

English studies in Dalmatia 1775–1995

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Early contacts between the English and the Croats in and from Dalmatia (which can be traced to the twelfth century) resulted in interest in the English language in the towns of the Dalmatian coast. In the second half of the eighteenth century, in Dubrovnik, English was spoken, read and used as a means of written communication among some educated people. At the same time, in Split, there were attempts at writing a textbook for learning English. The first translations of Shakespeare's works from the original into Croatian were done in Dalmatia (*King Lear*, *Hamlet*), translations of, and articles on, the works of British authors occasionally appeared in Dalmatian periodicals, along with reviews of performances of plays. There were instances of lexicographic works (a dictionary of maritime terminology), and also articles on the English legal system and some aspects of cultural life in Great Britain.

The foundation of the Teacher Training College in Split in 1945 and the Faculty of Philosophy in Zadar (with its English Department) in 1955 was a great stimulus for the further development of English studies in Dalmatia. Both members of the staff and graduates have made a significant contribution to the development of English studies in Croatia.

English studies in Dalmatia began comparatively early in Croatian cultural history. At first they were connected with the Italian language (almost all Dalmatian intellectuals were bilingual using both Croatian and Italian), but eventually their presence and development became related to purely Croatian intellectual, linguistic and literary discourse. English studies began in Dalmatia earlier than in other parts of Croatia as a result of the geographical position of the Dalmatian coast and its towns which facilitated early and long-term contacts between the English and the Croats (the first contacts can be traced to the twelfth century).¹ In addition, the

¹ Herman Dalmatin, *Rasprava o bitima*, Introductory chapters, Pula 1990, p. 7.

people and towns of Dalmatia were described or at least mentioned in several British travel accounts from the fifteenth century onwards, and they became increasingly numerous in the sixteenth century. Whether from these sources or others Dalmatia, its towns and the Croatian people were known in England to the greatest English Renaissance playwrights: William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson and Thomas Middleton.² Dubrovnik with an important community in London and strong commercial relations with England, especially in the second half of the sixteenth century, had a leading role among Dalmatian coastal towns. There was a period of stagnation in contacts from the middle of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, but the knowledge of English seemed to have endured among the educated citizens of Dubrovnik together with an awareness of its importance and cultural role.

In the second half of the eighteenth century English literary, philosophical and historical works began to appear in the private libraries of the Dubrovnik nobility. English periodicals, such as *The Spectator*, were read in Dubrovnik and their articles left traces in the names of the learned societies of eighteenth century Dubrovnik.³ Translations from English started at the end of the same century. An English poem was translated, into Italian it is true, by a Dubrovnik citizen and printed in 1785, and it can thus be regarded as the first English poem published in Croatia.⁴ In the context of English literature the translation and printing of this poem is of little literary value, but it is important as an indicator of the interest in translating English literature, and the very fact that it was printed at all is a reflection of the interest in English language and culture and a stimulus for further study of English which, indeed, was used by some Dubrovnik intellectuals in written communication.⁵

Knowledge of the English language, and the study of English were not confined to Dubrovnik. In Split the work of Julije Bajamonti (1744–1800), a versatile scientist and scholar, physician, historian, poet, composer and translator is of great interest. His many-sided active life brought him into contact with a number of famous people abroad. He corresponded with people from Dubrovnik who sometimes used English as a means of communication, and with Alberto Fortis who probably heard about our popular ballads from Bajamonti who himself collected and translated them. He accompanied Fortis and his friend Frederick A. Hervey, the bishop of Londonderry, during a part of their journey in Dalmatia, and it was probably

² William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, 1600; Ben Jonson, *Every Man in his Humour*, II, 4, 1598; *The Staple of News*, III, 2, 1625; Thomas Middleton, *A Game at Chesse*, 1624.

³ Josip Vlahović, »Dva pisma Džona Ristića na engleskom jeziku«, *Radovi Instituta JAZU*, Zadar, 4–5, 1959, p. 494

⁴ Josip Vlahović, »Jedna dubrovačko-engleska književna veza u 18. stoljeću«, *Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta u Zadru*, Razdio lingvističko-filološki(1), Zadar 1960, pp. 254–271

⁵ Josip Vlahović, »Dva pisma...«, p. 494

through Bajamonti that Fortis knew of »Hasanaginica« which through various channels came to Scotland and was translated into English by several authors.

Bajamonti had a good knowledge of English for that time, as shown by his correspondence in English with some English people living in the Dalmatian towns of Trogir and Zadar and in some places in Italy. He could read in the original, the works of the English poet Alexander Pope, philosophical works by David Hume, was especially interested in the work of Edward Gibbon, whose *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* was one of his sources for Diocletian's biography, and also translated some parts of the book of the Scottish architect Robert Adam into Italian. Here follows a short summary of his philological work related to the study of the English language, first pointed out in a paper on Bajamonti in October 1994.⁶

The 37 pages of the material written in English »from didactic purposes, which at first sight looks like Bajamonti's original textbook for learning English«⁷ give a good picture of the author's study of English: they contain commentaries on English pronunciation, English spelling, English graphemes and how to pronounce them. There are several pages with examples of English dialogues in everyday situations. In the part dealing with the essentials of English pronunciation and spelling Bajamonti took an English text designed for the French, with the English text on the left and the Italian text on the right. He also gives rules for the division of words into syllables. His »textbook« for conversation consisting of five dialogues is of some interest as well. It too is written in two columns, and the dialogues themselves and their titles (Dialogue II »Before going to Bed, and after one is in bed«, Dialogue V »Between a Lady and her Waiting Woman«), have some cultural interest. Whether the author intended to have his text printed or whether it was just his personal exercise in mastering the English language we do not know, but Bajamonti's work has many characteristics of a textbook for learning English. In addition, his knowledge of English allowed him to translate some philosophical essays of David Hume and other scholarly »conversations« (*kolokvia*) from English into Italian. The level of his knowledge of English can best be seen from the drafts of his letters sent to his English friends and acquaintances. There are grounds to assume that Bajamonti was the first to start a systematic study of the English language in Croatia. Although he translated and gave examples in Italian one should not forget that he felt himself Dalmatian and Croat, and when speaking about the Croatian language he called it »la nostra lingua«, he referred to the idiom of Dubrovnik as being a Croato-

⁶ Igor Gostl, »Julije Bajamonti i počeci anglistike u Hrvatskoj«. The paper was presented in a symposium on Bajamonti on October 30, 1994 in Split. All biographical data and a survey of his work dealing with the English language are taken from the paper.

⁷ Ibid., p. 9

Dalmatian language like what Parisian is to French. Bajamonti's work may thus perhaps be taken as marking the beginning of English studies in Croatia.

However, the English language, the works of English men of letters, and other cultural aspects of British life were not confined to Split and Dubrovnik. There are instances of lexicographic works related to the English language again done in Italian but which certainly influenced Croatian vocabulary and terminology. A famous citizen of Zadar, professor of mathematics and physics at some European universities, Šimun (Simeone) Stratico, compiled a trilingual dictionary of maritime terminology, *Vocabolario di Marina nelle tre lingue* (Italiano, Inglese e Francese), printed in 1813.⁸ Stratico acquired the greatest part of his knowledge of English in England where he was sent as member of a Venetian delegation to celebrate the accession of George III to the throne. Stratico remained in England a considerable time and during his stay he studied English customs, paid special attention to the size and strength of the British navy and eventually became a member of some English learned societies. Stratico is another Dalmatian intellectual who was bilingual, using both Croatian and Italian, and belonged to those who acquired a great part of their knowledge of English culture and civilization through Italian which, in turn, played the role of mediator in the process of transculturation between the English and Croats. Consequently, this dictionary, a product of an intellectual from the Croatian coast, must have influenced the acquisition of knowledge by all interested in English maritime terminology in Dalmatia which already had a long maritime tradition and orientation .

The first translations from the original of Shakespeare's works into Croatian were also done in Dalmatia. Antun Kazali from Dubrovnik was the first Croat to translate a complete play by Shakespeare into Croatian. He translated *King Lear* in 1844, in prose, after which he made a verse translation as well. Nine years later, in 1853, Kazali translated *Julius Caesar*. He did these translations while very young, and in the same year that Krizmani} translated part of *Romeo and Juliet* Kazali translated some parts of *Macbeth*, but into Italian. Kazali learned English both from textbooks and works of English literature. He was a good translator, with fewer aberrations from the original than was the case with other early translators and, as has been pointed out, »in translating Shakespeare's plays his work should be considered a great cultural event both in Dubrovnik and Croatia«. ⁹

Kazali was not the only translator of Shakespeare in Dalmatia. The first translation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* from the original was done in Zadar and printed in

⁸ Simeone Gliubich, *Dizionario Biographico degli Uomini Illustri della Dalmazia*, Vienna 1856.

⁹ Mladen Engelsfeld, *Hrvatski prevoditelji Shakespeara*, Zagreb 1989, p. 163. Other data about Kazali have also been taken from this book.

the Zadar *Narodni list* in 1916.¹⁰ The translator was Božo Perićić, at that time a well-known Zadar physician and outstanding in public and cultural life. He was a beginner in English and his translations show many faults, he used expressions from folk poetry that sound out of place in the context of Shakespeare's tragedy. However, one feels he made a great effort to come as close as possible to the greatness of Shakespeare's expression. The translation itself was an important contribution to translating from English into Croatian at that time, and its appearance (only a few parts of it) was obviously a result of the literary situation and current trends in Zadar and Dalmatia. Although only some scenes were printed, Perićić had translated the complete play – the manuscript is today in private possession in Split.

In 1883 in several numbers of *Narodni list* some parts of Milton's *Paradise Lost* appeared.¹¹ This was the first translation of Milton's work into Croatian literary language (the earlier translation by Krizmanić was in kajkavian dialect). The translator, Ivan Despot, used the original text. Although in some places his translation is little more than an attempt, it is nevertheless important as a reflection of the wish to present the greatest works of English literature to the Croatian reading public. Translations of the works of Thomas Moore, Lord Byron, Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde, Rudyard Kipling, Ossian etc. played an important role in Zadar periodicals in 19th and the beginning of 20th century. A prominent place is occupied by Byron's works and he deserves a special mention in this context because the translation of the fragment »Good Night« from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* is the first instance of a printed translation from Byron's original into Croatian (1845). The author is again Antun Kazali and the choice of the texts show that he knew Byron's works well, since the translation possesses high lyrical strength and the typical characteristics of a Byronic hero are well rendered into Croatian – and the romantic view of the world is also very successfully preserved.¹² Some of Byron's other poems were translated from Italian in 1884.

Besides translations from English literature numerous articles and reviews published in Dalmatian periodicals are also of great interest. In them some interesting approaches to such authors as Shakespeare, Byron, Tennyson etc. can be found, and in all of them the writers show a good knowledge and capability for critical assessment. There are also articles dealing with comparative studies, such as a short article on a scene from *Romeo and Juliet* which was compared with a similar motif in a Croatian popular ballad. The author writes about phenomena which could today be explained by archetypal literary criticism, long before the writings of Carl Jung were known and his teaching applied in the analysis of literary works. American authors were not neglected either. Translations of the American authors

¹⁰ *Narodni list*, XXII/1883, nos. 27, 28, 29, 30.

¹¹ *Narodni list*, XXII/1883, nos. 27, 28, 29, 30

¹² *Zora dalmatinska*, 1845.

are not on a high level, but critical articles attain a serious level of professional competence and are characterized by thoroughness and good knowledge of individual authors and literary production in America in general.

In the Dalmatian towns in the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century there were a number of people who were neither creative writers nor were interested in literary problems, but some had wide scientific and cultural interests and in various ways were in touch with English achievements in various fields of knowledge and culture. Not many of them knew English, but some did, and followed what was going on in England in their field of interest. Consequently some aspects of English life and culture were studied and written about – showing similarities to what today would be called cultural studies. The authors especially pointed out elements that were thought applicable to Croatian life. A well-known lawyer in Zadar, Vladimir Papafava, a man whose works were translated into several European languages, published a study of some aspects of the English legal system, entitled »Englezki pomirni sudci« (English Justices of the Peace).¹³ Pointing to the difference between »Anglo-Saxons« and, as he says, »Latin Communities« he analyzes the role, function and meaning of the justices of the peace in England, stressing the advantage of such an institution and suggesting the need for similar institutions in the Croatian legal system. This and similar studies and articles started a kind of transculturation in Croatian towns on the coast and to some extent restricted other alien influences that were dominant up to then.

Some less known or hitherto unknown authors, devoted themselves to the study of the English language and English literature. Among them were students of British philosophers and writers, and some of their publications can be traced as early as the middle of the seventeenth century. Croatian intellectuals and men of letters in Dalmatia wrote treatises in Latin, Italian and Croatian on such authors as Thomas a Kempis and Duns Scotus. The famous Croatian poet and writer Andrija Kaćić Miošić (1704–1760) wrote a booklet on the Scottish philosopher Duns Scotus (1265?–1308?), in Latin, printed in Venice in 1752,¹⁴ and Bartol Kašić (1575–1650), a writer and linguist, wrote a study in Italian of Thomas a Kempis (1380–1471) published in Rome in 1641.

English literature was much better known in Southern Croatia than it has been generally recognized. Stjepan Ivi}evi}, born in Makarska (1801–1871), a well-known Croatian intellectual, writer and politician, besides his interests related to Dalmatian political life of the time, Dalmatian history and its relations with other Croatian territories, devoted much of his time to translations of the works of Alexander Pope and Walter Scott.¹⁵ Another student of English literature, Nikola

¹³ Vladimir Papafava, »Englezki pomirni sudci«, *Pravo*, Spljet, no. 45, 1876, pp. 269–271

¹⁴ Simeone Gliubich, *Dizionario Biographico degli Uomini Illustri della Dalmazia*, Vienna 1856.

¹⁵ Giuseppe Ferrari Cupilli, *Biographie e necrologie*, Zara 1874.

Dragićević (1763–1847) translated twelve dialogues from *The Spectator*, and wrote a paper, in Italian, on the works of Alexander Pope, published in 1840.¹⁶

The bilingual orientation of the educated Dalmatians resulted in the publication of articles on the subjects pertaining to English literature and men of letters in several Dalmatian periodicals written in Italian. Some of the periodicals were themselves bilingual, published in both Italian and Croatian, and therefore there were a good many opportunities for their readers to learn about what was going on in English literature and English life. Articles on the life and works of English authors are very frequent and sometimes occupy extensive parts of these periodicals. The reading public seems to have paid an exceptional attention to the life of Walter Scott, especially to his last years. His letters, or parts of them, to his son are quoted in translation,¹⁷ and there are other data concerning the publication of his novels. A very long study of the works of Alfred Lord Tennyson deserves admiration of the reader even today. The author (unknown) possesses thorough information and knowledge of English literature prior to Tennyson and gives a sound analysis of the majority of his works.¹⁸ There are numerous articles on William Shakespeare, with special reference to some of his plays which are analyzed in detail. The analysis of the character of Hamlet can be of some interest even today, since the article describes the opinion of some eminent people of the world science (medicine) who approach Hamlet as a psychiatric case, quoting the opinion of a Berlin physician.¹⁹ Reviews on performances of Shakespeare's works (*Othello and Hamlet*), both in Dalmatia and abroad, are frequently found in Zadar periodicals, all showing good critical ability and understanding of dramatic art. Several anecdotes related to Shelley show an interest in this romantic writer who enjoyed less interest outside Great Britain than his much better known contemporary Byron.²⁰ The relatively few translations of the works of English authors into Croatian and Italian can be explained by the fact that Dalmatian periodicals (the largest number of them published in Zadar) devoted much of their space to the important political questions arising at that time, and to the rich literature of the neighbouring country. However, all the authors (mostly unsigned) showed a good knowledge of the English literary and cultural situation and served as good mediators in the process of transmission and transculturation between the English language and literature and the reading public in Dalmatia.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 73–74.

¹⁷ *Dalmazia Letteraria*, Zara, 1903, Oct. 6.

¹⁸ *Cronaca Dalmatica*, Zara, 1888, May 18.

¹⁹ *Rivista Illustrata*, Zara, 1898, March 15.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, July 1.

II

The demand for teachers of English after World War II showed the necessity to found schools for their training. In 1945 The Teacher Training College was founded in Split, within which the study of the English language had an important position and from which, by 1969, 183 students had graduated, thus alleviating the shortage of English teachers at both primary and secondary school level. With its good staff and teaching standards it achieved great success in supplying the necessary English teachers, after English had been introduced.

Ten years later, in 1955, the Faculty of Philosophy in Zadar was founded by an Act of the Croatian Parliament, and the Department of English language and literature, along with other departments, started work in 1956. The long cultural and literary tradition of the South-Croatian towns, especially Zadar, played a definite role in its foundation, and it was soon shown that the decision was well grounded because, as the first faculty outside the national centre Zagreb, it had its own cultural foundations on which to grow and develop.

The Department of English at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zadar started with a small number of students and an even smaller number of staff. The greatest merit for the beginning and organisation of university English studies, and especially for achieving an adequate academic level in the English Department goes to the English Department of the University of Zagreb, but especially to Professor Rudolf Filipović whom we proudly recognize today as one of the most important founders and promoters of the Department. With his work at and for the English Department, his lectures as visiting professor, first final examinations etc. Professor Filipović left a lasting mark on the further development of English studies, with the important support of Professor Torbarina. From her arrival to her retirement, previously a member of the English Department in Zagreb, Professor Mira Janković was a highly successful Head of the Department, directing the work of teachers and students in the best traditions of the English Department she had come from.

With the growing importance and position of the English language in all secondary schools the demand for new teachers also grew. Soon the Department became the largest in the Faculty, a situation still true of today. By 1994, 950 students had graduated from the English Department, the number serving as an indicator of the role the Department has had in the education of English teachers in this region. In spite of the relatively small number of staff and restricted scholarly facilities some important results in the field of English studies, both language and literature, have been achieved: the position of the Croatian language with our immigrants in the USA, the problems of language interference, history of the English

language, contrastive linguistics, comparative studies of Croatian and English proverbs and so on.

History and literary theory have an outstanding position in the work of English scholars in Zadar. Along with the studies of individual authors (Geoffrey Chaucer, Ben Jonson, Walter Scott, R. Kipling, G. B. Shaw, William Faulkner, E. M. Forster, W. B. Yeats, Th. Roetke, Virginia Woolf) comparative studies of English-Croatian literature should be mentioned, the problem of literary influences and reception, articles on translations of Shakespeare's works, theoretical works dealing with the problem of literary translation, a book on the American short story, Irish literature and Irish studies, Renaissance drama and poetry, cultural studies about the relations between the English and the Croats, English travel books about Croatian lands and people, etc. Consequently it could be said that English studies at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zadar have made a significant contribution to the development of English studies in Croatia, a fact that deserves mention on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the English Department at the University of Zagreb.

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ANGLISTIKA U DALMACIJI, 1775. – 1995.

Rani dodiri između Engleza i Hrvata iz Dalmacije utjecali su i na relativno rano zanimanje za engleski jezik u dalmatinskim gradovima. U drugoj polovici 18. stoljeća engleski se jezik govorio u nekim krugovima u Dubrovniku, čitala su se engleska djela u originalu a engleski se povremeno upotrebljavao u dopisivanju. U Splitu je bilo pokušaja pisanja udžbenika za engleski jezik, prvi prijevodi Shakespeareovih djela s originala na hrvatski nastali su na jadranskoj obali (Kralj Lear, Hamlet), prijevodi britanskih autora povremeno su se pojavljivali u časopisima, kao i članci o njihovim djelima i izvedbama njihovih dramskih djela. Osnivanje Više pedagoške škole u Splitu 1945. godine i studija engleskog jezika u njenom djelokrugu, te Filozofskog fakulteta u Zadru 1955. godine bili su poticaj daljnjem razvoju anglistike u Dalmaciji. Svojim radovima o engleskom jeziku i engleskoj književnosti djelatnici Odsjeka za engleski jezik i književnost i diplomirani studenti dali su značajan doprinos razvoju anglistike u Hrvatskoj.