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CONTENTS

VLADIMIR BUBRIN AND VINKO GRUBIŠIĆ

Croatian Renaissance Prose 5

PROZA (PROSE)

Legenda Aurea „Života svetoga Jeronima“ (*Legenda Aurea*:
“Life of Saint Jerome”) (attrib. Jacobus de Voragine)
(*Excerpts*) 24

POP MARTINAC

Zapis popa Martinca (The Account of Pop Martinac)
(*Excerpt*) 30

MARKO MARULIĆ

Počtovanoj gospođi Katarini Obirtića, kaluerici reda
Svetoga Benedeta Marko Pecinić s umiljenim poklonom
i dvornim pozdravljenjem piše (Marko Pecinić
[Marulić] Writes to the Esteemed Lady Katarina
Obirtić, the Abbess of the Order of St. Benedict, with
Amiable Respect and Courteous Greetings) (*Excerpts*) 34

PETAR ZORANIĆ

Planine (Mountains) (*Excerpts*) 38

ANTUN DALMATIN & STIPAN KONZUL ISTRANIN

Prvi del Novoga Teštamenta (The First Part of the New
Testament) (*Excerpt*) 62

ANTUN VRAMEC Postila na vse leto (Na god Svetoga Hieronima) (Postilla [On the Feast of St. Jerome])	74
IVAN PERGOŠIČ Decretum koteroga je Verbewczi Istvan dijački popisal (Posveta) (The Tripartite Decree, Written in Latin by Verböczy Istvan [Dedication])	80
FAUST VRANČIĆ Život S. Marije Egipatske (Po Sofroniju Bizkupu Jerosolimitanskomu) (The Life of Saint Mary of Egypt [According to Sophronius, Bishop of Jerusalem]) (<i>Excerpts</i>)	88
RENAISSANCE PROSE AUTHORS	96
ARTICLES	
IVA KURELAC Robertus Bonaventura Britanus (Robert Turner) and the Lost Manuscript of Dinko Zavorović's <i>De rebus Dalmaticis</i>	98
FRANZ POSSET "The Tree of the Cross" and Other Early Latin Poetry, With the Marginalia of the Father of Croatian Literature	114
BOOK REVIEWS	
ALOJZ JEMBRIH <i>Stipan Konzul i „Biblijski zavod“ u Urachu</i> [Stipan Konzul and the "Biblical Institute" in Urach]. (Stan Granic)	137
KATIA GRUBIŠIĆ AND VINKO GRUBIŠIĆ <i>Croatian Literature in English.</i> (Stan Granic)	141

DUBRAVKO JELČIĆ, ed. <i>Zbornik radova o Marku Maruliću / Collected papers on Marko Marulić.</i> (Vladimir Bubrin)	143
BRATISLAV LUČIN <i>Iter Marulianum: Od Splita do Venecije tragovima Marka Marulića [Iter Marulianum: The Itinerary of Marko Marulić from Split to Venice].</i> (Vladimir Bubrin)	146
FRA HRVATIN GABRIJEL, ed. <i>Zbornik „Kačić“: Fra Andrija Kačić Miošić u Americi [A "Kačić" Miscellany: Fra Andrija Kačić Miošić In America].</i> (Srebrenka Bogović)	149
MIRKO TOMASOVIĆ <i>Qual è colui che forse di Croazia...</i> (Vinko Grubišić)	155
GUEST EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS	158
OBITUARIES	160

Guest Editors: Vinko Grubišić and Vladimir Bubrin

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Robertus Bonaventura Britanus (Robert Turner) and the Lost Manuscript of Dinko Zavorović's *De rebus Dalmaticis*

IVA KURELAC

Introduction

The unpublished work *De rebus Dalmaticis* (*On Dalmatian History*), 1602), by the Šibenik humanist and historian Dinko Zavorović (c. 1540-5 October, 1608), is often associated in histories of Croatian literature with a still-unresolved literary scandal—the loss, under intriguing and unclear circumstances, of the first manuscript of this, the first history of Dalmatia. Zavorović scholars who have dealt with this so-called scandal, however superficially, all reach the conclusion that the main culprit was a man named Robertus Bonaventura Britanus,¹ thus agreeing with Zavorović's own opinion. It should be pointed out that Croatian historiography, relying solely on a brief reference to the loss of the original manuscript of *De rebus Dalmaticis*, found in an epistle by Dinko Zavorović himself in a subsequently rewritten version of the work, accepted this explanation unquestioningly, comment on it in a few cursory sentences.² Because of the scarce data on the aforementioned events, our knowledge of what really happened to Zavorović's manuscript remains limited, though the dearth of information does not justify the lack of any detailed scholarly analysis of Zavorović's written testimony of

¹ Based on the available Latin manuscripts of the work *De rebus Dalmaticis*, we use the form of the name *Britanus*. Cf. Iva Kurelac, "Dinko Zavorović i njegov rad na staroj povijesti u I. knjizi djela *De rebus Dalmaticis*." Vol. 2., Appendix, (MA thesis), Zagreb: 2006, p. 7. The critical edition of *De rebus Dalmaticis* is based on the text of the manuscript kept in Biblioteca Marciana, Venice (Cl. X. Cod. XL-3652); hereafter: M.

² Ivan Kukuljević-Sakcinski, "Dinko Zavorović," *Glasoviti Hrvati prošlih vjekova*. Zagreb: 1886. p. 131-132; Ferdo Šišić, "Dinko Zavorović," *Priručnik izvora hrvatske historije*. Zagreb: 1914. p. 39; Stjepan Antoljak, *Hrvatska historiografija do 1918*. Vol. I, Zagreb: 1992. p. 67; Darko Novaković, "Šibenska povijest Bosne," *Vijenac* 8 (Zagreb, 2000): 167-169; Milivoj Zenić, *U pohvalu od grada Šibenika*, Šibenik: 2002, p. 145; Ivo Livaković, "Dinko Dominik Zavorović," *Poznati Šibenčani. Šibenski biografski leksikon*. Šibenik: 2003, p. 512.

his meeting with Robertus Bonaventura Britanus, and the basis of his accusation. Despite the crucial role Bonaventura undoubtedly played in the events leading to the disappearance of the first version of the work *De rebus Dalmaticis*, the British priest remains almost completely unknown in the international and Croatian scientific community.

Although the main reason for this study is to present recent findings about Robertus Bonaventura Britanus, as well as to integrate the collected data into existing knowledge about the aforementioned literary scandal, the research itself will start with a detailed analysis of the text of two epistles Dinko Zavorović exchanged with Toma Suričević, the archpriest of Šibenik. The contents of these two short texts reveal details about the events that preceded the disappearance of the first version of Zavorović's *De rebus Dalmaticis*. Taking into account the above, this study has two main goals: first, to clarify at least partially the identity of Robertus Bonaventura Britanus and, second, to reconstruct the fragments of important and related events to shed new light on the disappearance of the first version of *De rebus Dalmaticis*.

Robertus Bonaventura Britanus in Zavorović's epistle to Toma Suričević

Judging from what is known about the life of Dinko Zavorović, it seems the last two decades of the sixteenth century were not especially favorable to him. Following a decision of the Venetian government, in 1585 Zavorović was exiled from his native Šibenik for four years, primarily because Zavorović, in his first and also unpublished work on the history of Šibenik, *Tratatto sopra le cose de Sebenico (A Treatise on Matters Concerning the City of Šibenik)* written in Italian sometime before 1585, expressed certain political views critical of Venetian policy.³ Zavorović spent the four years of his exile with his wife Klara's brother, Faust Vrančić, who at that time was secretary at the court of the Holy

³ Ante Šupuk, "Sitniji prilozi biografiji prvog hrvatskog historiografa," *Zadarska revija* 17.2 (1968): 150-152.

Roman Emperor and Hungarian-Croatian king Rudolf II in Prague.⁴ Upon his return to Šibenik in 1588, Zavorović began his main historical work, *De rebus Dalmaticis*, which was originally divided into ten books.⁵ Apart from the fact that Zavorović's manuscript on the history of Dalmatia was never published, the original version of the text was also unfortunately lost. As we will see, in 1598, approximately ten years after his return to Šibenik, through his friend the archpriest of Šibenik, Toma Suričević, Zavorović met a British priest by the name of Robertus Bonaventura Britanus. At that time, Zavorović's manuscript on the history of Dalmatia was already complete. Zavorović was impressed by Bonaventura's erudition and decided to lend him the only copy of the work, hoping that the British priest might offer some useful advice. However, soon after, Britanus told Zavorović that he had to leave Šibenik to go to the island of Surium, and Zavorović never again saw Britanus, nor his original manuscript of *De rebus Dalmaticis*.

The whole unpleasant event is described in detail in two epistles Dinko Zavorović exchanged with Toma Suričević. The complete text of both epistles was appended to the beginning of the second version of *De rebus Dalmaticis* (M, ff. Ir-IIIv), which Zavorović completed in 1602. These epistles, exchanged on July 7, 1602, reveal some lesser-known details concerning the unfortunate incident. The first epistle reveals some of the facts related to Zavorović's and Suričević's acquaintance with Britanus. At the beginning of the epistle to Suričević, Zavorović writes:

Sępe evenit, ut ex malo bonum eliciamus et ex incommodo utilitatem reportemus, ut mihi quattuor iam fere anni sunt, accidit. (M, f. IIr)

⁴ Kukuljević-Sakcinski, "Dinko Zavorović," p. 127-128; Antoljak, *Hrvatska historiografija*, p. 65; Zenič, *U pohvalu*, p. 143-144.

⁵ Šupuk, "Sitniji prilozi...": 152.

[It often happens that good is begotten from bad and that from misfortune we gain benefit, as has befallen me over the past four years.]

Zavorović, justifiably indignant because of the disappearance of the only existing copy of the manuscript, alludes to the events that had taken place four years earlier. Given that the epistle to the Šibenik archpriest is dated July 7, 1602, it is clear that it was in 1598 that Zavorović met the British priest Robertus Bonaventura Britanus, through Suričević. Zavorović describes Bonaventura's appearance as follows:

Siquidem, cum in hanc civitatem advenisset homo quidam, staturae mediocris, aetatis quinquaginta annorum, facie rubicundus, canicie conspersus, nomine Rubertus Bonaventura Britanus. (M, f. IIr)

[Indeed, when a certain man arrived in this city, of medium height, around fifty years of age, red in face, with graying hair, by the name of Rubertus Bonaventura Britanus.]

Britanus had studied in Rome at the *Collegium Germanicum*, where he made the acquaintance of Toma Suričević, who offered him lodging during his stay there. Staying in Rome was beneficial for both Suričević and Britanus, for there they became socially involved with many influential and distinguished persons in public and church life. According to Zavorović's epistle, Bonaventura was very knowledgeable about the humanities, particularly history. He also showed an impressive knowledge of the history of Dalmatia, which was to be crucial in his later acquaintance with Dinko Zavorović, whose most important historiographical work was about Dalmatia. The following excerpt from Zavorović's epistle to Suričević supports this view:

Hic primum apud quandam annosam mulierem est hospitio susceptus. Postea vero, cum se tuum in litterarum studiis contubernalem Romae in Germanorum collegio fuisset, faceret cerciorem, in tuam domum a te perhumaniter exceptus est. Ex quo postmodum factum est, ut multorum amicitiam virorum, tum saecularium, tum ecclesiasticorum facile iniret, quibus omni se bonarum

litterarum genere eruditum ac insignem historicum facile praebebat ac provinciae Dalmatiae rerumque in ea gestarum mire studiosum demonstrabat. (M, f. IIr)

[He (Britanus) initially stayed with an elderly woman. Then when as your fellow tenant while studying at the Germanicum in Rome he had shown himself to be trustworthy, you graciously took him into your house, from which it was later demonstrated that he easily made friends with many people, from civic as well as church life, who got the impression that he was well educated in every sort of letters and an excellent historian as well, thus surprisingly showed himself to be well-acquainted with events which took place in the area of Dalmatia.]

In a brief epistle to Suričević, Zavorović admits that he greatly appreciated Bonaventura's erudition and intellectual authority, and that regretfully he could not have refused to lend him his manuscript of *De rebus Dalmaticis*. In addition, Bonaventura offered Zavorović help with his writing, and encouraged him to have his work on the history of Dalmatia printed. Trying to exculpate himself, Zavorović explains to Suričević:

Quare, cum quadam die a me inter deambulandum efflagitasset, ut libros decem, quos de rebus huius provinciae lucubraveram illi ostenderem, ego qui talem virum plurimi ducebam, facere non potui, quin eos illi lustrandos simulatque aliquibus mendis scatentes traderem corrigendos, quos ubi mihi restitueret summopere me hortabatur ut illos tipis darem... (M, ff. IIr-IIv)

[Therefore, when one day while walking he cordially asked me to show him the ten books that I have written by candlelight about this land, I, who greatly respected this man, could not refuse to hand them over to him to review and to correct, given that they were full of all sorts of mistakes. He urged me wholeheartedly to submit them for printing once when he returned them to me.]

However, after Zavorović had given Bonaventura most of his manuscript, events took an unexpected turn: the British priest disappeared, along with the only copy of *De rebus Dalmaticis*.

...se Surium, insulam Spalatensis ditionis profecturum, ubi in ecclesia Sanctę Mariae, apud villam maiorem, Marcum Marulum quosdam libros in quibusdam muris reposuisse (ut scripta eiusdem, quae penes se retinere dicebat testabantur) affirmabat. Cleocem propterea, quae Venetias proficiscibatur (me presente) ingressus, quod diceret extra portum huius civitatis cymbam, quae illum erat Surium ductura expectare, illi dictos sex libros reliqui, ut secum corrigendos (ut dixit) asportaret, qui tamen Venetias profectus, haud amplius a me visus est. (M, f. IIv)

[...that (Bonaventura) intends to travel to Surium, an island in the region of Split, where he claimed that Marko Marulić had placed certain books into walls in a church of Saint Mary near Gornje Selo (as attested to by Marulić's notes, which (Britanus) said he had in his possession (...)) Thus in my presence he got into a carriage by which he travelled to Venice saying that outside of the port of that city a vessel was waiting to take him to Surium. I left with him the six books mentioned so that he take them with him and (as he said he would) correct them. In the end he left for Venice and after that I did not see him.]

Understandably disappointed and concerned that his manuscript on the history of Dalmatia could be published elsewhere and without his knowledge, Zavorović decided to rewrite the same text. Zavorović had not lost all ten books, but only the six loaned to Bonaventura— “...*ut sex libros denuo illi emendandos concederem [...] illi dictos sex libros reliqui...*” (M, f. IIv; “...again I therefore gave him six books to correct [...] I gave him the six mentioned books).

The new version of Zavorović's work *De rebus Dalmaticis* was more concise than the lost original, and ended up consisting of eight books. According to Zavorović, due to the numerous errors in the first manuscript, he corrected and extended the text of the whole first book, while from the remaining nine books he omitted those parts that seemed redundant, thus condensing nine books into seven:

Unde illusus ab illo, timens, ne meos partus ac labores alii sibi adiudicarent, ad nova studia me contuli et primum librum erroribus respersum, novum copiosiore et priore

veriozem totum reformavi. Reliquos, qui novem fuerant, multis quae superflua mihi videbantur, expurgatis, in septem libros conguessi. (M, f. IIv)

[Tricked by him, fearing that somebody else might appropriate my efforts and troubles, I then returned to new research and I converted the first book into a new one, a more extensive one and a more authentic one than the first. The remaining parts, of which there were nine, I reduced to seven books, purging them of all that was superfluous.]

Despite Zavorović's eventually successfully completed work on the history of Dalmatia, which became popular and was transcribed several times⁶ and translated, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, into Italian,⁷ Croatian historiography describes the role of Bonaventura solely in a negative light, with very little comment or indeed knowledge about the British priest as such. This attitude should not be surprising if we take into account the fact that the only source of information about Robertus Bonaventura and the affair of the lost manuscript was Zavorović's emotional epistle to Suričević. As much as the text of that epistle is valuable, it must not be forgotten that on the issue of the lost manuscript, Zavorović's epistle to Suričević is subjective and one-sided. For their part, Croatian historians have until now been satisfied with Zavorović's interpretation of the entire affair, unfortunately overlooking an actual examination of Robertus Bonaventura Britanus and of other possible explanations for what happened. Zavorović's biggest fear, that his work would be published without his knowledge by someone else,

⁶ There are seven available Latin transcriptions of the manuscript *De rebus Dalmaticis* by Dinko Zavorović, and two other Latin transcriptions of the same manuscript are known but cannot be traced. Cf. Iva Kurelac, *Dinko Zavorović: šibenski humanist i povjesničar*, Gradska knjižnica Juraj Šižgorić, 2008, p. 91.

⁷ *De rebus Dalmaticis* was translated into Italian under the title *Storia Dalmatina tradotta del latino in italiano*, de Alberto Papali, in 1714, by Alberto Papalić. The manuscript is in the Research Library in Zadar (ms. 549). *De rebus Dalmaticis* was also translated into Italian by the Franciscan Ivan Raičević. There are altogether six known transcriptions of the Italian translation of *De rebus Dalmaticis*, and there is also a copy of the transcription of the Italian translation of its fourth book. See Antoljak, *Hrvatska historiografija*, p. 69-70.

was clearly unfounded as no such work surfaced in the then still-developing world of book and manuscript publication.

***Nomina alumnorum* from the Register of the *Collegium Germanicum* in Rome**

Apart from his involvement in the peculiar circumstances surrounding the disappearance of the original version of Zavorović's manuscript *De rebus Dalmaticis*, the British priest Robertus Bonaventura is practically unknown in Croatian historiography. The only thing that can be said for certain, based on Zavorović's epistle to Suričević, is that the Roman Catholic Franciscan priest was British (confirmed by the qualifier "Britanus" added to his Latin name), and that he had studied at the *Collegium Germanicum* in Rome. Because he was a British cleric, his background should be researched in British sources. However, it quickly becomes clear that this seemingly simple task yields no immediate results. Moreover, the quest itself is discouraging if the search is undertaken using the priest's Latin name Robertus (or Rubertus) Bonaventura Britanus, as he was introduced to Dinko Zavorović. Any useful research should thus use his non-clerical name. The only known clue from Croatian sources was that Bonaventura studied with Suričević at the *Collegium Germanicum* in Rome.

Today, the *Collegium Germanicum* comprises with the *Collegium Hungaricum* the *Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum*. The archives of the *collegium*, or university, still include data on all the students who have ever attended that institution. Until 1917, the registers of the *Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum* were separate; the first question to resolve was in which register to begin to search for Bonaventura. As well, without his real name, the search for Robertus Bonaventura Britanus seemed futile even before it began. The only other possible avenue was to try to find data on Toma Suričević, who, as we already know, studied and lived in Rome with Bonaventura. Although Croatian students would usually have attended the *Collegium Hungaricum*, before searching for Suričević, the traces left on the registers of the *Collegium Germanicum and Hungaricum* by the turbulent historical events in

Dalmatia must first be taken into account: the affiliation of Croatian university students with one or another university changed several times over the years. During the period when Dalmatia was under Venetian rule, including the latter part of the sixteenth century when Suričević studied in Rome, Croatian students belonged to the *Collegium Germanicum*. The search for Suričević in the *Collegium Germanicum*⁸ register therefore seems logical.

In the first volume of the register, entitled *Nomina alumnorum*, the following entry is found at number 18:

Thomas Surreuicheuich Sibenicen[sis] Dalmata Dioecesis Sibenicen[sis] Acolytus Archidiaconus ibidem venit in Colleg[ium] 21 Decembr[is] 1568. Discessit X Octobris 1577. finito Theologiae curriculo factus Sacerdos.

[Toma Suričević of Šibenik, Dalmatian, acolyte, archdeacon of the diocese of Šibenik, came to the College on December 21, 1568. He left on October 10, 1577, having completed the study of theology he became a priest.]

In the nineteenth century, the university archivist Fr. Steinhuber added the following remark to that record:

Hic et Dominus Lignich admissi fuerunt ratione subsidii sc[udi] 131 soluti iussu Pii V. ab hospitio Dalmatarum. (ACGU, Bst. Hist., Nr 1.118)

[He and master Linjić were accepted upon payment of tuition fees of 131 scudi, paid under the order of Pius V by the hospitality of the confraternity of Dalmatians.]

Comparing the data from the first entry on Toma Suričević, it is clear that he is the same person who later became the archpriest of Šibenik, and Zavorović's friend, whom Zavorović addresses at the beginning of the epistle as *Admodum reverendo domino Thomę Surichievich, archipresbitero Sibenicensi, sacrae theologiae doctori* ("To the much es-

⁸ I gratefully acknowledge the assistance provided by Markus Pillat, S.J., archivist at the *Pontificium Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum* in Rome, who kindly offered his help with my research on Toma Suričević and Robertus Bonaventura Britanus (Robert Turner).

teemed Toma Suričević, archpresbyter of Šibenik, doctor of theology”), a title Suričević was given in 1568, according to the *Collegium Germanicum* registry.

Suričević thus studied in Rome during the 1560s, and, since documents corroborate that Suričević studied with the British priest, it can be concluded that Bonaventura was in Rome at the same time. For the years of Suričević’s study at the *Collegium Germanicum*, the student registry identifies two students named Robert who attended that university. Both were British. The first was listed in the university’s registry under the name Robert Johnson, who as it turns out died as a martyr in 1582, which excludes the possibility that this Robert Johnson could be Robertus Bonaventura Britanus, because Suričević’s colleague was still alive in 1598, the year he met Zavorović. The other student was entered in the *Germanicum* registry as Robert Turner. According to the university archives, he began his studies on February 1, 1577, at the age of 29. He became a prebendary in Wrocław, and, later, the secretary for the Latin correspondence of archduke Ferdinand II in Graz. The *Collegium Germanicum* registry also reveals that Robert Turner died on November 28, 1599, in Graz.

Turner’s death in 1599 would seem to solve the puzzle of the disappearance of Zavorović’s manuscript on the history of Dalmatia: Zavorović had stated in his epistle to Suričević in 1598 that he had met Robertus Bonaventura and lent him the only copy of his manuscript *De rebus Dalmaticis*, and the British priest clearly could not have returned it because he died the following year. Apparently, neither Zavorović nor Suričević knew of Bonaventura’s death. Moreover, Suričević’s written response to Zavorović suggests that he had not stayed in touch with Robertus Bonaventura. In fact, in his reply to Zavorović, Suričević seems to be astonished by the British priest’s theft:

Satis profecto sum miratus, quod vir religiosus eiusque aetatis ac doctrinę, tot annos distulerit ea domino restituere, quae bona fide possidere non potest. Scripta enim, de rebus Dalmaticis apud illum ea lege dimiseras, ut tibi quam primum redderet. Sed, quid miratus dixerim? Mirum enim non est, si homo hic vafer, qui sibi vestes

mentitus erat, fuit(!) tibi quoque ementitus libros. (M, f. IIIr)

[I am indeed very surprised that a devout man of his age and learning waited for so many years to return to a gentleman what he in good faith cannot keep. Namely, the books of the history of Dalmatia that you left with him with the condition that he return them to you at the earliest possible. Though surprised, what can I say? It is now not surprising that this crafty man who betrayed his [clerical] habit should also cheat you out of your books.]

By all indications, neither Suričević nor Zavorović knew what had happened to Robertus Bonaventura after he left Dalmatia. Although the fact that Robertus Bonaventura Britanus died shortly after he took from Zavorović the better part of the only copy of *De rebus Dalmaticis* does not fully explain why the manuscript was not returned to its author, this new information about Bonaventura should suffice for him to be viewed in a more positive light in Croatian historiography.

The Life of Robert Turner

In his homeland, Robert Turner has been recognized by a detailed entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*,⁹ in and of itself an indication that he was not a mere trickster as suggested in Croatian historiography. The author of the *Oxford Dictionary* entry, Peter E. B. Harris, brings to light data about Bonaventura Britanus unknown in Croatia. Thus we learn that Robert Turner was a Roman Catholic priest, born in Barnstaple, Devon. Nothing is known about his parents, except that they were of Scottish origin. After completing his studies at Oxford and at Cambridge, Turner left England in 1572 and started working as a professor of rhetoric at the English College in Douai, France, where in 1574 he was ordained a priest. What corresponds fully with the information in Zavorović's epistle to Suričević is that in 1576 Robert Turner

⁹ Cf. Peter E. B. Harris, "Turner, Robert," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Vol. 55. Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 657-658.

moved to Rome, where he taught classical languages for several years at the *Collegium Germanicum*. The information from the *Collegium Germanicum Nomina alumnorum*, presented above, that is that in 1577 Turner began his study at the Germanicum, is also mentioned in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. After leaving Rome, Turner travelled extensively and taught at several prestigious European universities. At the Bavarian university of Eichstätt he served as the prefect of studies and, at the recommendation of cardinal William Allen, thereafter became professor of rhetoric and ethics at the University of Ingolstadt where he received a Ph.D. in theology in 1586. Two years later, in 1588, he became dean of the diocese of Wrocław in Silesia, which also corresponds to the archival data from the *Collegium Germanicum* registry. Turner then moved to Graz, where he served as the secretary for Latin correspondence of Archduke Ferdinand II of Habsburg. This was his last professional engagement, and he died at Graz on 28 November, 1599. The information from the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* on Turner's stay in Austria and on the year of his death is also consistent with the *Germanicum Nomina alumnorum*, so there can be no doubt that we are dealing with one and the same person. Unfortunately, none of the sources on Robert Turner mentions his visit to Dalmatia, leaving Zavorović's epistle to Suričević as the only source of information on this particular biographical detail.

The Works of Robert Turner

Robert Turner wrote several works in Latin, which, in keeping with his education, were in the field of rhetoric. Turner's works were at the time particularly promoted by the British Jesuit Edmund Campion (1540-1581),¹⁰ later a martyr and saint, of whom Turner was an ardent follower. Campion and Turner apparently met at the university in Douai, where they shared their interest in rhetoric. Hoping that Turner's works, which he truly admired, would be widely read even during the

¹⁰ Campion, Saint Edmund, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, CD-ROM; Harris, Turner, p. 657.

Reformation, Campion promoted Turner, and Turner in return dedicated some of his works to Campion. Turner's two most notable works were published during his stay in Ingolstadt: *Sermo panegyricus de divi Gregorii Nazianzeni corpore... translato* and *Epistolae aliquot* (published in 1584), dedicated to cardinal William Allen, the founder of the English seminary colleges in Douai and Rheims. After Turner's death some of his other works on rhetoric were published, among them *Roberti Turneri Devonii oratoris et philosophi Ingolstadensis panegyrici duo*, the first edition of which was printed in 1609 in Ingolstadt, with a complete edition published in 1615 in Cologne.¹¹

Turner also wrote under the pseudonym Oberto Barnestapolio. Under that name he wrote *Maria Stuarta Regina Scotiae, Dotaria Franciae, Haeres Angliae, Martyr Ecclesiae, Innocens a cade Darleana vindice Oberto Barnestapolio: continet haec epistola historiam pene totam vitae, quam regina Scotiae egit misere, sed exegit gloriose rationem tuli praefert frons sequentis pagellae* (*Mary Stuart, the Queen of Scots, Queen Consort of France, Heiress to the Throne of England, Martyr of the Church, innocent of Darnley's murder, defended by Oberto Barnestapolio: This epistle contains practically the entire story of the unfortunate life of the Queen of Scotland, but which she ended gloriously. I set out the proof at the beginning of the following page*). This work too was published in Ingolstadt, in 1588. Today a reprint can be found at the university library in Rijeka (R.3.557-R.16-302-XXII. H. 13), bound with the work *Francisci Bencii... Quinque martyres*, printed in 1594.¹² As well, several epistles written by Robert Turner are part of the collection of letters by the French humanist Marc-Antoine Muret (1526-1585),¹³ printed for the first time in 1584 in Ingolstadt, *Epistolarum M. Antonii Mureti I. C. Liber nunc demum auctus et ab innumeris pene mendis, quibus librariorum incuria scatebat, repurgatus. Cui accesserunt Epistolae aliquot D. Roberti Turneri ethices et eloquentiae*

¹¹ Harris, Turner, p. 657.

¹² crolist.svkri.hr/cgi-bin/unilib.cgi?form=B0980613001 (14. 5. 2007).

¹³ Muret, Marc-Antoine, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, CD-ROM.

professoris in academia Ingolstadensi. Una cum epistola Julii Pogiani viri divertissimi de Ciceronis imitandi modo. (The letters of Marcus Antonius Muret I.C. The book has only now been expanded and purged of numerous mistakes with which it was riddled due to the negligence of the transcriber. Attached is an edition of Some Letters of sir Robert Turner, professor of ethics and rhetoric at the Academy in Ingolstadt, along with the letter of Julius Pogianius, a man who opposes the manner of Cicero). Copies of the book's first edition remain valuable for rare-book dealers.¹⁴

Part of the Robert Turner's genealogy

In the entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Harris points out that the origin of Robert Turner's family is unknown, except for the fact that they were of Scottish origin. Nevertheless, the existing data on Turner provides important information to guide future research. Based on the archival data in the *Nomina alumnorum* at the *Collegium Germanicum*, we know that Turner began his studies on February 1, 1577, at the age of 29 and that he was therefore probably born in 1547 or 1548. Turner's age is further confirmed by Zavorović's epistle to Suričević, wherein, as has already been pointed out, Zavorović states that he met Robertus Bonaventura in 1598, and that Bonaventura was at the time fifty years old. Knowing the years of Turner's birth and death narrows the range within which to conduct more detailed research. Since it is known that he was born in Barnstaple in Devon County, the registry of births and deaths of the parish of Barnstaple was thought to hold information about Turner and his family.

Even today, the Barnstaple parish records are carefully preserved, and the basic information in its registers are also available in digital format on the website *Family Search International™ Genealogical*

¹⁴ www.galaxidion.com/home/catalogues.php?LIB=amour-qui-bouquine&CAT=2450 (14. 5. 2007).

Index.¹⁵ Especially significant to research on Robert Turner was the register of baptisms, weddings and funerals performed in Barnstaple between 1538 and 1812. The files were arranged by Thomas Wainwright, and are divided thematically and chronologically into three volumes. A search of the digital genealogy index using the known facts about Robert Turner—his name, age and country of birth—brings up 25 persons named Robert Turner. Among them, only four entries are related to a male child with that name, baptized on 8 December, 1547 in Barnstaple, Devon.

The genealogy of Robert Turner reveals that his father was John Turner (born c. 1514) and that his mother was Avis Renold Turner (born c. 1518). They were married on 30 April, 1539 in Barnstaple, Devon. The Turners had nine children, four daughters and five sons. Starting with the oldest child, a chronological report provides information on the baptism of Ann Turner (baptized on 26 July, 1541), Margaret Turner (baptized on 16 December, 1542), Robert Turner (baptized on 9 October, 1544), William Turner (born on 4 September, 1546), Robert Turner (baptized on 8 December, 1547), Margaret Turner (baptized on 13 January, 1552), John Turner junior (baptized on 16 January, 1554), William Turner (baptized on 17 February, 1556) and Sarah Turner (baptized on 26 June, 1561). Since the names and baptism data for three of the Turner children are repeated, it can be concluded that Margaret, Robert and William Turner died in infancy and that the siblings born later, according to the custom of the time, inherited their names. Thus Robert Turner, baptized on 8 December, 1547, was named after his late brother, baptized on 9 October, 1544.

Robert Turner, as well as his baptismal name Robert Turner (or Robart Torner), was also known under the pseudonym Oberto

¹⁵ Basic data on Robert Turner is available at: www.familysearch.org/Eng/library/fhlcatalog/supermainframeset.asp?display=titledetails&titleno=278522&disp=Barnstaple+parish+register+of+baptisms%20%20&columns=*, 180,0. (11. 10. 2007). Barnstaple parish church records have been recorded on microfilm, which was financed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, Salt Lake City, 1974. The microfilm can be found at FHL BRITISH Film 962417, Item 1 and another at FHL BRITISH Film 90709.

Barnestapolio, which he used for his biography of Mary I of Scotland. He also published one of his books on rhetoric under the pseudonym Robertus Turnerus Devonius, and during his visit to Dalmatia introduced himself by the Latinized Robertus Bonaventura Britanus, by which he became known to Dinko Zavorović.

Conclusion

To date, the unclear circumstances surrounding the loss of the original version of the manuscript *De rebus Dalmaticis* by Dinko Zavorović have not been the subject of detailed research and analysis. Although Croatian historians writing on that period knew that the British priest Robertus Bonaventura had played a key role in the disappearance of Zavorović's manuscript, as was evident from Zavorović's epistle to Suričević published at the beginning of the second version of *De rebus Dalmaticis*, this was not probed beyond the unquestioning conclusion reached by Zavorović himself.

Although the two epistles Dinko Zavorović exchanged with his friend Toma Suričević in 1602 are the only known written evidence of the loss of Zavorović's original manuscript of *De rebus Dalmaticis*, a more in-depth analysis of the circumstances surrounding the event and the perpetrator of the so-called scandal clearly demonstrates that although the manuscript was never recovered, the vilification of Robertus Bonaventura Britanus (Robert Turner) was unfounded.