

Contemporary Legends from the Slovene Karst in Comparison with Fairylore and Belief Traditions

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The paper presents narratives collected in the last decade in the Karst region in southwest Slovenia, more precisely in Lož Valley with its Snežnik Castle and its forests, in the vicinity of Cerknica Lake, and in the region of Pivka. Although most of these stories can be defined as contemporary legends they do have much in common with traditional folk tales and with local mythology. The analyzed legends mention ghosts, witches, fairies, and other mythological creatures from Slovene traditional mythology; their content has been changed considerably, and they are usually narrated as personal experience, which is a characteristic of contemporary legends. On the basis of exact comparison and the study of context the author tries to outline the changes in contemporary folk narrative and the social function of both genres of narration according to the circumstances in which they have been recounted.

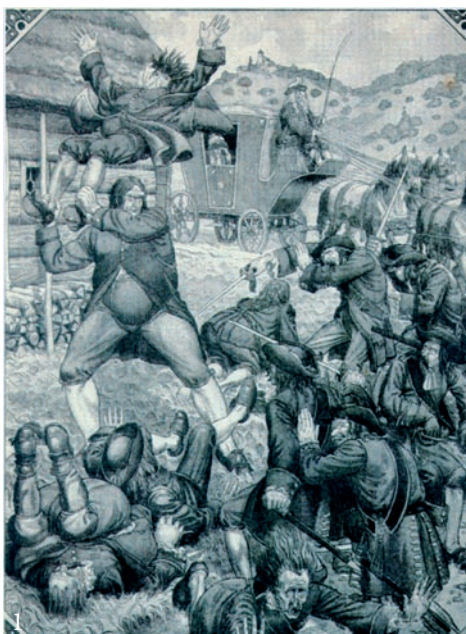
The habit of recounting narratives – traditional or contemporary – is still an important part of communication among the people, both young and old, living in the region of Notranjsko/Inner Carniola, in several villages situated in Lož Valley, by Cerknica Lake, and in the Pivka region. The research is based on the narratives collected in 1996 and later, compared to the folktales that have been collected in the Karst region since the 19th and 20th century. Analyzed are the social functions and context of these narratives, and the differences are outlined between traditional folktales and the stories that have been recently collected. A strong influence of local cultural and natural circumstances can be observed both in old folktales and in contemporary legends, which is why these narratives are still part of the heritage alive in the territory studied.

This part of Notranjsko/Inner Carniola has certain cultural and geographic characteristics that tend to be perceived as local tradition and characteristics of this region. Since they often give birth to variants and new types and forms of storytelling, they are often being used for tourist and economic purposes.

One of these local traditions is the folk hero **Martin Krpan** from Vrh by Sv. Trojica. This part of Notranjsko/Inner Carniola is even called »the land of Martin Krpan«. According to the story written by Fran Levstik, Martin Krpan, a Slovene folk hero, used to smuggle »English salt« on his mare through this valley. The story was written on the basis of folk tradition about smuggling in this region, and was put into literary form by Fran Levstik in 1858¹. The story tells of a very strong man who freighted »English salt«, or, as he had told the Emperor of Austria, »amadou and grindstones«, on the back of his mare. In reality he

¹ Fran Levstik, Martin Krpan. Ljubljana 1858; and: Fran Levstik, Martin Krpan z Verha, in: Slovenski glasnik, Celovec 1858.

was probably smuggling gunpowder or simply the salt from Strunjan salt pans. During one of his travels Martin Krpan happens upon the Emperor from Vienna. In order to make way for the dignitary, Krpan picks up his mare loaded with »English salt«, and moves it to the roadside. Needless to say, this immediately attracts the Emperor's attention. As a result, Krpan is summoned to the court in Vienna when Brdavs, a violent Turkish giant, is terrorizing the city. Since none of the Emperor's horses are strong enough to support the mighty Krpan, he sets off to fight Brdavs on his faithful little mare. Brdavs is defeated, and in return Krpan asks only for a pouchful of ducats and a permit to legally convey his freight through the area of Carniola.



Martin Krpan, illustrations by Hinko Smrekar (1917), Lojze Perko (1944), Tone Kralj (1954), Bard Jukundus(1981) and Suzana Bricelj (1999).

Among others small sculptures of Martin Krpan were made by academic artists Stojan Batič (2000), and Izidor Urbančič and by folk artist Ana Češarek. Recently the sculptor Franc Godina had an exhibition with Martin Krpan sculptures in Logatec in »Športna dvorana« from June 3 to June 20, 2005.

The folk hero Martin Krpan still appears in local tales, tourist events, and used in marketing. Among other things, his image is used as a trademark to advertize salt and meat products by the »Mesnine dežele Kranjske« Company. Also a »Martin Krpan« competition is organized in which the winner, the strongest man, receives the Martin Krpan Award. In the past, this was a Volkswagen van named »Krpan«. A sports program Krpan, is organized for children. The same name is used for a number of other institutions and products such as city buses, industrial products, hotel halls such as the one in the Mons hotel in Ljubljana, etc.² Martin Krpan is depicted even on the coat-of-arms of the town of Pivka.



Coat-of-arms on the
City hall in Pivka

People from these parts of Notranjska still recount a story saying that Martin Krpan was born in the village of Vrh near the Holy Trinity church. There was a lake between the church and the village, and in wintertime people from the village used to go to church across the frozen lake. But one day in late winter the ice was not strong enough to support their weight, it cracked beneath them, and they all drowned.

Another variant of this story recounts that the drowned people had been the villagers from Slovenska vas:

Prebivalci iz Slovenske vasi so hodili k maši na goro Sv. Trojica, kjer je stala cerkvena, ki pa je danes porušena. Neke zimske nedelje so se odpravili, tako kot po navadi, zjutraj k maši, ker pa je bilo jezero zaledenelo, so šli kar čez jezero, da bi si skrajšali pot. Medtem se je led začel taliti, začel je pokat, ljudem se je začelo vdirati in vsi so potonili v vodnih globočinah.

Villagers from Slovenska vas went to mass to the Sv. Trojica Mountain where there used to be a small church; the church has since been torn down. On a winter Sunday morning, like so many times before, they set off. Since the lake was completely frozen they decided to take a shortcut across it. But the ice started to melt, they all fell into the water and drowned in its depths.

(Bojan Novak from Prestranek by Pivka, collected by Monika Kropelj, April 2004.)

In other variants it is narrated, that Martin Krpan lived in now deserted village »Vasišče« under the hill Sv. Trojica (Holy Trinity). It was on the Christmas Eve, and the people from »Vasišče« went to the church in Slavina to be present at the midnight mass. They went across the Lake Petelinje, the ice cracked and they all drowned in the water. Those

² More about Martin Krpan in contemporary Slovene society see: Miran Hladnik, Pa začnimo pri Krpanu. In: *Sodobnost, Ljubljana 2002, št. 2*. But, as he writes, there is no statue of Martin Krpan in Pivka.



Sv. Trojica (Holy Trinity) by Pivka – Signpost.

that remained at home, mostly children and old people, later settled in other places.³

People located his house in the village near the church Sv. Trojica near Slivnica; in the village Zavrh in Bloke, and even in Šentjernej in Lower Carniola. In the coastal region in the city Koper they wanted to erect his statue.⁴ There are also stories about very strong men – for instance a man called Gadek – from Pivka⁵.

Even though they had originated in the »land of Martin Krpan«, these narratives have also been strongly influenced by the presence of the **Snežnik Castle** that was first mentioned in medieval sources in

1268. Originally owned by the Aquileia patriarchs, in 1853 it became the property of the Schönburg-Waldenburg family from east Germany. Herman, the castle's last owner, who had obtained it in 1902, managed it until 1945. After that, the castle was nationalized according to Yugoslav property laws. Herman died a year later, but he still appears in local legends. People tell how he couldn't stand any noise so that they were not allowed to breed hens and chickens.

Legend also has it that, as a young man, Herman was in love with a girl who was not of noble origin, and he was therefore not allowed to marry her. She married another man but many years later, after her husband's death, Herman was finally able to marry his beloved. Below is the story of Herman, the castle owner between 1923 and 1945:

³ From internet: "OŠ Pivka, 2004".

⁴ Milan Trobič, *Sindrom Martina Krpana*. Magistrsko delo. Univerza v Ljubljani, Filozofska fakulteta, Oddelek za etnologijo in kulturno antropologijo. 2004, p. 135..

⁵ Andreja Žele: Kaku so živejli in si dejlali kratek cejt. Ljubljana (Glasovi) 1996, p. 144, no. 103.



Lake Petelinje and the view of Slovenska vas from the top of the Sv. Trojica Mountain.

Herman je bil nepojmljivo strog in resen človek. Ženske v grajski pristavi niso smele rediti kokoši, saj ga je hrup kokodakanja in kikirikanja strašansko motil. Ko se je na primer odpravljaj na sprehod po parku, so morala dekleta na stezice polagati mah, da ne bi slučajno pod njegovimi nogami počila kakšna vejica.

Pravijo, da je bil takšen zato, ker se je kot mladenič zaljubil v neko dekle Teklo po imenu. Ker pa po njenih žilah ni tekla modra kri, se z njo ni mogel poročiti, a se je vseeno zaobljubil, da jo bo čakal. In jo je tudi dočakal. Ona se je sicer vmes poročila, ko pa je ovdovela, je bil tudi on zadosti star, da je lahko odločal o svoji usodi, in tako sta se vzela. Herman je umrl leta 1946.

Herman was an incredibly strict and serious man. Since he was deeply disturbed by the cackling and crowing of hens and roosters the women living on the castle farm were not allowed to raise them. When he strolled around the castle park young girls had to place moss on the paths so no twigs creaked beneath his feet.

It was said that he became like this because, as a young man, he had fallen in love with a girl named Tekla. Since she was not of noble origin they were not allowed to wed, but he still promised to wait for her. And he lived to see this happen. She had gotten married, but when she became a widow he was old enough to take his life into his own hands. They married. Herman died in 1946.

Nuša Berce, Pripovedke in pravljicne zgodbe o gradu Snežnik in njegovih gozdovih. (Raziskovalna naloga, Srednja zdravstvena in gimnazija Šubičeva) 1997, str. 5–6.



A new church is being built on the ruined foundations of the original one, on the top of Sv. Trojica.

As part of the Karst region, Lož Valley abounds in karstic caves, vanishing lakes, and rivers. Its most interesting feature is certainly Lake Cerknica that periodically dries up, only to reappear weeks later. Regarded as a marvel of nature, the lake was described by baron Janez Vajkard Valvasor (1641–1693), a noted chronicler and historian of noble origin. At Bogenšperk Castle, in the vicinity of Litija, he had his own printing press, and a large library.⁶ He was also a member of the British Royal Society, the oldest British academy of science. In his book »Die Ehre des Herzogthums Krain« (The Glory of the Duchy of Carniola), published in Laibach-Nürnberg in 1689⁷, Valvasor extensively describes Lake Cerknica:

Neither in Europe nor in other parts of the world can one find such a wonderful lake whose bottom is full of caves and holes; carts can be driven across the lake bottom, loads can be pulled across its frozen surface, boats can bring people from one shore to another, and waterfowl can be shot for food. Its islands appear and vanish according to the water level.

Valvasor also writes about witches who haunt the area:

Our lands have mostly been cleansed of witches and hags, except in the area around Snežnik, Lož, and Planina, for these places are situated in a huge wilderness that abounds in such vermin. When they are found and caught, they are burned at the stake...

⁶ The study about Lake Cerknica gained Valvasor membership of the British Royal Society in London.

⁷ Johann Weikhard Valvasor, Die Ehre des Hertzogthums Crain. Nürnberg 1689: book IV.

In the spirit of the 17th century, in which the inquisition still punished by burning those who were presumed witches, Valvasor believed in their existence. In his book, he describes a well-known folk belief that at night witches have a coven on top of Snežnik Mountain, where they dance; and that they appear disguised as flying lights.

As can be seen from Valvasor's report, **WITCHES** and **WIZARDS** were believed to be very frequent for this area and are among the most popular mythical creatures in this region. People in Lož Valley say that at night witches fly their broomsticks over hills and valleys, organize



Snežnik Castle, 2005

covens, collect magic ingredients, herbs, and Midsummer ashes. Locals still believe that they can single out the witches and wizards in their midst. They are presumably older, often a little strange. Witches are depicted wearing kerchiefs and flying broomsticks; wizards hold a lantern. Towards the dawn, witches disguised as small lights fly with supernatural speed through the woods. Anyone who chances upon them is forever marked by sleepwalking.

One of the collected stories tells us of such an encounter:

Witches 3/Cuprnca 3

Cuprnca so majle svuoje čase. Tud' za krajsno nuč, k' je krajs poguoru. Ne vajm, zakaj so rabile tist' pepjeu. Majnde za zvarke njihove. Pa nas je punce fjerbc matrau, če buo kakšna pršla, pa smo šle pogljekat kala, prot Podguore, od Jagrčkove bajte nauzdol!

Še zdaj jo vidm! Pokrita je bla u marinko, tak doug nus je majla, pa podbrjecano kiklo, pa tak rjep iz blaga od zadaj, pa z mjetlo, pa buosa. Smo jo poznale:



Lake Cerknica, 2005

*»Pogled jo, je žje šla! Tam pr krjese je dajlala svuoje okule.«
So rjekle. Pa nč naj muogla. Taku je je blu žje popraje rojenu. U zibko položenu.
(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 5.*

Witches flew on different occasions. On Midsummer Eve, after the bonfire went out. Don't know why they needed all those ashes. For their potions, I reckon. Us girls were curious if one would come, so we went nosing around towards Podgora, down from Hunter's cottage.

I still see her! She was covered with a kerchief and had a real long nose and a tuckup skirt. She had bare feet, a broomstick and a tail made of cloth in the back. We knew her:

»Look at her, she's off! Did her stuff around the bonfire!«

But she couldn't help it. It was already foretold, she had been marked from the cradle.

The story merely recapitulates a personal perception of an experience. Older narratives, however, tend to have the form of a full story with a plot and a denouement. By describing an event they tell of different skills and activities of witches and wizards.

The use of Midsummer ashes mentioned in this story is somewhat unusual. What is interesting, however, is the fact that the ashes were mentioned by Valvasor when he was speaking of witchcraft in this region, in reference to the persecution of witchcraft: the ashes that were left over after the witches' bonfire were strewn into the ears of witches and of others who practiced witchcraft.⁸

⁸ Same as footnote 5.

Other Stories about witches:⁹

Cuprneke/Wizards

So punce popraj pred veliko nočjo hodile k spuvede, pa je biu drejn pred spovednicame; za veliko nuč pa za buožč je blu taku. Pa so se odpraule u Star' trg že ob trijah zjutraj. Pridejo pred Pudab, tamla pr šule, pa vidjo moža z lantjerno:

»Lejte, laun je cupr'nk!«

Pa so taku bejžale. Pa pridejo kaj kmale do kuonca vasi, pa ga spjet vidjo pr' hiše pred mustam. S čistu druge smeri k' praj. Taku hitru normaln člouk njebe muogu prit sz enga kraja na drugega.

In the past, girls used to go to confession before Easter; in the period around Easter or Christmas there was always a long line in front of the confessional. Once they set off for Stari trg at three in the morning. When they reached Pudab by the school they beheld a man holding a lantern:

"Look that way, there is a wizard there!"

They fled like the wind. Soon they reached the end of the village and once again they saw him near the house by the bridge, which was in an entirely different direction. A normal person could not have reached that place in such a short time.

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 2.

Cuprnice 1/Witches 1

So pokuojna mama prpovedvale: »Še poprej, k' so imajle ajdo kmjetje u Šmarate, čez dan najso majle časa, pa so čez nuč na puodn petrolejko prnjesle, pa mlatile.«

Mama so ble takrat še dekle, k' je pomagala mlat't, pa so je stara tjeta kar naenkrat rjekle: »Pajd Jerčka, k' ne verjameš u cuprnice.« Pa jo je prjela za ruoko: »Pogljed zdaj!«

»Ijooj! Od Šmarate je letajla, z lučko, da je vidla kam jt, pa čez grad, pa čez Luojznštajn, puol se je pa zgbila.«

My late mother told me the following story: In the olden times, when the farmers of Šmarjeta grew buckwheat, they had very little time during the day; so at night they would bring a kerosene lamp to the threshing floor to thresh the buckwheat.

My mother, who was still a young girl then, helped with this chore. All of a sudden an old woman said: "Jerčka, since you don't believe in witches, come over here!" And she took my mother's hand and ordered: "Look over there!"

"Oh dear!" Holding a lamplight, (the witch) was flying from Šmarjeta, over the castle, and across Luojznštajn; then it disappeared.

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 3.

Cuprnice 2/Witches 2

Eno žjeno so tude obsojale za cuprnco, reč pa zasegurnu noben naj muogu. Bla je majhna stara ženica in za tisto so misnle, da je hodila po štalah. Enkrat so ble z vasi

⁹ The stories cited are from: Nuša Berce, Pripovedke in pravljlične zgodbe o gradu Snežnik in njegovih gozdovih. (Raziskovalna naloga na Srednji zdravstveni šoli in gimnaziji, Šubičeva 1 v Ljubljani). Snežnik, 25. 3. 1997.



Slivnica Mountain, where it was believed that witches had their covens.

pr spuvede. Ta žjena je šla u spuvednico. Eden odzunaj je pa slišou kaku jo je gaspud uprašau:

»Kakšna pa ste, štalska (cuprnca) al puolska (cuprnca)?«

Pa je rjekla: »Štalska.«

There was a woman who was believed to be a witch, yet no one could prove this with certainty. She was a puny old woman, believed to go into barns. At one time the villagers went to receive confession. The woman went into a confessional. Someone standing outside heard the priest ask the woman:

“Which kind are you, a field witch or one who goes into barns?”

And she replied: “The one who goes into barns.”

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 4.

While older stories are longer and well-rounded narratives speaking of the many skills of witches and wizards, modern ones recount a personal experience or encounter with these beings.

According to the recently-collected local folklore the **LIGHTS** shooting through woods and meadows at night are usually explained as witches, goblins, or souls of the dead; they are called »vedavci« or »vedomci«, »navje«, »movje«¹⁰. There are also lights

¹⁰ For more about this see: Mirjam Mencej, “Coprnice so me nosile”. Nočna srečevanaj s čarovnicami. in: *Studia Mythologica Slavica* 7, Ljubljana Udine 2004, 107–142 and: Zmago Šmitek, *Sledovi potujočih duš. Vedomci, kresniki in sorodna bajna bitja*. Radovljica: Didakta 2003.

that during the advent season get caught on people's umbrellas or in their hair. Such lights that in the darkness of the night can be perceived by passers-by as an unusual brightness resembling a trembling flame in the distance, represent the light of wandering and restless souls. One of these lights is described in this story:

Lučke2/Lights 2

K' so l'dje iz Nadljeska k devetdnjeuncam pred božičem u Star trg hodile, pa so kar ene take lučke okruog letajle, pa nad marelo najkaj časa, puol so se pa kar na kuonce šprikl obajsle, pa se pstile nuost.

Učash so se pa tude kar u lasje zapljetale.

(Janez Porok - Janežčov, Klance, February 1997), no. 24.

When folk from Nadlesk went to the novena in Stari trg just before Christmas, lights started to fly around them. For a time they hovered above their umbrellas, then they went and hung themselves on the iron points and let people carry them around.

Sometimes they got tangled in somebody's hair.

Lučke 1/Lights 1

L'dje, k' so vidle lučke švigat u guozde, tamla prot Javornikam, so rjekle, da so tu cuprnice, pa škratlne, k' majo u guozde pa na graščinah zaklad skrt. So se bale jt takrat u gozd, k' če be šu člouk u tistem čase kala, be ga luna nosila!

Še k' so ble partizane, pa so majle klala, pr klanške kapajlce stražo postauleno. Pa kar enkrat zvečjer že udre ta stražar u hišo:

»Lučke sm vidu u Javornike! Lučke, ma lučke!«

Nč druzga naj znou reč.

People who saw lights whizzing around in the forest beneath Javornik said that those were witches and goblins who owned hidden treasures buried in castles and in forests. People were afraid to go to the forest at such times for fear of becoming moonstruck.

Once the partisans had a sentry positioned by the small chapel on the top of the hill. All of a sudden the sentry breaks into a house:

"I have seen lights on the Javornik Mountain! Lights, I say, lights!"

This was all he could say.

(Janez Porok - Janežčov, Klance, February 1997), no. 23.

Enchanted souls, restless because they had not received their sacraments or had not been buried in holy ground, for instance, return to the world of the living, sometimes in the form of a radiant light or bird; this often occurs on All Saints' Day, on Midsummer Day, or during the advent season. These ancient beliefs have been preserved in contemporary legends as well.

FAIRIES play an important role in Slovene folk tradition. They are depicted as heavenly beautiful beings, misty, sometimes white, sometimes green, and with long blond hair. The fairies from Snežnik are no exception. Local people say: »Whoever joins the fairy circle will remain in it for a hundred, maybe three hundred years, but will feel as if a mere hour, or three hours, have passed.« Joining the circle, of course, indicates passing over to the world beyond. The time of eternity in the world beyond is everlasting and infinite; its

hours seem like minutes. Many songs and fairytales touch upon this subject¹¹; one of the collected contemporary stories describes how the narrator's sister chanced upon fairies dancing in a circle when she was returning home late at night. Since fairies do not like to be observed they usually punish those who dare to disturb their peace. This is why one of them spat on the girl's foot, which hurt for the rest of her life.

Vile pr' grade/Fairies by the Castle

16 lajt je muogla takrat muoja sjestra mt. Pa zvečer ata praujo:

»Pajdte no u vas po cigarete.«

Zmjeraj se je šele zvečer spumnu zajne. No, pa sta sz starejšo sjestro šle u gostilno in k' sta se vračale je bla že nuč. Sta ble puozne pa sta se hitale katjera bo praj pršla damu. Ta starejša je rjekla, da gre okul pristave. Ta je rjekla, da grje pa pr grade. Je pršla do une stežičke pr smrajkah k' vuode k cvingerje od grada. Tam jo je pa kar najkaj ustaulu, da naj muogla napraj. Pa obrne glavo pruot vratam od cvingerja, je biu tak čas, da so se pod večer meglice dajlale, pa zagljeda šest vil plajsat. Use bajle so ble pa lajpe. Njo je strah postal, da so je šle kar lasje u luft. Je huotla teč mimu, pa jo je nazaj pahnilu. Zatu je stjekla kar nazaj, pa naraunost damu.

Čez mnugu lajt je šla k vračare, vedeževauke. Pa je je ta rjekla:

»K' ste bla 16 lajt stara vam je blu danu vidt vile. Ampak tiste vile so ble zle in ena od teh vam je plunila na nuogo. Še zdaj nuoste tam madež.«

In rajs, cajlu žiulejne je sjestro do smrte strašnu nuoga bolajla.

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 7.

Many of the collected stories tell how **GOBLINS** and **DWARFS** watch over their treasures by the castle ruins. According to local lore, on Ember Days groups of goblins roam Cerknica Lake at night and frighten horses. Especially on Catholic holidays they like to sit in forest clearings, scaring people, like the dwarf in our story who on the Nativity of Our Lady frightened the people who were gathering walnuts. In another story the sisters' path was barred by seven dwarfs »dimnikarčki« (chimneysweepers), which is what occurs in fairytales. In this legend, however, an apparition was beheld by a chance passerby, and for a long time afterward girls used to recount this »true« event:

Dimnekarčke/Chimneysweepers

Smo šle sz sjestrame tude zvečer u Kozaršče. Istu taku smo šle po cigarete. Je bla svetla nuč polajte, pa smo rjekle:

»Kar okruog grada grjemo k' je taku lepu.«

Pa pridemo klala k smrajkam, k' je launa rampa.

Zdaj, tih sjedm možičku, pa taku fljetnh, ku dimnekarčke so ble, se taku fljetnu za ruokce drži čez puot. Kt po stopničkah so ble. Ta najvišje je biu u sredine, pa je biu tude čistu majčkn. Taku nekaku do pasa be me biu. Puol so se pa na usako stran po trije nižale. Pa kar držale so se pa nas najso spustile čez puot. Tu najso ble ldje.

Poprej je blu klala čistu najkaj družga ku zdaj.

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 8.

¹¹ The monk and the bird, folk song, see: Slovenske ljudske pesmi (Slovenian Folk Songs) I, Ljubljana: Slovenska matica 1970, no. 55, p. 305 – 308. .

Another story tells about an encounter in the forest:

Možiček u orajhove doline/The Tiny Man from the Walnut Valley

Na male šmarn, tu je blu uosmega septembra, so šle ldje iz vasi orajhe trgat na en laz pod Snežnik. Pa pridejo do ene zeljene doline, kar na srajde zagljedajo enga možička. Kar sedu je u tiste doline.

Jh je bla pa gruoza. So rjkle, da njebe šle nigdar več na tiste dan u gozd karkule dajlat.

On September 8, on the Nativity of Our Lady Day, people went to collect walnuts on a clearing beneath Snežnik. When they reached a green valley they saw a small man in the middle of it. He was just sitting there.

They were terrified. They said that that day they would no longer return to the forest for any chore.

(Neža Lekšan, Šmarata, February 1997), no. 26.

In Lož Valley people tell about the local **GIANT**, a bareheaded young man of immense stature called the Midnight Man (Polnočni mož), who still lives in Lož Valley as the local stories have it. At two o'clock at night he easily oversteps high fieldgates, watching the stars.

Pounuočne muož velikan/Midnight Man, Giant

Mama pa starejša žjena sta se zmenile, da grjesta na Mežališče pod Snežnik po moline. Pa so rjkle mama:

»Muormo kar zgudaj ustat, če čmo bt tam ob zuore.«

Šle so ob dvajh ponuoče pa je bla lajpa majsčna nuč. Pa pridejo do ograd tamla na ovinke, k so ble takrat, pa jh je kar najkaj ustaulu.

»Ustaute se!«

So djale mame pa še enm puncam ena žjena. Pa so se ustaule, pa vidle:

»Lejte ga!«

Pa je šu od zavrtu, od kraja vasi en u bajle srajce, črnu oblajčn, u aržetah rokje pa na visuokh nogah. Pa je čez rante taku zlahka stuopau, zakoraču čez cajsto, pa čez. Puole tam prot' Kucl. Tak lajp, visok, razoglau, u črnem telounike. Rajs lajp.

K' so ga gljedale, jh naj blu nč strah, pa same so ble tam. Ampak je puolaj zginu, čeprau je blu svetlu od majsca. Mama so djale:

»Noben me ne buo prepriču, da naj blu rajs.«

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 1.

In folklore, the **SNAKE** may appear as the giver of good, the guardian of the threshold or home, as a snake queen with a crown on its head, or as a symbol of dead souls. It may be kin to the dragon and have several heads, lording over waters, the world, and the skies. It can create chaos. But all that has remained of her powers in contemporary stories is the snake image in relation to St. Margaret. The snake stories of Lož Valley usually take place near Šmarata, which had been named after St. Margaret, the patron saint that protects people from snakes.



St. Margaret and St. George killing a dragon depicted on the coat-of-arms of Lož valley.

Kača 1/Snake 1

Kle k' grješ k Šmarate, čez Zagradne njive, so ble rante učash prjedn stuopš u puole. Pa so mama zmjeraj rjekle, da se je na tje pluoške hodila grajt kača. Raunu tam, k' stuopš na Šmarašku. Kdur se je namjenu, da jo buo ubu, takrat je začjela juokat. Puol je pa kar zginla. So praule, da je bla tu kača Svete Margarete, k' varuje šmaraško cjerku.

Tude k' smo za pujske nabirale u podrastje smo zmjeraj prjeden smo začjele dajlat rjekle: »Sveta Margareta, kačja pastirica, bodi moja pomočnica, da nas nje be kače!« Tu so nas mama naučile.

When you go toward Šmarjeta and cross the fields of Zagrad, just before you reach the field there used to be a fence. My mother always said that a snake used to crawl on the fence there to warm itself. Right where you reach Šmarjeta. If somebody wanted to kill it it started to cry, and then it just disappeared. It was said to be the snake of St. Margaret, the patron saint of the Šmarjeta church.

Whenever we would be gathering brushwood we first said:

“St. Margaret, snake shepardess, do not let the snakes get us!”

This we had learned from our mother.

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 10.

Kača 2/Snake 2

Smo šle, eno nedajlo maja popoudan z mamu k šmarncam u Šmarato. Pa sva šle tamla okul Dijane, čez Zagradne njive. Tiste čas je blu majnde, da so češarke odpadale. Jaz sm bla pa majhna, pa sm jh nabjerala ku zmajšana! Sm bla usa neumna najne, k' so ble taku lajpe! Kraj puotke je bla pa ku nalašč ena kotajncna pouna češarku!

»Jojs, mama! Kaku so lajpe!«

Pa sm skočila nuotre, pa tuolšna kača kar naenkrat tamla! Taku je bla velika, pa me je kar gljedala iz tistega kotajncčka, pa kar mežikala, pa kar gljedala.

Mama so začjele iskat palco, da be jo udarla, pa je kar zginla. Kar zginla je bla, k' je palco vidla.

On a Sunday afternoon our mother and we went to Šmarjeta to observe May devotions. We were rounding Dijana, crossing the Zagrad fields. I guess this was the time when fir cones were falling to the ground. I was so little that I was gathering them in a frenzy. I was really

crazy about them; they were so beautiful. And there, by the footpath, there was this basin filled with cones.

“Mom, look how beautiful they are!”

So we jumped in, but all of a sudden there was this big snake there! It was so big, and it was just looking at me from that basin, winking and just looking at me.

Mother started to search for a stick to hit it but the snake just disappeared. When it beheld the stick it disappeared just like that.

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 11.

Among other **MYTHICAL ANIMALS**, people living in Lož Valley sometimes observe beautiful horses galloping in the night. They represent the wild, untamed forces of nature. One story describes such horse apparitions:

Kuojne srjed noči/Horses in the Middle of the Night

Muoj uoče je skrbu za kuojne u hljevah pr prstave. Pa se je enkrat bl puoznu vračau damu, u Kozarišče. Pa kar naenkrat zagljeda ogromnu kuojnu k' so djerjale okruog in okruog grada. Taku lajpe so ble z uso žimo, kar so je majle, spletjeno u kitke. Pa kar galopjemale so tam, srjed noči.

My Dad takes care of horses at the castle farm. Once, late at night, he was returning home to Kozarišče. All of a sudden he saw numerous horses galloping around the castle. They were so beautiful, with their tails braided in small plaits. They were just galloping around, there in the middle of the night.

(Milka Vrhovec, Stari trg, February 1997), no. 20.

On **EMBER DAYS**, or pagan feriae, mythical women called »**KVATRE**« made sure that during this period people observed the rule of fasting, that young men refrained from paying nocturnal visits to their beloved, that women did not perform any of their chores like making bread, etc. It was also unadvisable to leave the house on Saturday evenings, and by no means to go hunting. What might happen if these rules are broken is told in this story:

Na kvatre 1/On Ember Days 1

Na kvatre se ne smaj u gozd! Če so šle takrat raupšicat, so se jm razne stvari prkazvale. Tud k' je raupšic ustrajlu u diujad, kugla naj šla napraj, ampak se je ustaula točnu pred srno, pa padla duol. Inu tu je blu rajs.

It is forbidden to go to the forest on Ember Days, for things might happen to poachers. When one of them fired a shot into a deer the bullet did not hit the animal but stopped right in front of it and fell on the ground. This was true, mind you!

(Janez Porok - Janežčov, Klance, February 1997), no. 21.

Na kvatre 2/On Ember Days 2

Je biu en muoške u Danah, k' je vuozu lejs na Rakek, inu tude na kvatarno sobuoto, takrat, k' nje be smeu. Pa se vrača s kuojne pruoat dume, pa je šu čez jezeru, k' je blu suhu. Pa pride do nasipa pr Dolajnm jezere, pa začnejo kuojne kar divjat, pa nemirne bt', pa hrzat, pa najso se

premaknile niti za malu naprej. Njega je strah ratalu. Pa zagljeda eno skupinco majhnih ldi, črnu oblajčenh, pa z lučkame u rokah. Pa kar mimu so šle. Kuojne pa še bl norajle.

No, in k' so ble enkrat mimu, so kar zginle. Kuojne so se pomirile in lahku je šu damu. Ampak je rjeku:

»Nekule več na kvatrno sobuoto klad vlč!«

Najkaj je muoglu bt', k' tiste člouk je biu strašnu pošten.

*Da zlo te ne napade,
ne hodi v gozd po klade,
v soboto kvatrno,
da zlo te ne napade,
čuj prošno materno!*

In Dane there was a man who transported wood to Rakek. He did so also on Ember Days, even though he shouldn't have. As he was returning home with his horses he took the path across the lake, which was dry at the time. When he reached the dam by Dolnje jezero the horses went wild, they were stirring and neighing, and wouldn't budge a bit. He began to be frightened. Then he saw a small group of tiny people clad in black, carrying small lights. They just passed him by while the horses went even wilder.

Well, when they moved past him they just disappeared. The horses calmed down and he was able to proceed toward home. But he said:

"Never again shall I haul wood on Ember Days!"

There had to be something in that for the man was a very honest person.

*For evil to attack you not
Do not enter forests to haul wood
On Ember Days Saturday
To keep the evil from your side
Pray, hear mother's wish!*

(Ivana Kandare, Dane, February 1997), no. 22.

The belief in **INCUBUS** is typical and abounds in Slovene traditional narrative. Some people imagined the incubus as a mythical creature in the form of a human or an animal that had the ability to change shape and even crawl through a keyhole or a narrow crack. Others were certain that the arrival of the incubus is the work of a hostile person or is caused by someone whose soul escapes the body at night in the form of a fly or a bee. Such notions are still alive in contemporary legends from the area around Snežnik.

Muora/The Incubus

Eden od pedjentarju je eno nuč, k' je spau u grade, u 13. sobi, kar začutu, kaku se me je najkaj na prsa pa grlu usajlu. Muora ga je začjela tlačt, pa je zgrabu tisto stvar na prsah, pa jo močnu vrgu ob tla.

*Samu po živjeple je zasmrdajlu, pa zginlu!
Praujo, da je bla tu Muora sama.*

Sleeping in the castle, in room No. 13, one of the hired hands felt something descend upon his chest and throat. It was an incubus. So he grabbed that thing and threw it hard against the floor.

He felt a strong smell of sulphur and the thing was gone!

They say that it was the incubus itself.

(Milka Vrhovec, Stari trg, February 1997), no. 19.

WATER DEMONS, water fairies, mermaids, and water nymphs are abundant in Slovene folklore. Perice washerwomen, also called night women, are dressed in white and quietly wash laundry in ponds or by springs. Woe to whoever observes, disturbs, or even mocks them! The women will pursue them and, like Pehtra, they will strike at their face with an iron hand. Reckless children who wander too near the water will be dragged into its depths. The vodovci – which might be translated as water-folk – in contemporary legends from this area, however, are more similar to water ghosts who sometimes pull children into water and drown them.

U vuode/Into the Waters

Tu je biu marc majsc. Zime so ble takrat hude pa snajg je biu kr zmjeraj vjelk taml na Golobinake, kjer je vuoda pršla, je blu pa kopnu.

Pa je blu en dan, 19. marca je blu, za svjetga Juožefa, je malu suonca posijalo. Pa smo se šle prou ke igrat. Naša ta starejša pa rječe:

»Slišete!«

Pa je pr brjege kar taku špasnu začjelu dajlat:

»Plup...pluap..plua!«

Ne muorm povajdat kaku, ampak še zdaj slišm. Pa smo rjekle:

»Muormo bajžat, k' je praznik dnš, mje se pa igramo.«

In smo bejžale taku, joj, vajste.

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 9.

Among the most frequent contemporary stories are terrifying stories. **GHOSTS** usually appear in forests. In Lož Valley people also tell stories about local frightening apparitions and ghosts; one of them is “the man with the hat.”

“The bloody thigh”, for instance, which lives in rivers and suffocates or devours children, can be used very efficiently to instill fright in children. Yet it is also a vestige of religious notions about the wild hunt, an event in which raging monsters zoom around and occasionally throw a bloodied thigh, arm, or another part of a human body in front of a chance passerby.

Krvavu stjegnu/The Bloody Thigh

Tu so zmjeraj rjekle, da so vidle pr' brjezne, pr izvire kr entazga človajka, al' bitje u poduobe krvauga stjegna. Vs rdječ je biu, pa okul vuode je kar huodu.

So nas strašile, če ne buomo pridne, da nas buo krvavu stjegnu!

They always said that there by the abyss, by the water spring, they saw a person or a creature in the shape of a bloody thigh. It was all red, and it kept circling the water.

They used to scare us that the bloody thigh would get us unless we were good!

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 13.

Another story tells about the man with the hat:

Muož s klobukam/The Man with the Hat

*Sva šle, z Ano, sjestro, pruoť Luojznštajne, taku malu. Pa grjeva po tiste stežičke.
Enkrat se pa Ana nazaj uzre, pa za nama tak muož, s takm šeruokm klobukam, črnem.
Pa vjelk, u črne hale, prou ku kakšn čarodej! Pa kar za nama! Še nekule praj ga najsva vidle.
Mje sva se skrile za ovinčkam, puol pa taku bežale.
(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 12.*

The story “**I still don’t know what was in that heap**” tells about an undefined phantom that moved up and down in a heap of leaves.

»Kaj je blu u tistem kupe, še zdaj ne vajm«

Smo šle, sjestre z mamu po moline u gozd. Smo šle, pa smo imajle tiste ajmrje žje poune, pa je mama rjekla:

»Ala fije! zdaj se usjedmo, da buomo pojajle.«

Najsmo majle veliku sabo, ampak useenu. Puol smo se pa posajle na - kukr en gričk zraun enga kupa smrajčja. Mama pa kar naenkrat:

»Vidte kaj tamla?«

Mje kar sedimo une kup se je pa kar pruzdigvat začjeu, pa kar šum’t, pa kar pruzdigvat se! Smo pobrale use, pa tjeke, da be čimprej od tam pršle.

Kaj je blu u tistem kupe, še zdaj ne vajm, ampak nobena žvau se naj muogla zvleč med laune šprajne u vajah, da be lahku taku močnu kup pruzdigvala.

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 6.

Since all of these stories originated in the area around Snežnik Castle many of them talk about castle ghosts and treasures hidden there. Snežnik ghosts roam the castle clad in sheets, extinguish candles, or have the head of a dog covered with a high hat. As is only befitting for castles, Snežnik Castle does not lack »**CASTLE GHOSTS**«.

Duhuove u grade 1/Ghosts in the Castle 1

Puolaj sm pa enkrat uokna na grade pomivala. Pomivam, ti, pa pride ena žjenska k mjene:

»Te naj nč’ strah? Klala so enkrat vidle enga muoškega sz pasjo glavuo, u frake pa cilindre. Po štengah pa skuz nadstruopje je šu.«

I was once washing the castle windows when a woman comes to me:

“Aren’t you scared at all? A man with a dog’s head, wearing a tuxedo and a top hat, was once seen here. He was walking up the staircase and through this floor.”

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 15.

Some stories tell about the echo of footsteps:

Duhuove u grade 2/Ghosts in the Castle 2

Pa so tjeta, k’ so zračle grad, kadar princa naj blu čez lajtu, vsa vrata zaklenile, pa šle šivat tačas.

Je čistu usa vrata zaklenila pa se kar naenkrat odprejo vrata od jedilnce. Puol pa zaslišē korake. Take tješke, u gozdarskh čēulah, muoškh. Čēz vježo, mimu

medvajda, pa se na ploščicah ustavjo. Pa odpre ta vrata od biljardcimra.

Tjeta pa kar za njim:

»Kdu je?«

Pa nič! Samu korake so šle kar naprej skuz biljardcimir u biblioteko. No, u biblioteke so se pa zgbile.

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 16.

Some of suddenly extinguished candles and small blazes dancing in the dark:

Duhuove u grade 3/Ghosts in the Castle 3

Punce, k' so muogle čez nuč u grade prespat, so hodile guore u 34. sobo, prou guore. Pa so praule, da so zmjeraj k' so šle ke, duole prbežzale, k' jm najkaj naj pestilu, da be majle svajčke pržgane in jm jh je skuze ugašalu. Puol, k' je bla pa tema, so začjele pa plamajčke okruog, po zrake pljesat.

So taku prtjekle duole! Duostkrat.

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 17.

Some about appearances of late lords of the manor, Jurij, Herman and Ulrich:

Duhuove u grade 4/Ghosts in the Castle 4

Ldje so zmjeraj vidle gospuoda, ta starga princa Jurija, od Hermana pa Ulricha očjeta, kaku se vrača pa huode po grade!

Ene so ga vidle u normalne poduobe, ene pa u rjuho zavitga.

Praujo, da kdur huode ven, najma meru. Od prej še.

(Milka Vrhovec, Stari trg, February 1997), no. 18.

Some about a dream revealing where to find the castle treasure:

Zaklad od Katarine/Katarina's Treasure

So me pokuojna tjeta, k' sm dajlala u grade, pa k je bla uona tam kuharca, poklicale:

»Pajd no mal sm!«

»Kaj želite?« Sm rjekla.

»Lej, kle je ena knjiga, te buom pokazala. Lej, kle u tej kronike piše...«

Ta kronika je bla taka lajpa knjiga, u sivu vazana, skuze srjed biljardcimir, na mize.

»Je biu pa en striček Jakobček (Jakob Pianetski), k' je huodu u grad pomagat.« Je rjekla.

»Se mu je sanjalu, da me je grofica pršla povajdat, da nej pride opounoči kuopat k temeljem kapajle pod eno stran njen'h vrat, pa da bo našu kelih zlat, mašne plašč s katjerm je grofica sama mašvala, pa še druge dragocenosti. Mašna knjiga je bla pa tku al tku u biblioteke.«

Pa so tjeta šle sz prstam po vrsticah:

»Lej, klala piše! Ali Jakob tega ni nikdar storil.«

(Ivanka Širca, Kozarišče, February 1997), no. 14.

Recounted are also PREDICTIONS, like the vision on the horizon around Lož Valley, which seems like a prediction of war. The narrator remembers being woken one night in 1939, seeing the sky above Lož Valley »on fire«, while »trumpets kept sounding on and on.« When people went to the forest to find out what was going on they suddenly saw a

glistening white rainbow which made the night as bright as day. The following day they learned that five young men from Dane were killed at that exact spot beneath Križna gora.

Kar nebu pa hribe so gorajle/The Sky and the Hills Were Burning

Tu je blu an 1939 lajta. No in kaj je blu? Jaz spim, ponuoče je blu, pa me sosajdove fantje pokličejo:

»Lej, Janez, gori, gori, lej!« Krči, »Pajde pogljedit!«

In rajs, okul in okul Luoške doline je blu, ku da be nebu pa obzuorje gorajla, je blu taku svetlu. Pa kar tiste ognjene zublje so švigale guore. So se trobajnte, tiste za preplah pr požare oglasile, pa kar trobile, pa trobile.

Puol smo šle pa mi sz sosajde pogljedit guore, u gozd, kaj sploh je, ki ne. Pa so se kar žje čez ene četart ure druge zbale, so šle nazaj, jaz sm šu pa kar napraj. Trobjente so še kar tulile, jaz sm se ustavu, je blu taku svetlu, ku pr bajlem dnjeve. Taku svetlu, da sm lahku še časopis brau, k' sm ga imu u žjepe!

Kar naenkrat pa taka svetluoba pride, taka, da me je kar vid slepilu. Najsm najpraj nč vidu. Puol pa pogljedit, čeprou me je še zmjeraj ščmajlu u očjeh, pa zagljedit, tamla od Rajke pa do Križne guore eno tako bleščječe bajlo maurico, kar en svetlječ se must čez nebu, čez vs tist uogn spuodaj.

Pa pounoči je bla žje ura. Pa svetlu, ku pr bajlem dnjeve.

Trobajnte so utihnle, jaz sm šu nazaj, pa ob ene pridem damu. Uoče je pa sedu za mizo, pa me upraša:

Pa me use povajm, pa rječe:

»Viš, ti buoš u žiulejne zelu srječn, k' se vidu znamejna na najbe. Tu so ble svetince, k' so prute Križne guore letajle.«

Naslajdn dan so pa raunu tamla pod Križno goro pjet fantu iz Dan ubile.

(Janez Porok - Janežčov, Klance, February 1997), no. 25.

Conclusion

These tales from Lož Valley present events that presumably happened to somebody, or else they just speak of something connected to their environment. The tales are recounted as true events and experiences, enriched by vivid imagination and elements of mythical traditions. They usually start in the traditional manner of contemporary legends: »Us sisters and our Mom, we went to the woods to get some raspberries...«; »It was the Nativity of Our Lady, September 8th, the folks from the village went to gather walnuts on a clearing beneath Snežnik.«; »My sisters and me, we went to the village to get some cigarettes for our Dad. We reached the pine trees by the castle, and there were little men blocking our path.« – All these are the beginnings that are very common for contemporary legends.

The location and the time are often described with considerable precision: »in the middle of the village, on Mežališče, by the castle wall door«; »when my sister was sixteen,« »after the war«, »when I was small.«

The stories cited above are contemporary legends of the countryside and of small market towns. They have been classified as contemporary legends because they describe a present or a recent situation, because they recount personal experiences that happened to their narrators, their friends, their relatives, or acquaintances, and because they speak of particular occurrences or incidents in their environment.

In addition to the above stories that recall Martin Krpan or fellow villagers who had drowned in the lake, the stories that can still be found among the people of the Pivka region are short. Mostly they tell of ghosts, mythical creatures, and witches; they explain the origin of a certain place, lake, or cliff; they describe what life was like when people still fastened their boats to Mountain Nanos that stretched all the way to the sea; they recall the olden times, the war, the grinders, the peddlers, the brigands, etc. Occasionally there is also an apocryphal and aetiological legend such as the story about the Fifty Poor Children of Eve: since Eve concealed them from God their descendants have remained poor to this day¹².

More fairytales and legends have been preserved in the vicinity of Lake Cerknica and in Lož Valley. In general, people tell each other stories similar to the ones listed above: about the castle of Snežnik, Lake Cerknica, the lords of the Štibrše and Karlovško manors, the Turks, the French, Hace the robber, bandits, thieves, and smugglers of forbidden goods. There are many mythical tales about the mračniki, snakes, the incubus, witches, the dead returning to the world of the living, petrified men, the bloody thigh, and fairies.¹³

When compared to older narratives collected in this region the difference is clear: in the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century people still often told fairytales, folktales, and legends such as the folktale »The Cunning Thief« (ATU 1525A + 1737) from Bloke near Cerknica¹⁴, or »The Fox Helps to Find a Miraculous Cure« (ATU 551), likewise from Bloke near Cerknica¹⁵; both were collected by Izidor Modic in 1904. That these regions were covered with forests – which is why most locals made a living from wood – can be seen in the folktale »How to Tame Shrews« (ATU 901) that was written down by Rudolf Andrejka in Hrašče near Postojna in 1911¹⁶.

The vestiges of rich mythological and narrative traditions connected to the Karst region, to the »land of Martin Krpan«, to the forests in Lož Valley, and to the area around Lake Cerknica, can still be found in contemporary stories and legends.

Recently collected narratives contain a pronounced cultural and historic context in that they speak about the specific Karst countryside with its vanishing lakes, forests, and castles, about their local heroes and events, and about personalities and folk belief connected with this environment. All this inspires typical local folklore that we can identify – even though sometimes in very restricted form – in the folk tales of today, or more precisely, in contemporary legends from this part of Notranjsko/Inner Carniola. From their social function and their context, folktales as well as contemporary legends still aid in the construction of national identity.

¹² Andreja Žele, *Kaku so živejli in si dejalali kratek cajt. Kratke štorije s Pivškega*, Ljubljana 1996, p. 19.

¹³ Milena Ožbolt, *Andrejeva stopinja. Folklorne pripovedi iz Loške doline, Blok, Loškega Potoka in okolice Cerkniškega jezera ter Babnega polja*, Ljubljana 2004.

¹⁴ Archives ISN ZRC SAZU: ŠZ 7/256, Published: Kropej 1995, pp. 187-189, No. 19.

¹⁵ Archives ISN ZRC SAZU: ŠZ 7/258, Published: Kropej 1995, pp. 189-190, No. 20.

¹⁶ Archives ISN ZRC SAZU: ŠZ 7/25, Published: Kropej 1995, pp. 190-191, No. 21

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Sodobne zgodbe s slovenskega krasa na Notranjskem v primerjavi z lokalnim bajčnim izročilom in tradicionalnim pripovedništvom

Monika Kropelj

V članku so predstavljene in analizirane pripovedi, ki so bile zbrane v zadnjem desetletju v Loški dolini, v okolici Cerknškega jezera in na Pivškem. Te zgodbe bi lahko označili kot sodobne zgodbe, čeprav imajo veliko skupnega z ljudskimi povedkami in bajkami, ki so bile razširjene tod okoli še v minulem stoletju. V zgodbah, ki so bile raziskane in podrobneje analizirane, se pojavljajo duhovi, čaravnice in čarovniki, vile, velikani, palčki in druga bajeslovna bitja slovenskega mitološkega izročila, toda njihova vsebina je v precejšnji meri posodobljena in po navadi jih pripovedujejo kot osebna doživetja, kar je značilno za sodobne zgodbe. Na podlagi precizne primerjave in raziskav konteksta tako tradicionalnih kot sodobnih pripovedi so začrtane spremembe opazne pri sodobnem pripovedništvu in družbena vloga tako enih kot drugih pripovednih zvrsti z ozirom na okoliščine, v katerih so jih pripovedovali oz. so živele.

Tako v Loški dolini kot v okolici Cerknškega jezera in na Pivškem je ljudsko pripovedništvo, kamor prištevamo tudi sodobne zgodbe, še razmeroma zelo živo in prisotno v vsakdanjem življenju in tudi v kulturni krajini, ki jo danes imenujejo kar »dežela Martina Krpana«. Znani junak Levstikove povesti iz leta 1858, ima korenine v ljudskem izročilu o rokovnjačih in kontrabantarjih na Pivškem in še danes si ljudje pripovedujejo zgodbe, kako so npr. prebivalci iz Krpanove vasi Vrh pri Sv. Trojici, v nekaterih variantah tudi iz Slovenske vasi hodili k maši na Sv. Trojico čez jezero, kjer so neke zimske nedelje zaradi odtajajočega se jezera vsi potonili. Druga značilnost teh krajev je Cerknško jezero. Z goro Slivnico in čarovnicami, ki se tod okoli zbirajo, ne nazadnje pa je tudi grad Snežnik s svojimi gozdovi pustil na pripovednem izročilu in v sodobnih zgodbah pomembne sledove.

Pripovedi, ki jih danes lahko zberemo na terenu na Pivškem poleg že zgoraj navedenih, so kratke in pripovedujejo po večini o strahovih, bajnih bitjih in čarovnicah ali razlagajo nastanek nekega kraja, jezera, skale, o tem, kako je bilo, ko so ljudje s teh krajev barke še privezovali h gori Nanos, do koder je segalo morje in tudi sicer obujajo spomine

na stare čase, na vojsko, na brusače, krošnjarje, rokovnjače ipd. Tu in tam se najde kakšna apokrifna in razlagalna legenda, kot je zgodbica o Petdesetih revnih Evinih otrocih, ki jih je zamolčala pred Bogom, in so zato njihovi potomci ostali reveži do današnjih dni.

V okolici Cerknškega jezera in v Loški dolini je ohranjenih nekoliko več pravljic in povedk, sicer pa si ljudje pripovedujejo podobne zgodbice, kot so zgoraj objavljene, npr. o Snežniškem gradu, Cerknškem jezeru, o Štibrškem in Karlovškem gospodu, ki sta živela tam, o Turkih, Francozih, razbojniku Hacetu, rokovnjačih, ravbarjih, tihotapcih in kontrabantarjih. Veliko je bajčnih pripovedi o mračnikih, kačah, mori, coprnicah, mrtvih, ki hodijo nazaj, okamenelih možeh, krvavem stegnu, o vilah, žalik ženah in krivopetah.

Bogata mitološka tradicija teh krajev, ki se odraža tako v bajeslovnem izročilu kot v zgodovinskem spominu, torej še danes živi v sodobnih zgodbah, ki so kratke pripovedi. Ljudje jih pripovedujejo predvsem kot osebna doživetja. Sodobne zgodbe loških, pivških in cerknških vasi in trgov odslikujejo kulturno okolje, v katerem so se razvijale. Pripovedi pa pomembno vplivajo na utrip kulturne regije in istočasno tudi sooblikujejo konstrukt nacionalne podobe in identitete.