

THE NARRATIVE HAGIOGRAPHIC SOURCE OF THE OLD CROATIAN PLAY *MUKA SVETE MARGARITE*¹

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The article contributes to the debate on the primary narrative hagiographic source of the Old Croatian octosyllabic saint play *Muka svete Margarite* [‘The Passion of Saint Margaret’], which is preserved in the *Florentine Miscellany* and the *Šibenik Manuscript* from the 16th century, as well as in the *Zadar Manuscript* from the first half of the 17th century. It argues that the play’s source was likely a Latin version of the widespread prose legend of Saint Margaret, pseudoepigraphically attributed to Theotimus. This Latin origin was previously postulated by Carlo Verdiani, although he eventually failed to substantiate his hypothesis convincingly. The present article verifies the plausibility of Verdiani’s view. Also, it challenges a competing interpretation by Eduard Hercigonja that *Muka svete Margarite* draws on the Croatian Glagolitic hagiographic tradition. The article demonstrates that the Old Croatian play contains numerous motifs common to Latin versions of the Pseudo-Theotimus legend that are not attested in the Croatian Glagolitic translation. Furthermore, while Hercigonja claims that *Muka svete Margarite* shares specific motifs exclusively with the Croatian Glagolitic legends, the article shows that those same motifs also appear in the Latin hagiographic tradition. The demonstrated affinity between *Muka svete Margarite* and the Latin prose legend also sheds new light on the degree of proximity between the play’s versions and their hypothetical urtext.

KEYWORDS:

Croatian Glagolitic hagiography, Latin literary sources, literary transfers, Margaret of Antioch, Old Croatian plays

¹ This article is a corrected, improved, and somewhat expanded version of a subchapter from my PhD thesis, *Provenijencija, žanrovski sastav i čitatelji* Firentinskoga zbornika [‘Provenance, Genres and Readers of the *Florentine Miscellany*’] (Vučković 2025: 19–37). The research has been supported by the Croatian Science Foundation under the project IP-2020-02-5611 Premodern Croatian Literature in European Culture: Contacts and Transfers.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. MANUSCRIPT SOURCES OF THE OLD CROATIAN SAINT PLAY

This article contributes to the debate on the primary narrative hagiographic source of the anonymous Old Croatian saint play *Muka svete Margarite* [‘The Passion of Saint Margaret’],² which is preserved in three manuscript codices written on paper, all three in the Latin script: the *Florentine Miscellany* from the first half of the 16th century (Florence, Laurentian Medici Library, sign. Ashb. 1582, ff. 1r–6v),³ the *Šibenik Manuscript* from the 16th century (Zagreb, Archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, sign. XV 44/8, ff. 13v–25v),⁴ and the *Zadar Manuscript* from the first half of the 17th century (Zagreb, Archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, sign. I a 44, ff. 1r–28r).⁵ Among these, only the *Zadar Manuscript* preserves

² There have been attempts to attribute *Muka svete Margarite* to Marko Marulić (1450–1524) (Verdiani 1957; 1958; 1973; Pandžić 2009: 50–106; 2019: 51–55). A comprehensive exposition of the attribution dispute is beyond the scope of this paper. To put it succinctly, the attribution of the play to Marulić rests on the assumption that one of its manuscript sources, the so-called *Florentine Miscellany*, began as a collection of Marulić’s vernacular texts written for his sister Bira, who was a Benedictine nun (Verdiani 1957; 1958; 1973). However, the hypothesis that Marulić is the sole author of the oldest section of that codex does not hold up under philological and codicological scrutiny, as demonstrated in Malić 2002; 2010; Vučković 2025: 139–156.

³ For an edition of the version from the *Florentine Miscellany*, see Kapetanović et al. 2010: 794–812. For a description of the *Florentine Miscellany*, see Verdiani 1957; 1958; 1973; Vučković 2025. Its record of *Muka svete Margarite* (Ashb. 1582, ff. 1r–6v) appears in the oldest section of the codex (ff. 1r–120v), which is a deliberately planned compilation of religious texts copied by a single scribe (Vučković 2025: 7–12). Until recently, philologists have mostly assumed that this scribe’s section of the *Florentine Miscellany* belongs to the final quarter of the 15th century or the initial years of the 16th century (Verdiani 1957; 1958; 1973). However, Bratislav Lučin has proposed a later timeframe, dating the miscellany’s watermarked paper either at the beginning of the 16th century or between the 1530s and 1560s (Lučin 2020: 84). Lučin’s revised dating is a welcome intervention, even though, based on my watermark analysis, I find his latter range more convincing than his dating to the beginning of the 16th century (Vučković 2025: 197–210). The dating of the oldest section of the miscellany has been further refined. Most notably, I have recently established a slightly later and more secure *terminus post quem* for its creation by showing that its three texts closely render a few chapters from Alberto da Castello’s Italian devotional book *Rosario della gloriosa Vergine Maria*, first published in Venice in 1521 (Vučković 2025: 117–138).

⁴ For an edition of the Šibenik copy, see Kapetanović et al. 2010: 813–829. The *Šibenik Manuscript* is briefly described by Franjo Fancev (Fancev 1925: 114–115) and in more detail by Amir Kapetanović (Kapetanović 2010).

⁵ For an edition of the copy in the *Zadar Manuscript*, see Kapetanović et al. 2010: 831–865. Franjo Fancev has scantily described the content of the codex, and its more thorough description would be welcome (Fancev 1932a: 20–21). *Muka svete Margarite* is usually presumed to be the oldest surviving saint play in the Croatian language. However, it is worth noting that its manuscript witnesses do not precede those containing the Croatian play *Prikazanje historije svetoga Panunčija*, usually

the complete copy of the play. In contrast, the acephalous *Florentine Miscellany* is missing approximately the first half of the text, while the *Šibenik Manuscript* lacks the second half (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 792; Malić 2010: 188–189).⁶ As is typical of medieval Croatian drama, in the surviving manuscript sources the play is not formally split into acts and scenes, despite the considerable length of 1,200 verses in its completely preserved copy from the *Zadar Manuscript* (cf. Perillo 1978: 61). Its dialogues and monologues are written in octosyllabic verse – the most common metre of medieval Croatian poetry – whereas its relatively elaborate staging instructions are provided in prose (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 792–793).

1.2. THE LEGEND OF ST. MARGARET OF ANTIOCH

Muka svete Margarite dramatizes the arrest and the trials of Margaret of Antioch in Pisidia,⁷ a virtuous virgin who is said to have endured imprisonment, demonic visits, and gruesome tortures before being decapitated for resolutely defying the Roman prefect Olybrius, who demanded that she venerate his gods and become his mistress or

attributed to Marko Marulić, which is based on Feo Belcari's (1410–1484) *Rappresentazione di san Panunzio*. The oldest complete copy of the Croatian adaptation of Belcari's play appears in the manuscript R6634 (Zagreb, National and University Library, sign. R6634, ff. 90v–95r), written around the year 1530 (Bibliotheca Phillippica 1976: 89; Lupić 2019: 9). However, an excerpt from *Prikazanje historije svetoga Panuncija* also appears as an interpolation in a version of the Croatian prosimetric life of Saint John the Baptist, recorded in the *Florentine Miscellany*, a codex that is also the oldest source of *Muka svete Margarite*, which is the focus of this study (Verdiani 1958: 134–135; 1973: 52). In attempts at dating of the composition of *Muka svete Margarite*, considerable attention has been given to the verse mentioning 1,500 years, which occurs in the Angel's epilogue from the version in the *Zadar Manuscript*: “Margarite, dive čiste, / ki prošćenja ne jimiste / **lit tisuća pet sat više** / ovu Muku svi ki sliše, / ki ju štiti svak dan bude, / svojoj duši raj dobude” (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 865). However, it is unclear whether the verse refers to the year of the play's composition, its past performance (Fancev 1932a: 16; Verdiani 1957: 73–74), the year when Saint Margaret's devotees received a promise of the plenary indulgence (Pandžić 2019: 54), or it simply quantifies the duration of the remitted purgatorial torments (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 792; Malić 2010: 188).

⁶ The *Šibenik Manuscript* is a convolute created from quires that initially belonged to two separately conceived volumes (Fancev 1925: 114; Kapetanović 2010: 185). Although the opening half of *Muka svete Margarite* is the final textual item in the first “codicological unit” of the *Šibenik Manuscript* (cf. Gumbert 2004), it is worth noting that two blank leaves appear afterwards within the same unit, which strongly suggests that the incompleteness of the *Šibenik* version is not due to material loss but instead due to an unfinished scribal undertaking (Kapetanović 2010: 185–186, 189).

⁷ While the saint came to be known as Margaret in Western Christianity, she appears as Marina in Greek hagiography (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 3). The latter name is also used, though rarely, in some of her earlier Latin passions (Dresvina 2012: 190, 203). In the Croatian hagiographic corpus, she is called Marina in a brief Glagolitic fragment from the late 13th or the early 14th century, which is uncovered from the binding of a 17th-century birth registry from Novo Mesto, now in Slovenia (*non vidi*). The fragment was edited and analysed in Petrović and Mihaljević 2013.

wife. While this martyrological narrative, which emphasizes the saint's resistance to venerate official Roman deities, clearly draws on the central themes of the Christian collective memory of late antique persecutions of the members of the Church, it is at best doubtful whether a specific historical martyr inspired the creation of Margaret as a hagiographic hero or whether she was apocryphally conceived from the outset to serve as a memorable model for becoming a virginal Bride of Christ through a triumph over the purported weaknesses historically ascribed to female nature (cf. Petrović and Mihaljević 2013; Dulibić-Paljar 2018).⁸ Skepticism regarding Margaret's historical existence arises from the absence of records of her veneration amongst early Christians as well as from the nature of her legend, whose typical versions are unusually exiguous in providing specific biographical details such as locations and dates (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 3; Petrović and Mihaljević 2013).⁹ Additionally, the central section of Margaret's legend reads like an exorbitant cumulation of diverse tortures experienced by the saint, many of which appear individually in vitae of other early Christian martyrs, some of whom have a longer history of veneration (Petrović and Mihaljević 2013; cf. Badurina Stipčević 2016: 11). Finally, the episode portraying Margaret's escape from a dragon that had swallowed her, while memorable and iconographically stimulating,¹⁰ was considered so excessive even by some of the saint's hagiographers that they explicitly questioned its truthfulness, even though they worked within a genre otherwise remarkably permissive of depicting supernatural events (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 34; cf. Dresvina 2012: 189, 192; Bledsoe 2013: 31–33).¹¹

Despite the occasional emergence of voices expressing doubts regarding Margaret's historical existence or the veracity of specific episodes from her hagiography, the saint's popularity was immense in both Eastern and Western Christendom throughout the Middle Ages and Early Modern period. Unsurprisingly, the Eastern Adriatic area was no exception. While a comprehensive account of the popularity of

⁸ The overall skepticism regarding Margaret's historicity has eventually culminated in the expulsion of the saint's name from Catholic liturgical books in 1969 during their official revisions following the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) (Dresvina 2012: 189; Bledsoe 2013: 33).

⁹ The earliest traces of Margaret's cult come from the late 8th century (Dresvina 2012: 190).

¹⁰ The enduring preoccupation with the scene of Margaret's escape from the dragon's abdomen was probably due to its symbolic potential; indeed, many redactors and readers of the legend tended to interpret it as representing exorcism, birthing, or both (Dresvina 2012).

¹¹ Most famously, Jacobus de Voragine (c. 1228–1298), a learned member of the Order of Preachers and the compiler of a renowned hagiographic collection *Legenda aurea*, highlights the frivolity and fictionality of that episode of Margaret's vita (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 4, 34; Bledsoe 2013: 31–32). Interestingly, Voragine's sermons on the same saint refer to her clash with the dragon without similar reservations regarding the story's tastefulness or veracity (Bledsoe 2013: 32, 42–43).

Margaret's cult in this region is beyond the scope of this paper, the following texts from Croatian literary tradition may offer a glimpse into her enduring veneration. In addition to being the heroine of the Old Croatian medieval play copied in the *Florentine Miscellany*, *Šibenik Manuscript*, and *Zadar Manuscript*, Margaret of Antioch is also the subject of the postmedieval Croatian play *Prikazanje života svete Margarite, divice i mučenice* ['The Depiction of the Life of Saint Margaret the Virgin and Martyr'], which survives in a 17th-century manuscript collection containing a dozen religious plays based on biblical, apocryphal, and hagiographic themes (Zagreb, Archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, sign. IV a 33) (*non vidi*) (Valjavac 1893: VII–X).¹² Besides these two dramatic representations – and prose legends, which will be discussed comparatively in later sections of this article – Margaret also features prominently in Croatian didactic prose. Within the Croatian Glagolitic corpus, of particular note is a genologically hybrid piece of instructive prose on the importance of fasting, repentance, and prayer, copied in *Berčić's Miscellany No. 5* (Saint Petersburg, National Library of Russia, sign. Bč 5, ff. 2r–4r) from the 15th century and *Gršković's Miscellany* (Zagreb, Archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, sign. VII 32, ff. 126v–129v) from the 16th century (Dürriegl 2024: 249). Namely, this text, which opens descriptively, ends with a long dialogue in which Margaret compels the devil to reveal the identity of his servants among twelve categories of sinners (Dürriegl 2024). Finally, it is important to draw attention to Franjo Fancev's hypothesis that the opening of the oral poem *Ovce pase Zadarkinja Mare* ['Mare from Zadar is Grazing Sheep'], recorded in Sućuraj on the island of Hvar, echoes the initial pastoral monologue in *Muka svete Margarite* and the saint's first encounter with Olybrius and his servants. Although this particular example remains somewhat speculative, since the record of the oral poem narrates the capture of a shepherdess by an Ottoman emperor rather than a Roman official,¹³ the observed narrative similarities should, at the very least, serve as a valuable reminder of the importance of considering alternative modes of disseminating Margaret's cult beyond manuscript copying (Fancev 1932a: 18–19).

¹² For an edition of *Prikazanje života svete Margarite, divice i mučenice*, see Valjavac 1893: 256–280. The play edited by Valjavac is likely a creative translation of an Italian saint play *La rappresentazione et festa di Santa Margherita, vergine e martire* ['The Depiction and the Celebration of Saint Margaret the Virgin and Martyr'], which is believed to have been initially written in 15th-century Florence (Krnić 2020: 159–160).

¹³ Despite the caution expressed above, this kind of narrative reworking does allign well with the typical dynamics of oral transmission.

1.3. DEBATE ON THE HAGIOGRAPHIC SOURCE OF MUKA SVETE MARGARITE

Researchers of the Old Croatian saint play *Muka svete Margarite* have long grappled with identifying its prose narrative model. At times, their conclusions have been largely speculative. For example, Franjo Fancev, familiar with the manuscripts from Šibenik and Zadar, suggested that the play was based on an unspecified Croatian prose legend, though he offered no concrete evidence to support this claim (Fancev 1932b: 148; cf. Vučković 2015: 484–485). Addressing the question of the prose model more systematically than Fancev, Carlo Verdiani argued that the play's source was a Latin prose legend attributed to Pseudo-Theotimus. At the same time, he explicitly rejected the possibility that the writer of the Old Croatian *Muka svete Margarite* had drawn on Croatian translations of Pseudo-Theotimus preserved in the Glagolitic manuscript tradition (Verdiani 1973: 42). Verdiani's assertion of the play's independence from these Glagolitic versions was later challenged by Eduard Hercigonja, who argued that the Croatian Glagolitic tradition played a crucial role in shaping the octosyllabic *Muka svete Margarite* as found in the *Florentine Miscellany*, as well as in the *Šibenik and Zadar Manuscript* (Hercigonja 1987). Ever since, Hercigonja's thesis has been favourably received in Croatian scholarship (e.g., Badurina Stipčević 2016: 13).

While Hercigonja rightly criticizes Verdiani for failing to present sufficiently clear arguments in support of his claim about the Latin legend's influence, in this paper I will show that Hercigonja has placed too much emphasis on the opposing view, one that is based more on general observations about the interplay between Croatian Latin and Glagolitic literacies than on close textual analysis.¹⁴ In addition to highlighting the weaknesses in Hercigonja's arguments for a Glagolitic prose model, I aim to demonstrate, in a more compelling manner than Verdiani, that the Old Croatian play contains numerous motifs absent from the surviving Croatian Glagolitic prose legends but well attested in the Latin legendary tradition.¹⁵ Obviously, such findings significantly strengthen the case for a Latin source of *Muka svete Margarite*.

¹⁴ Cf. Hercigonja 2006.

¹⁵ Cf. with the comment of Marija Krnić: "Even though Verdiani's theory is formulated in a more explicit way than the Glagolitic theory, the Latin origin is again not strongly supported by the evidence; Verdiani provided only a few examples which failed to establish a firm connection between the play from the Florentine codex and the Latin narrative legend" (Krnić 2021: 38). While Krnić's evaluation of Verdiani's and Hercigonja's arguments is itself not thoroughly substantiated, her intuitive assessment – as I will show in the following discussion – is largely accurate.

2. ON THE AFFINITY OF THE SURVIVING VERSIONS OF THE PLAY AND ITS HYPOTHETICAL URTEXT

Before turning to a critique of Hercigonja's thesis on the Glagolitic model for Old Croatian *Muka svete Margarite*, it is necessary to first address the differences between the surviving versions of the play. At first glance, the circulation of *Muka svete Margarite* does not exhibit nearly as high a degree of textual instability as that of Old Croatian Marian laments and Passion plays, which arguably represent a peak of textual "variance" in the entire Old Croatian literary corpus (Vučković 2015; cf. Cerquiglini 1999). However, previous comparisons between the preserved portions of the two incomplete copies in the *Florentine Miscellany* and *Šibenik Manuscript* and the complete version in the *Zadar Manuscript* did reveal occasional differences in the selection and length of characters' responses (Fancev 1932a: 21; Malić 1973: 116; 2010: 214). While the specific thematic emphases of the surviving versions of the play remain to be systematically studied, Dragica Malić has identified countless slight variations between analogous verses of its different versions. While some variations may reflect scribes' efforts to enhance literary expression, many seem to result from accidental copying errors or failures at grasping the meaning intended by the initial playwright (Malić 1973: 116; 2010: passim). Based on her analysis of these errors, Malić has concluded that the language of the play's hypothetical urtext is often best preserved in its latest source, the 17th-century *Zadar Manuscript* (Malić 2010: 214).¹⁶

Malić has also observed that some characters' replies in the *Zadar Manuscript* version of *Muka svete Margarite* are considerably more extensive than their counterparts in the versions preserved in the *Florentine Miscellany* and the *Šibenik Manuscript*. She interprets this difference in length as evidence of the play's gradual expansion, culminating in the work of the scribe who wrote the *Zadar Manuscript* (Malić 2010: 214). This conclusion may reflect Malić's considerable experience studying the transmission of anonymous texts in Old Croatian manuscript culture, where amplification appears to have been a more common scribal practice than abridgment. However, if, as Malić argues, the latest source of *Muka svete Margarite* in some places best preserves the language and stylistic features of its urtext, it is reasonable to ask whether it might also more faithfully transmit its content. That the *Zadar Manuscript* may indeed better reflect the urtext's content in some instances is evident from the fact

¹⁶ Malić's conclusion presents a considerable challenge for scholars who sought to attribute both the *Florentine Miscellany* and *Muka svete Margarite* to Marko Marulić (e.g., Verdiani 1957; 1958; 1973; Prosperov Novak 1986: 14, 42; Pandžić 2009: 60–61, 107–109, 146). See footnote 2.

that its unique verses are not always arbitrary. As I will demonstrate below, in some cases, the characters' replies in this version more closely mirror the content of the Pseudo-Theotimus' Latin legend than do those in the older copies from the *Florentine Miscellany* and the *Šibenik Manuscript*. Such instances of the closer alignment of the version from the *Zadar Manuscript* with the Latin legend are best explained as evidence that this version more accurately preserves elements of the urtext. To argue otherwise, we would have to posit an implausible scenario in which the scribe of the *Zadar Manuscript* approached an existing popular Old Croatian play with an unlikely degree of philological rigour that he decided to consult Latin legends in order to enrich them with obscure biblical and apocryphal motifs exactly where they occur in the Latin hagiography.

The differences between the versions of *Muka svete Margarite* are evident in the dialogue between Margaret and the devil, especially in the devil's response after the saint forces him to reveal the source of his power. For my argument, it is worthwhile to contrast the devil's response from the *Zadar Manuscript* and the *Florentine Miscellany* with that found in the prose Pseudo-Theotimus' Latin legend from the *Bobbio Passional Vat. Lat. 5771* (Vatican, Vatican Library, sign. Vat. Lat. 5771, ff. 71r–76v) and the *Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1.* (Prague, National Library of the Czech Republic, sign. VI. E. 1., ff. 77r–87r).¹⁷ Although the content of the latter Latin source is particularly close to the Old Croatian saint play, it was not consulted by Verdiani and Hercigonja, despite having been edited already in the 19th century (Patera 1887: 234–241).¹⁸

¹⁷ I am referring to the current foliation. Adolf Patera's edition places the Margaret's vita between ff. 76r–86r (Patera 1887: 234–241).

¹⁸ The citations from Kapetanović et al. 2010 are lightly edited: for ease of reading, I have replaced the editors' *l* with *lj*, and *n* with *nj*.

<i>Bobbio Passional Vat. Lat. 5771 (Verdiani 1957: 100)</i>	<i>Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1. (Patera 1887: 239)</i>	<i>Zadar Manuscript (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 853)</i>	<i>Florentine Miscellany (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 798)</i>
<p>“Satanas rex noster est qui proiectus de paradiso.</p> <p>In libris tamen Jamne et Mambre inuenies genus nostrum: scru- tare et uide.”</p>	<p>“Satanas rex noster est, qui proiectus est de paradiso, et mittit nos, ubi uult. Et ubi audimus opera iusticie, currimus cum armis nostris pugnare cum ipsis. Et si audi- erit, quod tu Ru- fonem occidisti, irascetur super te et nocebit tibi.</p> <p>In libris tamen jamne et mam- bre inuenies genus nostrum, scrutare et uide.</p> <p>Nam uie nostre non sunt super terram, sed cum uentis ambula- mus.”</p>	<p>“Satana se naš kralj zvaše, ki v nebeskom raju staše, da cić njega oholosti, bi izgnan iz radosti i Bog njega od jistine z neba varže u dubine. Ta Satana kada čuje gdi se pravda al’ Bog štuje on nas čini tja otiti s oružjem se ne smim biti. Svaki svoje mriže stere kako vernih zverne z vere. Ako pozna da ti s’ bila ka s’ drakuna umorila, na te će se rasarditi i mnogo te pogarditi. Zovemo se zloči[ni]telji i anjeli razčinitelji, Zovemo se mi zlotvori i od dobrih dil uvori. Poj štit knjige Jamesove i tolikoj Mambrezove, ondi hoćeš ti viditi gdo roditelj naš hti biti. Ovo, zabih jur sam sebe jer okрили Isus tebe. Ne smim usta otvoriti ni već s tobom govoriti. Mi po zemlji nismo hitri po ajeru gremo s vitri.”</p>	<p>“Satanas kralj naš se zvaše, ki v nebeskom raju staše, ki cić njega oholosti, izgnan bi prez milosti. I njega Bog od istine posla s neba u dubine. Ki Satan kada čuje, gdi se sveti al’ Bog štuje, onamo nas čini iti jeda bi hteli naši biti da smožemo mi onoga ki verovati bude Boga. I sardi se jer s’ ti bila ka si Rufna umorila. Mi svi jesmo učinjeni tađ anjeli izmučeni kad nas Bog varže doli jere bismo svi oholi. Pasti nas čini v jame paklene. Gđino stoje duš’ neverne. Ne smim usta otvoriti ni već s tobom govoriti. I zabi’ sam jur sam sebe gdi okrilil jest Bog tebe. Mi po zemlji ne hodimo, negli s vitri svi letimo.”</p>

The greater textual affinity of the *Zadar Manuscript*’s version of the play to the presumed urtext can be inferred from its mention of the books of Jannes and Jambres at precisely the same narrative point where such literature is referenced in the Latin prose legends from *Vat. Lat. 5771* and the *Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1*.¹⁹ This detail is particularly revealing, as Jannes and Jambres are not integrally connected to the plot of Margaret’s passion. Instead, they appear in the devil’s response as a biblico-demon-

¹⁹ As will be demonstrated below, the reference to the books of Jannes and Jambres does not appear in the Glagolitic prose legends (cf. Verdiani 1957: 100; Badurina Stipčević 2016: 18). This omission is one of the telling indicators that the Croatian saint play is derived from a Latin rather than a Glagolitic source.

ological reference, which is well-contextualized, but sufficiently uncommon to render it implausible that their inclusion in the Old Croatian play occurred independently from the Latin prose hagiographic tradition.²⁰

Although the *Zadar Manuscript* overall seems to more faithfully preserve the urtext in this section, only the version from the *Florentine Miscellany* retains the name of the dragon in the verses “*I sardi se jer s’ ti bila / ka si Rufna umorila*,” which the editors of a source collection *Hrvatsko srednjovjekovno pjesništvo* considered an unintelligible error (Kape-tanović et al. 2020: 798). However, the name *Rufo* is clearly well-attested in the Latin hagiographic tradition, and this is one of the instances where the version from the *Florentine Miscellany* aligns more closely with the Latin sources than the *Zadar Manuscript* (cf. Verdiani 1957: 117; Clayton and Magennis 1994: 28, 36, 124, 162, 206, 208).²¹ The *Florentine Miscellany* also appears to be closer to the urtext in the following segment, which it shares with the version from the *Šibenik Manuscript* (cf. Verdiani 1957: 116).

- ²⁰ To clarify, within the canonical books of the *Bible*, Jannes and Jambres are named only in the *Second Epistle to Timothy* (2 Tim 3:8), where Paul identifies them as adversaries of Moses and amoral defiers of the truth. He alludes to the Egyptian magicians from a memorable scene in the *Book of Exodus*, in which they transform their staffs into serpents in front of the Pharaoh in an attempt to discredit a similar sign performed earlier by Aaron as a demonstration of Yahweh’s power (Exod 7:8–12). Although they are unnamed in *Exodus*, Jewish tradition has provided these two figures with their personal names (Pietersma 1994: 36–42). By the early Christian era, the legend of the two magicians had even reached some Roman authors such as Pliny the Elder (23/24–79 CE) and Apuleius (mid-2nd century) (Pietersma 1994: 24). Furthermore, a book dedicated to them has been disseminated at least since the 3rd century, and it even survives to this day, though only in fragments (Pietersma 1994: 43, 48–59). Owing to Paul’s mention and the renown of the book dedicated to them, Jannes and Jambres do occasionally appear in medieval writings about magic and demonology (Pietersma 1994: 43–47). Given the prominence of demonic scenes in the legend of Saint Margaret of Antioch (Dresvina 2012), the reference to Jannes and Jambres in her vita may be considered warranted. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that the scribe of the *Zadar Manuscript* would independently introduce it at precisely the same discursive point at which it appears in the Latin hagiography.
- ²¹ The name *Rufen/Rufin* is also attested in the Croatian Glagolitic translations of Pseudo-Theotimus, though not at the corresponding place (Verdiani 1957: 97; Badurina Stipčević 2016: 18).

<i>Prague Manuscript</i> <i>VI. E. I.</i> (Patera 1887: 238)	<i>Florentine Miscellany</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 794)	<i>Šibenik Manuscript</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 826)	<i>Zadar Manuscript</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 849)
“Belzes nomen est michi, postea Belzebub. Ego multorum iustorum laborem in uentrem meum deglutiui, et ego cum omnibus pugno et nullus potuit me uincere ; tu autem oculum meum eiecisti [...]”	“Znaj da Bezes ja se zovem, / i mnogo se v paklu slovem, / pak Belbezub prozvan jesam / zač prijatelj Bogu nisam. / Čića mene pravi mnozi / stvoreni su svi ubozi. / I žeral sam ja njih muku , / bi’ sam [v] tomu ja nauku. / Ja svakomu dvižem rati, / nigdor meni moć ne skрати . / Samo sada ruke tvoje / izbodoše oči moje.”	“Znaj da Belbezub ja se zovem, / u paklu se mnogo slovem, / pak Belbezub poznat jesam / jer prijatelj Bogu nisam. / Ja svakomu di se rati, / činim da su svi nebozi. / Njihovu sam požro muku / jer sam na tom bil nauku. / Ja svakomu di se rati / nitkore mi moć ne skrati . / A sada mi ruke tvoje / izbodoše oko moje.”	“Znaj da Bezes ja se zovem, / u paklu se mnogo slovem, / pak Belzebub prozvan jesam / jer prijatelj Bogu nisam. / Ja pravadni, da znaš, mnozi / činih dušu svih nebozi. / A sada mi ruke tvoje / izbodoše oko moje.”

Finally, I would like to draw attention to a motif from the Pseudo-Theotimus’ legend that is reflected only in the version preserved in the *Šibenik Manuscript*, perhaps because it belongs to a section of the play that is missing in the acephalous *Florentine Miscellany*. When Margaret’s torturers attempt to persuade her to comply with Olybrius’ demand that she worship pagan gods, she addresses them as evil counselors (“*O prizali svitovnici*”) in the *Šibenik Manuscript*, echoing the phrasing found in the Pseudo-Theotimus’ legend (“*O mali consiliarii!*”), which I cite from the *Parisian Legendary Lat. 5574* (Paris, National Library of France, sign. Lat. 5574) (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 196). That motif is absent from the corresponding Margaret’s response in the *Zadar Manuscript*.

<i>Šibenik Manuscript</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 814–815)	<i>Zadar Manuscript</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 833)	<i>Parisian Legendary Lat. 5574</i> (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 196)
“O prizali svitovnici, zalih bogov naslidnici, pojte činit vaša dila, ja se dosle nis’ hinila.”	[omitted]	“O mali consiliarii! O pessimi omnes! Ite uiri ac mulieres ad opera uestra.”

3. MUKA SVETE MARGARITE IN COMPARISON WITH THE LATIN PSEUDO-THEOTIMUS’ HAGIOGRAPHY AND ITS CROATIAN GLAGOLITIC TRANSLATION

3.1. CARLO VERDIANI’S ARGUMENTS FOR THE LATIN SOURCE

Carlo Verdiani discusses the question of the prose source of the Old Croatian Margaret play in greatest detail in his article “Il codice Dalmatico-Laurenziano. Manoscritto croato dei primi decenni del XVI secolo”, published in *Ricerche Slavistiche* in 1957 (Verdiani 1957: 75–137). His Croatian monograph, published in 1973, addresses the question more briefly and without offering fresh arguments (Verdiani 1973: 41–46). In the 1957 article, he presents the problem in two chapters: “Le fonti latine e le fonti glagolitiche” (Verdiani 1957: 75–113) and “Le fonti latine della Leggenda e la Rappresentazione croata” (Verdiani 1957: 114–137). Although this division reflects two logical stages of research, the chapters are only loosely connected, rendering the arguments regarding the source implicit rather than explicit.

In “Le fonti latine e le fonti glagolitiche”, Verdiani compares the Latin version of Pseudo-Theotimus’ passion of Margaret from the *Bobbio Passional Vat. Lat. 5771* with a similar Croatian Glagolitic version. The latter is preserved in two manuscripts: the *Parisian Miscellany Code Slave 73* (Paris, National Library of France, sign. Code Slave 73), written in 1375 by Grgur Borislavić from Modruš for the recluse nuns associated with the church of Saint Julian in Šibenik, and the *Oxford Miscellany Can. Lit. 414* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, sign. Ms. Can. Lit. 414), written in the 15th cen-

tury in the area of Senj or Modruš (Verdiani 1957: 75).²² By publishing the Latin and Croatian Glagolitic versions of Pseudo-Theotimus' legend side by side, Verdiani demonstrates that the Glagolitic version largely follows the Latin one, although it is occasionally abbreviated. Having identified the differences between the Latin and Croatian Glagolitic versions, Verdiani was well positioned to offer a compelling case about the origin of the Old Croatian play. By showing that *Muka svete Margarite* includes motifs from Latin prose legends not found in the Croatian Glagolitic texts, he was in a position to convincingly argue that the Croatian playwright did not rely on a Glagolitic model.

In the chapter “Le fonti latine della Leggenda e la Rappresentazione croata,” Verdiani highlights several motifs and constructions in the play that he considers closely aligned with the Latin prose legend and illustrative of its adequate transposition into Croatian dramatic dialogue in verse (Verdiani 1957: 115–117). However, he does not explicitly clarify whether these expressions are absent from the preserved versions of the Croatian Glagolitic prose legend. The very omission to state that already undermines the strength of Verdiani's argument: although in the previous chapter he presented the material that may support his hypothesis on the Latin source, in this chapter, he essentially shifts the burden of analysis onto the reader, who is left to examine the evidence without sufficient guidance. Therefore, it is worthwhile to examine some of his examples more closely, and here I present the first five.

	<i>Bobbio Passional Vat. Lat. 5771</i> (Verdiani 1957: 115–116)	<i>Florentine Miscellany</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 796, 810)
(i)	“et tamen nemo de manu mea evadit”	“Uistinu jur nitkore Grišit mojih ruk ne more.”
(ii)	“Ego enim tecum sum”	“Uistinu s tobom stojim i od tebe ne odhodom.”
(iii)	“et aperiam tibi januam regni coelorum”	“Rajska vrata hoću tebi otvoriti kako sebi.”
(iv)	“Sed de illis dico in quibus portione habeo, quos frigidos et sine vexillo crucis invenio”	“I kih najdu nepripravnih Tere na boj moćno slabnih, Ki zlamenje nima križa, Uhiti ga moja mriža.”

²² For more information on the *Parisian Miscellany* 73, see Tadin 1954b, Badurina Stipčević 2016: 10–11; 2023. For the *Oxford Miscellany Can. Lit. 414*, see Tadin 1954a: 139–144. Curiously, Verdiani erroneously dates both codices, the *Parisian Miscellany* 73 to the 15th century, and the *Oxford Miscellany Can. Lit. 414* to the 16th (Verdiani 1957: 76; cf. Hercigonja 1987: 32; Badurina Stipčević 2016: 13).

	<i>Bobbio Passional Vat. Lat. 5771</i> (Verdiani 1957: 115–116)	<i>Florentine Miscellany</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 796, 810)
(v)	“vel si iuuenis me vinceret non cura (es- set mihi). Ecce a tenera puella superatus sum”	“Bi mi žalost privelika da me je smogla moć človika, Da divojka gdi me dobi, to mi žalost s tugom pribi.”

Examples (i), (iv), and (v) all originate from the same response by the devil, while examples (ii) and (iii) are drawn from a later speech by the dove proclaiming Margaret’s virginal beatitude. Whereas the cited parts of the devil’s lines from the Latin prose do not have a counterpart in Croatian Glagolitic legends (cf. Verdiani 1957: 97–99), the same cannot be said for the dove’s lines, which are attested in the Croatian Glagolitic translation of Pseudo-Theotimus (cf. Verdiani 1957: 109).²³

	<i>Bobbio Passional Vat. Lat. 5771</i> (Verdiani 1957: 115)	<i>Parisian Miscellany Code Slave 73</i> (cf. Badurina Stipčević 2016: 20)
(ii)	“Ego enim tecum sum”	“Ja bo s toboju jesam”
(iii)	“et aperiam tibi janua[m] regni coelorum”	“i otvoru tebi vrata kraljevstva nebeskago”

The presence of these expressions in both the Latin and Croatian Glagolitic traditions complicates Verdiani’s claims, and indicates that the evidence for a Latin source needs to be reconsidered with greater clarity and rigour.²⁴

3.2. EDUARD HERCIGONJA’S PLEA FOR THE CROATIAN GLAGOLITIC SOURCE

Building on well-documented cases of textual transfer between manuscripts written in the Glagolitic and Latin script, as well as on the activity of individuals proficient in

²³ Although I rely on the existing transliterations of the Glagolitic sources, I have chosen to present their citations in transcription.

²⁴ Furthermore, Eduard Hercigonja rightly pointed out that Verdiani occasionally overstates the differences between the legend’s Latin and Glagolitic prose versions (Hercigonja 1987: 43–45). Namely, in his analysis of the Croatian Glagolitic version of the Pseudo-Theotimus’ legend, Verdiani primarily relies on the version preserved in the *Oxford Miscellany Can. Lit. 414*, citing variant readings from the *Parisian Miscellany Code Slave 73* only in the critical apparatus. However, Hercigonja emphasizes that the Parisian codex is not only older but also a more detailed source for the Croatian Glagolitic translation of the Latin legend than the Oxford codex (Hercigonja 1987: 32, 43–45; cf. Verdiani 1957: 76). Taking into account this Hercigonja’s textual critical observation, I have consistently consulted both Verdiani’s edition of the Oxford version (Verdiani 1957: 76–113) and Badurina Stipčević’s edition of the Parisian one (Badurina Stipčević 2016: 14–21).

both,²⁵ Hercigonja asserts that such an exchange must also have occurred in the case of *Muka svete Margarite*:

“Na zaključak o udjelu glagoljaške hagiografsko legendarne tradicije u nastajanju ove *Muke* ne navode, međutim, samo predočene činjenice o postojanju tekstova koji su, zacijelo, mogli biti uzorom postojećoj versificiranoj dramatizaciji već i sama dijalektika procesa i odnosâ karakterističnih za hrvatsko književno srednjovjekovlje. U ozračju ove stilske formacije čiji je korpus specifično jedinstvo u različitosti tropismenog i trojezičnog stvaralaštva teško je, naime, pretpostaviti takvu selektivnu izolaciju po kojoj bi pisac jedne čakavske, latiničke religiozne drame posve izbjegao utjecajima glagoljske proze na istu temu te se dosljedno oslonio isključivo na latinski hagiografski predložak. Jer: rukopisi su se ovdje stoljećima stvarali i trajali u plodotvornom isprepletanju i međudjelovanju nekoliko grafijskih i jezično-književnih, tekstovnih tradicija” (Hercigonja 1987: 49).

[“The conclusion regarding the degree of influence of the Glagolitic hagiographic-legendary tradition on the creation of this *Muka* is not, however, based solely on the presented evidence concerning the existence of texts that could evidently have served as models for the existing versified dramatization, but also on the very dialectic of processes and relationships characteristic of Croatian medieval literature. In the context of this stylistic formation, whose corpus represents a specific unity within the diversity of trigraphic and trilingual production, it is indeed difficult to assume such selective isolation whereby the author of a Chakavian, Latin-script religious drama would entirely avoid the influence of Glagolitic prose on the same theme and rely solely on a Latin hagiographic source. For manuscripts were created and preserved here over centuries through the fruitful interweaving and mutual interaction of several orthographic, linguistic-literary, and textual traditions” (Hercigonja 1987: 49).]

Although it is important to consider general processes when analysing the transfer of individual texts, discussion about sources should be primarily grounded in concrete comparisons rather than vague assumptions. This is something Hercigonja is clearly aware of, as he states already in the abstract of his article that it presents “places

²⁵ For a specific example of such entanglements, see a recent case study of Gverin Tihić, a 16th-century notary and writer who was fully proficient as a scribe in both Latin and Glagolitic scripts: Lupić 2021.

[...] where the dramatic text aligns with the Glagolitic, and not the Latin version of the same redaction of the legend” [original: “mjesta [...] na kojima se dramski tekst podudara s glagoljskom, a ne latinskom verzijom iste redakcije legende”] (Hercigonja 1987: 29). Unfortunately, in the unnecessarily convoluted discussion that follows, such places are not easily identifiable. The article, which lacks the precision otherwise characteristic of Hercigonja’s writing, is often overly focused on demonstrating the “stylistic expressiveness” of the Glagolitic prose legends about Margaret of Antioch (cf. Hercigonja 1987: 42), but it fails to explain how this “expressiveness” relates to the question of whether the Glagolitic prose legends served as the source for *Muka svete Margarite*, which survives only in Latin-script manuscripts.²⁶

I have chosen to refrain from attempting to untangle Hercigonja’s convoluted discourse in writing, as doing so would amount to little more than speculation about the significance of a series of his claims. Such an effort could easily grow to monographic proportions without offering real value to the state of the research. Instead, I will refute Hercigonja’s assertion about a Glagolitic source with a few examples demonstrating a significantly stronger affinity between the Old Croatian play and the Latin legend. In other words, these examples will show that Verdiani’s hypothesis on the Latin model is ultimately a more plausible provisional explanation for the origin of *Muka svete Margarite*.²⁷

²⁶ Besides emphasizing the “expressiveness” of the Croatian Glagolitic translation of the Latin Pseudo-Theotimus, Hercigonja also points out that citations from the legend of Saint Margaret – more precisely, the dialogue between the saint and the devil – appear in the Glagolitic didactic text on repentance found in the *Gršković’s Miscellany* and the *Berčić’s Miscellany No. 5* (Dürriegl 2024: 249). He argues that these quotations are “clearly part of a complete manuscript of the passion” [original: “očito dio nekog cjelovitog rukopisa pasije”], which “aligns more closely with the Latin (and the play) in places where the *Borislavić’s Miscellany* and *MS. Can. lit. 414* do not have the same thematic elements” [original: “se bliži latinskom (i prikazanju) na onim mjestima gdje Borislavićev zbornik i *MS. Can. lit. 414* nemaju istovjetnih sadržajnih elemenata”] (Hercigonja 1987: 39). Hercigonja’s postulation of a lost Croatian Glagolitic version of Margaret’s passion strikes me as unconvincing. There is no evidence that the didactic text from the *Gršković’s* and the *Berčić’s Miscellany No. 5* is a compilation created by a Croatian Glagolite, rather than a translation of a Latin didactic compilation in which the quotations from Margaret’s legend were already present (cf. Dürriegl 2024: 249).

²⁷ Although Verdiani, who was familiar with quite a few prose and verse Italian legends (cf. Verdiani 1973: 45–46), excludes possible connections with the Italian vernacular hagiographic tradition (Verdiani 1973: 42), I suspect that this possibility has not yet been entirely explored, in part because Italian philologists have studied thus far only a fraction of the corpus of premodern vernacular religious manuscripts preserved in Italy’s vast libraries and archives. During this research, I consulted several editions of Italian verse legends edited after Verdiani, all of which proved to be significantly more distant in content from the Croatian play than the Latin prose version. See e.g., Banfi 1996; 1997; Nocita 2015.

3.3. SCENES ILLUSTRATING THE AFFINITY BETWEEN *MUKA SVETE MARGARITE* AND THE LATIN PROSE LEGEND

3.3.1. DEVIL'S SPEECH ON THE SOURCE OF HIS POWER

It seems appropriate to begin demonstrating the affinity between the Old Croatian *Muka svete Margarite* and the saint's Latin legend with the previously discussed extended speech by the devil on the source of his power. As briefly noted in Sections 2 and 3.1 of this article (cf. Verdiani 1957: 97–99), the Croatian Glagolitic translation of Pseudo-Theotimus contains a significantly abbreviated version of this speech compared to the versions found in the copies of the play in the *Florentine Miscellany*, the *Zadar Manuscript*, and the prose Latin legend in the *Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1*.

<i>Parisian Miscellany</i> <i>Code Slave 73</i> (cf. Badurina Stipčević 2016: 18)	<i>Oxford Miscellany</i> <i>Can. Lit. 414</i> (cf. Verdiani 1957: 100)	<i>Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1.</i> (Patera 1887: 239)	<i>Zadar Manuscript</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 853)
“Jere Satan kralj naš jest ki izvržen jest iz raja i šale nas gde hoćet. I gde slišimo dela pravde, tečemo s oružijami našimi rvati se suprotiv.”	“Jere Setan kralj, on naš jest ki izvržen jest iz raja, i šale nas gde hoćet. I gde slišimo dela našeje pravde, onamo tečemo sa oružijem rvati se protivu nim.”	“Satanas rex noster est, qui proiectus est de paradiso, et mittit nos, ubi uult. Et ubi audimus opera iusticie, currimus cum armis nostris pugnare cum ipsis. Et si audierit, quod tu Rufonem occidisti, irascetur super te et nocebit tibi. In libris tamen jamne et mambre inuenies genus nostrum, scrutare et uide. Nam uie nostre non sunt super terram, sed cum uentis ambulamus.”	“Satana se naš kralj zvaše, ki v nebeskom raju staše, da cić njega oholosti, bi izgnan iz radosti [...]. Ta Satana kada čuje gdi se pravda al' Bog štuje on nas čini tja otiti s oružjem se ne smim biti. [...] Ako pozna da ti s' bila ka s' drakuna umorila, na te će se rasarditi i mnogo te pogarditi. [...] Poj štit knjige Jamesove i tolikoj Mambrezove, ondi hoćeš ti viditi gdo roditelj naš hti biti. [...] Mi po zemlji nismo hitri po ajeru gremo s vitri.”

As evidenced by the presented citations, all the sentences in the devil's response from the Croatian Glagolitic versions have their parallels in the Latin legend preserved in the *Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1*, as well as in the devil's speech in *Muka svete Margarite* from the *Florentine Miscellany* and the *Zadar Manuscript*. However, the Croatian Glagolitic versions at this place omit the comment about Satan's anger at Margaret for killing the dragon Rufo, and the claim that devils move through the air rather than on the ground, both of which appear in the Latin hagiographic tradition and the copies of *Muka svete Margarite* from the *Florentine Miscellany* and the *Zadar Manuscript*. Furthermore, the Latin legend and the play from the *Zadar Manuscript* also include a diabolical "bibliographic" reference to the books of Jannes and Jambres, which does not appear in the Glagolitic versions.

3.3.2. MARGARET COMPARED WITH A CAPTURED ANIMAL

The distance between *Muka svete Margarite* and the Croatian Glagolitic prose legend is already evident in the line spoken by the future martyr after her capture by Olybrius' servants. While this speech is absent from the acephalous *Florentine Miscellany*, it appears in both the Šibenik and Zadar manuscripts. As shown below, the differences between Margaret's speeches in these two manuscripts are rather minor: in place of the *Šibenik Manuscript*'s use of the third person plural aorist of the verb "izdati," the *Zadar Manuscript* uses the verb "jati", which is a better semantic fit for the context and may more accurately reflect the urtext of the *Muka*.

<i>Šibenik Manuscript</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 814–815)	<i>Zadar Manuscript</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 833)	<i>Parisian Legendary Lat. 5574</i> (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 196)	<i>Parisian Miscellany Code Slave 73</i> (Badurina Stipčević 2016: 15)	<i>Oxford Miscellany Can. Lit. 414</i> (cf. Verdiani 1957: 81)
“u poganski je- sam ruci, / kako ovca meu vuci. / Od ptičara kako ptica / lać[e]na jesam ja divica. / Izdaše me sad tužnicu / kako ribu na udicu. / Kako i zvir u tenetu / pridoh u množ sad prokle- tu. / Slavni Bože, pozri mene, / u potrebi ne pusti me!”	“U poganskoj jesam ruci / kako ovca meu vuci. / O[d] ptičara kako ptica / laćena sam ja divica! / Jaše mene sad tužnicu / kako ribu na udicu / Kakono zvir u tenetu / pridoh u množ sad prokletu. / Slavni Bože, pomozi me, / u potrebi ne pusti me!”	“Video enim me sicut ouem in medio luporum, et facta sum sicut passer ab aucupe compre- hensa in retia et sicut piscis in amo; ecce con- prehensa sum uelut capra in laqueo . Adiuua me, Domine, et sana me. Ne derelinquas me in manus impio- rum.”	“Viju bo me kako ovcu posrede vlkov, se stvorena jesam kako rebac jat v mreži, k(a)ko riba na udici. Pomozi me G(ospod)i B(ož)e ne ostavi me v ruke neči- stivih”	“Viju bo se kako ovce posrede vlkovo [sic!] učinena jesam kako rebac jat v mriži i kako riba na udici . P(o)m(i)l(uj) (m)e G(ospod)i B(ož)e i sp(a)si me i ne pusti me v ruci neči- stivih”

In the lines from the plays in the Šibenik and Zadar manuscripts, Margaret compares her plight to that of a sheep among wolves, a bird caught by a bird-catcher, a fish on a hook, and a beast (*zvir*) caught in a trap (*tenetu*).²⁸ In the prose legend recorded in the Glagolitic manuscripts *Code Slave 73* and *Can. Lit. 414*, the captured virgin compares her unfortunate condition to being a sheep among wolves, a caught sparrow (*rebac*), and a fish on a hook, but she omits the image of a trapped beast. By contrast, some Latin versions of the legend include the image of a trapped animal, frequently a goat (*capra*) (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 220). The word “*capra*” appears in the corresponding place in the *Parisian Legendary Lat. 5574*, cited above (cf. Clayton and Magennis 1994: 196), and in the version from the *Bobbio Passional Vat. Lat. 5771*, published by Verdiani (Verdiani 1957: 81). In other words, Margaret’s line in

²⁸ Malić describes the examples “*kako ribu na udicu*” [“like a fish on a hook”] and “*kako i zvir u tenetu*” [“like a beast in a trap”] as being “marked by a ‘folk’ character” [original: “‘narodski’ obilježeni”] (Malić 2010: 207). However, the obvious dependence of these examples on the Latin legend shows that scholars’ impressions are not reliable guides for determining which motifs and expressions originate from the authors’ native folk tradition.

the Croatian play aligns more closely with the referenced Latin tradition than with the Croatian Glagolitic legend, which likely reflects a text from a different branch of the Pseudo-Theotimus' legend, which skips the motif of a trapped animal (cf. Clayton and Magennis 1994: 220).

It is difficult to determine with certainty why the Croatian play features the word “*zvir*” (‘beast’), whereas most Latin legends mention “*capra*” (‘goat’). However, given that “*zvir*” could historically denote any wild animal, not necessarily a carnivore, I am inclined to think that the Croatian writer may have drawn from a Latin version in which “*caprea*” (‘roe deer’) appears instead of “*capra*” (‘goat’).²⁹ The word “*caprea*” is attested in the legend in *Vat. Lat. 6074* (Verdiani 1957: 81), and a similar reading, “*cap(re)ola*,” is found in the *Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1.* on f. 78v, although Patera mistakenly transcribes it as “*campola*” (Patera 1887: 235). The word “*caprea*” may be the original choice in the Latin legendary tradition, possibly alluding to a verse from the Book of Sirach, which is found in the Vulgate: “*Sicut enim eructant praecordia foetentium, et sicut perdis inducitur in caveam, et ut caprea in laqueum: sic et cor superborum, et sicut prospector videns casum proximi sui*” (Sirach 11:32) (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 220). Although the hypothesis that “*zvir*” was motivated by the word “*caprea*” is probably the most compelling explanation for Margaret’s comparison of her condition to that of an animal caught in a trap, one cannot entirely dismiss the possibility that the word “*zvir*” resulted from a later correction by an ‘intelligent scribe’ who, based on everyday observation, may have recognized that wild animals are more likely to be caught in traps than domestic ones.

3.3.3. DOVE’S PRAISE OF SAINT MARGARET

Among the unambiguously formulated arguments by Hercigonja in support of the thesis about the Glagolitic origin of *Muka svete Margarite*, there are also some inaccurate claims. For example, Hercigonja indicates that the versions of the legend in the *Parisian Miscellany Code Slave 73* and the *Oxford Miscellany Can. Lit. 414* contain “an extensive address of the dove to Margaret in prison, as opposed to only one sentence in the Latin version” [original: “opširno obraćanje goluba Margareti u tamnici prema svega jednoj rečenici u latinskoj verziji”], which is implied to explain better the

²⁹ Cf. the entry for *zvijer* in the Academy’s dictionary: RHSJ 1880–1976, vol. 23. Among the attestations cited in the entry, particularly noteworthy is the one found in lines 267–268 of Antun Sasin’s *Filida*, where the word *zvijer* refers to a “*košuta*” (‘doe’), the female of a herbivorous mammal related to the roe deer, which is similarly perceived as an embodiment of timidity: “*Nu beruč ružicu zamjerih kon puta / gdi pase travicu tiha zvir košuta*” (Sasin 2021: 61).

longer dove’s praise in the Old Croatian play (Hercigonja 1987: 33). It is evident that Hercigonja is referring here to the first appearance of the dove in the legend from the *Bobbio Passional Vat. Lat. 5771*, where there is only a single sentence.

<i>Bobbio Passional Vat. Lat. 5771 (Verdiani 1957: 96)</i>	<i>Parisian Miscellany Code Slave 73 (cf. Badurina Stipčević 2016: 18)</i>	<i>Oxford Miscellany Can. Lit. 414 (cf. Verdiani 1957: 96)</i>
“Te sancta expectant porte paradisi.”	“Blažena jesi Margarita, ka devstvo želila jesi. Rufina ubila jesi, nebesko otačstvo želila jesi. Tebe vrata svetago raja čekajut v ne vhodećimi tebi neka jest ot Boga ugotovana krana pravde.”	“Blažena devo Margarito, ka dev- stvo želila jesi. Rufena ubila jesi. V nebesko otačstvo želila jesi. Tebja vrata svetago raja čekajut i meju vsimi va ne vhodiš, ka je ugotova(na) krana tebi ot Boga.”

However, at this point, Hercigonja overlooked Verdiani’s critical notes beneath the text, which include a significantly lengthier dove’s praise attested in Boninus Mombritius’s hagiographic collection *Sanctuarium*. Hercigonja’s oversight is somewhat confusing, as he later in the article refers to that very citation (Hercigonja 1987: 39), which is also very close to an even more detailed dove’s response in the legend from the *Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1*.

<i>Bonino Mombritius, Sanctuarium (Verdiani 1957: 96)</i>	<i>Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1. (Patera 1887: 238)</i>
“Beata es Margarita, quae draconem occidisti, quae dentes eius comminuisti. Beata es Margarita quae uirginitatem desiderasti, tibi est parata corona gloriae, te expectant.”	“Beata es, Margareta, que draconem occidisti, beata es Margareta, que dentes eius comminuisti, beata es, Margareta, que uirginitatem desiderasti. Tibi est parata corona glorie, te sanctam expectant porte paradisi.”

As demonstrated below, the content of the dove’s praise in the Old Croatian play resembles the praise in the Latin *Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1*. far more closely than the versions found in the Glagolitic codices. Specifically, both Glagolitic texts mention the ‘gates of paradise’ before the ‘preparedness of the crown,’ whereas the Latin *Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1*. and the Old Croatian play share the reversed order of motifs. Moreover, the expression “*krana ka je svake dike puna*” [‘the crown that is full of all glory’] from the Old Croatian play aligns more with the expression “*corona glorie*” found in the *Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1*. than with the expression “*krana pravde*” (‘crown of justice’), which appears in the Glagolitic legend from the *Parisian Miscel-*

lany Code Slave 73. Notably, in the corresponding passage from the Glagolitic *Oxford Miscellany Can. Lit.* 414, the noun “*kruna*” appears without a qualifying attribute.

Although it is true that in the Latin texts presented by Verdiani Margaret does not call Olybrius a dog after the scene of the flesh tearing, the Latin tradition does in fact contain a repeated insult in the corresponding place, as evidenced by the 14th-century version of Margaret’s passion published by Gordon Hall Gerould (Gerould 1924: 531).

Gerould 1924: 531	<i>Zadar Manuscript</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 841–842)
“Tunc beata Margarita respondit: O inique et impudes et audax canis, imo tormentis tuis carnem meam trado, ut anima mea sit coronata in celis cum sanctis uirginibus et martiribus.”	“ <i>Odgovori sveta Margarita Olibriju:</i> O pre[z] stida pse nečisti, neć’ bit vazda na tom misti! [...] Zato tilo karvi punim, neka dušu ja okrunim. U nebeskom stanju gori Isus meni raj otvori.”

3.3.5. *MARGARET’S SIGN OF THE CROSS IN A STAGE INSTRUCTION*

After Margaret triumphs over the devil in the dungeon, Olybrius sends his servants to bring the virgin before his throne, hoping to use the threat of further torture to persuade her to worship his gods. At this point, in the Old Croatian play, a stage direction mentions that Margaret makes the sign of the cross as she is leaving the dungeon. While the performance of the sign of the cross appears in the Latin legend, this narrative detail is absent from the Glagolitic versions in the Parisian and Oxford codices (Verdiani 1957: 102).

<i>Florentine Miscellany</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 800)	<i>Zadar Manuscript</i> (Kapetanović et al. 2010: 855)	<i>Parisian Legendary</i> <i>Lat. 5574</i> (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 210)	<i>Parisian Miscellany Code</i> <i>Slave 73</i> (cf. Badurina Stipčević 2016: 15)
<p>“Tada zapovidi Olibrij slugam svojim da dovedu svetu Margaritu njim govoreći:</p> <p>Sad k tamnici vi pojdite, Margaritu dovedite, neka vidim hoće [l'] htiti, svoju misal prominiti.</p> <p><i>Pojdu sluge po svetu Margaritu i znemu ju iz tamnice i ona izašadši, prikriži se. Privedoše ju sluge k Olibriju. Reče joj Olibrije govoreći:</i></p> <p>Molim tebe, Margarita, divojčice plemenita, ne čin' muke da te kolju, učin' jure moju volju. Hotij k meni pristati, boge moje adorati. Dostoji se ta rič tebi ako hoćeš život sebi.”</p>	<p>“I tada Olibrij zapovidi slugam da dovedu svetu Margaritu:</p> <p>Vi k tamnici sad pojdite, Margaritu dovedite, neka vidim hoće [l'] htiti, svoju misal prominiti.</p> <p><i>Jidu slige i privedu svetu Margaritu. I ona kad izajde, prikriži se i kad dojde, reče njoj Olibrij:</i></p> <p>Molim tebe, Margarita, divojčice plemenita, ne čin' da te muke kolju, jur učini moju volju! Hoti' meni ti pristati, boge moje adorati! Pristoji se ta rič tebi ako želiš život sebi.”</p>	<p>“Altera uero die iussit prefectus beatam Margaretam adducere ante tribunal suum. Sancta autem Margareta cum exiret de carcere consignavit corpus suum cum signaculo Christi. Tunc uenerunt cuncti de ciuitate ut uiderent que patiebatur beata Margareta. Praefectus dixit, ‘Margareta, consente mihi et adhora deos meos. Decet namque te eos adorare.’”</p>	<p>“I v drugi d(a)n pov(e)lja nepr(a)v(a) dni vl(a)davac b(la)ž(e)nu Marg(a)ritu priversti pred sedo svoje i r(e)če jej: ‘Marg(a)rita pristani k mni i pokloni se b(ogo)m mojim i dobro tebi budet.”</p>

3.3.6. THE PLAY’S ENDING

One of Hercigonja’s seemingly most compelling arguments for the Glagolitic source of *Muka svete Margarite* is based on a comparative analysis of the sequence of motifs at the end of the medieval Croatian saint play, the Glagolitic legends, and the *Bobbio Passional Vat. Lat. 5771*. He argues that the play’s ending represents a simplification

of the one in the Glagolitic versions, which had themselves simplified the finale found in the Latin manuscript tradition (Hercigonja 1987: 46). To represent his argument in the clearest possible manner, I have prepared the following table.³⁰

<i>Bobbio Passional Vat. Lat. 5771</i>	<i>Croatian Glagolitic prose legends</i>	<i>Zadar Manuscript</i>	<i>Florentine Miscellany</i>
1. angelic blessing of Margaret's body;	1. angelic blessing of Margaret's body, with the exclamation: " <i>Bog krepak i silan va vsih blažene Margarite...</i> " (Verdiani 1957: 111);	1. angelic blessing and receiving of Margaret's soul with the chant <i>Sanctus</i> ;	1. angelic blessing and receiving of Margaret's soul with the chant <i>Sanctus</i> .
2. cries of demons over Margaret's body with the exclamation: " <i>Unus Deus fortis, Deus magnus beatę Margaritę</i> " (Verdiani 1957: 111);	2. the demons are in torment after approaching Margaret's body;	2. the demons are in torment.	
3. angels carry Margaret's body (" <i>corpus beatę Margaritę</i> ") to heaven (Verdiani 1957: 112);	3. angels come to receive Margaret's soul (" <i>prijati dušu blažene Margarite ponesti ju na nebo</i> ") singing <i>Sanctus</i> (Verdiani 1957: 111–112).		
4. demons come to Margaret's relics and are tormented.			

However, I find it difficult to avoid the question of whether Hercigonja places too much emphasis on the fact that *Muka svete Margarite* from the *Zadar Manuscript* omits the final scene in which the demons are tormented after approaching the saint's relics. Although this scene is also absent from the Glagolitic prose legend, it is entirely plausible that the play's writer independently chose to exclude events that occurred long after Margaret's death in order to achieve greater unity of action in the perform-

³⁰ The table closely reflects Hercigonja's discursive reasoning (Hercigonja 1987: 46), with the exception that I have chosen to present the *Florentine Miscellany* and the *Zadar Manuscript* in separate columns, because these sources diverge at one point. Hercigonja does not comment on the fact that the ending of the play in the *Florentine Miscellany* is simpler than that in the *Zadar Manuscript*. This difference is another instance in which the version from the *Zadar Manuscript* appears to preserve the urtext more faithfully than the one copied in the older *Florentine Miscellany*.

ative text. More importantly, Hercigonja's thesis about the gradual development of the simple play's ending through the simplified Glagolitic prose legend is called into question by the fact that a similar simplified arrangement appears already in some Latin versions of Pseudo-Theotimus, such as the one from the *Prague Manuscript VI. E. 1*, published by Patera:

1. "*Tunc uenerunt angeli et sedebant super corpus beate Margarete*" (Patera 1887: 240);
2. "*Et ueniebant demones et torquebantur*" (Patera 1887: 240);
3. "*Tunc descendentes angeli cum uirtutibus et tollentes animam beate Margarete in gremio suo, ascenderunt super nubem, clamantes et dicentes: Non est similis tui in diis, Domine, et non est secundum opera tua. Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus dominus Deus sabaoth, pleni sunt celi et terra; gloria tua omnis in excelsis*" (Patera 1887: 240–241);
4. [not confirmed].

4. CONCLUSION

The Old Croatian saint play *Muka svete Margarite* includes numerous motifs found in the Latin prose legends of Saint Margaret that are not attested in its Croatian Glagolitic translation. This contrast is especially evident in the devil's lengthy speech on the nature and source of his power. Apart from differences stemming from the play's transposition of prose into verse, this speech is, at the thematic level, similarly developed in both the Latin texts and the Croatian play, but is significantly abbreviated in the Glagolitic sources, which omit many motifs found in both the Latin tradition and the play.

The presented findings support Carlo Verdiani's contention that *Muka svete Margarite* is based on Latin prose hagiography. They also challenge Eduard Hercigonja's hypothesis that the play draws directly on the Croatian Glagolitic tradition. Not only does the play include many motifs widespread in the Latin tradition that are missing from the Glagolitic sources, but the details Hercigonja presents as strong evidence of Glagolitic influence can also be found in Latin sources, once they are examined more broadly and systematically.³¹

³¹ This oversight in Hercigonja's reasoning is uncharacteristic, given his philological work's usual precision and rigour. If I may offer a conjecture, it is possible that his lapse was shaped, at least in part, by an underlying ideological commitment to affirming the continuous creative role of the Glagolitic tradition in the formation of Old Croatian literature. Hercigonja may have misread Verdiani's explicit rejection of Glagolitic influence on *Muka svete Margarite* as a sweeping dismissal of literary relevance of Croatian Glagolitism itself (Hercigonja 1987: 31–32). He might have too readily positioned Verdiani's analysis of the play's sources within a broader polemical framework, assuming its alignment with the negative stereotypes about Glagolitism that were deeply rooted in much of 20th-century Italian Slavic studies, especially due to the influence of Arturo Cronia, whose dismissive stance on Croatian Glagolitism was a frequent object of Hercigonja's critique (cf. Hercigonja 1983: 134–136, 175; Delbianco 2004: 25–54).

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NARATIVNI HAGIOGRAFSKI IZVOR STAROHRVATSKOGA PRIKAZANJA *MUKA SVETE MARGARITE*

JOSIP VUČKOVIĆ

SAŽETAK

Članak je doprinos raspravi o narativnome hagiografskome predlošku starohrvatskoga osmeračkog prikazanja *Muka svete Margarite*, koje se sačuvalo u *Firentinskome zborniku* i *Šibenskome rukopisu* iz 16. stoljeća te u *Zadarskome rukopisu* iz prve polovice 17. stoljeća. Autor iznosi tezu da je predložak prikazanja vjerojatno bila neka latinska inačica raširene prozne legende o svetoj Margareti koja se pseudoepigrafski pripisuje Teotimu. Na takvo je podrijetlo teksta već ukazivao Carlo Verdiani, iako svoju hipotezu na posljertku nije uspio uvjerljivo potkrijepiti. Ovaj rad iznova razmatra utemeljenost Verdianijeve teze i potvrđuje njezinu vjerojatnost. Istovremeno osporava različitu hipotezu Eduarda Hercigonje, koji je smatrao da *Muka svete Margarite* počiva na hrvatskoglagoljskoj hagiografskoj tradiciji. Provedena analiza pokazuje da starohrvatsko prikazanje sadrži brojne motive koji su prisutni u latinskim inačicama Pseudo-Teotimove legende, a nisu potvrđeni u njezinu hrvatskoglagoljskome prijevodu. Nadalje, iako Hercigonja tvrdi da prikazanje dijeli određene motive isključivo s glagoljskom legendom, članak pokazuje da se ti motivi također javljaju i u latinskoj hagiografskoj tradiciji. Povezanost *Muke svete Margarite* s latinskom proznom legendom omogućuje i nove spoznaje o stupnju bliskosti pojedinih zapisa prikazanja s njegovim pratekstom.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI:

hrvatskoglagoljska hagiografija; književni transferi; latinski književni izvori; Margareta Antiohijska; starohrvatska prikazanja