

Don Božo Baničević

KORČULA
THE CATHEDRAL
AND THE EPISCOPAL TREASURY
OF ST MARCO



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Harmony of the square in front of St Marco's cathedral

Introduction

On the happy assumption that you have decided to visit and stay for awhile in our historic town of Korčula in order to learn more about this jewel of the blue Adriatic and of our homeland Croatia, we would like to present you with some essential data before you visit the old town, the cathedral and the episcopal treasury of St Marco.

The name Korčula is derived from the Illyrian-Greek word «Korkyra» meaning «the rock passage». The sharp rocks of Pelješac and the somewhat gentler wooded cliffs of Korčula (Korkyra Mèlaina), on the far side of the passage through the Pelješac Channel, gave the name to these strategic straits. Although the ancient Croats called the peninsula of Pelješac «Krkar», it lost its original name a long time ago, while Korčula had lost its attribute «Melaina» even in the 3rd century B.C. and was called only Korkyra. Today's name Korčula derives from that old name.

In Hellenic times people could approach Korčula first by land across Pelješac, then across the sea where the passage is very narrow - between Viganj and Kneže. A permanent lookout was on duty in the village of Pupnat to observe the crossing. When the lookout observed smoke from a bonfire in Viganj, he went by boat to bring over the passenger across. Thus Pupnat played an important role in the history of Hellenic Korčula. Before these times, Korčula represented a kind of bridge, together with Pelješac, Lastovo and Palagruža, between the Balkans and the Apennines.

Archeological findings confino that man has inhabited this island for several thousand years. The oldest known inhabitants were the Illyrians. They settled across the whole island, most probably in the second millenium B.C. Many stone ruins («grazine») and old paths are remnants that mark Illyrian life on the island. They were farmers and cattle-breeders, but they were also pirates taking advantage of the island territory and its waters.

The Greeks began to arrive in Korčula in the 6th century B.C. and maybe even before. They did not come as invaders but as travellers, investigators and merchants. They established colonies at suitable sites and looked for co-existence with the original Illyrian population. They had two colonies on the island: one



Panorama of the town of Korčula

at the western end near Vela Luka, and another at the eastern tip in Lumbarda. The psephos of Lumbarda, a stone tablet in Greek regulating the relationships between the Greeks and the Illyrians from the 4th century B.C., was excavated here.

The Romans came for the first time to the island in 229 B.C. when their wars with the Illyrians began. According to the writings of the Roman historian Livius, the Illyrians came under Roman rule after their defeat in 167 B.C. The Illyrians then became

stronger and continued with pirate attacks on Roman galleys until the terrible invasion of the Roman Emperor Octavianus (in 35 B.C.). He, according to the writings of Appius, had all young men of the islands of Mljet and Korčula killed, while women and children were sold as slaves. A complete Romanization of the island began after these events which was to last until the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 A.D. In this period of over five centuries the Roman way of life was established on the island.



Big Land Gate

Latin was introduced for official use while the rural population of Korčula spoke their own old Dalmatian language. Even today, there are some remnants of this language in the speech and intonation of the people of Korčula.

In 476 A.D. Korčula came under the administrative rule of Byzantium until the middle of the 7th century when the first Slavonic Croat tribes began to arrive from the neighbouring Neretva region. They established their rule over the island in the 9th century assimilating the remnants of the Romans and introducing the Croatian language which was to remain until the present day. However, the Croats from the Neretva region assimilated Christianity from the Romans, as well as many useful customs and traditions developed through the centuries in this area.

Venice was also becoming powerful at that time and beginning its maritime expansion. The doge Petar II Orseolo was the first to conquer Korčula in 1000. From that year until 1420, Korčula changed its rulers several times: Zahumlje, Hungaro-Croatian kings, and then Venice; Dubrovnik for short periods and also the Bosnian rulers.

From 1420 to 1797, the island was permanently under Venetian rule until the Napoleonic wars, and then under the Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1815 until 1921, when it became an integral part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later Yugoslavia), until the Second World War. It was within the communist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1944 until 1990 when the Croatian people decided through referendum to live freely and independently within its own state of Croatia, “from now to eternity”!

Even before the arrival of the Venetians, the people of Korčula in 1214 created the Statute of their community in order to regulate internal social relationships and to protect their island autonomy. Aristocratic or noble rule was realized through the Rector and Great and Small Councils, and plebeian rule through people’s assemblies and brotherhoods. The Korčula Statute is the oldest legal act in Croatia and in the whole of the Balkans for which the inhabitants of Korčula can be justly proud.

The main economic activities for the inhabitants of Korčula through centuries were agriculture and cattle breeding, but they also used the sea and the woods, as well as the high quality stone in various quarries as their sources of existence. They would later develop various crafts, especially stone-cutting and ship-building in the town of Korčula. Starlati-Coleti, the writers of the famous historical work “Illyricum Sacrum”, wrote: “The inhabitants of the island have good characteristics: humanity, honesty, hospitality, talent, a sharp wit for all human and divine disciplines as well as the skills of warfare.”

There was no source of water on the island so that it suffered for centuries from the lack of healthy drinking water using only rain-water.

The people of Korčula had to defend their rights, autonomy and freedom through many centuries. Thus in the 12th and 13th centuries they fought the Venetian family Zorzi, the Nemanjići from Zahumlje and neighbouring Dubrovnik. In 1298 a famous naval battle between Genoa and Venice took place in the waters



View to the cathedral and bishop's palace

of the Korčula archipelago. The Venetians were defeated and they lost their supreme commander Andrija Dandolo who was buried in Korčula with full honours. Then the famous world traveler Marko Polo was captured and imprisoned as the commander of a galley, and then taken to prison in Genoa where he composed his famous description of the Far East "The Million".

Another big naval battle took place near Korčula on August 24, 1483 when the Venetian fleet conquered the ships of Naples in their struggle for domination over the Mediterranean.

The site on which the town of Korčula was built represents a very important strategic point, from which to control the passage of all kinds of ships from the gates of Otranto towards the

middle and north Adriatic and vice versa.

The town of Korčula is encircled by a number of islets some of which have been inhabited during the centuries.

From the Middle Ages until the middle of the 19th century the nucleus of the town was encircled by high city walls and numerous towers. While the city walls have mostly been pulled down, the towers have been preserved until the present day. The town was first built on its southern part, where the church of All Saints, the arsenal, and the Town Hall are situated. The town was entered through two gates. One of them led over the "Fossa" (a moat) towards the interior of the island and was named "The Big City Gate", while another led towards the city pier and port and was called "The Sea Gate". The town appeared from the sea like one whole piece of stone and unconquerable to an approaching enemy. The ships of the greatest maritime powers used to pass by here: those of Byzantium, the Arabs, the Venetians, the Genoese, the Croatian princes, the Neretvans, Dubrovnik, the Turks, etc. Each of them had their own interests invested in the Pelješac channel which still hides many uncovered secrets.

The heart of the old town is the Piazza with the cathedral of St Marco, which is the most valuable building both of the town and the island of Korčula. Here there are also other famous buildings: the oldest church of St Peter (12th a), the church of Our Lady (14/15th a), the bishop's court with the Episcopal Treasury of St Marco. The famous Renaissance palaces of the Arneri and Gabriellis families also face the Piazza. In the corner of the Piazza there is a magnificent stone column (16th c.) with the mast for the city's standard. The Piazza was the place where the orders of the authorities were proclaimed, where public auctions took place, where contracts were concluded, and where court disputes proceeded. Various plays were also performed here such as the famous "moreška".

The whole town is an unique work of art, and a significant cultural monument. It was designed according to well laid plans and was executed as an unique architectural and urban whole. It was built largely in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries when its silhouette became final.

Entering the town by the new staircase (19th c.) through the square tower, we come to the small square in front of the Town Hall (16th c.) and the church of St Michael (17th c), the political centre of the town. The votive chapel of Our Lady of the Snows

and of St Bartholomew is situated in one corner of the square immortalising the naval battle of 1483. The Renaissance court room and the hall of the Greater Council are also situated here. Nearby there was the arsenal, for storing of weapons and ammunition for the defence of the town and the equipment of ships; also the Rector's court (which no longer exists), the Renaissance building of the community surgeon, the "fontic" (granary), the fish market, the slaughterhouse, the community cistern, etc.

Archdeacon Antun Rozanović came to fame when he organized the defence of the town from the Turkish fleet commanded by the Algerian vice-roy Uluz-Ali on August 15, 1571. The enemy started to shoot at the town with big guns both from the land and from the sea. The town was defended by only 154 soldiers, among whom there were women, while on the opposite side there were about 2.000 Turks. The archdeacon raised the chapter's flag with the golden cross on the top of the cathedral's bell-tower and asked old people and children to pray in the cathedral for God's help in front of the miraculous image of Our Lady of the Island. Suddenly a storm broke out and smashed some of the Turkish galleys against the rocks, while others were destroyed by the guns from the city walls. They were forced to retreat towards the peninsula of Pelješac near Viganj. The famous Croatian poet Andrija Kačić-Miošić wrote these verses about that battle:

*"On the day of the annunciation of Mary
Great tokens appeared,
The bright sky was opened
And something spoke from the sky:*

*Do not be afraid, the people of Korčula,
Because the Catalans will not conquer you
Our Virgin Mary will defend you
Who is your Helper. "*

The church of St Michael, which has been restored several times, was built at the beginning of the 15th century. It is also the seat of the youngest brotherhood of Our Lady of Consolation from 1603. Its rich inventory: historical documents, objets d'art, huge processionalary candles ("torci"), and valuables are all kept in the restored hall of the Brotherhood which is connected with the church by two small stone bridges across the Street.



Portal of St Marco 's cathedral

On this square, the triumphal arch of Leonardo Foscolo, the famous Venetian army leader, was erected . This magnificent triumphal arch next to the entrance tower "Big Leverin" dates from 1650 when Foscolo became famous for his successes in the Candian wars.

As we move from the cathedral and look to the left and the right we see the floral Gothic and Renaissance facades of buildings from the 15th and 16th centuries.

Korčula, as the administrative, cultural and community centre of the whole island, had its rectors (998 -1793) and bishops (1300 - 1802). Various crafts, shipbuilding, stone cutting, maritime affairs and various trades flourished during its history.

The most recent areas of contemporary Korčula, outside the old city nucleus, extend to the east as far as St Anthony at the top of the hill, and to the west as far as Žrnovska Banja, forming a 4 km long suburban area.



Interior of the cathedral with the ciborium



Rosette of the cathedral with the bell-tower

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST MARCO

The cathedral church of St Marco is situated at the top of the small peninsula. It seems that there was an earlier cathedral church because the Korčula diocese was established in 1300, and an archival document mentions the cemetery and a hermit's dwelling on the site. The town itself lay around the church of All Saints, the arsenal building, and the Town Hall.



Bell-tower with the lantern, M. Andrijić, 15th c.

A stone fragment of the Early Croatian interlacing-ribbon pattern was found during the renovation of the old pier. This is probably a fragment from the first small church of St Marco from the 9th/10th century. There were also about 90 tombs in the church.

The oldest parts of the Cathedral are their three Romanesque apses and the lower parts of the Romanesque bell-tower. The present cathedral was built during the 15th century, while the



Interior of the sacristy

chapel of St. Rocco was built in the 16th century. The most well-known builders were: Hranić Dragošević, Bonino from Milan, Jakov Correr, Ratko Ivančić, Ratko Brajković, Krševan Bogdanić, Andrija Marković, Marko Andrijić, etc. Building went on over a long period of time because there was not always money enough to continue. Quarries and stone workshops were on the islets of Vrnik and Planjak. Cvito Fisković from the Croatian Academy of Arts wrote the first monograph about the cathedral: “Several generations of builders and stone masons worked on the cathedral and each of them left the signs of their own time. The first generations at the beginning of the 15th century gave it Romanesque firmness and stability of construction. The second generation in the middle of the 15th century ornamented it with stone decorations which are solid and mathematically cal-

culated at the base of the building and free and flamboyant at the top. The third generation with Andrijić at the head at the end of the 15th century introduced into the cathedral the purity of the new Renaissance style, while the next generation could only introduce, while repairing, the luxuriance of the Baroque forms, but in detail only.”

The building of the fourth apse of St. Rocco began in 1525 and was completed later according to the ideas of Marko Pavlović



Ciborium, M. Andrijić, 15th c.

with the intention of fulfilling the vow to St. Rocco, the protector against contagious diseases.

The facade of the cathedral with its various styles speaks about the golden age of stone masonry and those building skills in the town and the island of Korčula, which influenced the building of other Dalmatian towns. The styles progress from Romanesque art, through Gothic, floral Gothic, Renaissance and, in some nuances, to Baroque.



*Door to the sacristy, 14th c, a detail:
the boy-musician (drum and flute)*

A rich portal with flamboyant columns, the figures of Adam and Ève, lions, and above them St Marco the Evangelist - the protector of the town of Korčula - is the outstanding feature of the facade of the cathedral. There is a magnificent rosette with four heads of old people above the portal, while at the very end there is a well-sculptured gable with blind arches filled with shells and supported by small lion heads. There is a cone as an acroterium at the top.

The tombs of bishops Nikola Nikoničić and the rector Antun Leoni were placed above the portai of St Rocco.

The bell-tower of the cathedral is also stylistically varied. In the base there is a solid door under the arch, above which there are various windows-openings, decorative cornices, the clock and ball indicating the phases of the moon. At the very top stands the Gothic-Renaissance lantern. Already in 1432 the bells in the bell-tower were ringing, though the bell-tower was completed in 1483. A winding staircase leads to the organ and further on to the top of the bell-tower. Four impressive bells are situated there which ring in A-major. These bells were purchased in Venice in 1923, but there are two smaller bells for ringing the hours from the 16th century.

Entering the cathedral of St Marco we notice a richness of harmony and perfection of stone forms: a holy-water font, elegant columns with capitals, Gothic vaults, a ciborium, altars, a baptismal font, a pulpit, the sarcophagus of bishop Malumbra, the sacristy portai, etc. The ceiling of the Gothic aisle has wooden joists made by skilful shipbuilders of Korčula. The upper Gothic Windows in the main aisle have been renovated. In the middle aisle above the vault there are Renaissance distyles as the opening of the galleries. The irregularity of the layout derives from the parallelism of all the streets from the southern city wall towards the north. It also derives from the intention of the builders to use the three apses and the bell-tower from the previous church. In 1406, the Korčula bishop Nikola made a contract with the master builder Hranić Dragošević to build the church and the bell-tower during the time of "Ladislav, by God's grace king of Hungary, Apulia, Dalmatia and Croatia". Three aisles are the continuation of three earlier apses and they are separated by elegant round stone columns and half-columns dominated by chiselled capitals, vaulted arches. The symbols of four evangelists



Tintoretto: the altar painting, 16th c. (St Marco, St. Baptolornew, St Jeronime)

are represented in stone on the half-capitals.

At the very entrance to the church there is a stone holy-water font (14th a). A small column on a Romanesque base holds a round grooved bowl for water. In the left-hand corner near the main door there is the baptismal font of rector Giustinian from 1604.

A monumental ciborium, erected by Marko Andrijić in 1486 made of stone from the islet of Vrnik, dominates the central aisle above the main altar. This is the most valuable work of art by the outstanding Korčula and Croatian sculptor Marko Andrijić. The square ceiling in the form of a pyramid on three layers rests on four round columns. On the facade of architraves there are statues of Our Lady and the archangel Gabriel with the Latin inscription: "Hail Mary, full of grace." We can find similar ciboriums in the churches of Rome and Apulia, and in the cathedrals of Trogir, Kotor, Zadar, Rab, and in Korčula in All Saints church. Marko Andrijić introduced the Renaissance to Korčula with this work.

The door of the sacristy attracts visitors with its Gothic portal.

The richness of the motives and figures prove the influence

of the floral Gothic from southern Italy. The upper threshold is richly decorated with Christ's monogram and fantastic vegetative decorations. It lies against the door-jambs which have at the top two boy-musicians. The left one plays the drum and bagpipes, the basic instruments in the play of "kumpanija" in the old settlements on the island of Korčula. In the lunette above the architraves here is the figure of the archangel Michael piercing the devil with his right hand while holding a pair of scales in his left hand measuring souls. This sacristal portal was most probably built in later, during the time of the building of St. Rocco's chapel. As St. Michael is the keeper of tombs, this door was probably the side door of the cathedral through which one exited to the cemetery. The conclusion is that this door was most probably taken from an older church (14th c.)

Under Andrijić's ciborium there is the main altar holding the relics of St. Theodore the martyr from Rome. They were brought to Korčula in 1736, while the gilt sarcophagus for the relics was made in 1858. The painting of the main altar shows



Sarcophagus of bishop Malumbha, 16th c.

St. Marco, the writer of the second Gospel, St. Jeronime, the protector of Dalmatia and the translator of the Bible into Latin, and St. Bartolomew, the apostle. All three are protectors of the town. The painting is attributed to the famous Tintoretto from 1550.

In the apse of the southern aisle (St Jacob's), there is a Renaissance-Baroque altar with the painting of St Trinity above the apostles. The bishop on his knees at the bottom of the painting is the Korčula donor, Teodor Diedo, who renovated this altar in 1622 and decorated it with the painting. The painting is attributed to Leonardo Bassano (1557-1622). Near this altar, next to the southern wall, the Renaissance sarcophagus of bishop Toma Malumbra was built in.. This bishop is meritorious for the building and completion of the cathedral; he was bishop in Korčula for 50 years. He died in Korčula in 1513 and his bones were transferred to Venice in 1610. His successor Nikola Nikoničić had this sarcophagus built, and at the end of the 18th century the remnants of Korčula bishops Marin Drago and Vinko Kosovic were buried there. A very old



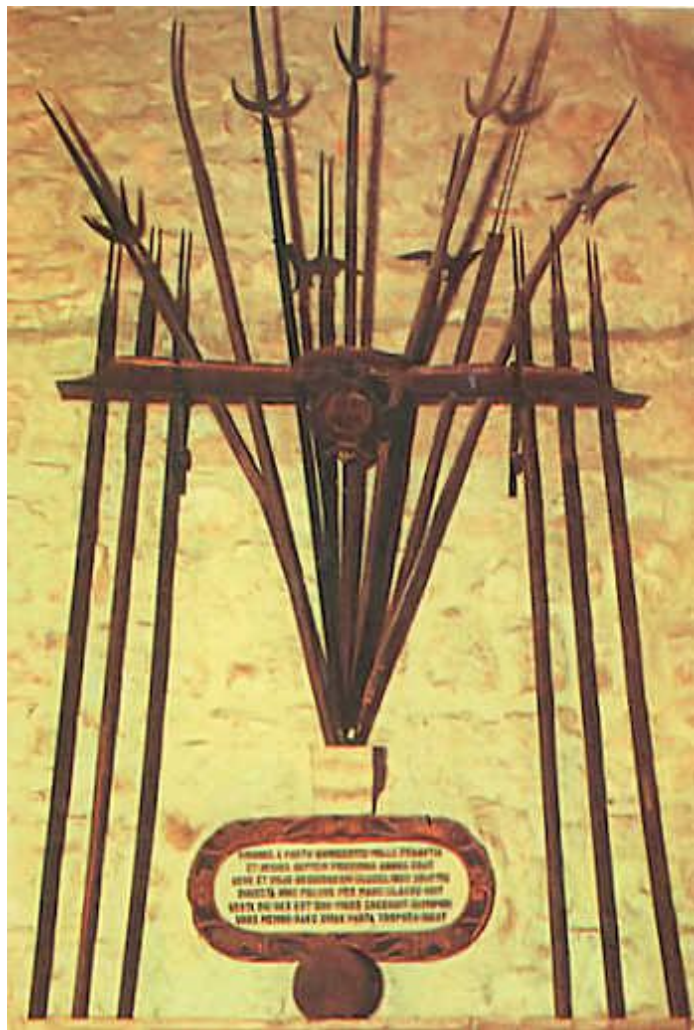
Tintoretto school: Our Lady's Annunciation, 16th c.

icon, Our Lady with the Child from the 13th century, was moved to this aisle from the Franciscan church in Badija. Its gilt Renaissance frame is the work of goldsmiths from Dubrovnik in the 16th century. This icon was set in silver in the 15th century. Nearby there is another valuable composition, attributed to Tintoretto's school of painting from 1545. Next to the southern wall there is the Baroque altar of St. Anthony



Our Lady of the Island, an icon

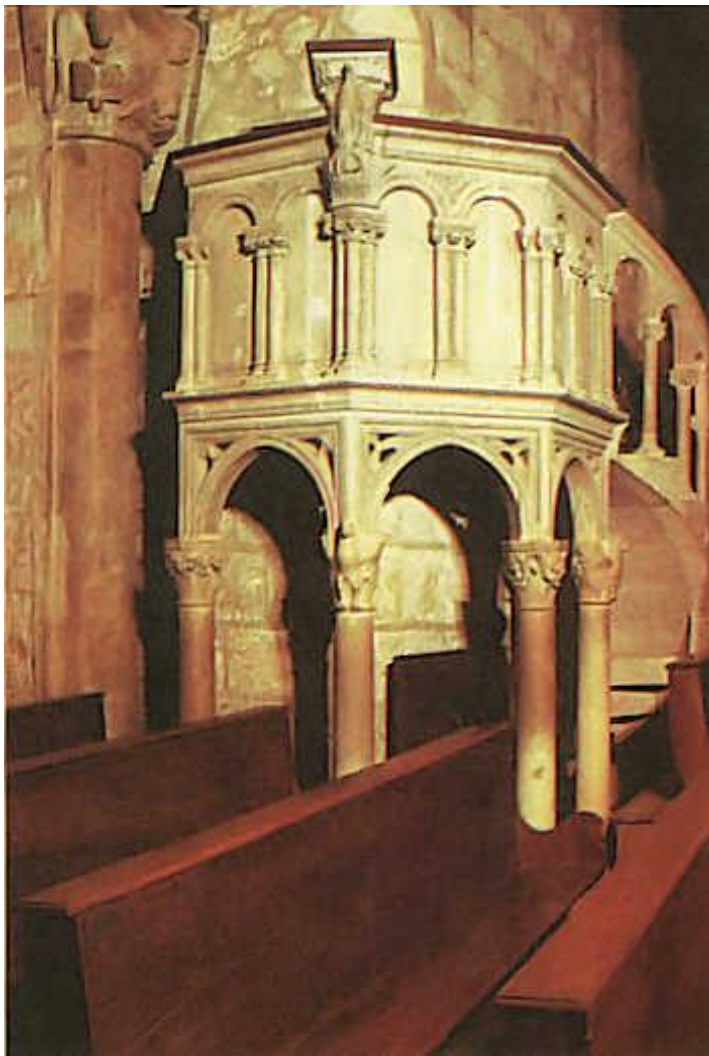
which belonged to the family Španić. Next to the door of St. Jacob's aisle, votive spears, halberds from the battle between the ships of Venice and Naples in 1483 are exhibited, together with cannon balls from 1571 during the attack of Uluz-Ali, as the stone tablet in Latin says. There is also the sculpture of Christ under the Cross, the work of the contemporary local sculptor Lujo Lozica.



Halberds and votive weapons, 15th and 16th c.

In the wall under the window, the fragment of God's Lamb, found during the restoration of the shrine, is built in. This is the oldest piece of stone decoration in the cathedral.

On the left side of the ciborium there is a wall niche which served as the tabernacle until 1791. Now there is the book inside for solemn readings, with covers of red Moroccan leather decorated with golden arabesques and jewels - the gift of the



The pulpit, F. Steka, 20th c.

Moroccan queen in 1954.

The northern aisle next to the main altar is devoted to St John. There stands the stone altar devoted to St John the Evangelist and St John the Baptist.

Above the Baroque table for Mass, the Renaissance altar was erected with two columns with Corinthian capitals. It is evident from the coat-of-arms above the altar that the Giunio family had the patronage. Near the sacristy portal, there is a bronze statue of St Blaise, the work of the foremost Croatian artist Ivan Meštrović.

The fourth aisle was skilfully added to the cathedral in the 16th century in order to put the town under the protection of St. Rocco, to avoid the contagious diseases including the plague which raged at that time. It was built in the Gothic-Renaissance style according to the concept of Marko Pavlović Milić during the time of bishop Nikola Nikoničić at the beginning of 1525.

In 1576, the local master Frano Čučić first built the gilt altar and decorated it with figures of saints in wood: St. Rocco, St. Cosmas and St. Damian, and the figure of Our Lady of Health. In the 18th century, Jeronime Picco built the present magnificent Baroque altar instead of the old damaged one.

On the neighbouring altar of Our Lady of Carmel, there is the triptych painting by the Venetian painter Carlo Ridolfi from 1642. The Baroque table for Mass and three half-columns bear the end architrave with Baroque arches resting on top. There are also paintings of St Peter, St Fabian and St Sebastian.

The oldest altar in the aisle of St. Rocco stands next to the wall of the bell-tower and is devoted to the Three Kings. Above the stone altar table, a second wooden Renaissance gilt altar of an unknown master is erected. The altar was mentioned in 1613, and its silver mount dates from 1726. Our Little Lady - the Reverence of Three Kings is painted in the Byzantine style.

On the ground-floor of the bell-tower lies the 15th/16th century baptismal font above which Christ in bronze stands. This is the work of the well-known Korčula and Croatian sculptor from Lumbarda, Frano Kršinić. On the wall of the baptismal chamber there are: a miniature Our Lady by I. Kerdić, a Pietà by I. Meštrović, Christ's body by M. Radica, St George's relief by

T. Ivančević, the figure of John the Baptist by I. Oreb, and two angels (doorframe) by V. Fabris. The south side of the bell-tower is covered by the pulpit; a copy of an older one. The stone-mason F. Šteka made it between the first and second world wars. From both sides of the aisle of St Rocco there are choir stalls dating from 1796, by the master from Brač V. Tironi.

The roofed-over stairway is erected much too high for liturgical purposes. The first organ in the cathedral was provided in 1556.



The Baroque hall: the throne of bishop Vicko Tironi with coats of arms and portraits of Korčula bishops and seniorpriests



Croatian song-book from the 14th century.



The directorium of bishop Teodor Diedo from 1611.

Numerous repairs were completed during the 16th and 17th centuries. Then in the 18th century, a thunderbolt struck the bell-tower twice and damaged the organ. A new organ was commissioned around 1800 but it also disappeared. The present organ is from the middle of the 19th century.

According to the opinions of some well-known musicians, Korčula cathedral can be proud of its excellent acoustics. The best

acoustics are obtained in the presbiterium in front of the ciborium.

There, the whole cathedral with its stone decorations is transformed into an unique musical instrument of a most grand tone, thus proving its exceptional quality and refinement.



Chapter's cross, 15th c.



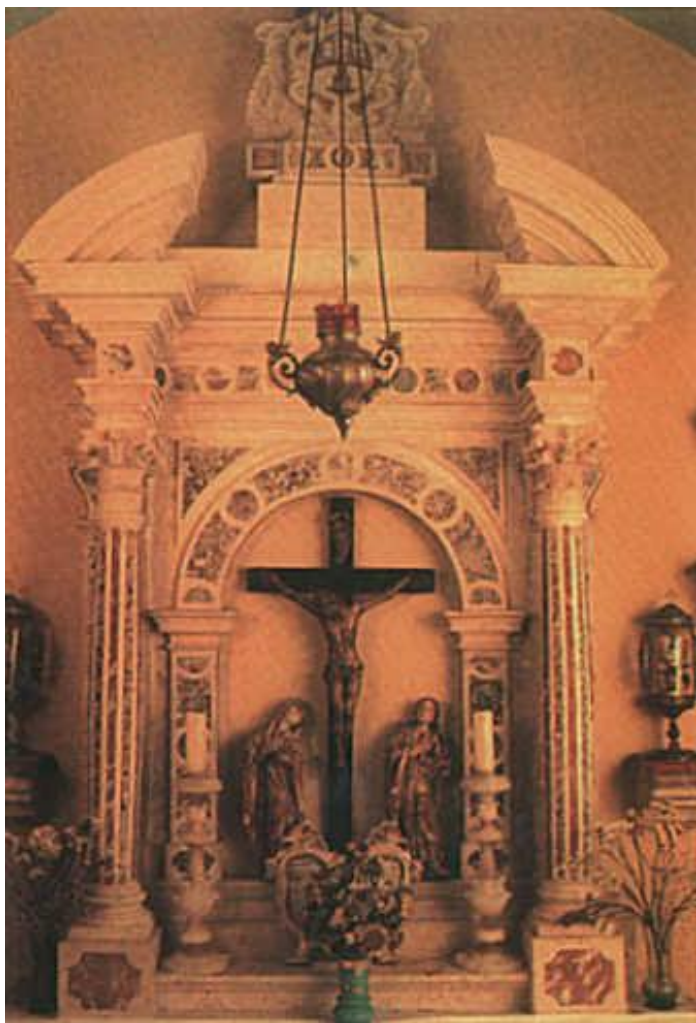
Blaz Jurjev: Our Lady with Saints, a polyptych, 15th c.



Church gold and silver from the 15th to the 19th centuries; a part of the collection

THE EPISCOPAL TREASUREY OF ST MARCO

If you climb from the cathedral square to the first floor of the old bishop's palace (which dates from the 14th century, and had its present facade added in the 17th century) you will find yourself



The altar of the chapel of Korčula bishops, 17th c.

in the Episcopal Treasury. It is a church museum founded in 1954 by don Ivo Matijaca, the long-serving senior priest of the church of St Marco. The exhibits are arranged in the dwelling of the Korčula bishops according to the concept of Professor Ljubo Babić. He separated them into several different rooms following various stylistic periods in the history of art.

The most valuable section of the exhibits belongs to the inventory of the cathedral church. Some articles belonged to local rich families, and it all represents the cultural inheritance of the town



Part of the numismatic collection, from the 4th c. B.C. to the 20th c. AD

of Korčula. There are items here, collected indefatigably by don Ivo Matijaca outside our town with the purpose of presenting them to the public and preserving them for the future. There are examples of both sacral and secular significance, and they range from the 3rd century B.C. to the 20th century A.D.. Climbing the steps to the Treasury we immediately notice the statue of St Marco by M. Radica; the necklace of Mother Theresa, which was given to her by the town of Calcutta on the occasion of her receiving the Nobel Prize for peace in 1979, and which she gave to the town of Korčula.. There is here a Persian rug and a collection of small domestic icons from the 15th to the 19th centuries, as well as a collection of drawings and illustrations from the 16th to the 20th centuries. In the wall-cabinet there is part of a Byzantine cross from the 6th century and other small works of art in metal from the 14th to the 18th centuries.

The first hall represents old Dalmatian and Croatian Gothic and Renaissance art, and includes a series of paintings by Dalmatian and Dubrovnik painters from the 15th to the 16th centuries, as well as various manuscripts, ceremonial and legal books, and registries from the 12th to the 16th centuries. There are incunabula, and old printed books from the 15th to the 19th centuries, and votive ornaments from the 17th to the 19th century. There is also the Baroque bishop's private chapel with cathedral reliquaries from the 16th to the 20th century, and a stone fragment of the Early Croatian interlaced-ribbon pattern (9th/10th c).

The outstanding exhibit here is the polyptych *Our Lady with Saints*, the master-piece of the Croatian painter Blaž Jurjev Trogrin, a priceless work of art from 1434. The painting *Our Little Lady* is also attributed to him. On the opposite wall there is the painting “*Our Lady Breast-feeds Jesus*”, by Ivan Ugrinović, a Dubrovnik painter of the beginning of the 15th century. *St Damian* by an unknown author, as well as other paintings of the Dubrovnik school from the 15th and 16th centuries also hang here. Two paintings attributed to Pellegrino da San Daniele from the 16th century with a series of saintly figures can also be seen. This painter from Udine derives his origin from Zagreb.

In the china cabinets next to the walls there are historical documents of the town: registry books, *Directorium Episcoporum*, The Statute of the Korčula Chapter, then the Korčula Codex from the 17th century on parchment, Korčula graduals from the 17th century, the Korčula book of sacraments from the 15th century, a hymn-book of the All Saints brotherhood from the 14th century, neumes from the 12th century, and other codexes, incunabula and books.

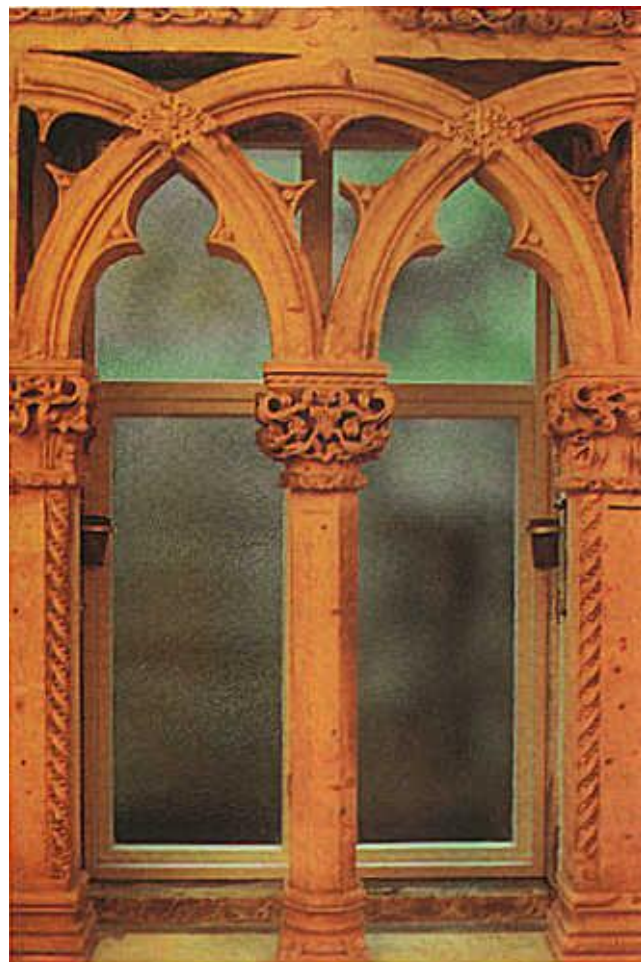
The wall-cabinet holds gold and silver articles made by local and Venetian masters, the property of Korčula cathedral from the 15th to the 19th centuries: Gothic chalices, chandeliers, a censer, bowls for oil, etc. Another china cabinet exhibits gifts in gold and crosses worn by Korčula bishops and senior priests from the 15th to the 19th centuries. An interesting exhibit is an old voting box. The china cabinet in the middle of the room guards sketches and



Bellini (G. da Santa Croce?): Our Lady with the Child

drawings of the human body by great masters of Italian and German Renaissance and Baroque periods (16th to 18th a): Da Vinci, Raphael, Giacomo Palma, Tiepolo, Johann Grund (1880), etc. The carvings in wood are also worth mentioning: Christ's head by an unknown master, and the statue of *St Jacob*, most probably the work of local master Frano Cucic.

The private chapel of Korčula bishops (from the 17th century) reminds us that 36 bishops lived and worked in our town from 1300 to 1828 when the Korčula diocese was abolished and joined with the Dubrovnik diocese.



The distyle, M. Andrijić, 15th c.



Titian school: Saint Conversation

The second hall belongs to the Italian Renaissance. It has an in-built 15th century Gothic distyle from the workshop of the building master Andrijić. On the walls around, works of art from the 15th and 16th centuries are exhibited, attributed to well-known masters or their school of art: Titian's Holy Conversation, Veronese's Annunciation, Carpaccio's Portrait of a Young Man, Bellini's (or G. da Santa Croce's ?) Portrait of a Knight; the schools of Tintoretto and J. da Todi are also represented. In the corner there is the painting of Sarah with Ismael in the Desert, of the Flemish school from the 15th century; the Tree of Life, three mysteries of Christ's life in alabaster from Nottingham (15th c); as well as the statuette of Mary Stuart in ivory (1600), and other smaller works of art.

There is here also a cabinet which shows a number of old European medals from the 15th to the 19th centuries. The outstanding examples are the bronze medal of Catarina Sforza from the 15th century and the silver medal Redemption by H. Erhardt from the 16th century.

The cabinet in the middle of the room contains a numismatics collection encompassing: Hellenic, Roman, the Middle Ages, Byzantium, Venice, and Dubrovnik times. The oldest exhibits are two coins of the Greek colony Korkira on the island of Korčula from the 4th century B.C. Metal coins of modera states are also exhibited here in bronze, silver, and gold.

The third Baroque hall exhibits items from the 17th to the 19th centuries. The bishop's throne of Vicko Tironi from Brae is in the middle, and the coat-of-arms of Korčula bishops and senior priests



Carpaccio: The Portrait of a Young Man

are displayed on the top of the walls around the hall. On the floor there are four big chandeliers by Andrija Brustoloni from the 18th century. On the walls around, the portraits of Korčula bishops are exhibited: Španić (by Tripo Kokolja), Kosirić, canon Andrijić, Geričić. The works of the following painters can be found here: Lampi, de Longhi, Pončun, Benković, Bergant, Layer, Magnasco, Dolci, and others.

In the central cabinet there are seals of the Korčula bishops, papal medals, votive plaques, modera European medals, etc.



The pride of the Episcopal Treasury: the Gothic-Renaissance collection of liturgical vestments, 14th-18th c.

The cupboard next to the wall exhibits small silver, majolica, china, and glass for household use, of Napolitan, English, French and German provenances.

Modern Croatian art encompasses the 19th and 20th century and it is exhibited in the fourth hall. You can admire the paintings, sculptures, medallions and medals of various Croatian authors such as: Ljubo Babić, Celestin Medović, Miroslav Kraljević, Ivo Dulčić, Bruno Bulić, Đuro Pulitika, Edo Murtić, Ivan Meštrović, Ivo Kerdić, as well as the painters and sculptors from Korčula: Vinko Fabris, Izvor Oreb, Frano Kršinić, Aljoša Minakov Minakov, Stipe Nobilo and others. Outstanding medals of sacred and secular contents are those by I. Kerdić.



Dalmatian from the 15th century

In the fifth, smaller hall especially valuable are the church vestments from the 14th to the 18th century. This is one of the best preserved Gothic and Renaissance collections of religious clothing in Dalmatia encompassing the dress of bishops, priests and deacons. They are made of precious materials: brocade, damast, silk, etc. These artistic works in textile are embroidered with gold, silver and multi-coloured silk. The majority of the exhibited vestments belonged to the cathedral church of St Marco which has always been well equipped with all necessary liturgic attire.



Medallion from a dalmatic, 15th c.

There are here: chasubles (15th a), dalmatics (15th c), mantles, mitres, medals (14th/15th c), the chasuble and the mantle of bishop M. Drago, the chasuble of bishop Nikola Španić, as well as the sets of gold and brocade attire purchased in Venice in the 17th century. The red velvet mantle embroidered with gold originates from Czechoslovakia from 1916.

In the courtyard of the Treasury, there is a collection of stone fragments from the 14th to the 17th centuries, as well as a cistern from the 13th century. The most outstanding fragment is the top of Andrijić's ciborium which served as a baptismal font and also as a support for an old pulpit. Here there are some bishop's and family coat-of-arms as well as the oldest inscription written in the Croatian language in our town from 1606.

In the vestibule there are some Roman amphoras next to a Gothic wash-basin, and a collection of old Turkish and other guns from 1571: a votive gift to the cathedral.

There is an old kitchen on the ground-floor next to the chapter library and archives. The kitchen contains a large collection of Roman ceramics from the 1st century A.D., pottery from the Middle Ages, dishes from the 15th century, and china from the 18th/19th centuries. A number of dishes and devices for kitchen and household use have been collected and brought here from old houses in Korčula; they lie around the hearth.

There is so much to see at the Episcopal Treasury and we hope you will come to the conclusion that you have just visited one of the most precious exhibitions of our cultural and artistic heritage.



Pari of the rich furniture with various documents

Recommendations for further sight-seeing

In the cathedral square you can visit the oldest church in Korčula, St Peter's. Its present appearance dates from the 14th century. There are numerous tombs in it according to the old custom. Around the walls you will see the wooden statues of apostles and evangelists, the work of Andrija Brustoloni from the 18th century. Some time ago these statues were set in the distyles of the cathedral as decorations.



Part of the furniture of the episcopal collection

Behind this church in the north-east direction, there is the house of the Depolo family with the belvedere-tower “Marko Polo”.

Nearby is also the hall of the brotherhood St Rocco with a valuable liturgie and historical inventory.

Another church, near the cathedral, is called Gospojina and is devoted to Our Immaculate Lady. It is built in the Gothic-Renaissance style and was already mentioned in the 14th century. It was earlier a chapel and the vault of the Ismaelis and Gabrielis families, and even before that it had belonged to bishop Malumbra. The tomb of the brave defender of Korčula against Uluz-Ali in 1571, Antun Rozanović, is also there. Together with the tabernacle transferred from the cathedral in 1796. There is also a large mosaic by the Dutch artist Luis Schrikhel from the Hague.

Facing the Treasury there is the Renaissance palace of the Gabrielis dating from the beginning of the 16th century where the Korčula Museum is situated. It houses Hellenic and medieval inscriptions in stone, and prehistoric objects. The shipbuilding and stone-cutting workshops of Korčula are also represented here. Upstairs there is the hall that contains much precious written material from the 15th to the 18th centuries, as well as items that illustrate the artistic heritage of our town.

In the southeast area of the old town the 13th century church of All Saints from the is situated. Its present appearance is from the 16th and 17th centuries. It seems to have been the first parish



The hall of modern Croatian art from the 19th and 20th centuries



The Mount of St Anthony

ish church in this town. The first Korčula bishop Ivan Križić founded in it the brotherhood of flagellants. It shows both the liturgical life of the town, and the social care of its inhabitants. It is rich in artistic works and objects.

A stone ciborium was erected above the altar at the beginning of the 16th century. Behind the altar the Baroque wooden composite Pietà is exhibited. This is attributed to the Austrian master Raffael Donner from the 18th century. It depicts the dead Christ in the hands of angels and Our Lady of Sorrows. During the Sundays of Lent, believers gather here to pray. On the right side of the altar there is the beautiful polyptych by Blaž Jurjev Trogirani from the 15th century showing the passion:

the wounded Christ, Our Lady, St. John, and All Saints brothers in adoration of the Passion and the Cross. There are paintings of other saints and protectors of the brotherhood as well as the apostles. On the left side of the altar there is a big cross of the Crete school from the 15th century, a magnificent combination of wood-engraving, painting and gilding. The altar of St Joseph belonged to the guild of shipbuilders from 1623. On the tessellated gilt ceiling there is a series of Baroque paintings: the mystery of the rosary, the evangelists, prophets, propagators of the faith with the big canvas, the Coronation of Our Lady at the centre. The whole composition was painted by the Dalmatian painter Tripo Kokolja at the end of the 17th century.

Next to the church the house of the brotherhood with the museum-hall is situated. It exhibits historical objects of the brotherhood, liturgical inventory for solemn processions, and a collection of valuable icons of the Crete school. The icons are war trophies from the Cretan wars (1645-1669) between Venice and Turkey when a Korčula galley with its crew took part. The icons originate from the 14th to the 17th centuries. Of special value are the silver cross by the Dubrovnik goldsmith Ivan Progonović from the middle of the 15th century, and the great painting of the Last Supper from the 17th century by an anonymous author. This brotherhood and its head ("gastald") has always played a significant role in the public affairs of our town.

The Dominican monastery of St Nicolas was built at the western end of the town in the 15th century. This building was destroyed by fire during the siege of Uluz-Ali in 1571 but it was renovated in 1600 when another aisle was added to the church. One altar exhibits the painting of St Peter the Martyr, and another St Dominio by our Baroque painter Matija Pončun from the middle of the 17th century.

The eastern part of the town is dominated by the Mount of St Anthony with its hermitage from the 14th/15th centuries. Reliefs of St Anthony the Hermit and St Anthony of Padua are built into the wall of neighbouring house. The church holds the tomb of the Korčula bishop Nikola Španić from the beginning of the 18th century. Bishop Španić had the alley of cypresses planted and the stone staircase to the top of the mount erected. During Illyrian times there was a "gradina" here, one of their stone fortifications. From this mount there is a marvellous view both of the sea and the gentle surroundings.

The archipelago of islets, seen from this mount, also belongs to the town of Korčula. The best known islets are: Majsan, Sutvara and Kamenjak, and especially the biggest islet of Badija well-known for its Benedictine, and later Franciscan monastery. Many preserved monuments on these islets attract our attention with their historical and artistic significance.

The cathedral of St Marco, the Episcopal Treasury and all the other churches, collections, museums, archives, and the halls of the brotherhoods make our town of Korčula an “open museum”, an original cultural monument which offers not only recreation but an unique cultural atmosphere. Man here has created refined forms of human knowledge on the basis of the natural values of the sky, land and sea. Our famous poet from the 16th century Ivan Vidali expressed this in verse: “World ornament, famous Korčula”. We hope that you will think of it in the same thing after visiting our rich natural and cultural heritage.

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