possibility cannot be neglected either. If this is a part of the same wall, this would mean that, in case it is positioned perpendicularly, it was 2 m wide, and in case it joins at an angle, it may have been much thinner. The faces of that wall are not discernible so its course is difficult to ascertain. It looks as if it continued from the presumed eastern wall of the defensive tower.

### THE WESTERN WALL

It seems that the western defensive wall was the first one to yield under the weight, seeing that its remains are the least preserved. There is a segment of the wall in the northwestern part of the burg, very poorly visible. It seems that the wall is preserved in the length of at least 5 m and around 2 m in height. It is considerably overgrown and consequently not easily discernible, but it is as if at places one can discern regular courses of stones that might belong to the preserved face of the wall (Fig. 9). However, it may easily be the case that not even here, at this higher level, do we have its preserved face. Its course leads in a not entirely perpendicular line towards the northern wall, precisely towards the point where the traces of the northern wall to the west are beginning to disappear. Perhaps there, therefore, lay the joint of these walls, that is, the place where the fortification wall bends.

We cannot be certain at the moment whether this is really the western fortification wall or only another partition wall. In the latter case the fortification wall would change its direction a little more to the west and curved toward the

smije se zanemariti ni ta mogućnost. Ako je to dio istoga zida, onda je on, ukoliko ovamo dolazi okomito, bio širok 2 m, a ako dolazi ukoso, mogao je biti i puno tanji. Lica toga zida nisu uočljiva pa je teško odrediti njegov smjer. Djeluje kao da se nastavlja na pretpostavljeni istočni zid branič-kule.

### ZAPADNI ZID

Čini se da je zapadni zid bedema prvi popustio pod teretom, jer su mu ostaci najmanje očuvani. U sjeverozapadnome dijelu burga nalazi se, vrlo loše vidljiv, jedan segment zida. Čini se da je zid sačuvan u duljini od barem 5 m te oko 2 m u visinu. Poprilično je obrastao pa se teško raspoznaje, no kao da se mjestimice razabire pravilno nizanje kamenja koje bi moglo pripadati sačuvanome licu zida (sl. 9). Međutim, lako je moguće da ni ovdje, na ovoj višoj razini, nemamo više njegovo očuvano lice. Pruža se ne baš sasvim okomito prema sjevernome zidu, i to upravo prema mjestu gdje tragovi sjevernoga zida prema zapadu već nestaju. Možda je tamo, dakle, bio spoj ovih zidova, odnosno lom zida bedema.

Za sada se ne može pouzdano reći ni je li to doista zapadni zid bedema ili je još jedan pregradni zid. U ovome drugom slučaju zid bedema bi se lomio nešto zapadnije i skretao prema "ulaznoj kuli" - tada bi se zapadni zid bedema nalazio još zapadnije, niže niz strminu, no danas nije uočljiv.

Možda je na ovome mjestu stajala kula prvospomenuta u opisu Bele iz 1606. godine.

### ULAZNI PROSTOR

Ukoliko linijom spojimo danas vidljive svršetke sjevernoga i južnog zida, oko 10 m zapadnije od te linije i na znatno nižoj razini vidljiv je segment jednog zida dužine oko 6 m i visine oko 3 m (sl. 10). Uočljiv je jedino s donje vanjske strane. Zbog toga ga možda pojedini istraživači nisu ni primijetili. Pruža se u smjeru sjever-sjeveroistok – jug-jugozapad. Djelomično se pri tlu dobro nazire i njegovo lice u dužini od oko 2 m. Prema konfiguraciji terena se čini da se od vidljivih krajeva ovoga zida prema unutrašnjosti burga pružaju dva paralelna zida. Budući da njihovi ostaci nisu vidljivi, nisu ni ucrtani na tlocrt.

Prva pomisao kod interpretacije ovog zida bila bi da se radi o još jednoj kuli, koja je branila ulaz jer "izlazi" iz pretpostavljenoga gabarita burga. No uzmemo li u obzir da nemamo naznačene lomove sjevernoga i južnog zida te da nam uopće nije poznat pravac pružanja zapadnoga zida, jer danas više nije vidljiv, možemo također pomisliti i kako je ovaj segment u stvari dio zapadnoga zida bedema. U tom bi slučaju prije opisani *zapadni zid* bio pregradni, a ne zid bedema.

Naravno, postoji i treća mogućnost, a to je da se tu nalazila ulazna kula utisnuta u produžetke sjevernoga i južnog bedema tako da se vanjski zid kule nastavljao prema južnom, a unutarnji prema sjevernom zidu bedema. Tada bismo mogli očekivati da se na ovome prostoru nalaze ostaci obzidanoga prostora pred vratima burga koji se također spominje spomenute 1606. godine.

Uočen je još jedan zid, koji se od navedenoga gotovo okomito pruža nizbrdo, s vanjske strane (sl. 11). Vidljiv je, na

"entrance tower" – in which case the western fortification wall would lay even further west, further down the slope, but it is not visible today.

Perhaps this was the location of the tower that was first mentioned in the 1606 description of Bela.

### THE ENTRANCE AREA

If we stretch a line connecting the presently visible ends of the northern and southern walls, around 10 m to the west of that line and at a considerably lower level, we can see a segment of a wall around 6 m long and around 3 m high (Fig. 10). It is visible only from the lower exterior side, which might explain why perhaps some explorers failed to notice it. It stretches in the north-northwest – south-southwest direction. Its face is at places relatively well discernible near the ground in the length of around 2 m. Considering the configuration of the terrain it seems that two parallel walls lead from the visible ends of this wall into the interior of the burg. As their remains are not perceptible, they were not drawn in the ground plan.

The first thought in the interpretation of this wall would be that it represented another tower, which defended the entrance considering that it "lies beyond" the presumed perimeter of the burg. However, if we take into consideration that we are lacking indications of the bends of the northern and southern walls, and that we know nothing whatsoever about the direction in which the western wall ran, because it is no longer visible today, we can also think that this segment in fact forms part of the western fortification wall. In that case the previously described *western wall* would be a partition wall and not a fortification wall.

There is, naturally, a third possibility, that this was the place where the entrance tower stood, fitted between the extensions of the northern and southern fortification so that the outer wall of the tower continued towards the southern wall, while the interior wall continued toward the northern fortification wall. In that case we could expect in this zone the remains of a walled area in front of the burg gate, which is also mentioned in 1606.

Yet another wall has been noticed, which runs almost perpendicularly downhill from the mentioned wall, on the outer side (Fig. 11). At the distance of 3,8 m from the previously described wall one can see its cross-section in the preserved breadth of around 125 cm (the southern face is not visible most clearly) in the height of approximately 150 cm. Taking into account the visible rectangular holes for wooden beams near the middle of the wall of the "entrance tower", this may be a remnant of an added room, its northern wall.

However, it might as well be a *frontal wall* that is added as a new element to the donjons or keeps, laid crosswise in order to close the slopes, passages or the like. This is a result of rapid improvement of defensive power in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, brought about through amalgamation of Roman-Byzantine and Arabian traditions of defensive construction with the experiences of the Crusaders and new Gothic structures, which appear in Europe in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. The costs of building new, more complex defensive systems could be borne only by *large noble families, provincial princes or knightly orders* (Müller, Vogel 2000,



udaljenosti od 3,8 m od prije opisanoga zida, njegov presjek očuvane debljine oko 125 cm (južno lice nije najjasnije vidljivo) u visini približno 150 cm. Možda je to, s obzirom na vidljive četvrtaste rupe za drvene grede pri sredini zida "ulazne kule", ostatak neke prigradene prostorije, njezin sjeverni zid.

No možda je riječ o *čelnome zidu* koji se kao novi element pridružuje donžonima ili utvrdama, a postavljao se poprečno kako bi se zatvorile padine, prolazi i slično. To je rezultat brzoga jačanja obrambene moći u 12. i 13. stoljeću, nastale prožimanjem rimsko-bizantske i arapske tradicije obrambene gradnje s križarskim iskustvima i novim gotičkim konstrukcijama, koje se u Europi pojavljuje u 13. i 14. stoljeću. Troškove gradnji novih, složenijih obrambenih sustava mogle su podnijeti samo *velike plemićke obitelji, pokrajinski knezovi ili viteški redovi* (Müller, Vogel 2000, 355).

### BRANIČ-KULA (DONŽON)

Već je, pri opisu oblika burga, spomenuta pretpostavka da je u južnome dijelu dvorišta očuvana velika četvrtasta branič-kula debelih zidova, donžon, koja je najvjerojatnije samostalno stajala u dvorištu burga. Na takav zaključak nas upućuje prvenstveno konfiguracija terena. Teško se domisliti drugome razlogu za postojanje 3,5 m visokoga "brda" unutar bedema burga. Zidovi se uglavnom ne vide, već se samo naziru (sl. 12). Čini se da je sjeverna stranica kule, ona okrenuta prema dvorištu, koja se ujedno i najbolje naslućuje u konfiguraciji tla, bila dugačka (izvana) oko 12 m. Sudeći prema toj veličini i, ponovo, prema konfiguraciji terena, zidovi bi joj mogli biti debljine oko 2,5 m, a očuvani su možda i više od 4 do 5 m u visinu. Prema analogijama s vjerojatno suvremenim joj nedalekim kulama (primjerice, kulama na Gradišću, Garićgradu, Židovini, Medvedgradu ...), nameće se pretpostavka da je kula bila četvrtasta. Ipak, točniji tlocrt ne može se ustanoviti jer je naročito urušen njezin jugoistočni dio.

Jedan segment zida ipak je vidljiv. Nalazi se na sjeverozapadnome uglu kule no nije posve sigurno je li riječ o uglu kule ili o nekome zidu koji je na taj ugao bio prislonjen (sl. 13). Lice zida nije vidljivo, tek amorfnu čvrsto vezanu jezgru, pa se ne može pouzdano utvrditi smjer pružanja. Naslućuje se da se pruža gotovo pod pravim kutom (oko 85°) u odnosu na pretpostavljeni sjeverni zid kule. Ostali se segmenti kule danas slabije razaznaju, pa o njezinu tlocrtnom obliku, kao što je već istaknuto, možemo samo nagađati prema analogijama.

Branič-kule su, logično, najbolje i najčvršće građeni dijelovi svake utvrde. Stoga i ne čudi da su njihovi zidovi najčešće bolje očuvani. To je ujedno i snažan argument protiv pretpostavke da jama u sredini dvorišta predstavlja ostatak kružne branič-kule.

### "JAMA"

Usprkos još uvijek vidljivim ostacima burga i konfiguraciji terena koja upućuje na postojanje drugih zidova, najviše je interesa u literaturi do sada posvećeno jami koja se nalazi u sredini dvorišta. L. Dobronić (1984b, 101) vjeruje da je to kula koja se spominje u izvoru iz 1606. godine i smatra da je

355).

### THE DEFENSIVE TOWER (DONJON)

In the description of the form of the burg we have already mentioned the supposition that a large rectangular thick-walled defensive tower, donjon, remained preserved in the southern part of the courtyard, which most likely stood independently in the burg courtyard. Such conclusion rests primarily on the terrain configuration, as it is difficult to imagine another reason for the existence of a 3,5 m high "hill" within the burg's fortifications. The walls in general are not visible any more, but only discernible (Fig. 12). It seems that the northern side of the tower, the one facing the courtyard and at the same time the one most discernible in the terrain configuration, was around 12 m long (on the outside). Judging by that size and, again, by the terrain configuration, its walls may have been around 2,5 thick, and they are preserved perhaps more than 4 to 5 m high. The analogies with probably contemporaneous nearby towers (e.g. those at Gradišće, Garićgrad, Židovina, Medvedgrad...) suggest that the tower was rectangular. Still, the ground plan cannot be determined with greater precision, because its southeastern part was particularly damaged.

There is however one segment of the wall that is still visible. It stands on the northwestern corner of the tower, but it is not entirely certain whether it is a tower corner or another wall that leaned against that corner (Fig. 13). The wall face is not visible, only the amorphous tight-bound core, so it cannot be ascertained in which direction it ran. There are indications that its course lies at an almost right angle (around 85°) in relation to the presumed northern wall of the tower. The remaining segments of the tower are today less well discernible, so as to its ground plan, as has already been pointed out, we can only speculate based on analogies.

Defensive towers are, logically, the best and most solidly built parts of every fort. It is therefore not surprising that their walls are most often better preserved. This is at the same time a strong argument against the idea that the pit in the centre of the courtyard represents the remains of a circular defensive tower.

### "THE PIT"

Despite the still visible remains of the burg and the terrain configuration that points to the existence of other walls, the greatest attention in the literature was reserved for the pit located in the centre of the courtyard. L. Dobronić (1984b, 101) believes that this is the tower mentioned in the source from 1606 and thinks that its ground plan was circular. There are others who reiterate her opinion (e.g., Đurić and Feletar 1992, 150).

There are several reasons indicating that this was not a circular tower. If we look at the remains of the neighbouring fortified towns from the time of the Hospitallers, we shall see that circular towers appear only exceptionally.<sup>4</sup> The period of circular towers commenced with the appearance

<sup>4</sup> In Szabo's opinion, the earliest phase of the Oštrc town, first mentioned in 1330, is represented precisely by a circular tower (1913/1914, 113); the situation is contrary, for instance, in nearby Belec, where, according to Szabo, the semicircular tower was a later addition against artillery (ibid.:114-116).

bila kružnog tlocrta. I drugi prenose njezino mišljenje (primjerice, Đurić, Feletar 1992, 150).

Više je razloga koji upućuju na to da nije riječ o kuli kružnoga tlorisa. Promotrimo li ostatke okolnih utvrđenih gradova iz vremena ivanovaca, vidjet ćemo da se kružne kule javljaju tek iznimno<sup>4</sup>. Razdoblje kružnih kula dolazi s pojavom opsadne artiljerije (u doba turskih provala) te su tipičnije za kaštele 16. stoljeća (Horvat 1995, 305; Kruhek 1994, 182,187; Kruhek 1995, 24). Naravno, to nije dosljedno pravilo te nam ne može biti jedini argument. Zanimljivo je da su na minijaturi iz 14. stoljeća iz *Secrete fidelium crucis*, Bodleian Library, Oxford (Tate 1994, 54-55; vidjeti i u: Belaj 2001, sl. 11), na kojoj su prikazane i brojne utvrde na zemljovidu Svete zemlje, sve kule četvrtastoga oblika. Vjerojatno se uopće ne radi o ostacima bilo kakve kule, jer bi tada trebalo objasniti potpuni nestanak njezinih zidova. Riječ je, naime, o najnižoj razini unutar bedema (sl. 14). Logičnija se čini pretpostavka da je riječ o tragu cisterne što ga je nepoznata znatijelna ruka možda dodatno proširila. Cisternu bi unutar burga svakako trebalo očekivati. Tragovi cisterne se pronalaze i na drugim, Belj suvremenim i nedalekim burgovima (v. Tkalčec 2008).

Studentsko je etnološko ispitivanje potvrdilo mišljenje okolnoga stanovništva, ono već prije isticano u literaturi (usp. Dobronić 1984b, 101): *Pa gore na vrhu je zdenec bil! Al je ve bil zatrpani! Je, vem da su imali zdenec kad su vadili vodu! Je zatrpan! Baš pri tom ... pri tej ruševini!*" (Belaj 2005a, 69). Čini se da su pritom mislili upravo na ovu "jamu". Među pukom je, naravno, kao i na većini sličnih lokaliteta, rašireno i uvjerenje kako je u stvari riječ o ulazu u podzemni tunel.

Ipak, zbog debelih naslaga urušena kamenja i šute i potpuno zaraštena terena, teško je sa sigurnošću reći radi li se doista o cisterni odnosno *zdencu*, o ostacima eventualne podrumске prostorije, o *iskopu* nastalom zbog potrage za *skrivenim blagom* u "podzemnim hodnicima" ili o nečem četvrtom. I ovaj bi problem mogla rasvijetliti tek arheološka istraživanja.

## NALAZI

Obilazeći burg po putu i u urušenjima moguće je pronaći sitnih ulomaka keramike. Takvi fragmenti nisu pogodni za precizniju dataciju, no svojom fakturama ukazuju na kasnosrednjovjekovno razdoblje, odnosno najvjerojatnije ih možemo pripisati posljednjem razdoblju života u Bela.

Naravno, bez provedenih barem sondažnih arheoloških iskopavanja ne može se raspolagati bilo kakvim značajnijim arheološkim materijalom. Možemo ga očekivati tek u najnižem sloju ispod višemetarskoga urušenja, kako se to događa na svim sličnim lokalitetima. Neizvjesno je očekivati značajniju količinu pokretnih nalaza iz najstarijeg vremena života u Bela, jer valja pretpostaviti da su uglavnom uništeni naknadnim intervencijama na lokalitetu.

<sup>4</sup> Szabo smatra da najraniju fazu grada Oštrca, koji se prvi put spominje 1330. godine, predstavlja upravo kružna kula (1913/1914, 113); suprotno je, primjerice, na nedalekom Belcu, gdje je, prema Szabou, polukružna kula kasnija prigradnja protiv artiljerije (ibid.:114-116).

of siege artillery (during Turkish incursions) and they are more typical for the 16<sup>th</sup> century citadels (Horvat 1995, 305; Kruhek 1994, 182,187; Kruhek 1995, 24). Naturally, this is not a consistent rule and cannot be taken as the only argument. Interestingly, on a 14<sup>th</sup> century miniature from the *Secrete fidelium crucis*, Bodleian Library, Oxford (Tate 1994, 54-55; see also in: Belaj 2001, Fig. 11), depicting also numerous forts on the map of the Holy Land, all towers are rectangular. These are probably not the remains of any tower at all, because in that case we would have to explain the total disappearance of its walls, considering that this is the lowest level within the fortification (Fig. 14). There is a much more logical supposition that these are vestiges of a cistern, perhaps additionally expanded by an unknown curious hand. A cistern is certainly something that one would expect to find within a burg. Traces of cisterns are found also in other burgs, contemporary to Bela and located nearby (see Tkalčec 2008).

An ethnological study conducted by students corroborated the opinion of neighbouring residents, the one already expressed previously in the literature (comp. Dobronić 1984b, 101): *There was a well up there on top! But it was already filled! Yes, I know that they had a well, because they extracted water! It is filled! Right there... in that ruin!* (Belaj 2005a, 69). Naturally, like on most other similar sites, there is a widespread belief among the folk that this in fact represents an entrance into a subterranean tunnel.

However, due to thick layers of collapsed stones and waste, and a thoroughly overgrown terrain, it is difficult to be certain about whether this was indeed a cistern, that is a well, the remains of a possible cellar room, a trench dug in search of *hidden treasure* in the "underground corridors", or something fourth. This is yet another problem that only archaeological excavations could shed light on.

## THE FINDS

By walking around the burg along the path and over the ruins one comes across small fragments of pottery. Such fragments do not lend themselves well to precise dating, but their texture points to late mediaeval period, that is, in all likelihood we can attribute them to the last period of life in Bela.

Naturally, without carrying out at least test archaeological excavations we cannot count on any more substantial archaeological material. We can expect it only in the lowest layer below the several-metre-high debris, like it happens on all similar sites. It is uncertain to expect a significant amount of movable finds from the earliest period of life in Bela, because one should imagine that they were by and large destroyed by subsequent interventions at the site.

The chance finds from Bela until that time, kept in the Varaždin Municipal Museum, were catalogued in 1996 by M. Šimek: *an iron arrowhead, a fragment of an attractive stove tile and a fragment of a ceramic pot*, tentatively dating them to the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century (Šimek 1997a, 20, Pl. IV, 2,3). Individual objects were described in more detail in the catalogue of the exhibition *Varaždin County in the Middle Ages*.

A four-bladed iron crossbow arrow for crossbow has a pyramidal form, with a damaged socket for hafting. The



Dotadašnje slučajne nalaze s Bele, koji se čuvaju u Gradskome muzeju u Varaždinu, popisala je 1996. godine M. Šimek: *željezni vrh strelice, fragment lijepog pećnjaka i ulomak keramičkog lonca*, oprezno ih pritom datiravši u 14. - 15. stoljeće (Šimek 1997a, 20, T. IV, 2,3). U katalogu izložbe *Županija varaždinska u srednjem vijeku* pojedini su predmeti podrobnije opisani.

Četverobridni šiljak željezne strjelice za samostrijel oblikovan je piramidalno, ima oštećeni tuljac za nasad. Očuvana dužina strjelice iznosi 7,7 cm, najveća širina četverobridnoga dijela je 1 cm, a promjer tuljca iznosi 1,1 cm (Šimek 1999, 63, kat. br. 182 sa slikom). Nalaz je datiran u 15.-16. stoljeće.

Pećnjak, čiji je fragment također pronađen na Beli, izrađen je od svijetle oker-crvenkaste keramike te žuto ocačljen. Na njemu je očuvan reljefni prikaz ženske glave (M. Šimek pretpostavlja da je riječ o liku svete), duge valovite kose s krunom na glavi. Datiran je na kraj 15. – početak 16. st. (Šimek 1999, 55, kat. br. 119 sa slikom).

U istome se katalogu navodi i željezni srednjovjekovni kovani mač pronađen u Bednji u 19. stoljeću (slučajni nalaz). Mač je dužine 122 cm, ima ravnu nakrsnicu i dvobridno sjekivo ukrašeno inkrustiranim zlatnim križićem. Pretpostavlja se da je pripadao *vjerojatno nekom redovniku iz Puste Bele*. Datiran je u 14. stoljeće (Težak 1999b, 63, kat. br. 180 sa slikom).

Pri obilasku terena u šuti je uočen jedan profilirani kameni ulomak. Riječ je o isklesanome ulomku doprozornika (sl. 4), izrađenome od mekoga kamena pješčenjaka svijetložućkaste boje, pogodna za obradu. Na svjetlo dana došao je nakon posljednjega urušavanja sjevernoga zida 2004. godine. I drugdje na lokalitetu može se pronaći još nekoliko primjeraka istoga kamena, ali bez tragova profilacija. Očito je korišten samo za posebne detalje. Veličina očuvana ulomka je oko 21,5 x 20 x 34 cm.

## ZAKLJUČAK

Mnoge još nepoznanice obavijaju burg Belu, osobito njezinu najstariju povijest. Zbog toga su se pojavili i različiti prijedlozi za njezinu dataciju.

Lelja Dobronić smatra da Bela pripada ranijem od dva tipa gradova koje su viteški redovi podizali na području Hrvatske. Karakterizira ga donžon u dvorištu, koje opasuje bedem, što se kod nas javlja još i u Čaklovcu i Vrani. Autorica smatra da je Bela (donžon i bedem) podignuta u drugoj polovini 12. st., kada su po njezinu mišljenju ivanovci došli u ovaj kraj, te da je kasnije dograđivana. To bi je činilo suvremenicom gradova toga tipa koji su na tlu Zapadne Europe podizani od 1000. do 1200. godine (Dobronić 1984b, 111-112).

Slično smatra i Tatjana Tkalčec, ubrojivši sa stanovitim oprezom i Belu među one kamenom zidane burgove koji su podizani od kraja 12. stoljeća do provale Mongola (Tkalčec 2008).

Željko Tomičić izgradnju Bele (uz mnoge druge kamenom zidane plemićke gradove u zapadnim dijelovima me-

preserved length of the arrow is 7,7 cm, the greatest width of the four-bladed part is 1 cm, while the diameter of the socket is 1,1 cm (Šimek 1999, 63, cat. no. 182 with a picture). The find is dated to the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century.

The stove tile, whose fragment was also found at Bela, was made of light ochre-reddish ceramics, with a yellow glaze. It carries a preserved relief depiction of a female head (M. Šimek supposes that the figure represents a saint), with long wavy hair with a crown on the head. It is dated to the end of the 15<sup>th</sup>- the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> cent. (Šimek 1999, 55, cat. no. 119 with a picture).

The same catalogue mentions also an iron mediaeval forged sword found in Bednja in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (chance find). It is 122 cm long, with a straight cross-guard and a two-edged blade decorated with an encrusted small golden cross. It is supposed that it *probably belonged to a monk from Pusta Bela*. It is dated to the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Težak 1999b, 63, cat. no. 180 with a picture).

A profiled stone fragment was noticed in the debris during the survey of the terrain. It is a hewn fragment of a window frame (Fig. 4), made from a soft light-yellowish sandstone suitable for working. It came to the light of day after the last collapse of the northern wall in 2004. It is possible to find several more pieces of the same stone elsewhere at the site, but without any traces of profilations. It was obviously used only for special details. The size of the preserved fragment is around 21,5 x 20 x 34 cm.

## CONCLUSION

There are many mysteries still surrounding the burg of Bela, above all its earliest history. This gave rise to various proposals regarding its dating.

Lelja Dobronić thinks that Bela belongs to the earlier of the two types of towns erected by the military orders in Croatia. It is characterized by a donjon in the courtyard, which are both encircled by a defensive wall, which is found elsewhere in Croatia in Čaklovec and Vrana. The author thinks that Bela (donjon and the fortification) was erected in the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> cent., when in her opinion the Hospitallers arrived in this area, and that additions were built on it at a later date. That would make it contemporary to the towns of that type, constructed in Western Europe between 1000 and 1200 (Dobronić 1984b, 111-112).

Similar opinion is shared by Tatjana Tkalčec, who included, with a certain caution, also Bela among those stone-walled burgs that were raised from the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century until the incursion of the Mongols (Tkalčec 2008).

Željko Tomičić places the construction of Bela (in addition to many other stone-built towns of the nobility in the western parts of the area between the Sava and Drava rivers) somewhat later, in the period from the devastating incursion of the Tatars and Mongols until 1270 (Tomičić 1999, 28). He, therefore, incorporates it into a well-conceived program of king Bela IV, a plan of building stone towns throughout the mountainous western part of the Kingdom in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century. That ambitious program could only have been achieved by rich nobility, that is magnates from the king's retinue (Tomičić 2002, 18).

đuriječja Save i Drave) stavlja nešto kasnije, u vrijeme od razornoga prodora Tatara i Mongola do 1270. g. (Tomičić 1999, 28). Uklapa je, dakle, u dobro osmišljen program kralja Bele IV., plan gradnje kamenih gradova diljem gorovita zapadnog dijela Kraljevstva sredinom 13. stoljeća. Taj su ambiciozni program mogli ostvariti samo bogati plemići, odnosno magnati iz kraljeve pratnje (Tomičić 2002, 18).

Marina Šimek govori o Beli kao o ivanovačkome sjedištu još od početka 13. stoljeća (1997a, 20), iako smatra da ostaci burga predstavljaju gotičku fortifikaciju te je datira u 14. stoljeće (1997b, red. br. 258).

Nažalost, preciznu dataciju i dalje ne možemo pružiti. Čak ne raspolažemo ni cjelovitim tlocrtom kako bismo mogli sigurnije tražiti analogije našem burgu.<sup>5</sup>

Na temelju prikazanih dostupnih izvora podataka te poznatih povijesnih prilika, možemo reći kako je teško vjerovati da ivanovci ne bi sebi izgradili utvrdu, čim su došli u posjed ovako velikoga preceptorata. Prema tome, ukoliko burg nisu dobili zajedno s imanjem, valja pretpostaviti da njegova prva faza potječe iz prvih godina nakon ivanovačkog dolaska, barem kamena faza burga. Naime, prema Kruhekovu mišljenju, burgovi su često izgrađeni na mjestu starijih predfeudalnih gradišta, koja su na ovome području bila građena od zemlje i drva (Kruhek 1994, 178-180). Iako ne znamo kada su ivanovci točno došli u posjed ovog preceptorata, čini se da se to zbilo prije 1209. godine, pa i prema tome možemo pretpostaviti da je burg Bela bio građen početkom 13. ili još krajem 12. stoljeća. Također, smijemo zamisliti da je središnji donžon činio jezgru burga od samog početka. Vjerojatno je bio opasan zidom, dok su stambene i druge prostorije mogle biti dozidavane i kasnije. Kao što je već navedeno, ovakvu dataciju osnažuju i neke značajke burga, osobito njegov teško pristupačan položaj, veličina, debljina zidova, a možda i postojanje čelnog zida, ukoliko se dokaže u priželjkivanim arheološkim istraživanjima. Bez njih, čini se, o ovome burgu nećemo moći više mnogo reći.

Velik je potencijal ovog burga za buduća istraživanja. Ne samo da se lako može vidjeti koliko su visoki pojedini očuvani njegovi segmenti, nego su oni praktično "konzervirani" tonama, tj. tisućama kubika šute, od dana njezina urušavanja pa sve do danas. To u nama mora buditi nadu da ćemo jednoga dana, kada bude moguće ukloniti urušeni materijal, osim pokretnih nalaza pri dnu, nailaziti i na brojne ulomke arhitekture, najvjerojatnije netaknute ili lakše oštećene, *in situ*. To nam pruža nadu da se na njegovu dnu još uvijek nalaze svjedočanstva o životu njezinih stanovnika.

Izvođenje arheoloških radova na burgu neće biti lagan zadatak, prvenstveno zbog njegove teške pristupačnosti. Trebalo bi riješiti pitanje lakšeg dovoza materijala i opreme na lokalitet. S druge strane, temeljita arheološka istraživanja su nužna, jer burg propada, uglavnom pod pritiskom vlastitog urušavanja.

Korist od arheoloških iskopavanja burga ivanovaca za

<sup>5</sup> T. Tkalčec skreće pozornost na određenu sličnost rasporeda graditeljskih elemenata Bele i burga Vrbovec kraj Klenovca Humskog te burga Dunkelstein u Donjoj Austriji; Tkalčec 2008.

Marina Šimek speaks of Bela as a seat of the Hospitallers starting from the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century (1997a, 20), although she thinks that the remains of the burg stand for a Gothic fortification, which she dates to the 14<sup>th</sup> century (1997b, no. 258).

Unfortunately, we are still unable to provide a precise date. We don't even have a comprehensive ground plan which would enable us to look for analogies for our burg with more certainty.<sup>5</sup>

Based on the presented available sources of information and the known historical circumstances, we can say that it is hard to believe that the Hospitallers would not build a fort for themselves as soon as they assumed control of a preceptory this big. Therefore, in case they did not receive the burg together with the estate, it would be logical to presume that its first phase comes from the first years following the arrival of the Hospitallers, at least the stone phase of the burg. In Kruhek's opinion, burgs were often built at the spot of older pre-feudal earthen fortifications, built in this area from earth and timber (Kruhek 1994, 178-180). Even though we don't know when exactly did the Hospitallers take hold of this preceptory, it seems that this happened before 1209, which is another factor in favour of the supposition that the burg of Bela had been built at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> cent. or even at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Also, we are allowed to imagine that the central donjon formed the core of the burg from the very start. It was probably surrounded by a wall, while the residential and other rooms may have been added at a later date. As has already been mentioned, such dating is reinforced by certain features of the burg, particularly its barely accessible position, size, thickness of the walls, and perhaps also the existence of the frontal wall, in case it is proven by desired archaeological excavations. Without them, it appears, we will not be able to say much more about this burg.

The potential of this burg for future research is great. Not only can easily be seen how high are some of its preserved segments, they are also practically "conserved" by tones, i.e. thousands of cubic metres of construction waste, from the day of its collapse up until today. This has to stir hope in us that one day, when it would be possible to remove the collapsed material, in addition to the movable finds towards the bottom, we shall encounter also numerous fragments of architecture, most probably untouched or slightly damaged, *in situ*. This gives us hope that at its bottom there is still evidence of the life of its inhabitants.

Carrying out archaeological works at the burg will not be an easy task, primarily due to the difficulty of approach to the burg. The issue of easier transport of the material and equipment to the site would have to be solved. On the other hand, thorough archaeological excavations are necessary, because the burg is falling to ruin, mostly under the pressure of its own collapsed material.

The scientific benefit from the archaeological excavation of a Hospitallers' burg is indisputable. However, in real-

<sup>5</sup> T. Tkalčec draws attention to a certain similarity in the layout of architectural elements of Bela and the burg of Vrbovec near Klenovac Humski, as well as the burg of Dunkelstein in Lower Austria; Tkalčec 2008.



znanost je neupitna. No realno se, zbog velike cijene takvih radova, postavlja pitanje isplativosti kada je riječ o širem društvenom interesu. Tu se dotičemo jednog od ključnih problema srednjovjekovne arheologije, a osobito burgologije. Koliko je zajednica, i uža i šira, spremna putem sustava financiranja uložiti u istraživanje ovakvoga lokaliteta i što ona zauzvrat očekuje? Jesu li isključivo znanstveni rezultati dovoljni? Možda je najbolje upitati se koji su pretpostavljeni mogući scenariji: ili ulaganje u istraživanja, popraćena konzervacijom i konačno prezentacijom, koja bi nesumnjivo obogatila naše društvo, ili propadanja i daljnja urušavanja burga. Istina je da ima mnogo starih gradova koja bi trebalo na sličan način istražiti i zaštititi od propadanja, no malo ih je koji su nesumnjivo pripadali viteškim redovima, a na kojima još uvijek možemo očekivati zanimljive rezultate.

ity, the high costs of such works raise the question of cost effectiveness when it comes to a wider public interest. Here we touch on a key problem of mediaeval archaeology, and burgology in particular. How much is the community, both the narrower and the wider, ready to invest by way of the system of financing into the investigation of such a site and what would it expect to gain in return? Would exclusively scientific results be considered sufficient yield? Perhaps it would be best to ask ourselves about the presumed possible scenarios: either investment into research, accompanied by conservation and eventual presentation, which would undoubtedly enrich our society, or deterioration and further collapse of the burg. It is true that there are many old towns that deserve to be investigated in a similar manner and protected from decomposition, but there are few that undoubtedly belonged to knightly orders, and still allow us to expect interesting results.

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