

Slovene Pagan Sacred Landscape Study Case: The Bistrica Plain

Benjamin Štular, Ivan M. Hrovatin

In this article the authors present the Slovene Pagan sacred landscape. Based on the case of the Bistrica plain, North of Ljubljana (Slovenia) they have tried to show the ritual sites within the sacred landscape for the period between 9th Century and the end of 10th Century. This was concluded through the oral tradition and archaeological sources. They have tried to determine the role of the individual ritual site within the landscape and the manner in which the sacred landscape influenced the life of the people of the period.

Introduction

Rituals and religion still seem to be “taboo subjects ..., denounced by the brave and avoided by the sensible” (Orme 1981, 218). Two decades have passed from the time since the author wrote down this quotation, yet there are very few changes for the better in Slovene archaeology. In fact much less than one would expect. This is also one of the reasons why we have (hopefully not too hastily) started with the task of researching the Slovene pagan sacred landscape.

In the introduction we will define the key words. We will follow this by showing the types of sources used and we will try to determine the manner in which they were used. In the second part of the article we will, on the basis of various sources, show the contents of the *Slovene pagan sacred landscape* and individual ritual places (in our paper these are places of special interest). At first on the area of one village (Gradišče pri Lukovici) and then we will spread our field of interest to a whole community (Bistrica plain).

Let us start with the term Slovene pagan sacred landscape. Why Slovene? For two reasons: (I) all discussed sources are from the Slovene territory and therefore confirm the existence of this tradition on this territory; (II) a proven continuation (Kos 2000) from the late antique period into the Slav period is specific for the Slovene territory and has no direct analogies. However, we are not able to distinguish the overlapping religious elements (dating from before the Roman, Roman, early Christian, Slav and mediaeval Christian periods). Therefore we do not wish to exclude the possibility that future research will point towards a pre-Slav origin of the discussed material (especially for the location of the ritual places).

The term *Slovene* is therefore used in a geographical sense. It applies to the area of the study case, i.e. Eastern Carniola. However, we do believe that a similar image will be found on the entire territory inhabited by the Slovenes.

The term *pagan* is an established term in literature for pre-Christian and early mediaeval religions, thus also for pre-Slav and Slav (for instance Belaj 1998, 7-44). The term is ideologically determined (it shows a Christian viewpoint), which is a fact we are trying to avoid in our paper. However the term *pagan* is used due to its common use in expert literature.

Sacred landscape is a well established term in archaeological literature. We also understand the term *landscape* as in the following definition “landscape is an entity that exists by virtue of its being perceived, experienced, and contextualized by people.” (Knapp, Ashmore 1999, 1). This perception enables us to perceive a *sacred landscape*: “And whereas ... landscape might also be a ‘sacred’ landscape, it is also a stage constructed in the mind to convey meaning to those who inhabit it.” (Knapp, Ashmore 1999, 8). The building stones of such landscapes can be represented by temples and churches, dramatic landscapes or merely places the religious meaning of which is a consequence of rituals, i.e. it is hidden in myths.

The term *sacred landscape*, as we use it, has also another meaning that can be described with the words of Z. Šmitek (1998; 1999). The world is constructed of three horizontal spheres and an axis that connects them. The horizontal spheres are the sky, earth and the underworld. The axis which links them all together is symbolised by a mountain peak, a cave in the mountain or a cosmic tree. However, the human world encompasses merely a part of the earth plate, while the underground and sky spheres belong to the gods, demons and the souls of the deceased. The *sacred landscape* is therefore a horizontal ‘earth world’ in which certain ritual places play a special role.

Obviously, ritual places were places where rituals took place. The meaning of these rituals was to link the earth (central) with the upper and lower worlds of the gods and demons. That is how the balance was preserved in all three spheres, and this brought prosperity to the earth world.

The subject of the research is therefore the *sacred landscape*¹. However, due to the nature of the sources that we will discuss in the continuation of this paper it is important for us to clarify our attitude towards the term conversion to Christianity. In doing so, we will use the article by W. G. Kilbride (2000) for reference.

Conversion to Christianity is a social process of the *longue durée* type, which deals mainly with the external expression. The goal of the conversion can be found in the structures of social reproduction, first the state and then the community and family. Therefore we can talk about the conversion of the South Slavs (Pleterski 2001), a long-lasting process which can be divided into numerous levels.

A single event when an individual converts to another religion is also defined by conversion. Gorazd and Hotimir (the son and nephew of the Carinthian duke Borut) were converted. When they were taken as hostages to Bavaria their father asked for them to be converted (c.4: 9-12; Grafenauer 1985, 32).

Converting to Christianity and being converted therefore describe two different processes which can (however) take place simultaneously.

¹ In the continuation of this paper we will use the term *sacred landscape* instead of the longer version *Slovene pagan sacred landscape*.

Christianity and paganism intermingled in the early mediaeval period and were not as clearly defined as it seems today: »Yet it is clear as the day is long that early medieval Christianity was fluid. It was not clearly defined.« (Kilbride 2000, 9; for south Slavs: Pleterski 2001). Therefore we can not talk about Christians, pagans and a merge between the two religions.

Or to put it differently, we do not talk about Christians and those who were not Christened and remained pagans. We will discuss (at least) two different religions which were present at the same time. The most extreme poles of these images are today perceived as Christianity and paganism. However, we presuppose that this society used a unified system of symbols and (at least some) rituals, to which each individual gave his own connotation.

We would like to explain another two terms. The first is a ritual (lat. *ritus*). For our understanding especially the changes of the rituals are important. Through time the ritual can change its form, meaning or both (a similar opinion can be found for instance in Wilkins 1996, 3)². This means that in the 'folk rituals' there are lost forms of rituals the meaning of which (the mythology) has been lost a long time ago. Toponyms can also represent remaining fragments of rituals when used as names for ritual places.

The other term is from the pre-Christian era. We use the term as usually chronologically. However with this term we have in mind something which precedes the mediaeval (and not early) Christianity.

Sources Used

For the reconstruction of the sacred landscape we used various sources. We used the following material: archaeological, historical, linguistic and ethnological. Only the archaeological material applies to the mediaeval ages. Other material and historic sources are applicable to the 15th and 16th Centuries, while the ethnological material was recorded in the 19th and 20th Centuries.

The sources used therefore do not relate directly to the same periods. However, we are of the opinion that we can connect them and place them in time.

The datations of archaeological sources are, at least within certain frames, indubitable. They relate to the early mediaeval period, at some time in the last two centuries of the first millennium (Vuga 1975; Sagadin 1997, 109; *ibid.* 2001). Therefore we will try to show that the remaining sources used, directly or indirectly reflect the same period. In this paper this period is defined as the *archaeological* period.

Amidst the material sources we place the locations and orientations of individual churches. For them we will try to show that we are dealing with a continuous line of *ritual places* from the *archaeological* period, which were consciously or unconsciously taken into account by the builders.

The foundation for such an opinion is offered by the following two historical sources: the first is the instruction of Pope Gregory the Great, in which he instructs the Canterbury archbishop Augustine how to react in relation to the conversion of the

² (Wilkins 1996, 3): "... ritual can change over time. This change could be one of meaning with the form staying largely the same ... Sometimes rituals simply continue to be practised long after the belief systems that originally supported them have ceased to have any relevance."

Anglo-Saxons. He suggests that he should not get rid of paganism in a single instance; the old temples should be preserved, because the pagans will find it easier to accept a new faith in buildings already known to them and he also instructed that celebrations and sacrifices should remain, however, they should change and be dedicated to the Lord (Letters XI, 76; Lukman 1980, 114-115).

In a similar spirit the conversion to Christianity took place also in the Eastern Alps territory, at least if we deduce from the notes from the synod *ad ripas Danubii* dating to 796: "Before the Christening a long lasting cathexis is necessary, ... At this one should not threaten with state violence, but should only draw attention to the payment of the heavenly life and the punishment of hell. The Christening should be voluntary and non-violent, ..." (Bratož 1990, 50).

The thoughts at the aforementioned lead us to the conclusion which is in fact similar to the one of A. Pleterski (2001, 46) in his historical-archaeological study: »... Christianity took over from paganism most of the forms of religious life and images: from processions to angels and relics. With this it enabled the pagan to continue to worship his old gods, he only needed to use a new name for them.«

In the case of conversion in the south-east Alps we can therefore expect a continuation of *ritual places* and individual ritual elements. We have noticed them in (i) the continuation of the ritual places for constructing mediaeval churches, (ii) preserving the contents of the ritual place in the form of a patron, (iii) some processions and (iv) traditional rituals.

As regards the reuse of the older ritual places for the erection of mediaeval Christian sacral objects (i) we have archaeological evidence. Such cases are documented in Carniola at the following sites: Kranj – Iskra crossroads (Sagadin 1988), Kranj – parish church (Valič 1991), Island on Lake Bled (Pleterski 1996, 173), Lesce and maybe, Kamnik – Mali grad³ (small castle) (Sagadin 1997; Sagadin 2001).

With the aid of the church patrons (ii) we notice not only the reuse of the ritual places but also the transfer of the meaning, i.e. rituals or at least myths.

Most studies on church patrons in our territory which rely merely on written sources (the history of researches can be found in Höfler 1986, 43-56) tried to define the latter as chronologically conditioned or, especially at proprietorial churches, connected to the founders of the church (Höfler 1986, 63). However, research which is at least partially based on archaeological research does not confirm this hypothesis (Pleterski-Belak 1995, 35).

However, we can look upon the consecration of churches from another angle. In places where they stand on older ritual places the patrons are repeated: Mary, Elias, George, Stephen, Agnes, etc. (Pleterski 1996, picture 16). In such cases the form and

³ On the Mali grad hill we have archaeological proof for the following elements "old Slav burial sites within the oldest core of the castle. 27 skeletal graves, which belong to the young Kotchlach culture phase ..., are situated at the north foothills of the rock upon which the chapel stands.« (Sagadin 1997, 109). The latter, i.e. the Mali grad chapel, is, according to the architectural elements dated to the end of 12th Century or beginning of 13th Century (Zadnikar 1982). Apart from that »it is not possible to determine what sort of an object stood here before the chapel was erected« (Sagadin 1997, 109).

We are dealing therefore with an old Slav graveyard and an at least one century younger chapel and the possibility that there was a predecessor to the chapel, i.e. a sacral building which was contemporary to the graveyard. Two explanations therefore exist: (i) the graves at the Christian church or (ii) a Christian church on the territory of a previous ritual place (of an old Slav graveyard).

meanings of the ritual were preserved, only the name changed. Veles was for instance substituted by St. Stephen (Kotnik 1928, 383-385; Kropej 1998, 159), St. Nicholas (Belaj 1998, 64), etc. Instead of Perun we find amongst others also St. George (Kropej 1998, 159-161; compare Mencej 2001, 178-180) and St. Elias (Mencej 2001, 180).

This fact is explained with the aid of the above mentioned: the manner of conversion, the general nature of the ritual and the continuation of individual ritual places. In places where they took into account the myth of the pagan ritual place at the consecration of the church, the patron shows the meaning of the pagan cult.

Some Christian processions are almost an exact copy of the pre-Christian rituals (iii), which were only partially transformed pagan rituals. In the testimony of two processions, i.e. in the procession onto Velika gora and onto Čuk in the vicinity of Rodika (see material), we recognise the same elements: the dragon – the dragon's habitat on the mountain – causes a hard time for the inhabitants of the valley – the dragon threatens that he will flood the valley – the procession to the dragon's habitat calms him down – the procession has a Christian 'disguise'. In the continuation we will show that such a ritual structure is typical for a *sacred landscape*.

In the oral tradition also rituals (iv) are preserved that have not been taken over by Christianity. At these the form remained and today they are recognised as traditional rituals. They are important because within them we can recognise, through a careful analysis, the location of the ritual places as well as parts of the myths.

Often the ritual place was represented by a pool, a spring, etc. For instance in Ščavnica, Rusa (the oldest preserved Slovene mask) was led through the village. When they arrived at the pool the two young men who represented a horse threw it into the water; Rusa – a mare – was sacrificed for the benefit of the horses (Kropej 1998, 158-159).

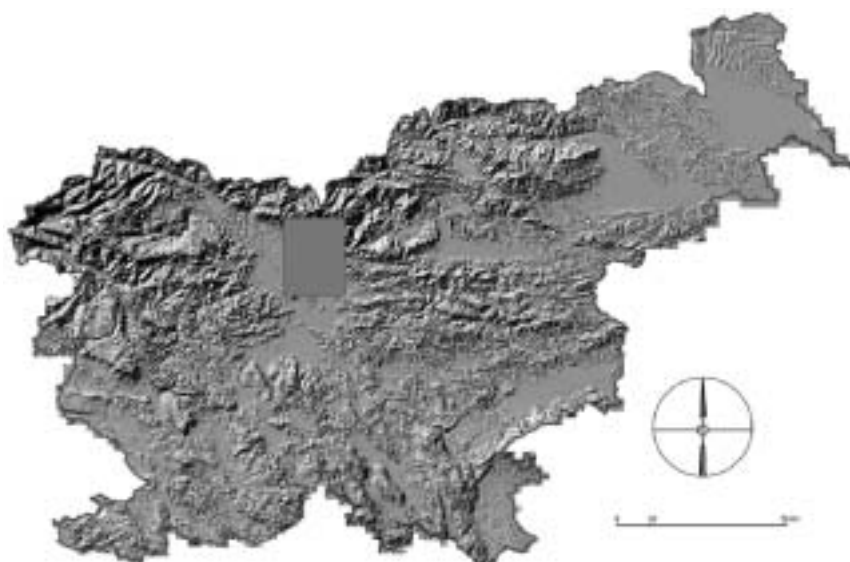
Let us recap for a moment. In the symbolism of the Christian landscape we can, due to the nature of conversion in the territory dealt with, notice elements of the *sacred landscape*. We can recognise them as ritual places and orientations of cult objects. On the basis of the patrons, traditional rituals and processions some *ritual places* can also be defined a meaning.

Meaning

The basis for the insight into the meaning of the sacred landscape is offered by a story from Lukovica pri Domžalah, as written down by R. Radešček (1996, 65-74), a version of the miraculous tale *The dragon killer* (type AaTh 300). A special meaning of the discussed example lies in the fact that the still existing tradition placed the events and actors into the community. Therefore we can obtain an insight into the *sacred landscape* (see figure 1).

A short resume of the story is as follows: On the hill of Gradišče stood a castle; underneath it, on the meadows today called Voke or Loke, was a lake, which reached to the neighbouring castle Rožek. Between the castle and the lake stood a settlement. In the lake lived a dragon who kept creating havoc for the inhabitants. Only killing the dragon offered the opportunity for a calm life.

Different ways of killing the dragon: (i) constructing the church of St. Margaret on the hill, (ii) a beggar kills the dragon by deceiving him, either at the request of the



Slika 1a. Lokacija Bistriške ravni.
Figure 1a. Location of the Bistrica straight.

villagers or (iii) the lord of the castle, in order to save his only daughter; to reward him the lord of the castle gives him a generous recompense and therefore the beggar becomes one of the richest people in the village.

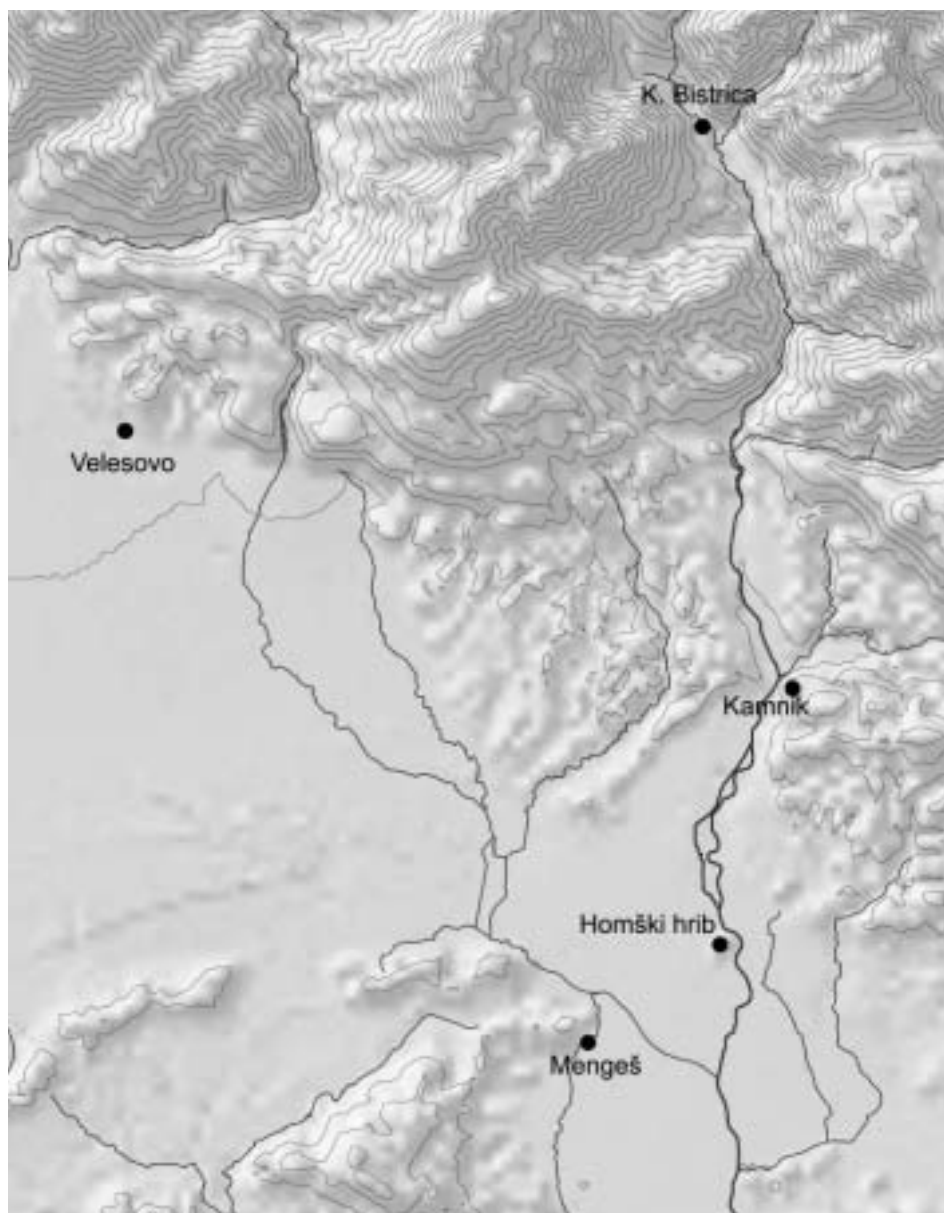
For us the last version is of greatest interest for it introduces a female actor into the story, the daughter of the lord of the castle. In the story we can recognise the following scheme: The lord of the castle is on the hill, therefore representing the authority, i.e. the lord of the sky. Below, in the lake is a dragon, which causes havoc and damage. Because animal and vegetable sacrifices are no longer sufficient he demands a human sacrifice or to be more precise a sacrifice of a young female. A traveller – someone from without the community – kills the dragon and brings peace to the valley.

We know that on the Slav territory the dragon represents a celestial being named Veles⁴ (Belaj 1998, 46–66). The lord of the castle represents the divine power, the old-Slav name for which is Perun (Belaj 1996, 989; compare *ibid.* 1998, 46–66). The ritual place of Perun is ‘used’ also by his son – George, etc. The toponyms Velesovo and Perun also tell us about the use of both names in eastern Carniola (see below). The daughter of the lord of the castle, for which the lord – Perun – and the dragon – Veles – fight, represents the goddess – Mokoš⁵.

In many versions of this story (AaTh 300) the offering of the young female sacrifice was performed at the water habitat of the dragon (for instance Kropelj 1995, 150) or a cave (Pogačar 2001, 31). Thus, also the female actor has a place in the environment which has certain attributes (see below).

⁴ For Slav mythology it is typical that the same celestial beings have different names (Mikhailov 1999, 179–184). We know that the name Veles was also in use for the celestial being in this territory from the name of the village east to Kamnik – Velesovo (for the etymology check Ilešič 1933, 37 and Belaj 1998, 66).

⁵ Amongst the various names for the goddess, Pleterski (1996) chose Mokoš, while Belaj (1998, 349) chose Mara/Morana. In the continuation of this paper we will use Mokoš, even though we still do not know which name was used in eastern Carniola.



Slika 1b. V tekstu omenjeni kraji.

Figure 1b. The places mentioned in the text.

The traveller or the beggar represents a person who performs the sacrifice⁶. The latter is concluded from a number of indications. The first one is that the beggar is entering the events, the world of gods from the outside. The second is that the beggar is

⁶ The story from Gradišče does not include the sacrifice; it only talks about the killing of the dragon. We have used sacrifice because the killing of the dragon offers positive changes and we are of the opinion that this symbolises the sacrifice.

rewarded for the sacrifice and becomes one of the richest men in the village. This can be explained in the following manner: the person has, by performing the sacrifice, mediated between both worlds, thus ensuring the welfare of the community. At the same time he was also accepted as a respected member of this community. If we continue a bit further with this interpretation, we can notice a sort of an initiation ritual in this: in order to preserve its welfare the society must regularly perform sacrifices and at the same time recruit new - male - members (for a similar opinion, see Kropelj 1995, 150 and the literature listed there).

Ritual places from this story represent places where the power of each celestial being is the strongest. The aforementioned example therefore reflects “a divine relational-marital triangle of two males and one female...” (Pleterski 1996, 182) on the territory of the Gradiška community.

Or, to put it differently: The sacred landscape is represented by three *ritual places*, connected with the aforementioned celestial beings which link the mythological and real world. As we have already mentioned in the introduction, the ritual places have the same role as the world vertical axis. Through rituals they enable contact with the world of celestial beings and therefore bring balance to the area and give the community welfare.

Bistrica Plain **Kamnik**

The story about Veronika from Mali grad talks about the start of the town of Kamnik. The basic elements of the three versions are shown in the table below⁷.

| Version | lake | links | castles | relations | Cause of flood | flood | consequences | the town of Kamnik |
|---------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | To the neighbouring hills | Three pagan brothers | Upper Kamnik; Lower Kamnik; Mengeš | Fighting and slaughtering | the dragon destroyed the mountain | Across the field around the hill | The dragon died in the field | In the place of the lake |
| 2 | From St. George in Nevlje to Šutne | Brother castles on the same mountain | Mali at the foothills of the embankment; Stari | | A cloud broke and split the mountain | Flooded the Mengeš straight Swept away the monastery between Mengeš and Homec | The field covered with piles of rocks | Where the lake used to be |
| 3 | Large and deep | | Old on Kriška gora = Upper castle; Mali at the edge of the lake | The lords of the castles fishing and having an argument | The lord of the lower castle dug out the edge | The lake disappears | The bells toll in Nevlje | |

The joint elements which combine the versions are the following: the existence of the lake and the upper and lower castle; in the continuation the lake disappears (which is caused by the dragon, natural disaster or the lord of the lower castle) thus enabling

⁷ Fragments from all three versions are published at the end of the article (amongst the materials).

the settling i.e. the appearance of the town of Kamnik and the arrival (or return) of the Christian attributes (most probably a substitute of a previous version, when a balance is established with the victory of Perun).⁸

The element typical only for the 1st version, is the existence of the third 'brotherly' castle in Mengeš. Only the 2nd version mentions that the upper and lower castle were at one stage 'the same'. The characteristic of the 3rd version can be found in the fish in the lake, which the lords of the upper and lower castle are trying to catch. The 2nd and 3rd versions mention Nevlje, which symbolised the end of the lake (in the 2nd version the embankment of the lake, in the 3rd version the bells toll there as a memory to the end of the lake).

On the basis of the aforementioned we would like to point out the following: the lake – chaos – must disappear – *the change* necessary for the town to emerge – *cosmos*. The cause for the disappearance is Veles in different forms: a dragon, natural disaster⁹, the lord of the lower castle; his place in Kamnik is Mali grad located on the lake embankment. The place of his antagonist is the upper Stari grad (old castle). The other places in the landscape are also: twice Mengeš, once Homec and Nevlje and once only Nevlje. The fields upon which the lake ran into, or the ones that the dragon died in, turned to fields of stone.

The mentioning of Mengeš in the oldest known versions (1. and 2.) of the story about the beginning of the town of Kamnik is maybe connected to the reputed tradition, written down by J. Trdina. In his own style, i.e. adapted strongly to the 19th Century he published the story of the Duke Mengo in a newspaper (quoted according to Radešček 1996, 39).

A short résumé: Mengo, the lord of the castle, built a castle on the hill. In a cave on the same hill he found two "Christian priests". He threw both men into jail, but they managed to escape with the help of the jailer converted to Christianity. Later on, during a hunt, Mengo got lost and was badly wounded. The fugitives - now three of them (together with the jailer), healed his wounds. Because of the kindness of the three fugitives Mengo also converted to Christianity; for penitence he built a house under the castle, where he hosted travellers. From this house the lower castle emerged later on, and around it a settlement which still today carries his name, Mengeš.

⁸ The story, the versions of which we have stated, sometimes continues with the story of Veronika from Mali grad. She is the daughter of the lord of the lower castle and has the appearance of half woman, half snake. At the same time she is also the origin of the town's ill-fortune and the guardian of the castle treasures. The saviour of the cursed Veronika and the town, who will also obtain the treasures and will marry Veronika will be a child, who was rocked in the cradle made from the wood of a fir tree, which grew on Križna gora (the old castle, Perun's habitat) (Cevc E. 1958).

In the carol songs the child connected to the tree (*arbor mundi*), which grows in the middle of the castle (Perun's habitat) is the son of Perun himself, who returns to the world of the living in spring in the form of George (Belaj 1998, from 140). Veronika is the daughter of the lord of the lower castle, she is half snake, lives in the underworld of the lower castle where she hides the treasures. She has the characteristics of Veles and apart from that she also brings death, and because of her pregnant women can abort. After meeting Perun's son she changes into a young woman and opens the treasures. According to Belaj's reconstruction Veronika is similar to Morana – the death in person, who dies in winter and reappears as Mara in spring, as George's sister and bride (Belaj 1998, 321) with the only difference being that Mara is Perun's daughter while Veronika is Veles' daughter.

⁹ Equalling the dragon and natural disaster also in: "Once upon a time a dragon came out of a cave somewhere on the Poljčane side of Boč and flew towards Polskava. At that time such a storm appeared, that trees were pulled out of the ground together with their roots. The Poljčane valley was left covered in rocks" (Pogačar 2001, 27; authors' emphasis).

In the Mengeš story there is only one lord of the castle. Apart from this the upper castle has negative characteristics, while the lower location has good characteristics. The main actor, Mengo, therefore transforms from an evil - upper to good - lower person and thus enables a balance of forces, i.e. welfare.

Mengo is a lonely lord of the castle. Taking into account the 1st version of the story about the beginning of Kamnik (see materials), this does not surprise us. However, after a near death experience, he changes his character from evil to good. This is where we could seek for parallels with the usual scheme, when as a consequence of the death of the negative actor - Veles - good emerges.

The second characteristic is the mirror location of the good and evil. The evil can be found above, in the cave¹⁰ on the hill resides the good - "Christian priest". At the end the good inhabits the landscape below.

On the basis of the aforementioned we can deduct that in the case of Mengeš we are dealing with a town dedicated to the good Veles.

Maybe, in the case of the stories from Kamnik and Mengeš, we are dealing with preserved elements of the same tradition. In this Mengo is the third of the lords of the castle, which appears in the 1st version of the Kamnik story. In that version the third brother does not have an active role. He obtains an active role only in the story from Mengeš.

Measuring System of the Bistrica Plains

Material evidence also speaks about the special role in the stories of the aforementioned towns and the ritual places of the sacred landscapes. Here we start from the presumption that the Bistrica plains is a territory of a community, the centre of which is Kamnik, while the economic basis lies in the Mengeš fields (see figure 2). The benefit of the fact that we are dealing with a closed area of a community is confirmed by the picture from the paleo-environment, the study of the economic inclusion of archaeological sites (Štular 2001, 90 - 116) and the mythological tradition (see above). We assume that the community created, used and 'lived' the sacred landscape on its territory.

A wholesome view into the sacred landscape is offered only by the understanding of the existence of the holy three in the religious concepts of the Slavs and the manner in which this is shown in the landscape. In the cases for the territory of the early mediaeval Carantania and Carniola the latter was shown by Pleterski (1996), and we will make a brief summary of this in the continuation.

We are dealing with three ritual places in the landscape or three points of origin of burial sites. The ritual places are mutually positioned in such a way that one of the angles in the triangle formed by the three ritual places represents a quarter of a right angle.

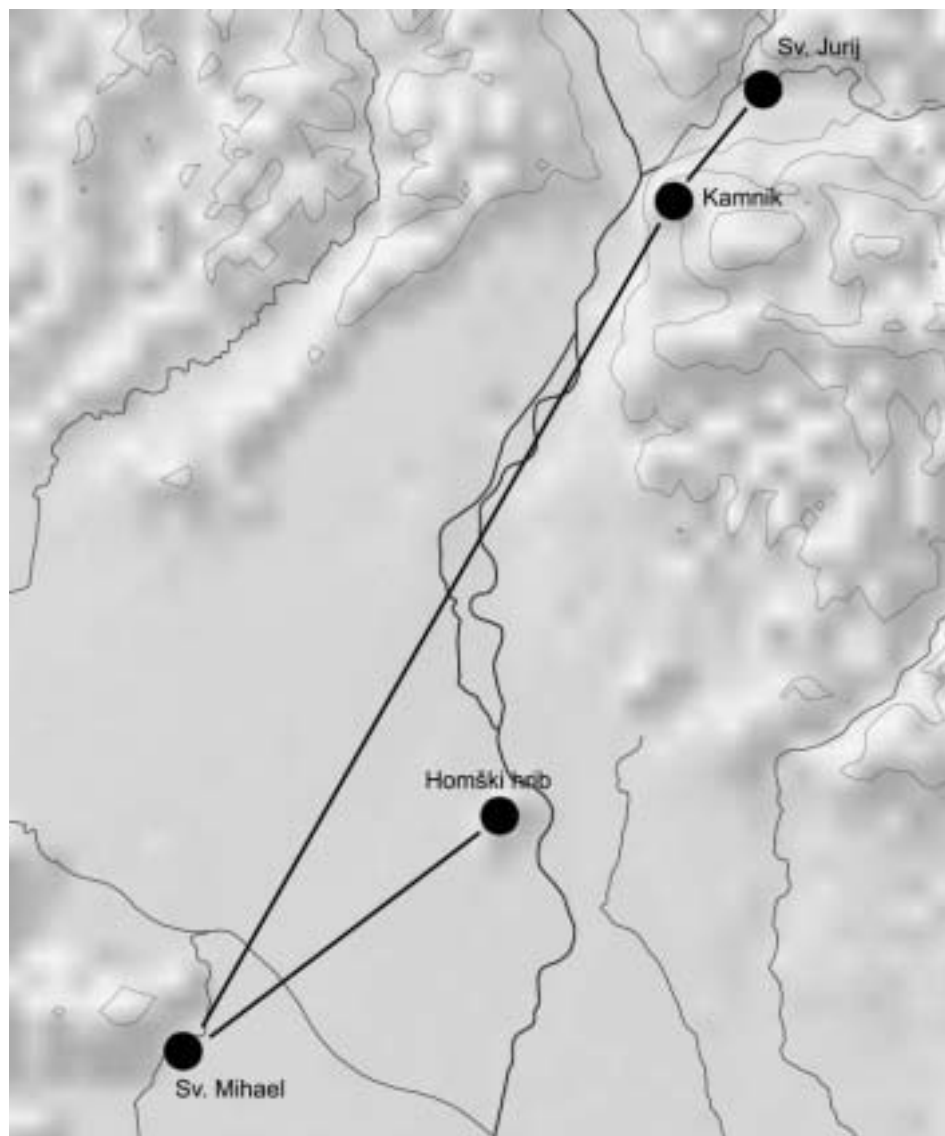
The use of the angle between 22° and 24° explains the angle between the earth's axis and the perpendicular to the level of the earth's orbit around the sun (approximately 23°), which is reflected as a fictive difference in the height of the sun at the time of the equinox and both sun turnovers. At the same time it is possible to define a quarter of a right angle with the aid of simple aids, such as for instance two poles tied together with a string.

In individual cases the cult building of one is oriented towards the other ritual place of the three.

¹⁰ The cave representing the underworld is, alongside water and the hollow mountain, the usual habitat of the dragon (Pogačar 2001, 31 - 33).

Ritual places should always be dealt with in the context of three. The same characteristic can be found in various places, which could have (as a consequence) a wrong interpretation of an individual location. The repetitive arrangement reflects the same thought pattern, yet it also points towards the fact that the ritual places were dedicated to the same celestial beings.

Outstanding is the connection of one of the three ritual places with water and as a rule with Mary, and the connection of the other with the rock above. This points



Slika 2. Kultna mesta Bistriške ravni.
Figure 2. Ritual places on the Bistrička plain.

towards the three groups of ritual places, the women goddess and two males - one heavenly and one earthly.

Places next to streams and springs (dedicated to Mary) are ritual places of the female goddess, the Slav Mokoša. These places are always below the male heavenly god, therefore 'underneath'.

The ritual places dedicated to the earthly male god are also 'underneath'; in the Christian disguise this god appears as the devil or the dragon. His worshipping takes place in spring and autumn. These are the ritual places of the Slav god Veles.

The male heavenly god is always 'above'. His sign is often a rock. He can appear as a horse and he is good. The name Stephen points towards worshipping at Christmas. These are ritual places of the supreme Slav god, Perun.

The setting up of the entire space measurement system has, as shown by the examples, started with the determining of three ritual places within the landscape, which was inhabited by a certain tribe. Veles' place is divided from Mokoš' by water, which most probably symbolises the division line between the habitat of the living from that of the dead. Then they decided upon the area for burial sites. In most cases these were undulations, often the south or east slope.

We have shown that the ritual place of Perun in the Bistrica straight is represented by Stari grad. According to the above – shown methodology (henceforth scheme), we ascribe him the following attributes: castle, rock, above. The basic orientation of the burial site on Mali grad and (maybe) the cult buildings are linked to him (Sagadin 2001).

Homška gora is the ritual place of Mokoš. It is interesting to keep in mind the legend of the miracle, which accompanied the construction of the church (i.e. a logical explanation is not given): "Dolničar (marianale Carnioliae) states that Mary appeared to the shepherd in 1419 and this was the initiative for the construction of the church, however this can not be controlled" (Stele 1929, 321). In Christianity it has the role of a regional pilgrimage centre. Attributes: *Mary, next to water, 'consecrated' spring*¹¹.

The *ritual place* of Veles can not be determined on the basis of tradition and attributes. These show the following possibilities:

Kamnik - Mali grad (attributes: *Veles, below, lake, treasure, next to water*);

Mengeš – upper castle (attributes: *Veles, above, cave*);

Mengeš – lower castle (attributes: *Veles, below*);

Mengeš – parish church of St. Michael (attributes: *Michael the dragon killer, Slav burial site, below, next to water/in the swamp*¹², *Pšata*¹³);

St. George in Nevlje (attributes: *George the killer of the dragon, below, lake, dragon's rib*¹⁴, *the souls of the deceased children*¹⁵).

¹¹ "The Žegnan spring originates from the Homec church and this spring has healing qualities" (Stražar 1988, 35).

¹² The proof of the attribute at the water is based on the reconstruction of the paleo-environment (Štular 2001, 90-116).

¹³ **Pšata**. According to Bezljaj (1961) from pisiata, which means colourful or evil (German Peischat).

¹⁴ In the church of St. George a mammoth bone was kept which was pronounced to be a dragon's rib. Thus they preserved the evidence of the dragon's death.

¹⁵ We draw parallels between Nevlje and Navje which is one of the names for a place where the souls of the unchristened children souls habitat (Šmitek 1999, 166).

Attention is attracted by the homogeneity of the attributes of the towns Mengeš – parish church of St. Michael and St. George in Nevlje, both early parish centres (Hoefler 1986, 22-32).

We must also use the scheme, or to be more precise the angle 22°-24°. Using this we can notice Mengeš - St. Michael and St. George in Nevlje as the ritual places of Veles.

An angle of approximately one quarter of a right angle (to be more precise 23.5°) is constructed by the spots in the following way: the line St. Michael – Stari grad encloses it with the line St. Michael – Homška gora. If we continue the first line across the crest, it points towards the ritual place of St. George in Nevlje (a similar case is cited also by Pleterski 1996, 519-520). Maybe this is the markation of both parts of the annual cycle, for George has his worshipping in spring and Michael in autumn. The Kamnik Stari and Mali grad are separated by the Kamniška Bistrica river, while Mengeš was separated from the other ritual places by the today regulated Pšata river.

The Slav burial site on the terrace above the Kamniška Bistrica river near Huda also plays a role in the sacred landscape. The modest data found so far gain additional value in the light of our research.

At the construction of the house of Marija and Anton Nemec (1933-34) in Radomlje (next to the road Radomlje – Duplica) two skeletons with offerings were found while digging the hole for the cesspool. According to the words of Anton Nemec, who was not present at the excavation, they found the grave on the north side of the house. Next to the skeleton they found large bronze earrings and a bronze bracelet, therefore they are of the opinion that a woman was buried there. The earrings and the bracelet were taken by Peregrin Rojc, who was building at the neighbouring house, to Niko Sadnikar from Kamnik to whom they were sold.

After W.W.II, in 1947, Marija and Anton Nemec were digging close to the aforementioned site in order to make a cellar for the extension. Approximately 50 to 60 cm under the surface they found two skeletons, which were placed in the ground oriented in the east – west direction. They did not find anything else. Later on they dug out another four skeletons, also with no offerings. Even though the gravel is merely 30 to 40 cm under the surface at this spot the skeletons were buried in the ground approximately 60 cm deep.

At the construction of the neighbouring Lenček's house (today's owners are the Cerar family), in 1933 (according to incomplete data) two skeletons with offerings were found 1 metre under the ground (Stražar 1988, 46-48).

In the Archive of the National museum of Slovenia one can find in the Diary of the archaeological department, in the rubric Evidencing the findings, excavations etc. from 8th November 1933 to 12th November 1944, under the year 1934, article No. 5 written down the obtaining of an old Slav pot on 9th August 1934 in Radomlje. Today this pot can no longer be identified.

Additional information gathering on the site enabled at least the reconstruction of the unusual orientation of the graves¹⁶. Instead of the usual orientation for the old Slav graves, where the view of the deceased was oriented towards the sunset, the deceased at Hudo are turned towards the west, i.e. across the Kamniška Bistrica river towards the ritual place, Homška gora.

¹⁶ We are grateful to Dr. A. Pleterski for his oral explanation.

On the south-east Alps territory we know of only three other old Slav burial sites, the orientation of which does not conform to the usual: Mlino pri Bledu (Ložar 1928), Windegg at Steyeregg in Upper Austria (Tovornik 1977) and Peggau at Deutschfeistritz (Krammer 1987). We can conclude that the orientation of the grave at Hudo towards the ritual place Homška gora is the consequence of a firm decision: "...they set the basic orientation towards one of the three ritual places in the landscape" (Pleterski 1996, 182).

By now we have therefore defined the following ritual places: Kamnik – Stari grad, Homška gora, St. Michael in Mengeš and St. George in Nevlje. The burial sites Kamnik - Mali grad and Hudo pri Radomljah are also connected to the measurement system of the sacred landscape.

However, we are of the opinion that Kamnik - Mali grad also has the role of a ritual place. From the 'normal' burial sites (for example Hudo) it differs in the following elements: mention in the tradition (see above and materials), cult building, possible habitation (Sagadin 1997, 109) and a continuous use in the mediaeval period (which can be the consequence of the exceptional location). Therefore, we can deduct that Mali grad is also one of Veles' ritual places and we ascribe it the following attributes: castle, rock, Veles and below. Most probably this is a ritual place of local importance.

Elements of the Sacred Landscape in East Carniola

Kamniška Bistrica

The toponymic material for the territory of the upper stream of Kamniška Bistrica, from the source to Mekinje, speaks about the special importance of this area in the sacred landscape (maybe the habitat of the gods).

We can also place the aforementioned landscape into the scheme confirmed by many examples by J. Peisker (1928, 55-68). Here we should stress that we are of the opinion that the 'explicit dualistic views of the world' (Peisker 1928, 56) can be discussed together with the elements of the 'Holy three in religion ... at the Slavs' Pleterski (1996, 163). The searched for third element of the Peisker dualistic scheme in the religious presentations of the Slavs is represented by water.

This will be shown on the example of Kamniška Bistrica, the gorge between the peaks of the Kamniško-Savinjske Alps, which was formed in the upper stream by the river of the same name (see figure 3).

On the right side of the Kamniška Bistrica river toponyms appear, which point towards Veles' place: Mali and Veliki *Hudi* graben, *Črnevka*, *Črni plaz*, *Farjev plaz*¹⁷ and *Hudi konec*. On the other, left side lie the places of the antagonist: *Kamniška Bela*, *Kraljev hrib*¹⁸, *Konjska*¹⁹ dolina (Horse valley), *Konjski potok*, planina *Konjščica* and *Knežja miza* (Duke's table).

¹⁷ On the basis of the structural similarity between the story of Far's avalanche under Mokrica and the Dolenja vas story we can deduct that the Far replaces the dragon. The toponym Far's avalanche therefore belongs to the Veles group (see materials).

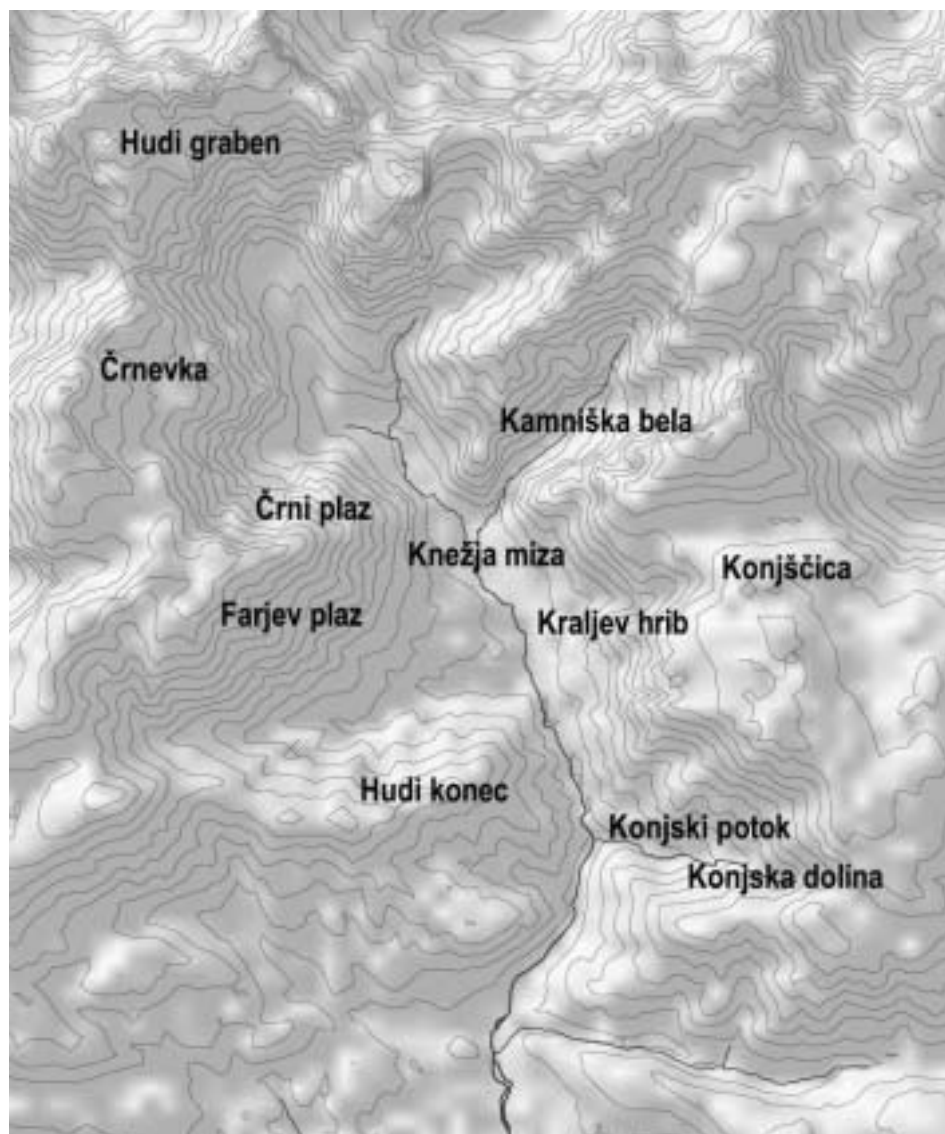
¹⁸ The toponym *Kraljev hrib* (King's hill) is connected to Peisker's scheme on the basis of which the stories described, in this article – where the lords of the castles therefore also the king and duke – are equated with Perun.

¹⁹ For the cosmological meaning of the horse in the Slovene heritage see Kropelj (1998).

The basic scheme when (on the right side of the water) we observe the Veles place, and on the left Perun's, is therefore repeated throughout the entire upper stream of the Kamniška Bistrica river.

However, we can still, on the basis of the ethnological material, find the individual places that played a special role in the valley. These are Knežja miza, the source of the Kamniška Bistrica river and the natural bridge in Predaslje.

The first is mentioned twice already by Valvasor (see appendix). In the late medi-aeval and new age this table was used by the gentry, amongst others also the emperor



Slika 3. Toponimi, ki kažejo vlogo Kamniške bistrice v sveti pokrajini.

Figure 3. Toponyms which show the role of the Kamniška Bistrica in the sacred landscape.

Maximilian and the archduke Charles, for their hunting rituals. In the literature (Šivic 1967; see the literature mentioned there) the name duke's is connected to these events.

However, we are of the opinion that the toponym as well as the table itself, which is most probably »an oval stone around 34 inches long and 10 inches thick, high 25 inches...« (Šivic 1967, 134), are older.

On the basis of the already known form in the folk tradition (see material), we can deduce that the tradition about the table points towards a pre-Christian ritual place. The following attributes show that this is in fact a sacred landscape: already Valvasor mentions the table as old, the location (next to water), the ritual (feast), and the devil that guards the treasure.

The same conclusion can also be drawn from the analogies with the ritual places in Dejlovci²⁰ (Čausidis 1994; quotation from Pleterski 1996, 163) and on Ajdovščina above Rodik (see above). We can deduce that also in the case of the Duke's table from Kamniška Bistrica we are dealing with a ritual place. The positioning on the left bank, the attribute duke's and the great similarity with the Macedonian ritual place lead to the town of Perun; on the other hand the tradition of the devil who guards the treasures and the caves²¹ speaks about Veles' place. It is yet too early to give a final judgement.

The same tradition also mentions the source of Kamniška Bistrica. This can represent another ritual place. On the basis of the attributes (»there the devil had no more powers«, water sources, *the chapel of Mary*), we can mark this place as a place of the goddess. However, the role of the water source could also be held by the gorge and the waterfall underneath the natural bridge at Predoselje; for it visually appears as if the water is coming from the earth.

The described holds true only for the afflux of the stream of Črna. The middle and lower stream of the Kamniška Bistrica river, when viewed from the standing point of the Peisker scheme was not studied in greater detail. However, we can draw attention to the basic elements: at the village *Županje njive* (on the right bank), where the gorge spreads into the valley, the scheme changes. The hydronym Črna is the left afflux, the toponym *Županje njive* on the right side. Such a mirror image is continued also in the lower part of the Kamniška Bistrica (river Hudo, Homec Mary – see above). Apart from this it also the place of the late antique settlement, and two churches dedicated to St. Primož and St. Peter, on the right bank above Črna also draw attention (compare material, Kamniti lovec). As already stated this part of the sacred landscape has not been yet studied in greater detail, therefore we will not draw any conclusions.

Perovo

Southwest of the Kamnik Stari grad, a ritual place of Perun of local importance, lies the settlement Perovo. Belaj (1998, 57) connects this toponym with Perun. Maybe this is an old ritual place of Perun of local importance, such as for instance Perun's hurst or similar.

²⁰ In Dejlovci we are not talking about a table, but stones placed on the ground upon which the food was set. This table was intended for the feast at the ritual place. (A. Pleterski, in person)

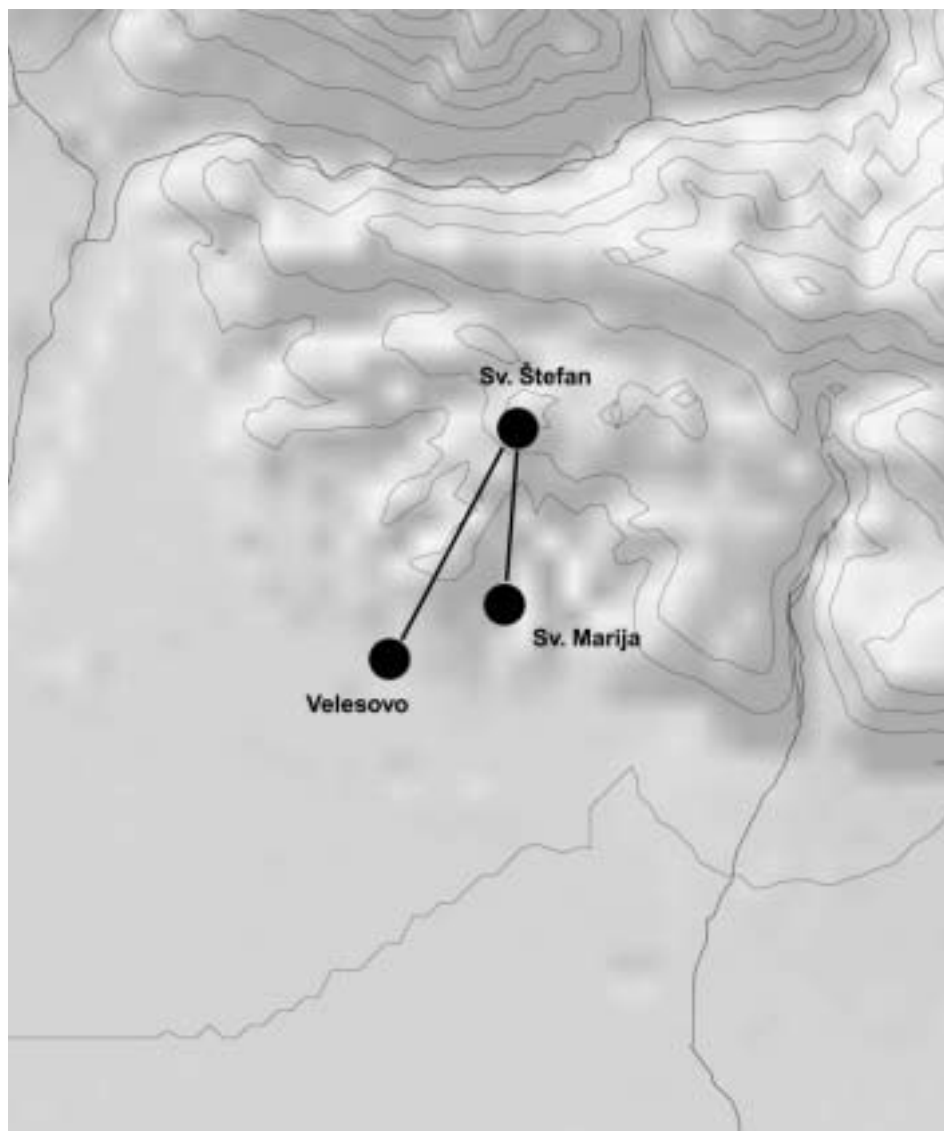
²¹ A part of the tradition is connected to the three caves, which were excavated while digging for the treasure. We are dealing with an element of a ritual which is as yet not known to us, maybe in relation to: "on the 'plain of forgetting' there were three wells from which the soul of the deceased was not allowed to drink (...). The soul also was not allowed to join the circle of dancers even though it might have consisted of close relatives and friends." (Šmitek 1999, 194).

Velesovo

A few kilometres west of Kamnik lies the village Velesovo, which we have already mentioned (see footnote 4 and figure 4). According to the methodology introduced by Pleterski (1996), we can single out three ritual places:

St. Stephen (attributes: *Stephen, above*);

St. Mary in Adergas; nunnery lies on the left bank of the spring (attributes: *Mary, below, next to the spring, nunnery.*);



Slika 4. Kultna mesta v okolici vasi Velesovo.
Figure 4. Ritual places in the vicinity of the village Velesovo.

Velesovo (attributes: *Veles, Margaret*²², *below*).

As between the church of St. Stephen on Štefanova gora and the church of St. Mary and the old village centre of Velesovo it encloses approximately a 23 degree angle²³.

Conclusion

On the basis of these examples we wished to show how the sacred landscape 'organises' the world of the community on all levels, from the local (Gradišče pri Lukovici) to the regional (Kamnik and the Bistrica plain). Apart from the environment, the proximity of natural sources, good soil, etc, the sacred landscape also influenced the organisation of the early mediaeval landscape.

The study of the economic situation of the Bistrica plain (Štular 2001, 95-100) showed that the settlements had a various economic role. The same division is also shown by the reconstruction of the sacred landscape (see table).

At least on the territory of the Bistrica plain the early mediaeval landscape is organised on the level of the community according to the following key: the ritual place of Perun represents the administrative military centre (Grad nad Gradiščem pri Lukovici and the Kamnik Stari grad; however, not Štefanova gora). The ritual place of Veles is connected to the economic (agricultural) centre (Mengeš, Nevlje, village of Velesovo). So far we have not yet found any special role for the ritual place of Mokoša in the territory of the community, except for the religious one.

| LOCATION | SOCIAL – ECONOMIC ROLE | RITUAL PLACE |
|-------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| KAMNIK | MILITARY-ADMINISTRATIVE | PERUN |
| MENGEŠ | ECONOMIC | VELES |
| HOMŠKA GORA | RELIGIOUS (HEALING?) | MOKOŠ |

Such organisation of the landscape has, at least on the discussed territory, also influenced the later organisation of the mediaeval feudal landscape. The ritual place of *Perun* remained the administrative military centre (spot *bellatores*: Gradišče pri Lukovici, Kamnik – Stari grad; however not Štefanova gora). The ritual place of Veles became the centre of the church organisation (spot *oratores*: Mengeš and Nevlje; not Velesovo), which took over the second active pole in the landscape, which before most probably belonged to the farmers and craftsmen (*laboratores*), who held Veles as their patron, as is shown to us by the oath-taking ceremonies in the 10th Century Kiev Russia (Belaj 1998, 48). One of the possible explanations is, that in such a way the farmers and craftsmen were also symbolically pushed out from the active (political) activities in the community. The third spot, the ritual place of Mokoša, becomes a religious centre (Homška gora, nun's convent in Velesovo, the church of St. Margaret above Gradišče pri Lukovici). The use of the administrative military centre is determined already by the surroundings (the strategic positioning of Kamnik, Perun's ritual place). However, especially the further

²² The church of St. Margaret lies to the east of the village, which is not so rare in East Carniola (Ilešič 1933, 30)

²³ We have not yet conducted a topography of the village, however this could maybe define the micro location of the ritual place.

use of the Mokoš ritual place shows that the elements of the sacred landscape were transformed also up to the Christian feudal late mediaeval period.

We must still explain the role of four ritual places on the Bistrica plain, which we have marked as those belonging to Veles, for the scheme does not foresee them. In the examples of Mengeš and Nevlje we have already given a hint: because the worshipping of George (Nevlje) is in spring, and Michael (Mengeš) in autumn, these might be ritual places which were in use at various times of the annual cycle. For the ritual places Kamnik - Mali grad and Hudo we can search for explanations on various levels. Here we are dealing with the difference between the local (example Gradišča) and common (community space: Kamnik - Mengeš - Homška gora) ritual places. However, we do not have any concrete evidence for such an explanation.

A special example is Kamniška Bistrica, in which we can see a sole ritual place. It is more likely that this was "the periphery (of the earth plate, which was) inhabited by people who were only half human, similar to animals or deformed." (Šmitek 1999, 194) or the mountains massifs represented the underworld sphere, which belongs to the gods and demons; on the left bank of the habitat of Veles, on the right the habitat of Perun. In this event the ritual place of the duke's table would represent an entrance or a crossing to this world

With this article we have, hopefully, contributed another mosaic stone to the image of the early mediaeval religious representations and their manifestations in the environment. Most of all we hope that we have at least to a small degree opened the way to a positivistic view upon archaeological landscapes. The regulation of these is not based on the efficiency of the system but on the ideology. It is as such that they should be perceived, and they should be studied accordingly.

Texts

PROCESIJA NA VELIKO GORO

"Rudolf Badjura poroča o zmaju iz 'Lintvernove jame' pod stenami, ki je pustošil po okolici. K jami na Veliki gori naj bi prihajale procesije vernikov, da bi pomirile hudobnega zmaja v skalni votlini. Ostanek nekdanjih obredov proti zmaju naj bi bila dva lesena križa pred rovom jame. Tedaj naj bi temu kraju pravili Pri treh križih ..." (Radešček 1983, 200).

PROCESIJA NA ČUK V OKOLICI RODIKA

V okolici Rodika v letih pred 1882 zapisal M. Sila, rodiški župnik in zgodovinar (povzemamo po Slapšak 1997). Iz Brezovice je vsako leto hodila procesija na Čuk, kjer je arheološko dokumentirano rimskodobno grobišče. Sodelovalo je do dvajset križnikov in morda deviška dekleta oblečena v belo. Na vrhu Čuka je potem brezovski župnik blagoslovil lokev Jezero (latinsko pallas). Obred je potekal ob kamnu v vklesanim latinskim križem. Razlog za vsakoletne procesije je bilo verovanje, da so v Jezeru zle sile; cilj je bil, kot poroča Sila, "hudobo zarotiti" z urokom: "Gospodine! zateri ga in ubi ga onega vraga, ki tu prebiva!" (Slapšak 1997, 20). V versionah zapisanih v sedemdesetih letih 20. stoletja je hudoba poimenovana zmaj ali Lintvern. Nevarnost, ki jo je zmaj povzročal,

so bile nevihte; iz goste megle, ki se je poleti valila iz Jezera. Če se je zmešala z meglo iz enakega jezera v gričih na zahodni strani, je iz nje vselej bila toča. Druga nevarnost naj bi bilo razlitje Jezera. "Domačini so pripovedovali, da naj bi bil Čuk poln vode, Jezero da je le vrh tega rezervoarja in če bi se Lintvern razsrdil, bi lahko goro razklal in potopil vas in celo dolino." (Slapšak 1997, 20).

POVEDKA O VERONIKI S KAMNIŠKEGA GRADU

Različica I: "Kamniško mesto je zelo staro, v poganskih časih pa so bili (tod) trije gradovi, mesta pa ni bilo; na kraju, kjer je danes mesto, je bilo veliko jezero, ki se je raztezalo od Kamnika do okoliških hribov. Od omenjenih gradov po je bil eden na večjem, drugi na manjšem hribu nad mestom, tretji pa na mengeškem hribu. V njih so prebivali trije malikovalski bratje, ki niso bili

nikoli složni; vedno so se klali in spopadali med seboj. Končno se je v tem kraju zakotil zmaj, ki se je tako močno premikal, da je razbil razvotljeno goro, ki je zadrževala jezero. In to se je razlilo po polju okoli hriba, zmaj pa, ki mu je zmanjkalo vode, je na polju poginil. Nato je na mestu, kjer je bilo jezero, nastal lep in prijazen kraj, kjer so zgradili mesto in ko so prišli učenci sv. Mohorja in Fortunata, so spreobrnilo tamošnje prebivalce h krščanski veri. Ko so ti videli lepi čudež, so po vzoru mesta Berita izbrali za zavetnico sv. Marjeto, da bi bili rešeni zmaja; še danes ima mesto v grbu sv. Marjeto" (Cevc 1958, 112).

Različica II: "Kjer stoji danes mesto, je baje bilo nekoč jezero. Še pred nekaj leti so na obzidju, na tako imenovanem Malem gradu, videli železne obroče, ki so rabili za privezovanje ladij. Jezero se je baje odtekalo tam, kjer gre pot iz mesta v predmestje, Šutna imenovano, k farni cerkvi. Kjer pa teče danes reka Bistrica, je bilo, pravijo, jezero tako visoko, da je Mali grad ležal spodaj ob vznožju gore; ta gora da je bila takrat eno, pozneje pa da se je razcepila na dvoje, ker se je utrgal strahovit oblak. Na ta način sta se ločila bratska gradova Mali in Stari grad. Po starem pripovedovanju je tedaj jezero preplavilo Mengeško polje, odneslo samostan med Mengešem in Holmcem ter posejalo polje s toliko kupi kamenja. Meje jezera postavlja staro izročilo k cerkvi v Nevljah, ki je posvečena sv. Juriju pa jo še danes mnogi imenujejo sv. Jurij ob jezeru; tu je bila nekoč, pravijo, tudi fara" (Valvasor 1984, 250).

Različica III: "Kjer zdaj mesto Kamnik stoji, je bilo nekdanje veliko in globoko jezero. Nad jezerom sta bila dva gradova: na Križki gori veliki grad, zdaj Stari grad imenovan, ki so ga same razvaline, spodaj na robu jezera pa je bil mali grad. Ribištvo sta imela oba graščaka, nazadnje pa je Starograščak malograjskemu branil ribe loviti, zato mu je iz sovraštva rob prekopal in jezero je steklo. To se je zgodilo ob 3 popoldan, zato še zmiraj v Nevljah ob 3 popoldan z malim zvonom v spomin te prigode zvoni" (Cevc 1958, 116).

VALVASOR O KNEŽJI MIZI

»Die Steinerische Feistritz (Kamenska Bisterza) entspringt zwo Meilen oberhalb der Stadt Stein und dem höchsten Schnee-Gebirge. Nahe bey dem Ursprunge hat die Natur selbst eine seltsame Brücke gelegt, wie man an eingedruckter Figur erkennt. ... Es hat auch den gedachten Brücken ein seltsamen Fall, wie in besagtem Kupfer erscheint. Unterhalb steht eine steinere Tafel, darauf man zu tischen pflegt, wenn man auf der Jagd ist.« (Valvasor ... , 2. knjiga, 15. poglavje, 152); »Un einem anderen Ort eröffnet

sich zwischen diesem Schnee-Gebirge, in der Feistritz, eine annehmliche und lustreiche Ebne; woselbst vor undenklichen Jahren eine steinere Tafel gemacht worden. ... Un selbiger Tafel pflegt man zu speisen wenn man in der Feistritz das hohe Wild jaged." ... (Valvasor ..., 2. knjiga, 37. poglavje, str. 605).

FARJEV PLAZ POD MOKRICO

»Čez neki plaz je hodil gams. To je bilo v Bistrici. Tam je bil ovčar mladoleten deček, ki je že lahko pasel. Je pa videl, da so hodili tja srnjaki in gamsi, ki so imeli zlate parklje. Seveda, ko so pa stopili tja, kjer je bilo zlato! Je bilo popolnoma samo zlato. Ko je prišel srnjak ali gams, je tja stopil in se mu je samo posedlo, da je takoj dobil zlate parklje. In potem je šel pastirček gledat, kje bi se bilo tisto zlato dobilo. Res ga je našel. Bilo je samo zlato! O tem je povedal nekemu fajmoštru.

Rekel mu je: » Nekaj vam bom povedal, samo vam, nobenemu drugemu!« Tolko je bil deček že pameten, da je vedel, da je zlato vrednost.

Fajmošter je res šel gledat in je tam videl samo zlato. Zagrabila ga je hudobna želja in je fanta zaklal. Tisti trenutek se je utrgal plaz. Pobral je fajmoštra in vse zlato se je skrilo, da ga ni bilo več.

Še danes se reče Pod farjevim plazom v Kamniški Bistrici. Tam v Bistrici, nasproti Zbirkarja, tam je Farjev plaz« (Podbrežnik 1999, 16).

(op. a.:Strukturni elementi:

- v hribu skrito zlato;
- negativne značilnosti duhovnika (ni »dober«);
- otrokova smrt;
- plaz zasuje - ubije - negativca.)

DOLENJEVAŠKA POVEDKA

»Sredi dolnjevaškega polja, kjer stoji danes kapelica sv. Marjete, je imel vhod v svojo jamo velik in hud zmaj. Potreboval je veliko hrane. Vsako leto so mu morali dati tudi nekaj otrok. Če jih ni dobil, je začel strahovito razsajati. Zemlja je kar pokala in nastajale so velike jame. Nekoč pa so ljudje sklenili, da bodo jamo zasuli z ogromnimi skalami. Od vse strani so jih začeli voziti in jamo popolnoma zasuli, da zmaj ni mogel ven. Divjal je po rovu da se je zemlja tresla. Silil je ven pri votlini pri Beli steni. Bil pa je prevelik. Napel je vse sile. Takrat pa se je zamajala vsa Velika gora in ga podsula podse. Ljudje so bili zmaja rešeni. V spomin na to pa so sredi polja pozidali kapelico.« (Radešček 1983, 134)

(op.a.:Strukturni elementi:

- zmaj v jami;
- žrtvovanje otrok;
- gora (Bela peč na Veliki gori) podsuje - ubije - zmaja.)

IZROČILO O KNEŽJI MIZI

Zapisano ljudsko izročilo je: »... tam – v bližini mize – (je) ‘firšt’ zakopal denar in so ljudje na treh mestih skopali jame, da bi našli ‘zaklad’. Dve jami se še sedaj poznata, eno pa so zasuli z zemljo ob graditvi kamionske ceste leta 1958. Ljudje so rekli, da kopljejo

šac', pa kolikor je znano po pripovedovanju Bosa, niso nič našli. Ko so ponoči kopali zaklad, niso smeli govoriti. Zjutraj so se šli krepčat k izviru Bistrice, kajti tam 'hudič ni imel več moči'. Stari ljudje imenujejo ta kraj še vedno pri 'Firštovi mizi', mladina pa te oznake skoraj ne pozna več; le redki mladi lovci ali logarji jo poznajo« (Šivic 1967, 136).

KAMNITI LOVEC

Blizu znamenite srednjeveške božjepotne cerkve svetega Primoža in Felicijana nad Kamnikom je skala, ki ima v očeh domačinov podobo lovca, kako strelja na divjega petelina. Zakaj je lovec okamenel in kako se je to zgodilo, pripoveduje povedka:

Na kvatrno nedeljo je bil en grof na lovu. Je pa gori stal, gori nad Kamnitim robom, na štant. Pa je dol gledal k Svetemu Primožu. Doli so pa ljudje bili. Je že morala kakšna maša biti. Pa je zavpil:

»Ljubi sveti Primož,« je rekel, »ti meni daj lovce, jaz rabim lovce, ne svetnike!«

Dvakrat, v tretje zavpije, je pa okamenel.

Saj so ga potem ljudje hodili gledat tja gor. So rekli, da je res tam gori ena taka skala. Ne vem, ali je v resnici okamenel. Gori je bil pa primoški mežnar in jim jo je hodil kazat. Enkrat pa je rekel:

»Ne bom jim tja gor hodil kazat!«

Je pijance dobil, so pa gor odšli, so pa tisto skalo nekako v dolino zvalili. So mi še stari pripovedovali, da je v Koprivnem ležala tista skala. Sedaj pa je vse zasuto. (Podbrežnik 1999, 15)

Kvaterna nedelja: nedelja v kvatrnem tednu (vsak od štirih tednov v cerkvenem letu z določenimi postnimi dnevi) / mežnar: kdor oskrbuje cerkev (cerkovnik) / štant: čakališče za lovce.

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Slovenska poganska sveta pokrajina. Primer Bistriške ravni.

Benjamin Štular, Ivan M. Hrovatin

V članku avtorja na primeru Bistriške ravni prikazujeta slovensko pogansko sveto pokrajino. To predstavljajo kulturna mesta v pokrajini; hkrati je sveta pokrajina živela v predstavah sodobnih ljudi. Kulturna mesta avtorja iščeta predvsem s pomočjo atributov, ki jih je podal A. Pleterski (1996), predstave o svetu pa najdeta ujete v ljudskem izročilu.

Pri tem uporabljata vire (materialne oziroma arheološke, zgodovinske in etnološke), ki neposredno ne pričajo o istem času, vendar jih vsebinsko povežeta in s pomočjo arheoloških virov umestita v čas. Slovenska poganska sveta pokrajina je tako datirana v zadnji stoletji prvega tisočletja.

Na podlagi povedke iz Gradišča pri Lukovici avtorja prikažeta podobo svete pokrajine. Izhodišča te predstavljajo tri kulturna mesta, kjer je osredotočeno delovanje vsakega od božanstev (Perun, Veles in Mokoš), in povezujejo mitološki svet s stvarnim. Kulturna mesta imajo vlogo vertikalne svetovne osi (Šmitek 1999, 194) in odsevajo "božanski sorodstveno-zakonski trikotnik dveh mož in žene..." (Pleterski 1996, 182). Obredi, ki so se odvijali na teh kulturnih mestih, so ljudem omogočali stik s svetom božanstev. Tako so v prostor vnašali ravnovesje ter skupnosti omogočali blagostanje.

Povedka o Veroniki z Malega gradu govori o nastanku mesta Kamnik in omenja kulturna mesta Bistriške ravni, o katerih pričajo tudi materialni dokazi. Kulturno mesto Peruna je kamniški Stari grad z atributi *grad, kamen in zgoraj*. Kulturno mesto Mokoši je Homška gora z atributi *Marija, ob vodi, 'žegnan' studenec*.

Pri umestitvi kulturnega mesta Velesa je več možnosti:

Kamnik — Mali grad (atributi: *Veles, spodaj, jezero, zaklad, ob vodi*);

Mengeš — zgornji grad (atributi: *Veles, zgoraj, jama*);

Mengeš — spodnji grad (atributi: *Veles, spodaj*);

Mengeš — Sv. Mihael (atributi: *Mihael ubijalec zmaja, slovansko grobišče, spodaj, ob vodi/v močvirju, pisani/zli*);

Sv. Jurij v Nevljah (atributi: *Jurij ubijalec zmaja, spodaj, jezero, zmajevo rebro, duše umrlih otrok*).

Pozornost zbujata homogenost atributov mest Mengeš — Sv. Mihael in Sv. Jurij v Nevljah. Kot kulturna mesta Velesa se pokažejo Mengeš — Sv. Mihael, Sv. Jurij v Nevljah in kamniški Mali grad (glej sliko 2).

Naslednje Velesovo kulturno mesto je slovansko grobišče pri Hudem z nenavadno usmeritvijo grobov proti zahodu, preko reke Kamniške Bistrice proti kulturnemu mestu Homška gora. Ta usmeritev je posledica zavestne odločitve. Atributi kulturnega mesta Hudo so: *hudo, spodaj, Volčji*.

Na podlagi atributov sta avtorja našla še eno trojico kulturnih mest v okolici vasi, ki nosi ime slovanskega božanstva Velesa (glej sliko 4).

Drugačno vlogo pa so imela kulturna mesta v dramatični pokrajini ob zgornjem toku Kamniške Bistrice (glej sliko 3). Osnovna shema, kot jo je utemeljil J. Peisker (1928), na desno stran vodotoka postavlja Velesovo mesto, na levo Perunovo. Shema sta avtorja razširila s konkretnimi kulturnimi mesti, ki sta jih določila na podlagi etnološkega gradiva. Ta so: Knežja miza, izvir Kamniške Bistrice in naravni most v Predaslju.

Na podlagi primerov sta avtorja pokazala, kako sveta pokrajina »ureja« svet skupnosti na vseh nivojih, od lokalne (Gradišče pri Lukovici) do regionalne (Kamnik in Bistriška ravan). Poleg okolja, bližine naravnih virov, dobre zemlje ipd. je torej na ureditev zgodnj srednjeveške pokrajine vplivala tudi sveta pokrajina. Vsaj na prostoru Bistriške ravni je zgodnj srednjeveška pokrajina na ravni skupnosti urejena po naslednjem ključu: kultno mesto Peruna predstavlja upravno vojaško središče (Grad na Gradišču in kamniški Stari grad; ne pa Štefanova gora). Kultno mesto Velesa je povezano z ekonomskim (kmetijskim) središčem (Mengeš, Nevlje, Velesovo). Kultno mesto Mokoši ima v prostoru skupnosti vlogo religioznega središča (romarska cerkev).