

LIVIO MARIJAN



VELI IŽ

GLAGOLJAŠKO PUČKO CRKVENO
PJEVANJE U ZADARSKOJ NADBISKUPIJI

P J E V A N A B A Š T I N A



VELI IŽ – GLAGOLJAŠKO PUČKO CRKVENO PJEVANJE U ZADARSKOJ NADBISKUPIJI
VELI IŽ - GLAGOLITIC FOLK CHURCH CHANTING IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF ZADAR

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Hrvatska kulturna udruga Pjevana baština
Institut za etnologiju i folkloristiku
Zagreb, 2013.



Dan od gnjeva

Posljednica mise za mrtve (Dies irae)

♩ = 90

I STRANA



Dan od gnje - va vaj ne - mi - lom! Svijet će spr - žit o - gnja si - lom



ve - li Da - vid — sa Si - bi - lom.

II STRANA



Ko - lik tre - pet tad će bi - ti ka - da Su - dac bu - de si - ti



sve po - tan - ko — ra - su - di - ti. —

Poslušajte, braćo mila

Gospin plač, T.Babić, 18. st. (Planctus Mariae)

♩ = 100

I STRANA



Po - slu - šaj - te, bra - ćo mi - la gor - ku mu - ku Go - spo - di - na.

II STRANA



I - su - krs - ta Bo - žjeg Si - na ko - ju za nas — sa - da pri - ma.





PJEVANA BAŠTINA



9. THE GLAGOLITIC CHANT OF THE PARISH OF VELI IŽ

The multimedial monography “The Glagolitic Chant of Veli Iž” is the seventh publication within the project of the “Heritage of Chant”, the first of the series covering the Glagolitic liturgical heritage of the Archdiocese of Zadar. It consists of a monography on the history, Glagolitic culture and liturgical chant of Veli Iž, three audio compact discs with 112 recordings of liturgical, paraliturgical and folk chants of Veli Iž and one digital video disc with a documentary report on the town of Veli Iž and its history and Glagolitic heritage.

9.1. The Glagolitic heritage

It is well known that the Glagolitic alphabet played a unique cultural, historical and social role among the Croats. By the end of the 15th century the most important monuments of Croatian literature emerged in the Glagolitic script and only 28 years after Gutenberg’s invention of print the first printed Glagolitic Missal came out. More than just an alphabet that is not Latin or Cyrillic, Glagolitsa and Glagoliticism implies a unique sacral and secular culture, consisting of literature, art, social and political values, music, spirituality, customs and mentality. From the very beginning the fundamental basis of Croatian Glagoliticism was the Church liturgy. Unlike the rest of the Catholic nations of Europe, who until the 20th century used the Roman Rite in the Latin language, the Croats had the Roman Rite in Old Church Slavonic and the Glagolitic script. This tradition is based in the apostolic work of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in the 8th century who translated biblical and liturgical texts of both Byzantine and Roman liturgical provenience into Slavonic. While the eastern and southern Slavic peoples entered the eastern (byzantine) ecclesiastical sphere and used Slavonic, but in the Byzantine rite and the Cyrillic script, the Croats from the start used Slavonic,



but in the Roman rite in the Glagolitic script. This phenomena was without precedent in the Catholic Church where Latin was the only official liturgical language. Eventhough the Glagolitic liturgy was approved and tolerated by Rome, nevertheless it was often looked upon as something irregular and even illegal by local Latin clergy and various governments that ruled the Croatian Adriatic, where the Glagolitic liturgy existed. The paradox of the Glagolitic liturgy of the Croats is that at the same time it connected the Croats to the orthodox Slavs via the Slavonic liturgical language, but also divided them due to the difference of rites and the fact that they belonged to the Catholic Church. On the other hand, Glagolitism divided the Croats from the rest of the Catholic west via the use of Slavonic and not Latin, but united them due to the same Roman rite and Catholic affiliation.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Glagolitic heritage among the Croats is the Glagolitic liturgical chant. It is only natural that the phenomena of the Roman rite celebrated in a domestic and familiar language produced a unique chant. The language was familiar and understandable to the folk and this enabled the lay people to engage actively in the liturgy. While the peoples of Western Europe had very little access and almost no active participation in the liturgical services of the Church, and thus developed paraliturgical rites and chants as a substitute, the Croats fully participated in the liturgy, they chanted it and understood it. This fact gave rise to the developement of a unique liturgical chant that is not Gregorian (typical for the Roman rite) but instead an original “homemade” chant that can be described as having elements of old Gregorian and Byzantine elements, but on the most part as an authentic musical tradition based largely on folk music. Glagolitic chants originated in a very tight relation to the traditional folk music of the the Croatian Adriatic (Istria, Quarner and Dalmatia) and represent a unique “folk liturgical chant” in Western European culture.

9.2. Veli Iž and its history

The small island of Iž lies in the North Dalmatia, 14 nautic miles from Zadar. There are two villages on the island: Veli Iž and Mali Iž. Croats inhabited the island since the 10th century. The Church of St. Mary in Mali Iž dates back to the 9th century while the first historic record of the parish church of St. Peter in Veli Iž comes from 1341. During history the basic occupation of the islanders were olive and vine cultivation, sheep breeding and fishing. Since the 18th century shipping and marine activity prevailed and in the 20th century emigration strongly depopulated the island. In 1527 Veli Iž had a population of 174, in 1759 - 396, in 1900 - 1318, in 1981 - 556



and finally in 2012 less than 300. Until 1409 Iž was under the Croatian and then the Croato-Hungarian kingdom, from 1409–1813 under Venice, 1813–1918 the Austro-Hungarian Empire, 1918–1945 the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, 1945–1990 the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and since 1990 the Republic of Croatia. During its history it was always connected to the city of Zadar. For almost 500 years the administrative and ruling class of the region were the Italian speaking Dalmatians and Venetians. The Croatian language emerged as official only in the 20th century. The island villages were fairly autonomous communities and they never experienced the typical feudal system unlike the rest of Croatia and Europe. Dalmatia had the colonate system in which the villagers were free men and small landowners with a longterm tenancy relationship to the landlords. This economic system, alongside the development of fishing and shipping and a strong Glagolitic culture formed the basis for the expansion of the islands economy and autonomy in the 18th and 19th centuries. The rise of navigation and seamanship gave rise to a significant economic, cultural and social development of Veli Iž in the beginning of the 20th century, when it became one of the most prosperous villages in the area. The population engaged actively in the partisan resistance against fascist and nazi occupators during World War II. The Church experienced a very harsh repression during the 1945–1990 communist regime suffering attacks, the imprisonment of priests, alienation from the people due to propaganda and complete control of all public life.

The parish church of Sts. Peter and Paul was enlarged three times in 700 years. In the beginning it was a small gothic style church on the very seaside. In 1700 it was rebuilt in the baroque style and in the 19th and 20th centuries enlarged again to its present form. It has five monumental marble altars in the baroque style from the 18th century. One of the oldest and most precious silver processional crosses in the Zadar region (14th century romanesque style) belongs to the church.

9.3. The Glagolitic patrimony of Veli Iž

From the very beginning Veli Iž was a Glagolitic parish, the liturgical language being the Croatian recension of the Old Church Slavonic written in the Glagolitic script. Historic records list Glagolitic priests since the 14th century. A number of 140 Glagolitic priests are known from the 14th to the 20th century, putting Veli Iž on the fourth place in terms of number of Glagolitic Clergy on the Zadar Islands. Only in the 18th century there are 76 priests recorded (up to 14 in the village at the same time). They acquired



minimal theological and liturgical education at home, being taught by elder priests. They received clerical ordinations by the archbishop in Zadar, first as deacons and later as priests. At home they lived a simple life of fishermen and farmers, remaining with their parents and relatives, participating regularly in the Mass and Canonical Hours in the parish church. They actually rarely administered sacraments to parishioners or celebrated Mass on their own, because this was the regular and official ministry of only one of them - the parish vicar. Some of them travelled and served as priests in other parishes, regions and even abroad, while others never left the island. They were very active in the life of the village, promoting social and economical development and national consciousness. Since the 19th century they regularly attend the theological seminary in Zadar where they received professional education and became parish priests throughout the diocese.

One of the most important and valuable inheritances of the Glagolitic priests is the written Glagolitic heritage they left behind. It consists of various documents (letters, rescripts, liturgical books, chronicles, stone carvings) in manuscript and printed Glagolitsa form, conserved in the contemporary parish, regional and state archives. Three stone carvings with Glagolitsa inscriptions still exist in Veli Iž, while two have been lost (all date from the 17th century). The parish archive contains five manuscripts (three chronicals of church fraternities, one baptismal register and one register of deaths) dating from 1712 to 1831 and some 15 various letters, fragments and legal acts in manuscript. The parish church has 19 liturgical books in printed Glagolitsa (mostly missals and breviaries) dating from the 18th century.

The Glagolitic culture of Veli Iž includes religious, social and folk traditions that shaped the history and identity of its inhabitants for centuries. One of the most important institutions in the history of the island were the lay fraternities (brotherhoods) that promoted religious and social life. The earliest ever recorded is the Fraternity of St. Peter in 1448. The brotherhoods were independent organizations of clergy and laity, dedicated to the Virgin Mary or various saints, with their written rules and statutes, governing structures (chairmen, treasurers, judges) legal possessions and properties (olives and vineyards) and regular income acquired from membership dues, charity, contributions. Their main task was promoting religious and social values, and most of all caring for their deceased members by organizing and paying costs for funerals and holding prayer memorials for them. They each had their own chaplain, supported and cared for its own altar in the parish church, provided for liturgical needs (oil lamps, candles, liturgical vestments) and in the 19th century adorned the church with monumental



marble altars. They participated in the liturgical rites and solemn processions with candels. Once a year they held their annual assembly and feast. Brotherhoods were the only organized societies in the village throughout history and they played an essential role in shaping the social and religious life of the people. Their statutes and chronicles are the most renowned Glagolitic manuscripts in Veli Iž and represent invaluable sources for the history of the parish.

The Glagolitic liturgy had a formative impact on the traditions and customs of generations of islanders. Family and community life were centered around the church and the liturgy. The liturgy was elaborate and rich, consisting of the Sunday and feastday solemn masses and various other services such as the Office of Hours (Vespers, Matins) and devotional services (Benediction, Rosary, The Stations of the Cross, processions) according to the yearly liturgical cycle. The Mass was always celebrated in Old Church Slavonic while the other rites and services were mostly held in the vernacular Croatian, making them understandable and enabling all the texts and rites to become an integral part of the spiritual and psychological life of the people. Moreover, the people actively participated in the prayers, chants and rituals and they felt them as their own. The Roman Rite is known for its sobriety and simplicity. But its “glagolitic” version was not only linguistically different, it was also different in its elaborate ritual and ceremony, resembling a more “mediterranean” or “byzantine” style than the typical western liturgical style. The Glagolitic priests and the people chanted in a thundering voice, the rites were supplemented with extra paraliturgical ceremonies reflecting folk customs with annual solemn processions through the village and special chants on feastdays. Chanting was led by two male choirs seated on both sides of the altar in the sanctuary. They sung the propers and ordinary parts of the liturgy, usually alternating verses and strophes. Being a cantor of the choir was a lifetime occupation and a special honor. It was only in the 20th century that women began to sing in church.

Feastdays graded as solemnities (Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Pentecost, etc) meant a special order of bell ringing, a more solemn mass ritual, special festive chanting and the celebration of solemn Vespers in the evening. On Sundays and feastdays the entire village would gather after church services for the traditional circle dance and folk singing. The culmination of the liturgical year was Holy Week with the use of rattles during the Triduum, the Tenebrae Offices (Office of Matins with the Lamentations of Jeremiah), the night procession of Good Friday and the chanting of the Lament of the Virgin Mary. The chants of these rites were distinctly different than chants for the rest of the liturgical year, marked with lamentative solemn melodies.



Snimanje glagoljaške mise za TV magazin Alpe Dunav Jadran 2010.





The Christmas season was also rich in customs. It began nine days before Christmas with the Rorate Masses before dawn when the church would be enlightened with boat lanterns. Christmas celebrations began with the first Nativity Mass before daybreak and lasted for twelve days, until the feast of Epiphany (Holy Three Kings). These days were marked by various folk customs such as bonfires, the election and coronation of a village king, burning the yule-log in the domestic fireplace. A very important part of the religious and liturgical life were the memorials of the deceased. The names of the dead were read from the altar every Sunday (according to the day of death in the oncoming week through a period of one hundred years after a persons death). Requiem Vespers were sung every Sunday and on All Souls Day the entire Requiem Office with a processional visit to the cemetery was held. On this day the whole village would gather in the square where special endowments were held in honor of the deceased. Families would distribute bread and wine to the village folk as their deceased members ordered them in their last wills, so that all would pray for their souls and honor their memory.

The liturgy had a strong impact on family and personal life. At sunset on the eve of Sundays and feastdays oil lamps were lit in every home in honor of the feast and the memory of deceased relatives. On Christmas eve, the head of the family would bring the yule-log (a large piece of olive wood) and ceremonially place it on the fireplace where it would burn until Epiphany. He would also bless the family, house, barns, fishing boats and nets and cattle with incense. Every evening families would gather to recite the Rosary by the fireplace. Seamen made special vows to the parish church and saints, granting incense, candels, oil for lamps or even building small chapels in honor of saints. Sailing ships in the 18th and 19th century carried names of saints (St. Nicholas, St. Anthony). Baptism, first communion, christmation, marriage, life long friendship alliances, funerals and memorials were all accompanied by special rituals in the parish church.

9.4. The Glagolitic chant of Veli Iž

One of the most distinct cultural features of the Glagolitic culture and history of Veli Iž is the Glagolitic chant. In 1177 on the occasion of pope Alexander III's visit to Zadar, it was recorded that the people greeted him with lauds and canticles that resounded strongly in their Slavic language. This is the earliest historic record of Glagolitic chanting ever. There is only sparse historical data on the Glagolitic chant of Veli Iž. It was never written down in notes or tape recorded until the middle of the 20th century. The earliest his-



toric data comes from the pastoral visitations of bishops where one can find sporadic notes mentioning the liturgy. Visitations as early as the beginning of the 17th century (1603) note the existence of Glagolitic Missals, the celebration of solemn Mass and Vespers every Sunday, the Glagolitic clergy reciting Matins and Lauds. Archbishop Parzaga noted in 1670 that he was escorted to the parish church by the clergy chanting the “Te Deum”. In 1678 the pastor declares to the bishop that he regularly ‘chants and celebrates Mass and Vespers’ and preforms all the rites in Old Church Slavonic. The Glagolitic manuscripts of the parish archive during the 18th and 19th century have entries mentioning church cantors (for example they receive wine for chanting the Lament of the Virgin Mary on Good Friday) or the liturgy (the unusual custom of playing bagpipes and drums at the church services during the Christmas season). Other sources are the various Glagolitic Missals and Breviaries that date back to the 17th and 18th centuries and also the lectionary books and rituals in the vernacular Croatian of the time (called “ščavel” – from Italian “schiavetto” meaning “Slav”). The order of the liturgy in the parish church is described in detail in the “Parish Order of Services Book” (Običajnik) where the various chants, liturgical texts and rites are described. But none of these historic records bring information on the actual musical structure and traits of the chants. They were handed down from generation to generation by oral tradition and sung by heart.

First tape recordings were made in 1958 by ethnomusicologist Jerko Bezić of the Croatian Academy in Zagreb, who recorded 5 liturgical and 5 folk chants during his visit to Veli Iž. In 1949 the pastor Vladislav Cvitanović put the melodies of the Ordinary of the Mass (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei) into notes and sent them to a renowned musicologist in Zagreb in order to harmonize them. The pastor was one of the last authentic Glagolitic priests in Veli Iž and the whole Zadar area. For almost 40 years he engaged himself in transcribing and researching Glagolitic manuscripts. Much of the data on Glagolitic priests and culture we have today comes from his research. During the 1980’s and 1990’s ethnologist Livio Marijan, a native of Veli Iž, systematically recorded the Glagolitic chants and collected information from the elder generations in Veli Iž. Finally Jerko Bezić made a recording of the revived Glagolitic Mass on the Feast of the Assumption in 1994. Recordings were made also during 2000-2012. The CD’s that accompany this monography were compiled from all of these recordings, the majority of which are live recordings of the actual church services.

The historical data reveals that since the 18th century, alongside the regular use of Old Church Slavonic in the Mass, the vernacular Croatian was used in other services (Bible readings, Canonical Hours, Holy Week



Offices, Requiem services and paraliturgical devotions) eventhough it was illegal according to Church Law. This phenomenon was wide spread in Glagolitic parishes on the Croatian coast, especially since the 18th century when lectionaries and ritual books in the Croatian language began to appear. It also facilitated and encouraged the participation of the laity in church singing. We can conclude from the various historical notes that the liturgy was rich and elaborate, laymen cantors engaged in liturgical chanting together with the Glagolitic clergy, the antiphonal and responsorial modes of chanting were used. By the end of the 19th century, due to the decline of priest vocations, the once numerous choir of Glagolitic clerics was replaced by two choirs of lay cantors that eventually became an "institution" in the parish church with a leading role in the church liturgy. Only in the beginning of the 20th century women began to participate in the singing of the Mass. During the 1920's a female choir was founded and in 1939 an organ introduced. From then on the choir of cantors and the traditional Glagolitic chanting were in decline in favor of the choir performance and sophisticated new church music. During the Communist era church attendance dropped drastically due to regime oppression and attacks on the Church and priests. Singing in Church services was upheld by the eldest generation and during the 1980's it came down to a very few left. In the 1960's the liturgical reform of the Second Vatican Council was implemented, introducing the standard Croatian language in all Church services. It had little effect on the chants themselves because the melodies of the Glagolitic Mass were mainly preserved, being only modified by the change of language from Slavonic to Croatian (which are very similar). Following the fall of the communist regime, the rise of democracy and the independent Republic of Croatia in 1990, the Church experienced a revival in all fields, including the liturgical chant. The traditional Glagolitic chanting was revived and many disused and forgotten old rites and chants were brought back to life. The chants were recorded and research was done. This revival culminated in presentations of the Glagolitic chants outside Veli Iž as a rare cultural heritage. Church cantors performed traditional Glagolitic chants at various festivals in Zagreb, Zadar and other places. Television and radio broadcasts presented this unique tradition to the public and today it can also be seen on youtube.

The historical developement of the Glagolitic chant in Veli Iž can be divided in several phases. The first is the early phase when the liturgical chant was performed mainly by the priests and clergy (deacons, candidates), who exclusively used the Glagolitic liturgical books and Old Church Slavonic. The only evidence of their actual chanting is scarce historical data and a few old chants that survived. They reveal a very archaic and funda-



mental musical structure. The second phase begins in the 17th century with the infiltration of the vernacular Croatian language into Church services (liturgical and paraliturgical) that introduced a greater participation of the laity in Church singing and thus secular folk melodies. The third phase coincides with the decline of the number of priests in the 18th century when a choir of laymen cantors took up their role as leaders and performers of the liturgical chant. In this period, priests received education and training in Zadar and as a result introduced new melodies and chants for the Mass and especially psalmodic chanting of the Office. In 1903, a new melody for the Ordinary of the Mass was introduced. The priests worked with lay cantors and chants of the Cathedral of Zadar and other urban centers of Dalmatia entered into the traditional Church singing of Veli Iž. The fourth phase came about in the 1920's and 1930's and is characterised by the introduction of classical and composed church music, executed by a newly formed female choir and accompanied by an organ. Many traditional and archaic Glagolitic tunes were lost due to being replaced with new ones. The old traditional melodies were not seen as fit in a 20th century culture when the entire lifestyle was modernised. The fifth phase is the renewal of the 1990's when most of the old chants were revived again as a unique and authentic cultural heritage.

Regarding the musical characteristics of the Glagolitic chants of Veli Iž, we can sort the chants in three groups. The first group consists of old chants, some of which can be truly called "original" or "authentic" Glagolitic chants. They represent roughly around 25 % of all the chants and they belong to the old "historic" style, having a very simple, basic and archaic musical structure and polyphony. Some of them even have traces of chromatic elements. Eventhough a few of them contain elements of simple Gregorian melodies, most of them display the typical musical characteristics of the old vocal folk music style of this region (recitative melodies with only two to four tones, short intervals with eventual semitones, periodical twopart singing with unison endings). These chants can be divided in very simple and simple old-style melodies (recordings nr. 8, 15, 20, 21, 25, 34, 36, 43, 44, 63, 72, 80-87, 92, 93, 95, 96, 102, 104) and elaborate or developed old-style melodies (nr. 2, 5, 19, 28, 38, 65, 66, 77, 88, 97, 98, 103). They represent the first historical layer of Glagolitic singing in Veli Iž.

The second group of chants represent the second historical layer, dating eventually to the 18th and 19th century, with a more complexed, developed and elaborate musical structure based entirely on the diatonic major scale and accord harmony. They were imported from urban centers of Dalmatia and the Cathedral of Zadar. Originally they were sung in two part singing, but gradually some developed into three and four part melodies in



recent times. This group contains most chants of the Mass, Vespers and Holy Week (nr. 3, 4, 7, 9, 10-18, 22, 24, 26, 27, 29, 37, 39, 40-42, 45-61, 68, 71, 73-75, 90, 94, 99-101). Among these is a number of chanted lessons sung by solists.

The third group belongs to the newest historical layer, consisting of composed church music of the 19th and 20th century, imported from various sources (basically the Croatian Church music books of the 20th century). All of the imported and new melodies that became a part of the church singing in Veli Iž experienced some type or scale of modification because the folk interpreted and modified them more or less according to their traditional musical taste and possibilities, in a sense giving them a traditional “Glagolitic” interpretation (nr. 29, 31-33, 35, 58, 62, 67, 69, 70).

As a comparison, historic recordings of the oldest living singers alive in Veli Iž in 1958 and 1898 are found at the very end of CD 3 (107-112). They demonstrate the resemblance and interference of the liturgical, paraliturgical and secular folk singing tradition.

The CD recordings contain the singing of various inhabitants of Veli Iž, the eldest born in 1879, the youngest in the 1990's, covering approximately one century. Today, once again, we are witnessing a decline of the traditional chant, largely due to a steadfast and continuous decline of the population of Veli Iž (less than 300 in 2012, the majority of which are senior citizens). Upholding a fairly rich and diverse vocal musical heritage such as the Glagolitic chant in a small and depopulated parish such as Veli Iž is not an easy task. The few leading singers are amateurs and it is mainly their love and respect for such a unique tradition, alongside their natural talent and personal commitment, that is keeping this great sacral, musical, historical and cultural phenomenon alive.







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