

## **The British Scholarship Trust – final report**

Candidate: Matko Marušić, Institute of Art History, Zagreb (PhD candidate in Art History)  
Receiving institution: University of Cambridge, Department of Architecture and Art History  
Adviser: Dr Donal Cooper, fellow of the Jesus College, Cambridge

It has long been an ambition of mine to pursue a visiting studentship at one of the institutions in the United Kingdom. I obtained my BA and MA degrees at the same institution, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb, and during my studies, I have participated in Erasmus programmes in Naples and Pisa, Italy. However, I was quite unfamiliar with the Anglo-Saxon traditions of teaching and doing research. This changed much during the initial months of this year, which I spent at the University of Cambridge as a visiting student at the Department of Architecture and Art History. My stay there was kindly supported by the British Scholarship Trust. Being a part of such a vibrant academic community offered me the opportunity to expand my professional skills and has enriched my understanding of a job of researcher in the Humanities. But, let us start from the beginning.

When planning to apply for the BST scholarship, I first had to find an advisor at the receiving institution in the UK, a scholar with whom I share research interests. My choice was almost immediately narrowed down to one particular scholar, whom I had never met in person, but whose work I had studied in depth. Dr Donal Cooper is a Senior lecturer in Italian Renaissance Art and a Fellow of Jesus College, but more importantly for my field of research, an expert in late medieval and Renaissance Croatia, focusing particularly on the artistic heritage of the Franciscan Order on the Eastern Adriatic coast. Dr Cooper kindly endorsed my initial application concerning the Franciscan and Dominican shrines in late medieval Dalmatia, but also encouraged me to broaden the scope of my research topics.

Upon my arrival to Cambridge, Dr Cooper acquainted me with members of the administrative and academic staff at the Art History Department, and introduced me to his other PhD students, with whom I share similar research interests. Although I was not planning to audit any courses, but focus primarily on my research, I happily accepted Dr Cooper's proposal to take a back seat at the course on Gothic Art in France. Thought by Professor Paul Binski, this course offered me a valuable insight into the way medieval art is thought in the United Kingdom, and deepened my theoretical understanding of medieval artworks. In the Anglo-Saxon scholarly tradition, the pursuit of a critical approach is required even at the undergraduate level, which differs in many ways from the Croatian and Italian education, where factual recall plays a strong part.

I devoted most of my time in the United Kingdom to library visits. In Cambridge, I carried out my research in the outstanding University Library and the Library of Art History and Architecture Department, while during my several visits to London, I had a chance to use the British Library, and pay a short visit to the captivating collection of the Warburg Institute. Considering that my home institution and the university where I am currently studying have only limited library resources, I cherished the opportunity to consult the most recent publications in the field of medieval and early modern art history, as well as different databases containing archival material. Apart from spending valuable time in the libraries, I attended a number of

seminars offered by the Department of Art History, including the *Medieval Seminar, Art and the Senses*, and the lectures of the series *Approaches to the History of Art and Architecture*, all of which make the Department such a motivating academic environment.

As a junior scholar, I found the opportunity to discuss my findings and dilemmas with Dr Cooper truly rewarding. Our encounters at Dr Cooper's office at Jesus College and informal meetings at college's cafeteria helped me shape the arguments of my research, and, in particular, encouraged me to look at comparanda for my Dalmatian material across the Adriatic and wider Mediterranean. After discussing the progress of my research with my advisor, of particular importance was to test my conclusions with other specialists in the field. Through the good offices of Dr Cooper, I gained an exciting opportunity to present the findings of the research I was able to conduct thanks to the BST scholarship. I delivered two talks in London; one before a highly-specialized audience, and the other addressed to the general audience at the Croatian Embassy.

The first talk, entitled "Devotional Imagery of Late Medieval Dalmatia: The Case of the Zadar Crosses", was presented before the seminar group *Giotto's Circle*, convened by Professor Joanna Cannon of the Courtauld Institute of Art in London (**att. 1**). Every term professor Cannon's circle provides the opportunity for specialists in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian art to present their current work and receive valuable feedback in front of a selected audience at her Courtauld's office. Indeed, such a friendly intellectual environment, in which a 45-minute paper is followed by an engaging discussion, is ideal for sharpening the arguments of one's research, and is particularly invaluable for an early-career researchers like myself. I was particularly indebted to professor Cannon for accepting Dr Cooper's proposal to include my talk into the programme, and for her interest in the topic of medieval Dalmatian art, in this case the iconography and Latin verses inscriptions of the thirteenth-century monumental crosses from Zadar. The comments put forth in a lively discussion that followed my talk instigated me to observe some of my arguments more closely, and will be of great help in further reflections upon this matter.

A week later, I was generously invited by Mrs Flora Turner-Vučetić, a president of the Croatian British Society, to hold a talk at the Croatian Embassy in London (**att. 2**). Mrs Turner-Vučetić has been a dedicated promoter of Croatian artistic and cultural heritage in the United Kingdom for a number of years, and has kindly offered me the opportunity to present my research to a wider audience. For this opportunity, I decided to give a talk on a small group of Croatian islands which were important local pilgrimage centres in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, particularly during the period of Lent. The aim of my talk entitled "Adriatic Islands as Sacred Spaces" was to offer a glimpse into the devotional practices of people from Eastern Adriatic coastal towns who sailed to islands inhabited by Franciscan friars to perform their Holy Week devotions. I was surprised by the insightful questions and intellectually provocative comments I received upon delivering my talk, which showed me how enriching it is to communicate my research outside the academic community. It was also a privilege to talk in front of a small but lively Croatian community in London, which shares a great interest in cultural heritage of their homeland.

My Cambridge weeks, combined with several visits to London, thus came to an end, leaving me wondering how time has flown so quickly. Indeed, the highly stimulating period at the University of Cambridge – composed of library research and numerous (both formal and

informal) opportunities to discuss one's research – has been of immense value for my work. It is also my hope that the contacts made during my two-month stay in the United Kingdom will be deepened by collaborations on future research projects. Dr Cooper kindly offered his further assistance in fulfilling the final deliverable of my stay at Cambridge – a submission of a research paper in an internationally renowned journal. The main arguments were already discussed at *Giotto's Circle* in London and Dr Cooper already thoughtfully commented the first draft of the paper, whose final version I plan to submit by summer. As with other aspects of my Cambridge life, Dr Cooper's assistance and encouragement was crucial, and I would be honoured to collaborate with him in the future.

My final thanks for enriching me both professionally and personally goes to the British Scholarship Trust and its chairperson, Mrs Celia Hawkesworth. I am deeply indebted to Mrs Hawkesworth for her efficient and friendly replies to my e-mails and concerns, which made my stay in Cambridge a very pleasant experience. Finally, and most importantly, due to the exciting opportunity to pursue a visiting studentship at the University of Cambridge I gained valuable acquaintances and a new motivation for my research, which will in many ways enrich my future work. In the next few months, all of my time will be devoted to writing my PhD, which I will do with fresh ideas and fond memories of my Cambridge days.

**Attachment 1.** Programme of [Giotto's Circle](#) – Spring Term 2018

Monday, 5 February, 5.00 pm:

Morag McLintock (Birkbeck), short presentation: 'Interplays in Altichiero's fresco *The Council of King Ramiro*, in the Capella S. Giacomo, Padua.

Krisztina Ilkó (Cambridge) 'Forging the Augustinian past: the peculiar imagery of a late duecento gradual'

Monday, 26 February, 5.00 pm:

Matko Matija Marušić (Institute of Art History, Zagreb), 'Devotional Imagery of Late Medieval Dalmatia: The Case of the Zadar Crosses'

Monday, 12 March, 5.00 pm:

Andrew Chen (St John's College, Cambridge) 'The iconography of Giotto's *Penitence* in the Crossing of the Lower Church at Assisi'

John Renner (Courtauld Institute) 'The Maestro di San Francesco and Bonaventure in the Lower Church'

**Attachment 2.** Announcement of the talk at [The British Croatian Society](#)

Adriatic Islands as Sacred Spaces

Talk by Matko Music

18-30, Tuesday March 6

Croatian Embassy, 21 Conway Street, London W1T 6BN

Matko Marušić will talk about places of local pilgrimage on smaller islands near larger coastal towns – especially those that were important during Holy Week because they had copies of the Holy Tomb of Jerusalem. His talk will focus on Daksa near Dubrovnik and Košljun near Krk. He will highlight the various roles the islands played in the lives of coastal towns and, in many cases, were special sacred spaces with carefully planned "strategies" through which the process of going to these islets (as well as the prayers they were praying there), was a substitute for a "real" pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Matko Matija Marušić is a junior researcher at the Institute of Art History and a PhD candidate at the Postgraduate programme of medieval studies of the University of Zagreb. During the Lent term 2018 he is a visiting student at the Department of Art History of the University of Cambridge. His research stay in the UK is supported by the British Scholarship Trust.