

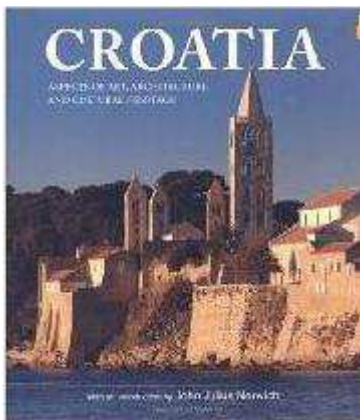
## BOOKS & REVIEWS

Dr Gerard Toal, Professor & Director, Government and International Affairs, [www.gia.vt.edu](http://www.gia.vt.edu)  
Virginia Tech in the National Capital Region announces that later this summer the book *BOSNIA REMADE: ETHNIC CLEANSING AND ITS REVERSAL* will be published by Oxford University Press. He is the first author, and the co-author is Dr. Carl Dahlman from the University of Miami in Oxford, Ohio.

*CROATIA: ASPECTS OF ART, ARCHITECTURE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE* with an introduction by John Julius Norwich, Frances Lincoln Limited, London 2009, ISBN 978-0-7112-2921-1. Available from Amazon.com for \$40.95.

The credit for conception and realization of this book goes to Jadranka Njerš Beresford-Peirse, who won the 1999 INA (sponsor of this publication) award for the promotion of Croatian culture in the world. She is the founder and Trustee of the International Trust for Croatian Monuments ([www.croatianmonuments.org](http://www.croatianmonuments.org)). The book has no listed editor, but Jadranka must be its silent editor.

The book is a collection of 12 scholarly essays, written by British, Croatian and American academics and specialists on art and architecture. Their brief biographical information is provided in the "List of Contributors." The essays are highly



readable and enjoyable for non-specialists as well, and are free of discipline-specific jargon. There are detailed and informative endnotes for most essays, together with current scholarly bibliography and suggested further readings. Each chapter is richly illustrated with excellent color photographs, some of full-page size. The quality of writing, illustrations and

printing make this book a valuable and enduring gift for any occasion.

The Preface by Jadranka Beresford-Peirse reminds us how little known is Croatia's share in the European and world cultural heritage. This book aims to present "an insight into some aspects of art and architecture which may be unfamiliar to a wider audience outside of Croatian borders, and some which may be understudied." It is her hope that the book "will inspire further research and serve as a reference for both specialists and all those who are interested in the arts in Croatia and their wider context and who may take pleasure in walking in the footsteps of the authors." There are now seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Croatia.

In the Introduction, John Julius Norwich reflects on the past millennium of the Croatian political position in Europe and concludes that "Croatia is now at last enjoying the freedom and prosperity that it has for so many centuries deserved and so seldom managed to achieve."

"A survey of Croatian History", written by Stjepan Čosić (translated by R. Harris), covers 13 centuries of history, during which the Croats created distinctive cultural values and achieved territorial and national integration (and finally independence), while negotiating free or forced choices between the great powers of Europe. Historical maps illustrate the key periods.

Branko Kirigin in "Ancient Greeks in Croatia" presents the up-to-date archaeological evidence and the ancient literary sources for the Greek colonial settlements of the 4<sup>th</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC on the central Dalmatian islands of Hvar (Pharos-Stari Grad), Vis (Issa) and Korčula (Melaina Kerkyra), and on the coastal area around Split (Trogir-Tragurion, Solin-Salona, Stobreč-Epetion). The system of Greek land division into plots assigned to the colonists is still visible in the plain of Stari Grad. In 2008 this landscape monument was placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list, as the best preserved of such systems that are known today. We get glimpses of the Greek-Illyrian contacts and exchange from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC on until the Roman involvement in the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. The most recent excavations on the small island of Palagruža uncovered a shrine of Diomedes, which Greek sailors frequented on their open-sea trade route up and down the Adriatic. There are good illustrations of many sites and artifacts, although the later do not have information on their museum location.

The chapter on "Roman Art in Croatian Dalmatia First to Third Centuries AD" by J. J. Wilkes is a survey mainly of imported and locally produced marble sculpture, representing imperial and private portraits, figured funerary monuments and religious art, followed by a shorter overview of public and private architecture, including mosaics. There is an informative discussion of style and dating evidence for the sculpture followed by reflections on the images of the Olympian deities and those of Illyrian cults assimilated to classical deities. An appended catalogue of objects and sites with bibliography supplements the survey. The art and architecture comes only from Roman cities in the coastal area, therefore the use of the term "Croatian Dalmatia" in the title. The Roman province of Dalmatia extended over the present day Bosnia and Hercegovina. One missing updated bibliographical reference is that of M. Suić's *Antički grad na istočnom Jadranu*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2006.

"The Palace of Diocletian at Split" by Sheila McNally is a scholarly and elucidating article on the past and current debate regarding the key issues in interpreting this retirement residence of the Roman emperor: ancient and modern names for the site (villa, palace, castle), use of fortification, and above all the design, function, meaning and relationship of ceremonial and sacral spaces. The author's compelling ideas on the building's role in imperial ceremonies and imperial cult bring her to conclude: "The original strength of the complex lay in its multiple uses; its continuing legacy stems from the grandeur of its experiments."

Reading the chapter on "Illuminated Manuscripts in Croatia" by Christopher de Hamel is like discovering a gold mine of European medieval and early modern literacy. In the author's words "to visit Croatia in pursuit of manuscripts is like stepping back into the distant European past.....many are still in the possession of monasteries or medieval churches, preserving a way of life which has hardly changed since the Middle Ages." The essay is a richly illustrated survey of manuscripts written in Latin, Glagolitic and Germanic between the 7<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, which were brought into Croatia or produced in the country. Into it is woven a narrative of monastic orders and their scribes and illuminators, the most important being Giulio Clovio (Juraj Glovičić (1498-1578).

Donal Cooper's "Gothic Art & the Friars in Late Medieval Croatia 1212-1460" is an overview of architectural and

artistic patronage of the Dominican and Franciscan orders in the major Adriatic cities. This heritage is the best preserved in Europe, after Italy, but is poorly known in the Anglophone art historical literature. The author's aim is "to reference and synthesize" rich literature in Croatian, Italian and German. One shall also find in this essay much on the history of the mendicant orders in Croatia and the artists they commissioned, as well as important references to documents in local archives.

The next four chapters deal with the Renaissance and Baroque periods in the Adriatic region, with a common theme of artistic exchange between Croatia and Italy, in which Croatia is a significant but often overlooked partner. David Ekserdžian's "The Renaissance in Croatia and Italy: the Chapel of the Blessed Giovanni Orsini" begins with an overview of painters and sculptors originating from and working in both sides of the Adriatic. His discussion of the Trogir masterpiece "ensemble whose sheer artistic quality and virtual completeness make it one of the most remarkable sculptural decorations of the entire Renaissance" clearly integrates Croatian artists and patrons into the Italian Renaissance. The three sculptors, Niccolò di Giovanni Fiorentino, Andrea Alessi and Giovanni Dalmata, are documented in the surviving contract, which offers Ekserdžian the evidence for addressing problems of attribution, iconography and chronology. In his poetic essay "Nikola Božidarević" Joško Belamarić (G. McMaster translator) interprets the style and iconography of this Dubrovnik painter trained in Italy, who signed his name as Nicolaus Rhagusinus and Nicolo Raguseo. His most famous work, a triptych in the Dominican church, shows St. Blaise holding a model of Dubrovnik. The surviving four works, out of 17 recorded, were all private votive offerings, what inspired Belamarić to relate Božidarević to the socio-intellectual milieu of his humanistic patrons, the mercantile aristocracy of Dubrovnik.

The two chapters written by Timothy Clifford, "Italy and Dalmatia: Architecture, Sculpture, Painting & the Decorative Arts, c. 1400-1800" and "Dubrovnik: Italian Art, c. 1400-1800," the author himself calls "pioneering works in English on Italian art in Croatia." The artistic heritage is discussed separately for each coastal and island (Hvar, Korčula) city in the former, while the latter is a guided tour of Dubrovnik's treasures. Clifford offers new ideas on the attribution and iconography of Italian and Italianate art in Dalmatia, all through

historical narrative of artists and patrons in their socio-cultural context.

The last two chapters cover the continental region of Croatia. "Castles and Manor Houses of Croatia: Winning or Losing" by Marcus Binney is an impressionistic tour of selected sites in Zagorje and Slavonia (maps included) built during the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Binney enriches his perceptive descriptions of the settings, architecture and interiors with information on the past and present owners and occupants, while reflecting appreciatively and critically on the current conditions and future possibilities of the properties.

Brian Sewell's essay on "Museums of Zagreb" starts with a critical debate on the Mimara Museum and the questionable attributions, integrity and quality of most of its paintings collection. Sewell continues discussion of attributions of some works in the Strossmayer Gallery of Old Masters and relates the life and work of bishop Strossmayer with his art collection, whose later 19<sup>th</sup> century paintings helped to start the Gallery of Modern Art. Among them were the works of three painters who founded modern painting in Croatia, Vlaho Bukovac, Celestin Medović and Nikola Mašić. The works of the best known Croatian artist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Ivan Meštrović, are exhibited in a 17<sup>th</sup> century house in which he lived from 1922-1942. Of the short comments on five other museums we should mention Sewell's selection of two ancient pieces of world significance in the Archaeological Museum. One is an over life-size bronze copy of *Apoxyomenos*, found in the sea off Mali Lošinj in 1999 and which "adds Greek glory to a significant collection of classical antiquities that are primarily provincial Roman." Last year the statue was transferred to its permanent home on the island of Mali Lošinj. The other is 14 m long linen wrapping of a mummy, the so called *Liber Linteus Zagrabiensis*, which contains the longest known text in the Etruscan language, a unique survival of lost "books."

This book is a most delightful way to learn about Croatian social and intellectual history through art.

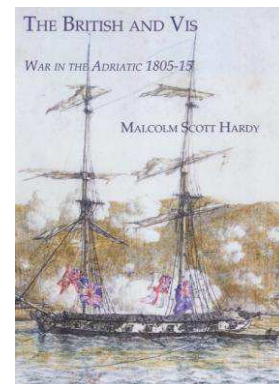
Ivancica Schrunk

***The British and Vis: War in the Adriatic 1805-15*** by Malcolm Scott Hardy  
Published by Archaeopress 2009, 152 pages. ISBN 9781905739158.

[www.archaeopress.com](http://www.archaeopress.com)

Croatia and the UK don't share that many links, but there is one that is perhaps not as well known as it should be. The island

of Vis was once occupied by the British between 1805-15. Although cricket was introduced to the island at that time, there is rather more to the story. We take a look at the book and consider if Vis could enhance the connection.



There is an awareness of Britain's links with the island of Vis. A lot of this focuses on Tito's use of the island as a centre for the partisan resistance

during the Second World War. Consequently, quite a few British servicemen served there during the war.

However, the shared history goes back much further, to 1805, when the British moved in due to the campaigns against Napoleon. This is largely now remembered due to Captain William Hoste, who reputedly was responsible for introducing cricket to Vis. Matches are still played there—the subject of occasional pieces in the British press.

Malcolm Scott Hardy's work gives us a much fuller version of the British presence on Vis during the Napoleonic Wars. Well illustrated, Hardy has done extensive research in military archives to shed new light on this period and clarify certain aspects.

Captain Hoste is a casualty of this work. From the very start of the book, the author points out that Hoste's reputation has been inflated since his death. Indeed, some less than flattering accounts of his behavior are related, as well as positive aspects. Less familiar names who played their role in this part of Vis's history such as Lord Bentinck and Captain Robertson are given their due.

Military history enthusiasts of this era will most likely gain the most from this work, but it is accessible to the general reader. Hardy gives an account as to the political circumstances of the time, and why the British were in the Adriatic and on Vis in particular. Indeed, correspondence from Lord Liverpool in London authorizing the occupation of Lissa (as Vis was then known) is reproduced.

The author considers all aspects of