

# The Marbles in the Chapel of the Blessed John of Trogir in the Cathedral of St. Lawrence at Trogir / Đeni Gobić-Bravar and Daniela Matetić Poljak

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# THE MARBLES IN THE CHAPEL OF THE BLESSED JOHN OF TROGIR IN THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. LAWRENCE AT TROGIR

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## Abstract

The Baroque intervention in the Chapel of St. John of Trogir introduced new Baroque polychromy into the Renaissance chapel. The change was induced by new windows, which let more light in, the building of an altar (on which the renewed Gothic chest with the relics of the Saint was placed) and new paving. The endeavour, in which the entire population of the town took part was noted by its contemporaries - the historians Ivan Lucić and Pavao Andreis, who recorded the course of the project, meticulously noting details of the purchase and provenance of the marble *spolia*.

## Keywords

baroque, marble-*spolia*, Trogir

## Introduction

The urban history of Trogir began with the Greek colonization, and since then has been characterized by continuity. Considering the importance of the Greco-Roman and early Christian phases in the development of the town and its surroundings, and the vicinity of the metropolis Salona (which ceased to exist at the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century), the number and diversity of marble *spolia* built into the local constructions does not come as a surprise. The surviving buildings bear witness to two periods in which they were intensively used: the medieval, when they were reused once or even twice (Greco-Roman *spolia* taken from early Christian buildings) and the Baroque. The Baroquisation of Dalmatian churches began in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was mainly altars that were concerned, their appearance changing largely through combinations of different types of marbles, in accordance with the new Baroque polychrome aesthetics.<sup>1</sup> Their redesign was commonly entrusted to the *marmorari* and *altaristi* from the Apennine

Peninsula. One such project was the Baroque renewal of the Renaissance Chapel of the Blessed John of Trogir, in the town's cathedral of St. Lawrence, and the ensuing works were recorded by the contemporaries and historians Ivan Lucić (1604-1679) and Pavao Andreis (1610-1686). Additional sources of information with respect to this matter are the "Chiese di Traù" by Andreis, and the visitation of Didak Manola (the bishop of Trogir from 1755 to 1765).<sup>2</sup>

The Baroque interventions in the Chapel of St. John of Trogir included the piercing of four lateral niches by large windows, the building of a polychrome altar (on which the Gothic chest with the Saint's relics would be placed), and the replacement of the old with a new pavement. (Fig. 1) Ivan Lucić, who at the time held the position of the *operarius* of the Cathedral, meticulously recorded the acquisition of the marbles, aware of the historical significance of the act. His and Andreis' writings reveal the engagement of the entire population of the town in arranging financing (through donations in wine, oil, sardines or marble) motivated by the desire to provide a decent eternal resting place fit for the town's patron, John of Trogir, in the Cathedral's Renaissance chapel.<sup>3</sup>

John of Trogir was the town's bishop purportedly from 1064, the year in which he was first mentioned in that position, till his death in 1111. He is of Apennine extraction, probably from Rome, while the tradition claims his lineage to the Roman Orsini/Ursini family.<sup>4</sup> Before arriving to Trogir he was a Benedictine monk at St. Peter's at Osor. His saintly fame spread already in his lifetime, and following his death, as part of the preparations for his canonization, *The Life of Ivan of Trogir* was composed (compiled by Anonymous, around 1150, and by the future bishop of Trogir, Treguan, in 1202). Its subsequent transcriptions and additions enumerate, in the common hagiographic manner, the miracles which

1 PRIJATELJ 1982; TOMIĆ 1995.

2 LUCIO 1674, 488-490; LUCIĆ 1979, 1034-1036; ANDREIS 1978, 315-372; FISKOVIĆ 1940; ZELIĆ 2009.

3 LUCIO 1674, 490; ANDREIS 1978, 339-351.

4 IVANIŠEVIĆ 2005.

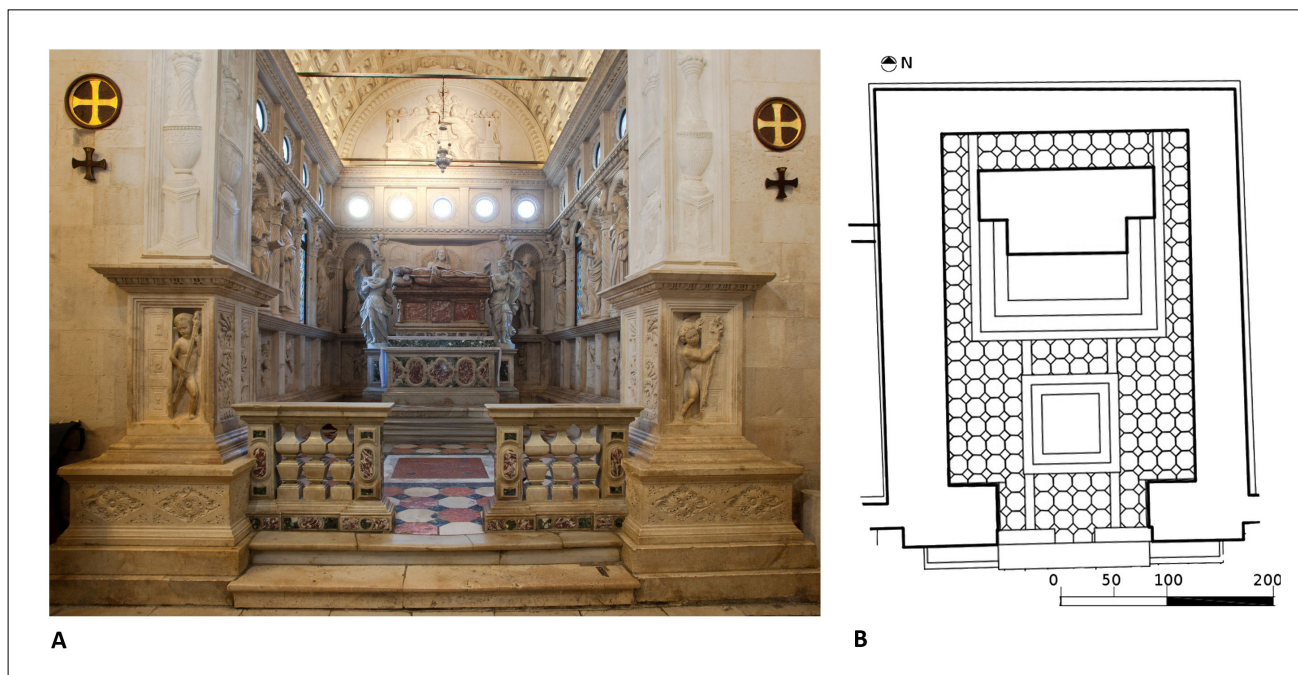


Fig. 1. Chapel of St. John of Trogir: A. View (photo: Z. Sunko); B. Plan (Neir d.o.o.)

occurred through his intercession *ante* and *post mortem* which was sufficient to proclaim him the patron of the town and its population.<sup>5</sup> John of Trogir is called both Blessed and Saint. As a consequence, it has become customary for authors of specialist texts to call his chapel in the cathedral of Trogir “The Chapel of the Blessed John Orsini/Ursini”.<sup>6</sup> It is unknown when exactly he was declared a Saint, but his cult rhythmically strengthened over the centuries. Running persistently through the densely knitted fabric of historical events and supernatural interventions that built John of Trogir’s hagiography is his alleged wish that his relics be venerated in Trogir.<sup>7</sup> At the

beginning, John of Trogir was revered only locally, but later on his cult spread beyond the borders of the diocese of Trogir, into the wider area of Dalmatia (Korčula, Hvar, Zadar). In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it reached as far as Benevento.<sup>8</sup>

The place in which the Saint’s relics were kept in the Cathedral were changed on several occasions. With each translation of the relics, a more lavish altar or chapel was built. Their original location in the old Cathedral was opposite the altar of Sts. Cosmas and Damian,<sup>9</sup> wherefrom they were translated to an altar – whether to the one dedicated to the two saints<sup>10</sup> or to the altar/Chapel of St. Ursula<sup>11</sup> is not clear. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century the so called Old Chapel of John of Trogir was built (begun in 1331, completed after the epidemic of plague of 1348). It occupied the north apse of the Cathedral and the bay in front of it. For this Gothic chapel a chest (now on the

5 A critical comment on different transcriptions, editions and additions to *The Life of St. Lawrence of Trogir* is given by IVANIŠEVIĆ 1977. Frequent healings in the 15<sup>th</sup> century are reported in an account of 1442, published by Daniele Farlatti in *Illyricum sacrum*; LUČIN 1998. During the translation of the Saint’s bones to the Orsini Chapel in 1681, miraculous healings also are reported, ANDREIS 1978.

6 There is no proof that John of Trogir was of the lower rank of Blessed, IVANIŠEVIĆ 2005. However it is often used to designate the renaissance chapel.

7 Following the Cathedral’s destruction in, as is believed, Saracen attacks on the town at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, after which the Saint’s grave fell in oblivion, he appeared to a man called Theodor, revealing to him the exact place of his burial. After the Venetians had stolen the Saint’s right arm in 1171, and after the Doge

ignored repeated appeals of citizens of Trogir for its return, it was miraculously brought back to the Cathedral by an angel, who thus fulfilled the Saint’s will. The return of the relic was announced by a falling star, which on the eve of its discovery halted over the Cathedral, ANDREIS 1978, 327; IVANIŠEVIĆ 2005.

8 IVANIŠEVIĆ 2005.

9 In present-day Cathedral, the place is marked by the inscription put there by Lucić, BABIĆ 2016.

10 ANDREIS 1978, 329; IVANIŠEVIĆ 2005.

11 The information is brought by Didak Manola, FISKOVIĆ 1940, 38; BUŽANČIĆ 2004, 81.



Baroque altar of the Renaissance Chapel of St. John of Trogir) was commissioned.<sup>12</sup>

The preparatory works for the building of a new chapel began after yet another epidemic of plague, which in 1465/1466 decimated the town's population.<sup>13</sup> In 1468 the building contract was drawn up with Masters Niccolò Fiorentino and Andrea Alessi, specifying the manner of construction, the appearance, and the iconographic programme of the chapel, in whose conception and development, as is believed, Bishop Giacomo Torlon, the humanist Coriolano Cipico and the sculptor and architect Niccolò Fiorentino took part. The significant amount of 2,300 ducats was provided for the project.<sup>14</sup> Its construction, however, was characterized by delays, halts, and changes of design. Although architecture-wise it was completed by 1488, and the fee for the last sculpture was paid to sculptor Ivan Duknović (Ioannes Dalmata) in 1508,<sup>15</sup> the Renaissance design was not carried out to the full: the altar was not made as described in the contract, and four of its sculptures were not executed.<sup>16</sup>

The relics of the Saint were translated 200 years later. In the meantime, the Chapel became the mausoleum of Giacomo Turlon († 1483) and, subsequently, of Trogir's bishops. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century it was called the Chapel of the Holy Sacraments, New St. Mary's Chapel, or simply, the New Chapel.<sup>17</sup> The decision to bring it back to its original purpose of a chapel built *ad honorem beati Iohannis Confessoris de Traugurio* was taken at the beginning of the Candian War, when the town was preparing its defense against the Turkish threat. In 1624 the contract "for the execution of an altar with a front, and the decoration of the chest" was drawn up with the Venetian Master Zuane Bicogeni.<sup>18</sup> In 1645 the execution

of an octagonal marble slab for the pavement and the marbles for the Bishop's tomb with a lid was paid for.<sup>19</sup> The altar was given its present-day shape in 1648, by Master Niccolò from Venice.<sup>20</sup> The works were delayed once more by the Candian War (1645-1669). After the war, the preparations were taken up where they had been left off. The translation of the relics, however, was postponed because the Gothic chest was in urgent need of repair. They were eventually translated on 4 May 1681, and the solemn occasion was celebrated with a sumptuous procession.<sup>21</sup>

Lucić's and Andreis' accounts of the Baroque interventions in the Chapel are not identical. Lucić enumerates the marble slabs, but does not enter into the arrangement of the altar inlays, while Andreis' summary description more or less corresponds to present-day situation.

### Marbles in the Chapel of the Blessed John of Trogir

The present study follows Lucić's account, giving the Italian original in the footnotes.<sup>22</sup>

Lucić's description begins with the steps in front of the altar:

"The first two steps of the marble altar in the new Chapel are made from a column in St. Martin's Church, which has been replaced there with a granite column found abandoned on the wharf, at the Port, between two bridges, which in ancient times had stood in the municipality house, in the Public Square.

The third step and the sub-base of the mensa come from another column in the aforesaid St. Martin's Church, in which it has been replaced with two pieces of stone columns put one on top of another. They were donated by Signori Pietro Casotti and Dott. Gio. Nicolò Andreis."<sup>23</sup>

12 FISKOVIĆ 1940, 59, n. 53; ZELIĆ 2009, 100; BUŽANČIĆ 2004.

13 BENIOVSKY LATIN 2009, 20, 59. When the epidemic of plague was at its peak, many citizens of Trogir pledged the means for the salvation of their souls, which became so widespread that the Municipal Council had to intervene, asking the Doge to stop this "excessive covering of the altar"; BELAMARIĆ 2004, 143.

14 The donor Antun Markušić/or Mačkušić is mentioned as a party in the contract IVANČIĆ 1997, 279-280.

15 FISKOVIĆ 1940, 44.

16 The four missing sculptures were eventually commissioned from the Venetian sculptor Alessandro Vittorino, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, FISKOVIĆ 1940, 42.

17 BELAMARIĆ 2007, 274-275; BABIĆ 2016, 330, 337-338.

18 In the documents, the name of the Master and the year in which the contract was drawn vary. In the *Chiese di Traù* (attributed to Pavao Andreis, written probably

between 1673 and 1676) the Master's name is Zuane da Venetia, and the year of the execution of the altar is 1644. ZELIĆ 2009, 102. In Andreis' *Traslazione di San Giovanni vescovo di Traù*, the Master's name is Zuane Bicogeni, and the year is 1624, ANDREIS 1978. Didak Manola records the name of Hyeronimo Diogene and the year 1644, FISKOVIĆ 1940, 42, note 71.

19 FISKOVIĆ 1940, 42.

20 ZELIĆ 2009, 102, note 66b; BABIĆ 2016, 335.

21 ANDREIS 1978, 344.

22 The Baroque angels on the left- and right-hand sides of the 18<sup>th</sup> century chest, attributed to Giuseppe Toretti, are beyond the scope of the present research.

23 "Li primi due scalini dell'altar di marmo nella Capella noua fono fatti d'vna colonna della Chiefa di San Martino, in luoco della quale è stata posta vn'altra di granito, ch'era piantata alla ripa del Porto tra li due ponti, la quale anti-



Fig. 2.  
Steps and  
the predella  
(platform) of the  
altar (photo:  
Z. Sunko)



Fig. 3.  
A.  
Churches and  
sites in Trogir:  
1. Cathedral,  
2. St. Martin,  
3. St. John the Baptist,  
4. Municipal Palace,  
5. Cimatorij,  
6. St. Nicholas,  
7. The Holy Spirit,  
8. Eastern part of  
the seafront (photo:  
Tonko Bartulović)



B.  
Churches in the  
surroundings:  
1. St John, Bili Brig,  
2. St. Luke at Poljica,  
3. St. Stephen  
at Sustipan,  
4. St. Martha, Bijaći,  
5. Our Lady near  
the Sea Čiovo  
(© Google Maps)





Fig. 4. St. Martin. Interior (photo: Z. Sunko)

The first two steps, as well as the socle (sub-base) of the altar base, are made of Proconnesian marble. However, the situation with the third step is not so clear, as it consists of different pieces of marble, mostly Proconnesian, but also of Cipollino and limestone. Although information about its past repairs is not available, it can be assumed that over the centuries the step suffered damages which were repaired with pieces of Cippolino marble and limestone. (Fig. 2)

The medieval church of St. Martin (whose new titular saint became St. Barbara, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century) lies to the south of the town square. (Fig. 3A, No. 2) Its building was carried out in two distinct phases: a pre-Romanesque (10<sup>th</sup> century), and an early Romanesque (11<sup>th</sup> century). These two phases have been dated according to the years of activity of its eminent builders and renovators mentioned in inscriptions.<sup>24</sup> Inside the church, there

*camente era stata nella casa, chiera del'commun'in Piazza. Il terzo scalino, e la sottobassa della mensa sono d'altra colonna della predetta Chiesa di San Martino, in loco della quale furono riposti due pezzi di colonne di pietra vna sopra l'altra; donati dalli Signori Pietro Cafotti, e Gio. Nicolò Andreis D.r.*, LUCIO 1648, 488.

24 BUŽANČIĆ 1995; MARASOVIĆ 2011, 120-127; BABIĆ 2016, 437. There is a hypothesis about an earlier Early-Christian and/or Carolingian church.

are six columns, composed mainly of Classical and Late Classical *spolia* (bases, shafts, capitals). The shaft in limestone, made up of two pieces, is the “column” referred to by Lucić as a gift of the above said Gentlemen. (Fig. 4) As for the granite column claimed by the same writer to have stood originally in the Municipal Palace (Fig. 3A No. 4), wherefrom it was later removed and put on the wharf, between two bridges, i.e. on the eastern side of the town's seafront (Fig. 3A No. 8), it is impossible to say which of the columns in St. Martin's it is, since no less than four of them are made of granite (marmor Troadense).<sup>25</sup> The interior of this church has provided other building elements for the new altar, as well (see below).

“As for the two slabs of the predella, the one on the right-hand side was in the Sacristy of the Church of St. John the Baptist called Abbatia (Abbey); the one on the left-hand side was in the same Cathedral church, near the main entrance, serving as a tomb parapet, while in ancient times it was the lid of a tomb.

The rest of the first and second steps are marbles donated by Signori Biagio Cafotti, Girolamo Vitturi, Pietro Celio, and Lodovico Celio.

The rest of the third step and the strip of the predella under the sub-base are the marbles which in former times were set around the Casotti and Lucie tombs, now in the graveyard of the Abbey, near each other, which were donated for the construction.”<sup>26</sup>

Lucić's text mentions the right- and left-hand sides of the predella. It has been logically concluded that in this case “left” means west and “right” means east.<sup>27</sup> The west side of the predella is made of white marble, whilst the east one is of Proconnesian marble. The marble of which the rest of the steps and the strip of the predella are made is Proconnesian. (Fig. 2)

25 BABIĆ 2016, 21-23. We would like to thank colleague DUNJA BABIĆ who has explained to us that the column at the wharf served as a bitt for securing mooring lines.

26 “Le due pianche della pradella, quella alla destra era nella Sacrestia della Chiesa di San Gio: Battista detta Abbatia, l'altra alla sinistra era nella medesima chiesa Catedrale vicino alla porta grande, che seruiua per parapetto di sepoltura, & anticamente serui per coperchio pur di sepoltura.

*Il resto del primo, e secondo scalino sono marmi donati dalli Signori Biagio Cafotti, Girolamo Vitturi, Pietro Celio, e Lodovico Celio.*

*Il resto del terzo scalino, e la lista della pradella sotto la sottobassa erano marmi, che stauano attorno le sepulture Cafotti, e Lucie, che sono nel cimiterio dell'Abbatia, vna vicina all'altra donate alla fabrica.”* LUCIO 1648, 488-489.

27 In Lucić's account, the term “predella” is used in the meaning of the platform in front of the altar which rises above it.



Fig. 5.  
Front face of the altar/mensa  
(photo: Z. Sunko)



Fig. 6.  
Altar table/mensa and the  
ledge for candlesticks  
(photo: Z. Sunko)

The Romanesque church of St. John the Baptist is located to the south-east of the main town square. (Fig. 3A, No. 3) Built on the remains of an early Christian church, it is the sole surviving part of a Benedictine male monastery (probably founded before its first mention, at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century).<sup>28</sup> It is interesting that among the names of those whose healing was brought

about through the intercession of John of Trogir, at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, there is also the name of one of its monks, Jordan.<sup>29</sup> Upon the termination of the activity of the Benedictine order in the town in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century, this once rich municipal endowment, consisting of a monastic building - *palatium*, houses, ancillary structures, a courtyard etc., was given *in commendam*. This brought about gradual degradation of the complex,

28 KOVAČIĆ 1993, 291.

29 LUCIĆ 1990, 112-113.





Fig. 7.  
Lateral sides of  
the mensa:  
A. Eastern side;  
B. Western side  
(photo: Z. Sunko)

which, due to its run-down state, was pulled down in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>30</sup> The church and the sacristy from which the marble slab was taken have survived.

The monastic cemetery, in which both noblemen and commoners were buried over the centuries, was still in use in Lucić's day.<sup>31</sup> However, the burials of eminent citizens of Trogir were also carried out in the Cathedral and other town churches. The marble elements taken from the tomb, which Lucić mentions further on in the text, bear witness to the prominence of the families and individuals who found their eternal resting place there.

"The front of the mensa and its top with the front of the ledge which makes the support for the candlesticks, come from a marble pillar which had stood in the new cemetery under the statue of the Saviour, and was at about that time removed and replaced with an altar, which is still in place."<sup>32</sup>

The front of the altar base and the table are made of Proconnesian marble (Fig. 5, 6), while the front of the ledge for the candlesticks (Fig. 6) is made of three pieces

of white marble. It is possible, as has already been noted for other altar elements, that over the centuries the ledge suffered damage and was replaced by another, which is still in evidence. In any event, the present-day situation is not as described by Lucić.

The new town cemetery (used from the 14<sup>th</sup> till the 19<sup>th</sup> century) stood in front of the Cathedral's western façade, in the area now called Cimatorij. (Fig. 3A, No. 5). The sole known mention of the statue of the Saviour is given in the account by Lucić quoted.<sup>33</sup> Since Lucić makes a distinction between the terms "colonna" (column), which he consistently employs in the meaning of shaft, and "pila" (pillar), we believe that the statue was placed on a marble pedestal, and not on a shaft. The altar mentioned in his account has not been preserved.

"The western side of the mensa is a single slab that was in the Cathedral, next to the door of St. John's Chapel, where the bench of the Conte and the Judges stood. This was at the time when in the repository, in the corner, under the aforesaid decoration of the pilaster, the Blessed Sacrament was kept, while the Bishop's see stood opposite to it, placed against another pilaster, at the south side.

Its eastern side has already served as the table of

30 BENIOVSKY LATIN 2009, 217-220; BABIĆ 2016, 347-359.

31 BABIĆ 2016, 351.

32 "Il parapetto della mensa, e la sua pianca col parapetto del scabello per li candelieri era vna pila di marmo, che staua nel cimiterio nouo sotto la statua del Saluatore, che fù all'hora leuata, e fattoui l'altare, che si vede." LUCIO 1648, 489.

33 In FISKOVIĆ 2008 the statue is identified as the *Resurrection of Christ* by Niccolò Fiorentino (today in the Town Museum of Trogir). A replica of the statue, supported by a column, was installed in the Cimatorij area in 2011.



Fig. 8.  
Side wings of the altar:  
A. Western wing;  
B. Eastern wing  
(photo: Z. Sunko)

an altar, and was found in the floor, near the tomb of Stefano Lucio. This tomb, which is located in front of the Bishop's see, is without inscription.”<sup>34</sup>

Both the western and the eastern sides of the altar base are of Proconnesian marble. (Fig. 7)

The entrance to the old Gothic Chapel of John of Trogir was from the bay in front of the main apse, in the direction of the north nave.<sup>35</sup> Traces of the Count's seat, which in the past stood against the pilaster which divides the north and the middle apse, are still visible.

“The rest of the sub-base of the lateral sides are pieces brought from the monastery of St. Stephan de Pinis, [located] on a small peninsula near Split.

The sub-bases of the side wings are two slabs. The

one found in the pavement of the Church of the Holy Spirit in ancient times served as the table of an altar; the other one is from the aforesaid St. Stephen”.<sup>36</sup>

The mouldings on the lateral sides of the sub-base are of Proconnesian marble. Also, on either side there is a thin slab inserted under the sub-base to bring these mouldings in line with those on the front face. The slab on the eastern side is Cipollino marble, and the one on the western side is Proconnesian. (Fig. 7) The bases of the side wings are of Proconnesian marble, too. (Fig. 8)

The remains of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Stephen de Pinis are located on a peninsula which closes Split harbour from the west. (Fig. 3B No. 3) The earliest mention of the monastery dates from the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, but it is highly probable that the basilica is early Christian.<sup>37</sup> After the Benedictines had left, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, this once thriving and influential abbey was

34 “Il lato da Ponente della mensa, è d'vna pianca, ch'era nella Catedrale appresso la porta della Cappella di S. Giouanni, doue anticamente era la banca del Conte, e Guidici quando in quell'armario, che è nel cantone sotto il sopradescritto ornamento del pilastro vi staua il Santissimo, e la Sedia Episcopale staua all'incontro appoggiata all'altro pilastro dalla parte di mezzo giorno. Il lato da Leuante fù già pianta d'vn'altare, e staua nel falizato vicino alla sepoltura di Stefano Lucio, che è senza iscritione auanti la sedia del Vescouo.” LUCIO 1648, 489.

35 In BUŽANČIĆ 2004 the reconstruction of its preliminary design (based on historic documents) is proposed.

36 “Il resto della sottobassa dalli lati sono pezzi portati dal monasterio di San Stefano de Pinis dalla punta vicina à Spalato.

Le sottobasse delli fianchi sono doi pianche vna ritrouata nel falizato della Chiesa di S. Spirito fù anticamente pianca d'altare, e l'altra di San Stefano sopradetto.”, LUCIO 1648, 489.

37 MARASOVIĆ, VRSALOVIĆ 1965, 193-197; MARASOVIĆ 2011, 367-374.





Fig. 9. View of the back side of the altar (photo: Z. Sunko)

given *in commendam*. Upon its dissolution, at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the already dilapidated complex passed into the hands of the archbishopric of Split. Still witnessing to the former prominence of the abbey is the number of the Classical and Late Classical marble *spolia* found during excavation works, and the *spolia* which have been built into the small Neoclassical church raised there in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to meet the needs of the new town cemetery.<sup>38</sup> Several marble elements from this site have been used in the Baroque altar of Saint John of Trogir.

The church of the Holy Spirit was originally a house in the south-west part of the town. When it was donated to the Church by one of the local aristocratic families, it was redesigned into a church, at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. (Fig. 3A No. 7) Standing next to it was a building belonging of a prominent fraternity. It housed the infirmary and was pulled down after the fire of 1898. Today, the place is occupied by a school.<sup>39</sup>

38 MARASOVIĆ, MATETIĆ POLJAK 2010; MARASOVIĆ, MATETIĆ POLJAK, GOBIĆ BRAVAR 2015, 1074.

39 BENYOVSKY LATIN 2009, 242-243; ANDREIS 1978,

“As for the slabs used for the fronts of the side wings, the one used for the left wing has been brought from the graveyard of St. Martha’s Church, and once served as the table of an altar, while the one used for the east wing, was found in the garden of Signor Marco Grisogono and carried an inscription.”<sup>40</sup>

The front of the west altar wing is faced with Proconnesian marble. The slabs used for the front of the east wing, however, are not of a single type of marble. The slab used for the shorter, lateral side is of Proconnesian marble, while the one used for the front side is of white marble.

The site of St. Martha at Bijaći, in Velo polje (Big Field) (Fig. 3B No. 4) is rich in archaeological layers. The earliest is represented by a Roman *villa rustica* from the 1<sup>st</sup> century, which continued as an estate until the 7<sup>th</sup> century. An early Christian church of St. John with a baptismal font was erected on this site, succeeded in the early 9<sup>th</sup> century by the church of St. Martha and its *baptisterium*. During the early medieval period the importance of this site grew as it was one of the feudal estates of the Croatian rulers. In the end of 12<sup>th</sup> century the church was rebuilt and given back its original titular.<sup>41</sup> About this time the site is included into the territory of Trogirian commune (*districtus*). The second church of St. Martha, mentioned in Lucić’s account (and pulled down in the 20<sup>th</sup> century), was built next to the ruins of the previous church, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Andreis describes it as a modest benefice, the right to which rested in laymen’s hands.<sup>42</sup> Near the church there was a graveyard, with different archaeological layers, from where the marble slab which, as it can be deduced from Lucić’s account, had already served as the altar table in some medieval church, was taken.

“Of the two slabs on the top of the side wings, the one on the west wing has been brought from St. Luke’s at Rastinić, now called Poljica, pertinent to Bosiljina and owned by the nuns of St. Nicholas, while the one on the east wing is yet another piece of the slab that once stood next to the main entrance to the Cathedral, serving as part of the lid of the aforesaid tomb.”<sup>43</sup>

306, 333; BABIĆ 2016, 412-420.

40 “*Li parapetti delli fianchi, quel da Ponente fù portato dal Cimitero della Chiesa di S. Marta, e servì già per pianca d’altare, quella da Leuante era nell’horto del. Sig. Marco Grifogono, fù inscrittione.*”, LUCIO 1648, 489.

41 BURIĆ 2012, 21-23.

42 ANDREIS 1977, 353.

43 “*Le due pianche sopra li fianchi, quella da Ponente fù portata dalla Chiefa di S. Luca di Ranifticio hora detta Pogliza nelle pertinenze di Boffiglina di ragion delle mo-*

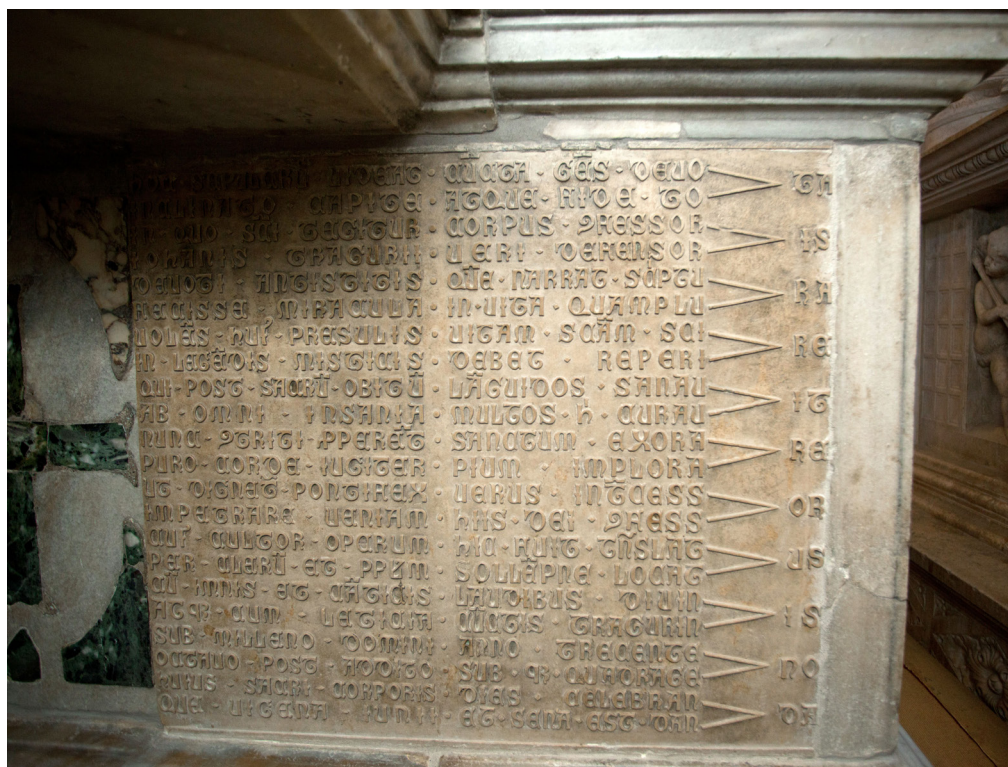


Fig. 10.  
Inscription from  
the Old Chapel of  
St. John of Trogir  
(photo: Z. Sunko)

Both slabs are made of Proconnesian marble. St. Luke at Rastinić (village Poljica near Marina) is a small Gothic church dating back to somewhere between the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> century. (Fig. 3B No. 2)<sup>44</sup> The above mentioned marble slab is the sole known marble element from this rather modestly furnished church.

“The stone that makes the cube, or block, at the back side of the altar, was the lid of a tomb which is in the Old Chapel of St. John:

Behind the west wing, there is the above said ancient inscription lifted from the Old Chapel.

Behind the east wing, there is a slab which was found in the church of St. John of Bile Brige and which is intended for the plaque with inscription commemorating the translation of the body of St. John, once it has taken place.”<sup>45</sup>

*nache di S. Nicolò ; quella da Leuante era vn'altro pezzo di pianca, ch'era appresso la porta grande della Cattedrale, che seruiua in parte per coperchio della predetta sepoltura”, LUCIO 1648, 489.*

44 PIVAC 2008.

45 “Dalla parte di dietro l'altare la pietra, che forma il dado, ò falsa era pianca della sepoltura, che è nella Capella vecchia di S. Gio:  
Dietro l'fianco da Ponente, è l'inscrizione antica sopraregistrata leuata dalla Cappella vecchia.  
Dietro'l fianco da Leuante, è la pianca trouata nella Chiesa di S. Gio: de Bile brige per scolpirui l'inscrizione

The slab used for the face of the back side of the altar is of Cipollino marble, whilst the slab on the back of the east wing is of Proconnesian marble. (Fig. 9)

The aforesaid inscription, composed in honor of the Saint, on the occasion of the 14<sup>th</sup> century translation of his relics, is carved on a stone plaque. (Fig. 10)<sup>46</sup>

Andreis places the church of St. John at Bile Brige into Trogir's Malo polje (Small Field). He calls it St. John the Baptist, with the remark that at his time it was just a modest benefice in which the bishop said mass once a year – on its Feast Day.<sup>47</sup> The church has not survived and today the exact location of the toponym of Bile Brige is unknown. There is, however, an area on the mainland called Brige, placed to the west of Pantana (Fig. 3B No. 1), from which it can be deduced that St. John's might have been somewhere in that area.<sup>48</sup>

“The chest and the various insets, all of the same colour, are from a piece of a column found in the Nunnery of St. Nicholas.

*della translatione del Corpo di S. Gio: quando fi farà.”, LUCIO 1648, 489.*

46 BUŽANČIĆ 2004; BABIĆ 2016.

47 ANDREIS 1977, 349. A text by an anonymous author from the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century mentions S. Zoaane de terra bianca; BABIĆ 2012, 38.

48 We are grateful to D. BABIĆ for the clarification of the possible location of the toponym.





Fig. 11.  
Back of the chest  
(photo: Z. Sunko)

The sub-base and the cornice in front of the chest are from the aforesaid tombs of Luciċ and Kažotić.

The lid of the chest was already there, on the front side of the old altar, and had been brought there from the Church of St. Martin, together with another that covers the tomb of the Reverend Canons.

The sub-base of the back side of the chest is from the same slab.

The two triangles which are to offer support to the Saint's statue from the old chest, come from a slab that was earlier in the Church of Our Lady near the Sea on the island of Čiovo.<sup>49</sup>

The chest of 1348 is attributed to the Venetian De Sanctis workshop.<sup>50</sup> Today, it is decorated on the front and

lateral sides with slabs of French red marble, while the back of it is faced with marmor Thessalicum. (Fig. 11) It is believed that Luciċ, when speaking of the marble originating from a column in the Nunnery of St. Nicholas means green marble. Later in the text he writes that the small rectangular insets in the floor are from the same column shaft and they are too of marmor Thessalicum. The front, lid and moulded back of the chest are Proconnesian marbles. Luciċ, however, also mentions the front moulding, which is incongruent with the real situation. Namely, the front moulding is an integral part of the Gothic chest. Andreis mentions its repair and its new placement in the New Chapel. This probably explains why the present appearance of the chest is inconsistent with Luciċ's description.<sup>51</sup>

The Benedictine Nunnery of St. Nicholas at Trogir was founded in 1064 and is still active. (Fig. 3A No. 6) Since the credit for its foundation goes to John of Trogir, the Benedictine nuns have cherished a particular devotion to the Saint. The donation of a column and a slab from the Church of St. Luke in their possession therefore doesn't come as a surprise.<sup>52</sup>

49 "L'arca e varij rimeffi deli steffi colori sono d'vn pezzo di colonna trouata nel monasterio di S. Nicolò delle monache. La sottobassa, e cornice dauanti l'arca sono delle sopradette sepulture Lucie, e Casotti.

La pianca che copre l'arca era iui nel parapetto dell'altar vecchio, e fù già portata dalla Chiesa di S. Martino, compagna dell'altra, che copre la sepultura delli Reuerendi Canonici.

La sottobasse di dietro d'essa arca, è della stessa pianca.

Li due triangoli, che deuono sostentar la statua del Santo dell'arca vecchia sono d'vna pianca, ch'era nella Chiesa della Madonna del lito in Ifola Bua.", LUCIO 1648, 489.

50 FISKOVIĆ 1971, 8; BUŽANČIĆ 2004, 97; BABIĆ 2016, 335.

51 ANDREIS 1978, 344.

52 KOVAČIĆ 1994. John of Trogir convinced seven of the town's noblemen to donate for the salvation of their souls the house of St. Domnio (domus beati Domnii) near the city gate (porta dominica) to the nun Euphemia, to have a monastery built adjacent to it.



Fig. 12. Front face of the altar/mensa. Inlays (photo: Z. Sunko)

The 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> century Our Lady by the Sea stands east of the modern bridge which connects the island of Čiovo with Trogir. (Fig. 3B No. 5) In Lucić's time, beside the church, which was enlarged in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, women who went into seclusion lived.<sup>53</sup> Since the triangular pieces have not been executed, the type of marble that the slab brought from this church was made of is unknown.

"The insets on the front face of the altar, with the exception of the marbles of the chest, have been carried from Venice; but since the Cross with iron dowels ended up inadequate for the purpose, it was moved to the front face of the high altar, while on the new altar the red Cross of Veronese stone was put.

The insets of mottled Africano are two pieces from the column shaft donated by Gentlmen Giacomo Grisogono and Zuane Baffo.

Small pieces around the altar, and the strips in the pavement are different snips of the aforesaid white marble, and they are pieces donated by Messrs Michael Zaccore, Andrea Marcouich and Mrs. Elena Calafatich."<sup>54</sup>

53 MARASOVIĆ 2011, 514-515; BABIĆ 2016.

54 "Li rimeffi del parapetto dell'altar oltre quelli del marmo dell'arca furono portati da Venetia; mà perchie la Croce con li tondini non riuſcì, fù riposta nel parapetto dell'altar maggiore, & all'altar nouo poſta la Croce roſſa di pietra Veroneſe. Gl'altri rimeffi di maglia d'Africano fono due pezzi di colonne donati dal Sign. Giacomo Grifogono, e Zuane Baffo. Li pezzi piccoli, che fono attorno l'altar, e le liſte del ſalizato

Marmor chalcidicum, in combination with marmor Thessalicum, was used for the insets. (Fig. 12) The small pieces around the altar and the strips are of white marble. However, since Lucić mentions them as pieces of the above described marbles, they are most likely of Proconnesian marble.

Today's pavement in the Chapel consists of octagons of white limestone and Verona red marble, with small rectangular insets made of marmor Thessalicum. (Fig. 13A) The strips of black marble with white veins are used as the frame of the central slab (the lid of the bishops' tomb), which is in Verona red marble.

"The old pavement in the Chapel was made of simple, white and red square tiles of Verona stone. Standing at the centre [of the space] was a marble tomb slab with the effigy of the bishop Giacomo Turlon in mid relief, which is now removed. The corners of the squares were cut off, whereby they were reduced to octagons. The truncated corners formed small squares which were filled with the same marble of which the chest was made. Also, a new stone for the bishop's tomb was executed in Verona stone carried from Venice.

The step at the entrance had served as the step in front of the high altar in the church of St. Martin mentioned above."<sup>55</sup>

The riser of this step is made of Greco scritto marble. (Fig. 14)

## Conclusion

For the building of the Baroque altar of John of Trogir light, white marbles were sought. Proconnesian, Cipollino and Greco scritto were selected due to their bright white surfaces. They were mostly old altar tables, tomb lids, and, occasionally, shafts of columns and smaller fragments. These types of marble were more common in the Classical and Late Classical periods of the town and its surroundings. Red French marble, along with the pieces of Verona marble and marmor Chalcidicum, was

*fono varie ſegature delli ſopradetti marmi bianchi, e certi pezzi donati dal Signor Michael Zaccoreo, Andrea Marcouich, & Elena Calafatich.*", LUCIO 1648, 490.

55 "Il ſalizato della Capella era prima di quadri ſemplici bianchi, e roſſi di pietra di Verona, & in mezzo la ſepoltura di marmo con l'effigie di mezzo rilieuo del Veſcouo Giacomo Turloni, che fù leuata, e ſcantonati li quadri furono ridotti all'ottagoni, e frapoſtiui li quadretti del marmo dell'arca, e fatta noua pietra per la ſepoltura de'Veſcoui di pietra Veroneſe portata da Venetia. Lo ſcalino dell'ingreſſo ſeruuiua per ſcalino auaunti l'altar maggiore della ſopranominata Chiesa di S. Martino", LUCIO 1648, 490.



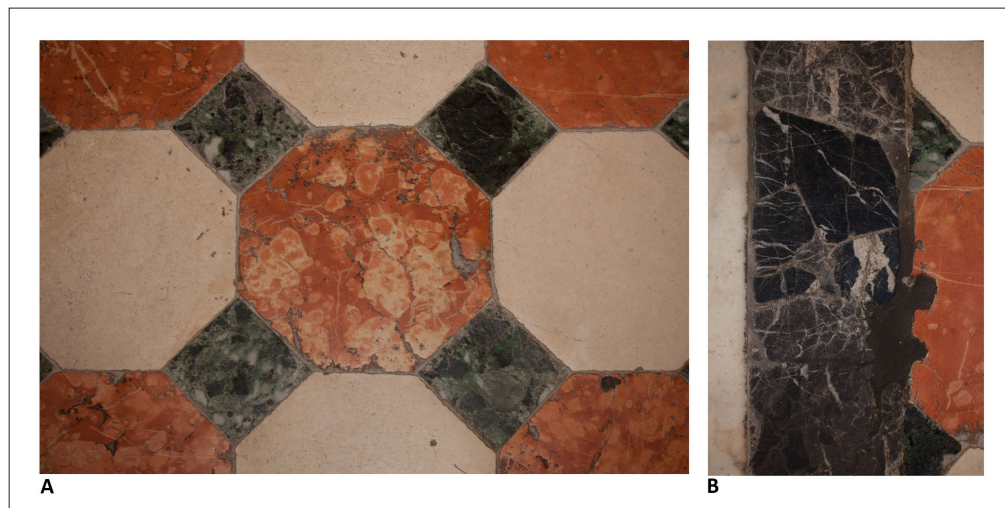


Fig. 13.  
A. Tiles on the floor  
of the Chapel;  
B. Marble frame of the  
bishops' tomb in the  
Chapel's pavement  
(photo: Z. Sunko)



Fig. 14.  
Step at the entrance  
of the Chapel  
(photo: Z. Sunko)

commissioned with the specific purpose of chest decoration, but it is impossible to say with certainty whether it was used already in the making of the Gothic chest, or was introduced during the Baroque intervention on the altar. Particularly interesting are the insets and the slabs made of marmor Thessalicum originating from a column. Although, marmor Thessalicum was massively reused in the Late Classical period and in the Middle Ages, it is worth noting that in the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was in such a demand in Rome that the marble columns from Diocletian's palace at Split were dismantled and transported to Rome, where they were sawn into altar tables and decorative items.<sup>56</sup> Their reuse on the Baroque altar serves as an additional proof of the great importance that the Saint had for the local population.

Almost all of these items have been taken from churches in the town or in the territory in the jurisdiction of the diocese of Trogir. The majority of them came from the Cathedral itself (the paving and the tomb lids in Proconnesian marble; one tomb lid in white marble; the tomb lid from the Gothic Chapel of John of Trogir made of Cipollino marble) and from the Church of St. Martin (the step in Greco scritto marble; two column shafts and the slab of the old altar of St John of Trogir in Proconnesian marble). Yet single marble items were also brought from other town's churches, such as the Church of St. John the Baptist (the slab in Proconnesian marble), the Church of the Holy Spirit (a slab of Proconnesian or Cippolino marble) the Nunnery of St. Nicholas (the column shaft in marmor Tessalicum), even from the town's cemetery (the pedestal in Proconnesian marble). Of the items originating from the churches in the diocese of Trogir, a single slab of Proconnesian marble comes from

56 GNOLI 1988, 164.

St. John's at Bile Brige, St. Luke's at Poljica near Marina, and the graveyard of St. Martha at Bijaći, respectively. Of what type of marble the slab from St. Mary's by the Sea on the island of Čiovo was made is unknown. From the farthest location – the monastery of St. Stephen de Pinis at Split (which at the same time is the sole one that is outside the diocese of Trogir, in the jurisdiction of the Split archbishopric) – several elements made of Proconnesian marble (one perhaps of Cippolino marble) were carried by sea.

The elements donated by individual donors are those of Proconnesian, white and Cipollino marbles (save for the two fragments that Lucić calls "Africana", i.e. marmor Chalcidicum). Names of most of the donors can be found in the register of the members of the Grand Council of 1637 and from 1662 to 1668. The noblemen are as follows: Biagio Casotti, Girolamo Vitturi, Pietro Celio, Lodovico Celio, Dott. Gio Nicolo Andreis.<sup>57</sup> Marco Grisogono, from whose garden one of the slabs comes, may be a descendant of the noble Grisogono Sara family<sup>58</sup>, while Michael Zaccoreo may be descendant of the Šibenik noble family of Zavoreo.<sup>59</sup> Zuane Baffo was an eminent citizen (in a document of 1657 concerning the town's fortifications he is mentioned as the representative of the commoners).<sup>60</sup> Unfortunately, the authors of this article have not managed to identify the others.

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57 ANDREIS 2006, 53-54, 58. The period of their maturity corresponds with the period of the Baroque intervention in the Chapel.

58 ANDREIS 2006, 211.

59 ANDREIS 2006, 341.

60 ANDREIS 2006, 320.



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