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Introduction

Objective: To illustrate the relationship between two historians and priests, Reverend Frane Bulić and Reverend Ivan Delalle, based on a study of their correspondence archived at the library of the Catholic Faculty of Theology.

Methods: Part of Revd Bulić's legacy, preserved at the library of the Catholic Faculty of Theology at the University of Split, includes his correspondence with Revd Delalle. This comprises 43 postcards and 19 letters. Beyond the correspondence, the library also conserves Revd Bulić's *Pro memoria* (refer to reference number 68) on 10 pages. This text illustrates the relationship between Bulić and Delalle.

Correspondence: The author covers topics concerning the interpretation of the Good Shepherd sarcophagus, the question of Kairos' discovery, Revd Delalle's use of his doctoral title, and the issue of Delalle's political involvement.

Conclusion: Based on their correspondence, Bulić and Delalle never managed to resolve their disagreements. The last record of their relationship was made 19 days before Revd Bulić's death. Revd Bulić still appeared to be invested in Delalle. The questions of why Delalle never printed and published his doctoral dissertation and why he misappropriated the discovery of the Trogir Kairos remain unresolved.

This report is part of a larger project aimed at systematizing Reverend Frane Bulić's legacy to showcase his scientific and cultural contributions to Croatian and European science. Additionally, we aimed to investigate Revd Bulić's personal and professional relationships, with the intention of publishing a comprehensive *Correspodentia Buliciana*. In previous papers, Josip Dukić has written about the relationship between Revd Bulić and Fr Ivan Marković (Dukić, 2009a), Revd Mihovil Barada (Dukić, 2009b), Revd Luka Jelić (Dukić, 2009c), Jozo Kljaković (Dukić, 2009d), Revd Petar Kaer (Dukić, 2010), and the candidate



for priesthood in the Split Church, Ante Alfirević (Dukić, J. & Dukić, B., 2017). These works were mainly based on Revd Bulić's written legacy. His writings provide a first-hand insight into historical events that he often witnessed or even played a predominant role in.

Revd Frane Bulić (Vranjic near Split, 4 October 1846 – Zagreb, 29 July 1934) was a Croatian archaeologist, epigraphist, conservator, and Catholic priest at the turn of the 20th century. The bulk of his work involved research of ancient and early Christian monuments in Solin (Dyggve, 1951; Bulić, 1900a). He studied the history of the Salonitan church and its hagiography. On the other hand, Revd Ivan Delalle (Trogir, 13 November 1892 – Trogir, 31 January 1962) was an art historian and publicist. He published essays, monographs, reviews, and literary and art criticism, mostly on the topic of Trogir and Split monuments, church architecture, and art exhibitions. Both were reputable priests whose work – each in their own way – left a mark on the time in which they lived and worked. They met at the beginning of the 20th century; at the time, Delalle was a seminarian at the Split Seminary. Revd Bulić, recognizing Delalle as his successor, directed him toward studying at a university. However, due to their disparate affinities in the field of historical and archaeological research, as well as character differences, their relationship reached a stalemate due to several issues that they never managed to resolve. Their correspondence, however, shows no signs that their relationship had gone permanently and irreversibly awry. They corresponded until Revd Bulić's death.

Revd Bulić and Revd Delalle's corresponded at the beginning of the 20th century, during a particularly important and fruitful period for early Christian archeology. Contemporary research yielded various archeological discoveries. Revd Bulić, the most prominent Croatian archaeologist, devoted most of his life to studying ancient Salona, a metropolis in the Roman province of Dalmatia, whose remains now stand close to Split (Dyggve, 1951; Bulić, 1900b). He was responsible for transforming Salona into a focal point of early Christian scientific discourse (Jackson, 1887, pp. 161–178). As he was approaching his eighties, Revd Bulić wanted to leave a worthy successor to keep the archaeological discourse in Dalmatia to global standards. Revd Delalle – who, by Revd Bulić's estimate, had a golden quill – was to be that successor (Bulić, 1933–1934d). By his recommendation, Delalle went to study in Rome and defended his doctoral thesis in 1930. Delalle and Bulić corresponded frequently during Delalle's studies in Rome. However, their companionship deteriorated upon Delalle's return to Trogir. Several disputes on a personal and scientific level soured their relationship, leaving it in shambles.

We learn of their correspondence through letters preserved by Revd Bulić and left to the library of the Catholic Faculty of Theology in Split (Dukić, 2017). Notably, these letters bear witness to scientific debates and controversies surrounding the date and location of the martyrdom of St Domnius, Salona's first bishop in 304 and patron saint of the city of Split (Bulić, 1912). The letters are also an important source of information on who discovered *Kairos* (Boschung, 2013) and where. The *Kairos is* a shallow relief depicting the Greek god of the opportune moment, acclaimed by many as the finest work of Greek art in our parts. Additionally, the clergymen shed some light on how to interpret the central aedicula of the early Christian "Good Shepherd" sarcophagus (Jarak & Cambi, 2016; Wilpert, 1929), now kept in the Split City Museum. Finally, the letters uncover the drama that unfolded around



the installation of the statue of the illustrious Bishop Gregory of Nin in the Peristyle, now standing by the northern exit of Diocletian's Palace (Brock, 2007).

Methods

The report, based on hitherto unstudied letters from Delalle to Bulić, is part of a series of papers exploring Revd Bulić's personal and professional relationships with various people. All letters covered in this paper are part of Bulić's legacy, which has been collected in twenty-seven volumes and is now kept at the library of the Catholic Faculty of Theology in Split. Every tome is bound in half-leather, with a gilded common title *Salon Christiana – Quaestio de Martyribus Salonitanis* printed on the spine (Dukić, 2017). The first volume is subtitled *Coemeterium Manastirine*, the second volume is *Coemeterium Marusinac*, the third volume is *Coemeterium: a*) *Manastirine, b*) *Marusinac*, volumes 13 to 18 are *Melita*, and the 19th volume bears the subtitle *Illyricum sacrum*. The volumes are ordered by the date of creation, from 1880 to 1934. Each item in the volume, including articles, letters, memos, and other documents, is numbered or marked "bb" (bez broja [unnumbered]), in Revd Bulić's own hand.

As already mentioned, Bulić's legacy also comprises his correspondence with Delalle, over 43 postcards and 19 letters. These can be found in volumes: *Salona Christiana* XXII (1926–1927), 18 postcards and eight letters; *Salona Christiana* XXIII (1928–1929), 21 postcards and nine letters; *Salona Christiana* XXIV (1930–1932), one postcard and one letter; and *Salona Christiana* XXV (1933–1934), three postcards and one letter. Although one of the letters spans eight pages, most are three to four pages long. In total, they make up 57 pages of text. In addition to the correspondence, Revd Bulić's *Pro memoria* on 10 pages is also a part of Volume XXV (1926–1927), reference number 68.

This paper is based on the study of the correspondence and consists of two parts. The first part, covering the period between 1926 and 1930, introduces important topics from the history of Split and the Split-Makarska Diocese on which Revd Bulić and Revd Delalle agreed, such as the date and location of the death of St Domnius, the installation of the Gregory of Nin statue in the Peristyle (Brock, 2007), the discovery of the Trogir *Kairos* (Boschung, 2013), etc. The second part deals with the period between 1930 and 1934 and tackles the points of conflict between the two priests that they failed to resolve prior to Revd Bulić's death in 1934.

The correspondence: Revd Ivan Delalle and Revd Frane Bulić's relationship between 1926 and 1929

This period can be described as a prolific period of mutual correspondence. We describe the start of their correspondence, related to the apostolicity of the Split Church. Additionally, the installation of Gregory of Nin in the Peristyle, which the authors saw as *abominatio in loco sancto* (an abomination in the holy place), is also discussed in this section.



Domnius the Martyr and friction with the cathedral chapter

Bulić made the first mention of Delalle in his note on the issue of St Domnius' martyrdom, which is a crucial problem in Salonitan hagiography, associated with a fragment of a *mensa* bearing the saint's name (Bulić, 1886). This matter was a source of various problems for Revd Bulić in his scientific field. Based on epigraphic monuments – a fragment from the martyrium of the Manastirine basilica discovered in 1874 (Bulić, 1900b) and the sarcophagus of Salona bishop Primo, Domnius' nephew (Bulić, 1912), Bulić was the first to contend that there existed only one Domnius – not two, as held by the Split tradition at the time (Devich, 1900b). Bulić suggested that Dominus lived and worked during the reign of Emperor Diocletian, and not during Emperor Trajan's reign in the second century, as explicitly asserted by canons in Split (Devich, 1900a; Ostojić, 1977). The note reads:

"This evening, Revd Ivan Delalle told me that... he received a visit... from the vicar, Revd Grgić, and as Delalle was speaking about St Domnius Church, bishop and martyr, Grgić added – a martyr under Trajan rule!" (cf. Bulić, 1924–1925a).

Therefore, scientific evidence was at odds with Split canons, who based their argument in favor of the apostolate of the Split Church on legends. Split Church leadership believed that Domnius lived, worked, and was martyred during Trajan's time (Devich, 1900a; Ostojić, 1977). The hypothesis that dated Domnius' martyrdom during Emperor Diocletian's reign in 304 was taken by the church officials of the time as an attack on the repute, history, and apostolate of the local Split Church, regardless of its scientific merit. In other words, the majority thought exactly as the Chapter thought. To deny their claim was to go against the grain of the local Church.

The belief had already been questioned in the 18th century by Antun Matijašević Karamaneo (1658–1721), who asserted that there was only one Domnius; the hypothesis was reinvented by Revd Bulić, who contended that Domnius was martyred during Emperor Diocletian's reign (Matiješević-Karamaneo, 1901). Revd Bulić's claim stirred up controversy and provoked severe accusations, a court dispute, as well as *a proviso* from Rome, banning any mention of St Domnius in vernacular writings, to prevent confusion among the faithful. The matters of St Domnius and other Salonitan martyrs even brought Revd Bulić before the ecclesiastical court in a dispute that would drag on for several years but was – as far as we know – without a final verdict (Dukić, 2010, p. 210). Despite the pressures, Revd Bulić held true to his conviction. Today, his hypothesis is acknowledged both by the scientific world (Prozorov, 2006) as well as the liturgical practice of the Split Church (Bulić, 1893–1894).

In another letter, Delalle wrote:

"Dom Quentin said that he knew that Dalmatia was one of the poor provinces and that Monsignor Bulić was not a rich man so that he could not buy every edition. Everyone knows us for paupers! But then again, no one knows all our sorrows and troubles in the homeland where qui divitior sanctior est... Libreria Vaticana, Quentin tells me, sends such publications pro bono to poor libraries as well as poor archaeologists whose life was not 'plenus pecunia' (full of abundance) but 'plenus labore in regno Spalatrino' (full of labor in the Split area), the city where some





would call archeological science 'old stones' and polemicize on purely scientific matters (Questio di S. Domnio – Devich) with no knowledge of modern hagiography. 'Horror vacui' reigns supreme, but they thought that mere Split legends would do. I can see the big questions. There is doubt concerning St Cecilia and St John and Paul, let alone our local saints. Now we are learning about 'right' and 'wrong' saints. The profusion of issues boggles the mind. Small lamps and candles are being extinguished, as you once wrote, not to leave us in the darkness, but rather to show us the true light of day and truth" (cf. Bulić, 1926–1927a).

In one of the letters, Delalle noted that Bulić had been banned from publishing articles that went against the Chapter's position (Bulić, 1926–1927b). Delalle's brief reflection clearly concerns the question of St Domnius. He also mentioned Canon Ivan Dević, who published two books defending the "two Domniuses" hypothesis in 1900, as Revd Bulić's greatest opponent (Devich, 1900a; Devich, 1900b).

Beside Canon Grgić and Canon Dević, Revd Bulić also referred to Leopold Ivanišević (Ostojić, 1977, p. 132), who ran the Split-Makarska Diocese during the sedisvacation between 1921 and 1923 (when the local bishop's seat was empty). Revd Bulić had an interesting way of dealing with skeptics. More specifically, Ivanišević received the 3rd Degree Decoration of the Order of St Sava from what was then the Ministry of Faiths of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in Belgrade for leading the diocese "prudently and selflessly and to the general satisfaction of all, from the national and ecclesiastical standpoint" (Bulić, 1924–1925a), despite the fact that during his appointment in the diocese, Marko Kalogjera got involved in a scandal. In the late 1921, Kalogjera wrote to the Ministry of Faiths of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes to rally for an "independent Croatian Catholic Church" (Patafta, 2016). At this time, his name began to be linked with outrage and law-suits as well as a love affair, which he did not end. This brought him into the conflict with church authorities and they ordered him to leave the parish and retire. In January 1924, he resigned from the Catholic Church and joined the Croatian Old Catholic Church as its first bishop (Patafta, 2016). According to the notes:

"On 6 June 1923, Revd Marin Kuzmić told me that he had once, a year ago, inquired what Leopold Ivanišević made of the scandalous affair of Revd Marko Kalogijera, to which Ivanišević replied that he thought Kalogijera guilty – but would later defend him! The nuncio in Belgrade christened Ivanišević 'il povero Ivanisevic'" (cf. Bulić, 1924–1925a).

Revd Bulić ironically concluded:

"And these are the people and vicars that would stand up against Revd Fran Bulić on the matter of Solin martyrs" (cf. Bulić, 1924–1925b).

During these heated debates, Delalle served as vicar choral (1919–1926) and took part in singing and praying the canonical hours in the choir of the cathedral (Ostojić, 1977). But he did not fall under the influence and opinion of other canons. In fact, during the initial period of his acquaintanceship with Revd Bulić, he played the role of a mediator. Alongside the 1923 memo, a note from 1924 also directly addresses the issues involving canons:



"On 29 March 1924, at 11 o'clock, Revd Ivan Delalle, the vicar choral of the cathedral, told me in the mausoleum office that the very same morning, a valet of the Church... had asked him to inform me that he had, 'per ordini superiori' (by order of his superior), removed the picture of the martyr which I had, a few days ago, laid down next to the altar that was under repair, with these words: 'Abbastanza scandali sei in questa chiesa, basta con questi scandali' (This Church has seen enough sandals, enough with the scandals). Of course, he relayed this on the order of Canons Ivanišević and Grgić" (cf. Bulić, 1924–1925a).

In another note, Revd Bulić wrote:

"On 9 December 1930, there was the funeral of Revd Frane Smolja, an honorary canon (appointed by the late Bishop Carić in 1902), vicar choral, and sacristan of the Cathedral. I went to his funeral. The deceased had stopped greeting me 7 years ago, would ostentatiously turn his head if we happened onto each other. He somehow joined the Organization of Yugoslav Nationalists, was a kind of their chaplain, and they backed and exalted him. What I ever did to him, I do not know... when in 1925, the Chapel of St Domnius was merged with the cathedral and people came to watch, I sent a framed picture of the Solin martyrs, to be placed next to the altar, so that the faithful who gathered could see the picture of our martyrs; Revd Frane Smoljo removed the picture, muttering to himself. What did Revd Frane Bulić ever do to these capitulars, that they disrespect him so?" (cf. Bulić, 1930–1932a).

In 1931, after his article entitled *Diocletian and St Domnius* was published in the Split newspaper *Novo doba* (The New Age) (Delalle, 1931a, pp. 23–24), Delalle received a letter from Canon Grgić, which Bulić recorded in detail:

"On 13 May 1931, Revd Ivan Delalle told me that he had received a letter from Canon Luka Grgić, owning to this article... asking him what had gotten into him, to write the article" (cf. Bulić, 1930–1932b).

Bulić continued:

"As regards Canon Luka Grgić – as regards him – he is a pathological presence in the matter of Solin martyrs" (cf. Bulić, 1930–1932b).

Abominatio in loco sancto (An abomination in the holy place): Bulić versus the statue of Gregory of Nin in the Peristyle

In 1919, Revd Bulić met the Croatian sculptor and artist Ivan Meštrović in Paris. Meštrović told him that he wanted to make a statue of Gregory of Nin. However, at the time, Peristyle [within Diocletian's Palace] was not even considered as a possible location for the installment of Meštrović's statue (Ivanišević, 1983, p. 21). Meštrović completed his statue in 1927; impassioned, heated debates of where the statue would be placed sparked off the same year. A decision was made by the end of the year. The correspondence between Revd Bulić and Revd Delalle from the end of that year follows the events surrounding the matter. In May 1929, in a desperate attempt, Revd Bulić sent a letter to King Aleksandar Karađorđević, beseeching him to use his authority and prevent the defacement of the



Peristyle (Duplančić, 1986, p. 24). Ultimately, the only effect the letter had was that King Alexander declined to attend the unveiling of the monument in September of the same year. Revd Bulić also declined the invitation of Split Mayor Ivo Tartaglia to attend the ceremonial opening of the square (Duplančić, 1986, p. 52).

Understanding Revd Bulić's staunch opposition to the statue in the Peristyle requires awareness of social and political circumstances. Namely, in the first Yugoslavia, Gregory of Nin was a symbol of the Slavic spirit that defied Italian hegemony. The Yugoslav ideal was somewhat accepted among the populace and the clergy alike (Nikolić, 2015). Photographs taken to immortalize the unveiling of the statue of Gregory of Nin in the Peristyle clearly show that the clergy of the time was present among the masses (see https://www.telegram. hr/politika-kriminal/sto-smo-novo-o-mestrovicu-naucili-iz-dvije-vazne-izlozbe/).

All things considered, Revd Bulić had his work cut out for him. He not only faced opposition among the clergy but was also falsely accused of being a *talijanaš*, or an Italian sympathizer, in public and political life (Boban, 1985). Twelve years after the unveiling of the statue, the Italians occupied Split (1941). After the occupation, they removed the Slavic symbol – the statue of Gregory of Nin – from the Peristyle. This was covered by some newspapers. The front page of the 21 November 1941 edition of the most widely read daily, *San Marco*, showed (**Figure 1**) late Bulić driving Gregory of Nin out of the Peristyle with a whip in his hand (Tolić, 2018; Markovina, 1983, p. 26).



Figure 1. Revd Bulić, carrying a whip, drives Gregory of Nin out of the Peristyle. A caricature of Revd Bulić on the front page of the San Marco newspaper. This work is made available under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Unported (CC BY-NC 3.0). Retrieved from https://digitalnezbirke.gkmm.hr/object/10614.

However, Bulić had a singular reason for contesting the unveiling of the statue, as is evident from his correspondence with Delalle. The two dubbed the occasion *abominatio in loco sancto*, or "an abomination in the holy place," a line they adopted from *The Book of Daniel* 9:27 ("and for the space of one-half week he will put a stop to sacrifice and obla-



tion, and on the wing of the Temple will be the appalling abomination") and *The Gospel of Matthew* 24:25 ("So when you see the appalling abomination, of which the prophet Daniel spoke, set up in the holy place..."). Both were aware of who Gregory of Nin was; however, they were also aware of the artistic and historical importance of the ancient Peristyle Square in Split. As the correspondence between Bulić and Delalle suggests, and Delalle himself stressed several times, archaeologists and the public outside Yugoslavia were appalled by the statue. They originally discussed Gregory in a letter from early 1928, just as the decision to install the statue at the Peristyle was made. In the letter, Delalle wrote:

"I have received your esteemed letter of 13 January 1928 with all the minor attachments and the ground plan of Diocletian's Palace with a marker in the future site of the statue. Just question upon question! I completely agree with you, as well as the local archaeological circles, with whom I have spoken about this. But I see it is in vain! Quod non facerunt barbari facerunt Spalatrini (The people of Split have done what the barbarians failed to do)!" (cf. Bulić, 1928–1929d; Bulić, 1928–1929f).

In one of his letters, Delalle explained at length where he had read about the installation of Gregory of Nin in the Peristyle:

"I have attached pictures of the Institute as well as an article by Senator Cippic on the monument of Gregory of Nin. Read it! As you can see, the 17 January issue of the Journal des Debats stirred up a hornets' nest. Today, I saw the Archivio on display in a bookstore and I bought it for this article, so I could send it to you. The news from Paris about the plans to install the monument in Split provoked a volley of comments. Beside Archivio, long articles have been published in all major Italian newspapers – Corriere della Sera (Milan), Stampa (Turin), Matlino (Naples), Corriere adriatico (Ancona), etc. The matter has spread and little by little, all Italian newspapers have been publishing protests. The March issue of Rassegna d'Italia reports of an article on the monument in Split. Agenzia Stefani has broadcast the news all over the world. Papers in England and America reported the news from Italian newspapers. This has become an international matter. The whole world is concerned about the aesthetics of Diocletian's Palace. Are you familiar with any of this? If you want, let me know and I will find the individual issues of papers that have written about it" (cf. Bulić, 1928–1929f).

In the letter, Delalle also addressed Bulić's proposal, suggesting that he write an article on the matter for the *Narodna politika* daily:

"In your last letter, you suggested that I should also write about in for Narodna politika. That is all well and good, but who would listen to me? When they have not listened to one Revd Fran Bulić, the only worldly man in Split, who impoverished himself in his 50 years of labor to illustrate Diocletian's Palace, only to swell the coffers of the "Travel Office" and other travel establishments, hotels, and beaches – who would even listen to me?" (cf. Bulić, 1928–1929f).

Delalle then went on to complain about laymen commenting on the matter in local papers:

"I cannot grasp how low we have fallen, to have some nobody lawyer, who knows nothing of the arts and has never seen the world, write such rot in Obzor. Need



I say more! While our press keeps silent about this, it has been all over the news on the other side of the Adriatic. Every continent is in an uproar, as they think of Diocletian's Palace as a global, international heritage, not unlike the Acropolis of Athens or the Pantheon of Rome" (cf. Bulić, 1928–1929f).

As a result, Delalle then implored Bulić:

"While you can and as much as you can, please protect the Peristyle from parasites from the cement throne that have been all over the news" (cf. Bulić, 1928–1929f).

Interestingly, an Italian made an insightful remark to Delalle:

"When I asked a neighbor what he thought of the monument, do you know what he told me? 'We'll fling it into the sea before long, anyway!' No comment!" (Bulić, 1928–1929b).

Delalle noted that Revd Bulić regularly wrote for the newspapers to explain the consequences of this matter to the public. It should also be noted that Revd Bulić was the head of the Provincial Conservatory and Conservation Institute from 1911 to 1929; he was succeeded by Ljubo Karaman (Ivančević, 1971, p. 9). However, his protests, alongside those of Ljubo Karaman, fell on deaf ears in Yugoslavia, despite his high position (Bulić, 1928– 1929e). For this reason, Revd Bulić sent letters and booklets concerning Gregory of Nin to professors and students in Rome. This is clear from a postcard in which Delalle mentions receiving a letter and booklets about Gregory of Nin, which he then distributed to students at the Oriental Institute to inform them about the matter relating to the Peristyle (Bulić, 1928–1929a).

Delalle's return home from his studies in June 1929 put an end to the more exhaustive correspondence concerning Gregory of Nin; however, the last words on the matter were exchanged in two postcards that Delalle sent to Bulić from Trogir, lamenting the inevitable installation of the monument and calling it an *abominatio in loco sancto* (Bulić, 1928–1929c).

Revd Ivan Delalle and Revd Frane Bulić's relationship between 1930 and 1934

Bulić and Delalle corresponded mainly through postcards in this period, not letters. The dearth of letters may have heralded the crumbling relationship between the two archaeologists. We will now discuss topics having to do with an article in *Dobri Pastir* (the Good Shepherd), the *Kairos* question, Revd Delalle's use of his doctoral title and, ultimately, Delalle's career in politics.

Disagreement over the interpretation of the Good Shepherd

In 1860, Luka Gašpić discovered three sarcophagi at the cemetery of Christian martyrs in Manastirine, where he owned land (Cambi, 1994, pp. 9–15). One contains a relief depicting the myth of Hippolytus and Phaedra; another bears a depiction of the Good Shepherd. Luka sold the sarcophagi and the land where they were found to a Split lawyer, Dr Šimun



Rossignoli (Bulić, 1886, p. 133), who would later, in a show of compassion, sell the monuments to his hometown museum at a bargain price (Cambi, 1994, p. 9). At the beginning of 1872, the Good Shepherd sarcophagus was transferred from Manastirine to the Split Archaeological Museum (Figure 2). It is made of white marble and is much larger in size than the first. By some estimates, it was made at the beginning of the 4th century, when Christianity was still banned and believers had to use symbols to recognize each other (Piplović, 2013, p. 144). The central figure on the front of the sarcophagus is a shepherd carrying a sheep on his back, with a sheep apiece on his left and right. To the left of the shepherd, there is a woman holding an infant in her arms. The woman is surrounded on both sides by much smaller figures: women on the left and men on the right. There are six women and eight men, or 14 characters in total; 15, counting the child in her arms. To the right, flush with the figure of the shepherd and the woman, stands the figure of an unknown man dressed in a tunic and pallium, resting a hand on his chest with three fingers outstretched. In his left hand he holds a rotulus. Like the female figure, he too is surrounded by smaller male and female figures (Cambi, 1994, p. 19).



Figure 2. The Good Shepherd Sarcophagus. The central aedicula depicts Jesus Christ. Split City Museum – graphics. Reproduced with the permission of the Split City Museum.

The symbolic meaning of the male and female figures has been the subject of debates and varying interpretations. However, older researchers viewed it as a Christian sarcophagus and had no misgivings about its allegorical visual language; the sarcophagus itself was named after the central motif at the time of its discovery. As Cambi remarked:



"The depiction of the shepherd on the sarcophagus was at the time clearly taken in the biblical sense, as an allusion to Christ – the Good Shepherd" (cf. Cambi, 1994, p. 39).

Since Cambi argued that there was no doubt about the symbolic interpretation among older archaeologists (Cambi, 1994), we may conclude that Revd Bulić would have shared this interpretation of the male shepherd.

Joseph Wilpert (1856–1944) was a German archaeologist and Delalle's professor of Christian iconography during his doctorate in Rome (Sörries, 1998). Delalle and Bulić often mentioned Wilpert's greatest work, *Corpus sarcophagorm christianorum (I sarcophagi Christiani Antichi*) (Wilpert, 1929). As it happened, Wilpert was preparing to publish the first volume of that work while Delalle was studying in Rome. As a matter of interest, Bulić helped Wilpert with certain points through Delalle. Thus, we read in the letters:

"I paid a visit to Wilpert and showed him the letters you sent me. He is satisfied. He is glad that you will send him pictures of your sarcophagi. Wilpert sends his regards" (cf. Bulić, 1926–1927c).

Wilpert published the pictures of the Good Shepherd sarcophagus he received from Revd Bulić in his monumental work. Interestingly, Wilpert's interpretation of the Good Shepherd from the Salona sarcophagus would later become the bone of contention between Revd Bulić and Revd Delalle, with the latter siding with Wilpert, who believed the male figure in the central aedicula of the sarcophagus to be St Peter rather than Christ, as was the prevailing opinion. It should be noted that Delalle asked for Bulić's opinion on the interpretation of the sarcophagus' central figure. However, Delalle would ultimately publish an article with Wilpert's interpretation in *Hrvatska straža* (The Croatian Guard), under the title *A new interpretation of "the Good Shepherd" of Solin* (Delalle, 1931b, p. 4). The letters give no indication that Delalle and Bulić ever discussed the matter. One letter reads:

"Wilpert and I talked about your Good Shepherd sarcophagus. Your bearded "good shepherd" is surely St Peter, as that is how he is always portrayed. Bearded Jesus has been depicted only once, on a Lateran sarcophagus, also containing a scene with a Canaanite woman. According to Wilpert, the Canaanite woman erected a monument to Jesus so Jesus was made realistic, as he was, with a beard" (cf. Bulić, 1926–1927c).

Four years before his article on the Good Shepherd, Delalle discussed the monument with Wilpert; moreover, he and Wilpert asked Revd Bulić for advice. This is surprising, as Bulić was later perplexed by Wilpert's interpretation of the figure in the central aedicula (Bulić, 1933–1934c).

Afterwards, Revd Bulić asked Revd Delalle to clarify the theory of the Good Shepherd that he set out in the paper. Revd Delalle replied:

"Just as you had left Trogir, I received your postcard in which you addressed Wilpert's opinion on the Good Shepherd from Solin. Wilpert published a monumental work in 1930... I sarcofagi cristiani volumen 1. I drew data on the Good Shepherd sarcophagus from Solin from his work. Since I do not have the work here with me, I do not recall the exact page. (...) since St Peter, according to Christian teaching, is



the successor of his divine Master, it is understandable that Christian artists would also portray him as such on sarcophagi. (...) generally, the Good Shepherds have been divided into bearded and beardless, and both were regarded as depictions of Jesus. However, Wilpert rejects this old belief and poses, based on evidence, and rightly so, that the beardless Good Shepherd is the Savior and the bearded Good Shepherd is St Peter. As his main evidence, Wilpert cited the discovery of a statue of the Good Shepherd in the crypt of St Clement's Basilica in Rome. This statue, which I have seen with my own eyes on the site, under the guidance of Wilpert himself as my interpreter, shows a bearded Good Shepherd with an inscription engraved in the base, which reads: 'Petrus Pastor bonus.' (...) In this article, he speaks about the Solin sarcophagus, and several others, as the Good Shepherd sarcophagus, claiming that the shepherd is St Peter, because he is bearded. (...) This is briefly the essence of Wilpert's interpretation in the first volume of Sarcofagi cristiani. (...) This is a short answer to your question" (cf. Bulić, 1933–1934c).

We may assume that with this, Bulić and Delalle somewhat buried the hatchet. In articles on the topic that were published that year – *Cult of St Peter in ancient Solin* and the *Good shepherd* – Delalle makes no mention of Wilpert's theory that the Good Shepherd on the Salona sarcophagus is, indeed, St Peter.

The Kairos discovery

The damaged relief of the Greek god Kairos from 4th century BC, discovered in Trogir, is certainly one of the finest examples of Greek art (**Figure 3**).

Vučemilović wrote about the discovery of Kairos as follows:

"In the storage room of a private house owned by the Benedictine monastery of St Nicholas, Delalle discovered a relief of the illustrious Kairos, the Greek god of the opportune moment. The relief was discovered at the end of 1928 and handed over to the curator of the local lapidarium, Rok Slade-Šilović... Delalle used to tell a story about the family using the back of the relief to beat cod. Today, the relief is kept at the treasury of the Benedictine monastery of St Nicholas. The treasury, itself named the Kairos Art Collection, is open to the public" (Vučemilović, 1998, p. 18).

More recent studies of the relief show that it was not made in Trogir; it was brought over during the Renaissance, probably from Greece (Boschung, 2013). It was discovered in the attic of a house once owned by the Statilić (Statileo) family, which produced eminent figures, diplomats, and artists associated with the Hungarian-Croatian court (Boschung, 2013). It is therefore assumed that a member of the family obtained the relief abroad and brought it to Trogir. This depiction of Zeus' youngest son is said to most closely resemble the bronze statue of Kairos carved by Lysippus. Unfortunately, this statue was lost and is known to us only from descriptions in old documents. He depicted the god of the opportune moment as a winged young man balancing on a ball with a razor in his hand. Later, he was often depicted as a young man with a lush mane, cropped short at the scalp, holding a scale. Kairos was believed to keep a vigilant eye on the moment when the scales would be in a perfect, auspicious balance – the moment of luck. He gives humans the op-





Figure 3. *Kairos* relief. Trogir City Museum – graphics. Reproduced with the permission of the Trogir City Museum. Retrieved from http://tragurium.blogspot.com/2015/02/kairos.html.

portunity to "seize him by a tuft of hair." Whoever is lucky enough to succeed shall have all their wishes come true (Boschung, 2013).

The crux of the problem lies in the fact that Delalle did not, in fact, discover the relief of the god, as Vučemilović claimed in his thesis (Vučemilović, 1998, p. 18). It was discovered by Roko Slade-Šilović, who met Revd Bulić while he was teaching at the Split Gymnasium (Abramić, 1932). He found a fragment of the relief depicting the Greek deity in a house owned by the monastery of St Nicholas (formerly, the Statileo family house) and saved it from decay. In *Vjesnik za arheologiju i historiju dalmatinsku* (the Journal of Dalmatian Archeology and History), Croatian archaeologist Mihovil Abramić wrote:

"A fragment of the Kairos relief... was found at the end of 1928 in Trogir by an industrious collector of Trogir antiquities, Mr. Roko Slade-Šilović" (Abramić, 1932).



Kairos had been a part of the city collection from 4 March 1929 to 26 July 1929, when it was handed over to the nuns, under whose watchful care it remains to this day (Abramić, 1932).

In one of the letters, Bulić reproached Delalle for claiming to have discovered the relief in one of his articles. Interestingly, Delalle never took up the issue with Bulić and remained reserved and dispassionate in the face of the letters and postcards Bulić sent him in the hope of resolving the conflict. The issue arose when in the almanac *Selo i grad* (Country and city), Delalle wrote:

"The extent to which Trogir was the city of the arts is also supported by the recently discovered Hellenistic relief of Kairos, the Greek deity of the opportune moment, a very rare example of classical art, found by the author of these lines in the kitchen of a private family. Dr Mihovil Abramović wrote a beautiful monograph on the new-ly discovered Kairos relief for the scientific world" (cf. Delalle, 1933, p. 66).

It is interesting to note that Delalle cited Abramić's article in which the author explicitly stated that the relief was found by R. Slade-Šilović. In addition to the correspondence, Revd Bulić's *Pro memoria* has been preserved as part of Volume XXV. This text amply demonstrates the relationship between Bulić and Delalle. In the manuscript, Revd Bulić described his relationship with Revd Delalle. Revd Bulić substantiated his arguments by citing Abramić's article. However, this was not the only contending issue concerning the Kairos relief. More specifically, in the manuscript, Bulić stated:

"But what is even stranger is that Dr Petković, the director of the Belgrade Archaeological Museum, told Dr Abramić, who is very angry, and rightly so, that Revd Ivan Delalle had offered to sell him the relief" (cf. Bulić, 1933–1934d).

The official website of the City of Trogir cites Šilović as the discoverer of the Kairos relief (**Figure 3**). Delalle's silence was curious. Revd Bulić observed that he had sent letters and postcards to resolve the matter. Interestingly, Delalle never claimed to have discovered Kairos again.

The matter of Delalle's doctoral title

On 22 April 1930, Delalle defended his doctoral dissertation in Rome (**Figure 4**), after which he returned to Trogir, his hometown, to teach Christian archeology to theologians (Bulić, 1933–1934b).

The problem occurred when Delalle started adding "Doctor" to his name in his published articles. According to Revd Bulić, he started using the title in 1932, although he never specified where:

"It is a disgrace for Delalle that he has been signing himself as 'Dr' since 1932, when according to the statute of Annuario del pontifico Instituto di archeologia cristiana, Roma, (1929), he has no right to the title of doctor because he is yet to submit his paper on the Chapel of St Venantius to receive his degree, although I have told him to do so, on behalf of Professor Kirsch" (Bulić, 1933–1934b).

L'ORATORIO DI SAN VENANZIO PRESSO IL BATTISTERO

La sacrosanta Basilica Lateranense, diventata "Omnium Urbis et Orbis Ecclesiarum Mater et Caput", tenuta sempre dai romani Pontefici come "sponsa" prediletta e questi lavoravano "ut decus et venustas illius accrescat continuisque proficiat incrementis", come ci indicano le biografie dei diversi pontefici (l), accoglie nel suo seno materno i ricordi e le vicende delle lontane provincie cristiane.

Cosi la Basilica Lateranense è congiunta con le memorie della Dalmazia cristiana come si espresse con enfasi Mons. Bulic: "Pervetustae Salonitanae Ecclesiae Martyrum Reliquias omnium urbis et orbis ecclesiarum mater et caput basilica lateranensis iam sacculo septimeo amplerate pie servat et colit (2). Nella sua immediata vicinanza, presso il Battistero Lateranense si trova tuttora l'oratorio o la chiesa di San Venanzio.e degli altri Santi dalmati.

I. Stato attuale dell'Oratorio

Il vero titolare dell'oratorio oggidi non si ricorda più e l'oratorio è conosciuto dalla popolazione romana sotto il nome del

- (1) Kehr : Regesta Pontificum Romanorum Vol. I p. 30
- (2) Folium Diocesanum Spalatense in honorem SS. D.N. Papae
 - P11 XI (Am. 1929 N. 2 p. 12).

Figure 4. Page one of Delalle's dissertation. One copy of Delalle's dissertation is owned by the Karlo Grenc Foundation; another is kept in the archives of the *Pontificio istituto di archeologia christiana*. Reproduced with the permission of the Karlo Grenc Foundation. Retrieved from https://www.piac.it/listituto/storia/tesi-di-dottorato-discusse/.

Delalle indeed wrote his dissertation but did not publish it for a wider public use; an original is kept in the archives of *Pontificio istituto di archeologia christiana* written with an old personal typewriter machine, while only one known copy exists; no official printing house ever published the dissertation as a book. The statute of the Archaeological Institute states that one must publish a dissertation to use the title of a doctor; otherwise, they would only receive the diploma *al magistero di archeologia cristiana*.

Revd Bulić kept imploring Delalle to publish his work; why Delalle failed to do so, we cannot say. In his *Pro memoria*, Bulić wrote that he had met Delalle and confronted him about his use of the title of doctor, to which Delalle had replied that he had a doctoral de-



gree. In his *Pro memoria*, Revd Bulić went as far as copying the part of the statute of the Archaeological Institute concerning the use of the title of doctor. It does, indeed, state that in order to use the title of doctor, one must publish a dissertation; otherwise, they would only receive the diploma *al magistero di archeologia cristiana*. At that time, Bulić was corresponding with Delalle's professor Kirsch, in the hope that Delalle would soon publish his paper. In a letter sent on 16 December 1933, Kirsch confirmed to Bulić that Delalle could not use the title of doctor (Bulić, 1933–1934d).

Bulić implored Revd Delalle on several occasions and offered his help with publishing the dissertation. Understandably, Delalle had to postpone the publishing of his paper due to illness. However, he wrote to Bulić on several occasions that he had recovered his health and that he would send his paper to Rome at the earliest opportunity. Kirsch and Bulić corresponded from the end of 1933 until Bulić's death. The publication of Delalle's paper was at the heart of their conversation. In one letter, Kirsch praised Delalle's excellent work, going so far as to offer to print it independently, at his own expense, at the institute:

"Msgr. Kirsch recently wrote to me to urge Delalle to send his good work to the Baptistery of St John Lateran, so that he could print it at Studii di archeologia cristiana" (cf. Bulić, 1933–1934d).

In fact, Bulić once even excused Delalle to Kirsch, probably out of embarrassment, explaining that Delalle had just begun serving as pastor in Trogir and could not send his paper at the moment due to work. Delalle neglected to reply to postcards in which Bulić questioned him about sending in the paper. Bulić truthfully tried his best because he wanted Delalle to publish his dissertation – just 19 days before his death, he begged Delalle to send in the paper:

"On 10 July 1934, I saw Delalle for the first time in several months at conferences at the seminary... and told him beati oculi qui te vident, et aures quae te audiunt. Then I asked him if he had sent his paper to Msgr. Kirsch. He replied that he had not, and that he would come to see me" (cf. Bulić, 1933–1934d).

That was the last mention of Delalle's doctoral dissertation. In summary, Delalle had no right to use the title of doctor until he published his dissertation. Seeing as it was never published due to unknown reasons, he was – *de facto* and *de jure* – not a doctor of Christian archeology and had no right to the title of doctor. Toni Vučemilović, who at length studied Revd Delalle and his work, presented several articles that Revd Delalle signed as "Doctor" in his diploma thesis (Vučemilović, 1998, p. 30). We can only speculate as to why he never published his valuable dissertation. Maybe it just did not matter to him.

19 days later, Bulić passed away. Delalle never published his doctoral dissertation. There are two extant copies of the manuscript; the original version owned by the Karlo Grenc Foundation and another kept in the archives of the *Pontificio istituto di archeologia christiana*, from which Delalle received his doctorate (**Figure 4**).

Political disagreements

The biggest crisis, if we may call it that, between the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia sprung from the Church's growing dissatisfaction with the

Sokol (Falcon) movement. Sokol was a unique youth organization devoted to the physical and moral education of young people. The movement was founded in early 1929 and had several branches, published a newspaper, and held joint "gatherings" across the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Nielsen, 2014). On 17 December 1932, the Episcopal Conference of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia held a meeting in Zagreb and issued a joint epistle, which was then published in all Catholic newspapers and had to be read in all churches on Sunday, 8 January 1933 (Poslanica katoličkog episkopata, 1933, p. 2). The epistle addressed the Sokol Association of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Even before the joint epistle, several bishops published articles criticizing the organization. For example, in 1931, Bishop Josip Srebrnić from Krk published an article entitled *The spirit of Tyrš*. The joint epistle of the Bishops' Conference spoke at length about Miroslav Tyrš, the Czech who founded the Sokol organization. In the epistle, bishops warned parents to keep their children from joining such organizations, claiming that they were fundamentally atheist and anti-church, and went so far as to explicitly ban any member of the *Sokol* society from partaking in the sacraments (Poslanica katoličkog episkopata, 1933, p. 9). Members of Tyrš's Sokol used to hold their rallies and gatherings on Sundays, during Mass, or on holidays, dancing and drinking until dawn, while often staging indecent performances. Although these arguments were corroborated with examples, a portion of the clergy still believed that it would be unjust to generalize and label the entire organization as anti-church and atheist. For example, Bishop Frano Uccellini of Kotor refused to sign the epistle. He claimed not to see anything contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church in the basic tenets of the Sokol organization (Nielsen, 2014, p. 224).

What connects Delalle, Bulić, and this story? While the joint epistle was being published, Revd Bulić wrote:

"I heard that Delalle did not read the circular of the Yugoslav diocese on the Sokol movement at the low mass in Trogir on 8 January 1933, and neither did the abbot at the high mass. I wrote to Delalle to let me know about the movement, but I did not receive a response" (cf. Bulić, 1933–1934d).

Delalle's real stance may be inferred from a note in which Bulić mentioned that Bishop Kvirin Klement Bonefačić had appointed a committee consisting of Delalle, Revd Frane Ivanišević, Revd Lovre Katići, and Revd Ivan Garković. The committee was tasked with drafting the *Hagiography patriae*, or the recounting of the lives of saints of the Split diocese based on historical records in the field of archeology, iconography, and hagiography. The committee, as Bulić ironically remarked, never met. Revd Bulić jotted down a few lines on every member of the committee. About Revd Ivanišević, he wrote: "Revd Frane Ivanišević, *abiit in regionem longinquam* [left for a distant land, quoting *Luke* 19:12; figuratively: he was not all there], rallied in his letters against the episcopal circular regarding the Sokol movement (Bulić, 1933–1934b)." In 1919, Revd Ivanišević gave an interview for the Belgrade paper *Politika*, shortly after the publication of the joint epistle of the Yugoslav Bishops' Conference. The article states:

"No one has the right to dispute the right and duty of the episcopal conference to spiritually educate the faithful and the parish, to pluck the poisonous weeds from the Lord's field when they appear. But even then, one should exercise great skill and



caution, so that we do not become like that evangelical reaper, who, while cutting down poisonous weed also inadvertently pulled out the good seed and caused more harm than good, as was the case with the episcopal epistle. The reaction should have been predicted beforehand as difficult operations of this kind have always ended in complications that a skilled surgeon, both spiritual and physical, should try to avoid. This direct move against 'Sokol' directly affects the state, whose goals and ideals 'Sokol' explicitly supports" (cf. Novak, 1933, p. 2).

Evidently, Ivanišević opportunely concluded that the Church should keep out of state affairs because the Church enjoyed a much better position in Yugoslavia than in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (Novak, 1933, p. 2). Ivanišević also cited examples of several countries where the Church supported the *Sokol* movement. We can only assume that Delalle disregarded the Church's instruction and refused to read the common epistle at Mass because he shared this attitude or held a similar one (Bulić, 1933–1934a).

Another apple of political discord between Bulić and Delalle had to do with Delalle's political activism. Bulić wrote: "The 13 July 1933 edition of *Novo doba* reports that Ivan Delalle, now a canon in Trogir, is to be appointed as councilor of the Littoral Banovina, although he was warned not to meddle in such affairs (Bulić, 1933–1934a). Elsewhere, Bulić wrote:

"On the evening of 5 October 1933, Bishop Bonefačić told me that he had renounced his position in the council of the Littoral Banovina, although the bishop once informed me that he had forbidden him to do so" (cf. Bulić, 1933–1934a).

This note would suggest that Bishop Bonefačić also clashed with Delalle. However, Bonefačić did not take any action against Delalle; moreover, he allowed Delalle to run for banate councilor (banate is a territory ruled by a ban), if he was not allowed to speak at the sessions (Bulić, 1933–1934d). Shortly afterwards, Revd Bulić learned another tidbit about Delalle's political activity:

"On 1 March 1934, Prof Revd Ante Sasso, a retired high school teacher from Trogir, told me that Revd Ivan Delalle's brother, a merchant and manufacturer from Trogir, had gone under and filed for bankruptcy, so his brother, Revd Ivan, was trying to get him into an office of the Trogir Municipality. He also told me that he was too friendly with the current mayor, Frano Slado" (cf. Bulić, 1933–1934d).

However, after being elected a Split banate councilor and Trogir municipal councilor, Revd Delalle, disillusioned, withdrew from these positions (Lončarević, 2011, p. 27).

In his Pro memoria (Figure 5), Revd Bulić recounted:

"All this is a real sin for Delalle, who has a golden quill for feuilletons, full of enthusiasm and ideals... He must be saved because the older he gets, the worse it will get for him. The environment in Trogir, where he receives nothing but flattery, does him no good" (cf. Bulić, 1933–1934d).

The correspondence between Revd Delalle and Revd Bulić ended with the line *abiit in regionem longinquam* (not all there – literal translation: inhabits a distant land) (Bulić, 1933–1934d).



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Figure 5. Excerpt of Revd Bulić's record on Delalle entitled Pro memoria. Revd Frane Bulić's legacy, Volume XXV, No. 68. Library of the Catholic Faculty of Theology. Reproduced with the permission of the library of the Catholic Faculty of Theology.

Discussion

This paper attempts to shed light on major topics in the broader historical discourse, such as the date and site of the martyrdom of St Domnius. Even today, St Domnius is often falsely described as St Peter's student and an early Christian martyr who lived at the turn of the 1st to the 2nd century. The controversies that troubled Revd Bulić have given rise to indisputable facts that have been acknowledged both by the scientific milieu as well as the Church's liturgical practice.



The controversy surrounding the installation of Gregory of Nin helps to better understand the historical background of the statue. The figure of Gregory of Nin was misused both in the first and second Yugoslavia. Contrary to historical facts, his character "forcibly" became a symbol of resistance to Italian hegemony. His placement in the Peristyle was essentially politically motivated, while Revd Bulić opposed the statue purely on aesthetical grounds.

Delalle's doctoral dissertation was on *L'oratorio di San Venanzio presso il battistero lateranense* (The Oratory of St Venantius next to the Lateran baptistery) (Figure 4). Unfortunately, his valuable work has not been translated and remains neglected in the field of art history.

The letters demonstrate that the discovery of *Kairos*, a shallow relief of the Greek god of the opportune moment, was made by Roko Slade Šilović (Boschung, 2013), and not by Delalle, as reported by Toni Vučemilović in his thesis. The letters also provide an interpretation of the central aedicula of the early Christian sarcophagus of the Good Shepherd, now exhibited in the Split Archaeological Museum (Jarak & Cambi, 2016; Wilpert, 1929).

These topics leave room for further research. In some ways, Delalle's doctoral dissertation is still waiting for better days to be translated, published, and studied in more detail.

Finally, we may conclude that the relationship between Revd Bulić and Revd Delalle remained at a stalemate; although it was never permanently and irretrievably lost, Revd Bulić's death put a stop to any possibility of smoothing out their disagreements. After all, Revd Delalle never shared his affinity for historical and archaeological research, as determined by his opus.

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