Settlement of the Eastern Alps in the Early Middle Ages, Opera Instituti Archaeologici Sloveniae 48, 2024, 101–152. doi: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610508786_07

IMAGES BEHIND THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL CURTAIN: VLACHS, SLAVS, ŽUPAS, PRINCIPALITIES, CARANTANIA

Andrej PLETERSKI

Slovenian early medieval archaeology has not been aware of the "*tyranny of the historical record*". This record has always structured the interpretation of the archaeological evidence.
[Irena Mirnik Prezelj 1998, 380]

I wish Irena [1955–2018] would be the first to read my study, and that she would experience moral satisfaction while doing so.

Abstract

The Slavs were people who, as survival opportunists, lived on the border between wet and dry environments, who cremated their dead, who had elaborate ideas concerning the landscape of the dead, and therefore mound shapes and slopes towards the south-east were important to them. According to current data, they arrived in groups from the end of the 5th century onwards. The ancient Vlachs as oldsettlers knew how to survive in the mountains, but they occasionally also inhabited the plains, to where they descended by the 9th century and merged with the Slavs who were already living there. Linguistically, the Slavic language was clearly dominant. The mountainous and dry karst world requires special skills for survival, which the Slavs did not master. Without the cooperation of the Vlachs, this world would be abandoned.

While studying the relationship between the influential spaces of churches and burial sites without churches, an archaeological tool was revealed that outlines the political relations and the extent of authoritarian power at the time the church network was emerging. According to this, the small starting point of Carantania appeared at the beginning of the 9th century, as did many individual župas as primordial political communities in the 9th and 10th centuries. They formed the foundation that has retained its importance in many places to this day.

Keywords: Vlachs, Slavs, Eastern Alps, Early Middle Ages, settlement, Christianization, churches, places of political power, župa (Slavic primordial political community), Carantania

1. WHAT THE READER CAN EXPECT

The research question is: *what can we establish from the analysis of sites as data documents about the South-eastern Alps in the period between the 5th and 11th century?* The question was set broader that the title of the project, within which this analysis emerged, would demand: Settlement of the South-eastern Alpine region in the Early Middle Ages (https://iza2.zrc-sazu.si/en/programi-in-projekti/settlement-south-eastern-alpine-region-early-middle-ages). I draw attention to the notion of a **site as a data document**. This is a data structure that is part of the ZBIVA database (for a detailed description see *3.3*), just as other data structures, graves and artefacts are also a part of it. The analysis includes only sites as data documents (see *Limitations* below). The discussion indicates only the possible connections and their interpretive potential to other data structures. Therefore, the purpose of the presented study is not a complete synthesis of the existing knowledge on life in the South-eastern Alps and the periphery during the Early Middle Ages, but primarily an analysis of what can be extracted about the settlement from the archaeological sites. Therefore, I do not delve into the review of non-archaeological, especially written sources for the time and area under consideration.

This means that my discussion answers the above-mentioned question, but also poses many new research questions, which will be answered only once an adequate volume of collections of other types of data structures is established.

The area covered by the research (see Štular, Lehner 2024, Fig. 1 in this volume) is diverse in all respects: geologically, biologically, culturally, politically, economically, historically. It is merely a mosaic of countless individualities that are constantly changing. Any generalization would be unfair to the particularities that manifest themselves on the regional or micro-regional level, yes, even on the level of an individual site. If, nevertheless, I risk certain general conclusions, this is because the entirety cannot be placed into words in any other way. Having said that, I am fully aware that the details I have overlooked, or that are yet to emerge, may fundamentally alter my current general findings.

The research covers merely a certain period. The downside of any time slice is that we are not certain what came before it and we do not understand what followed it. Traditionally, the 6th and 7th centuries have been regarded as a turning point for the territory in question. This period represents an imaginary break between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages (on the vagueness and looseness of this type of periodization see: Mirnik Prezelj 1998). In order to question this turning point, we included the 5th century into our investigation. And while the turning point of these two centuries is, in many ways of lesser importance than we considered until now, we have missed another, perhaps even more important turning point. If we would have included also the 4th century it would be even more noticeable what great civilizational changes were taking place already at that time (for more on spatial, temporal, and informational limitations see *3.2.1*).

I did not know what the cognitive possibilities of the proposed research were, and there were no established research methods available for it either. My work took place alongside the digital analysis of the settlement process in the same territory. This included space-time pattern mining, time series clustering to classify sites into chronological groups and the so-called hot spots analysis, that connected everything together spatially and determined the consilience with linguistics and genetic history (Štular et alii 2022). Compared to my time-consuming work, the analysis, which used mathematical algorithms, was lightning fast. However, on their own, algorithms fail to offer an interpretation, as they do not explain what they show, and thus leave the freedom to our imagination. Since we are unfamiliar with the historical process in which the structure was created, there is a great risk that it could be misinterpreted (Pleterski 2001a). The slower process enables the recognition of historical processes and provides a chance for a better interpretation. This is not to say that mathematical algorithms are useless, by no means. However, they need the addition of various interpretive tools to interpret their results.

My study is not an overview of the existing publications and their brief content on the topics they address. For bibliographic questions arranged by individual topics, please see the Libera bibliographic database for the Early Middle Ages of the Eastern Alps (https://zbiva4.zrc-sazu.si/en/iskanje/literatura). In archaeological publications, we are used to dealing with artefacts, graves, structures, individual sites. In recent decades, various digital tools (GIS, LiDAR) have enabled the expansion of spatial research. I focused my research on sites as artefacts and their interrelationships. I carried it out in a digital environment (see *3.3*), as this task would not be feasible in any other way. In the presented initial stage, the spatial analysis digital tools have been used merely to a small extent, but I hope that the results present a sufficient challenge for the subsequent use of such tools to the greatest possible extent.

Even though the first steps of my analysis showed that the issue of settlement would be at the forefront, eventually the issue of political organization came to the fore, of course at the level of primordial political communities (see below *3.2.2*). Since these were related to the organization of space, they could be detected archaeologically. And since it increasingly seems that spatial-political units represented the basis for identifying individuals, they are also related to identity questions that arise in the face of population changes. These are research topics that researchers have so far tried to answer primarily with the help of written sources. I accepted the challenge of questioning some of their interpretations with the help of the new perspectives provided by analysing archaeological material. This also resulted in some completely new views of the past. I use written sources only as much as this is necessary for a better understanding of archaeological issues. In view of this I hope I will not be accused of establishing a tyranny of the archaeological record.

2. THE STATE OF KNOWLEDGE

45 years have passed since Paola Korošec's large, two volume monograph *Zgodnjesrednjeveška arheološka slika karantanskih Slovanov* [*Early Medieval Archaeological Image of Carantanian Slavs*] (1979). The first volume addresses the division of archaeological material into cultural groups, followed by the typochronology of artefacts, while the second volume includes a catalogue of 242 sites and 162 plates of selected artefacts. Although it does not involve written sources at any point, the

goal of the work is set in the perfect spirit of the then unconscious tyranny of the historical record (for more on this concept see Mirnik Prezelj 1998). Only in the last sentence of her book did Paola Korošec state her goal and express her belief that she has achieved it, as she supposedly used archaeological sources to support the idea that the oldest Slavic state with a multi-layered social organization was created on the territory of the Eastern Alps (Korošec 1979, 330). She did not describe its borders and social organization, nor did she write about the way of life that could be shown by the archaeological material. However, the ambition of her work is clear. While Bogo Grafenauer relied on written sources to prove the state of the Carantanian Slovenians (Grafenauer 1952), she included archaeological sources that supported her findings. While Bogo Grafenauer founded the state of the Carantan Slovenians with written sources (Grafenauer 1952), she did the same with archaeological sources. If one wished to add anything to her findings or even alter them, one would first have to expand the dataset, master new information tools and set new methodological starting points (briefly Štular, Pleterski 2018). Of course, one also had to wait for over four decades for all of this to take place.

Before one starts a comparison between new and old knowledge, one needs to be familiar with at least the rough outlines of what we believe we know. I emphasize, what we believe we know. At this, I will help myself with a certain shortcut, for I will focus on the studies by two authors who have made an effort to carry out extensive overviews. Both were created far enough outside of Slovenia that the authors were forced to find what they considered to be the prevailing opinion. Namely, they could not build their view on primary information sources, but could only rely on existing interpretations. What was worthy of their attention?

In 1995, the Russian archaeologist Valentin Vasilevich Sedov published a monographic overview of the Slavs in the Early Middle Ages (I used the Serbian translation: Sedov 2013). In the basic interpretive terms, which he did not define, he leaned upon archaeological cultures (also cultural communities), ethnolinguistic communities, tribes, ethnicity. He believes that the ethnic tribes that the Slavs encountered during the Great Migration, had a significant influence on the formation of Slavic cultures. He also believes that the Early Middle Ages is the period in which the conditions for the beginning of individual language groups among the Slavs began to appear (Sedov 2013, 9–10). His interpretive ideal is an archaeological culture that spatially corresponds to a linguistic group or a political territory. In the first part of the book he shows a series of archaeological cultures that were determined by the forms of burials, dwellings, and artefacts.

For our work, the second part of the book is of greater importance, as this addresses the formation of Slavic nations and states. It contains a chapter on the Alpine Slavs (Sedov 2013, 382–393). Its visual core is represented by two maps that apparently overlap. The first shows the political territory of Carantania (Sedov 2013, Fig. 78). Sedov summarized its borders from Grafenauer's map in *Zgodovina slovenskega naroda I [History of the Slovenian Nation I]* (*Fig. 21*), but added the territory south of the Karavanke mountain range all the way to the Kolpa river, which was said to have been reoccupied by the Avars after the collapse of Samo's tribal union (Grafenauer 1964, Map XV, 332). In this way, he limited the area in which most of the sites he summarized from Korošec (Korošec 1979, Appendix 4) were located and called this area the Carantanian culture (Sedov 2013, Fig. 79). From the matches that were thus created, he came up with the interpretation that the formation of the Principality of Carantania and the stabilization of the living conditions united the Slavic population in the Alpine region, for which he found confirmation in the fact that this area in the 8th century, also formed a unified archaeological culture (Sedov 2013, 386), which is determined by certain forms of jewellery. The Carantanian culture testifies to the ethnic unification of the Alpine Slavs. It is obvious that with its formation and development, the process of the creation of a special Slavic nation of Carantanians began. The loss of national independence and the unification brought by Christianity interrupted the process of its formation. Today, the descendants of the Alpine Slavs are represented by Slovenians. The formation of their language apparently began during the Principality of Carantania (Sedov 2013, 389–391). Thus, Sedov seemingly consolidated the consensus of the interpretation of written and archaeological sources, as established by Grafenauer and Korošec (see above).

The importance of Carantania as a political formation is such that it can be found in any broader overview of Slavic history. This was also shown in an extensive monograph by the German historian Eduard Mühle that addresses the Slavs in the Middle Ages and in doing so verifies the modern idea of the former Slavic community (Mühle 2020). As expected, such a community is not supported in medieval sources. It is important for us that in the chapter on the first Slavic statehood formations (*Herrschaftsbildungen*) he also discusses Carantania in great detail. This is a story addressing the formation and disintegration of the Carantanian identity, how the Carantanian social elite drowned amongst the aristocracy of the medieval empire. The Slavic language was to a great extent preserved by the common population, which was labelled *Windische* or *Slovenes* from the Late Middle Ages onwards (Mühle 2020, 151–157). Mühle believes that the archaeological evidence of the social elite can be found in the graves with weapons and in luxurious stones richly decorated with interlaced ornament in proprietary churches (Mühle 2020, 156). The

established idea of the large territory of Carantania as early as the 8th century, differs from Mühle's idea that Borut's Carantania was small and that Borut used the help of the Bavarians to establish himself as a regional ruler. Mühle refers to the formulation in the Conversio (*Quarantanos [...] similiterque confines eorum*, c. 4), when the subjugation of the Carantanians and their neighbours is said to have occurred (Mühle 2020, 154). Herwig Wolfram, who insists on the concept of the large territory of Carantania in the 8th century, claims quite differently that the neighbours (*confines*) are anachronistically meant to be the inhabitants of Pannonia, which was at the time still under the rule of the Avars (Wolfram 2012, 119). This example shows the great interpretive freedom when reading the same written source.

The image of the South-eastern Alpine territory's past and its neighbourhood is thus still based almost entirely on the interpretation of written sources. Carantania represents its political core. This idea was already discussed by historians between the 15th and the 18th century and it thus seems understandable that Anton Tomaž Linhart placed the concept of new Slovenian history on Carantanian foundations (cf. Mihelič 1977, 322). The pinnacle of this concept was established by Bogo Grafenauer (1952).

Since the publication of the Köttlach burial site with enamel jewellery in 1854, archaeological research has focused not only on the excavation process itself, but also on the questions that were raised already at the time: on the period the artefacts were from and to whom they belonged. So far, this debate has focused on typo-chronological discussions, and for a very long time also on the questions of archaeological culture and its ethnic definition. In the current century, new discoveries of settlements and dating with the C-14 radiocarbon method have raised the issue of Slavic migration (more on the latter below). It is characteristic that the recent monograph on Carantania, written by the Austrian archaeologist Paul Gleirscher, is based on written sources, while archaeological artefacts mainly represent merely an attractive decoration (Gleirscher 2018). With this, he proved that the "tyranny of the historical record" exists widely. This is why one might now be taken by surprise at my announcement that I will not escape the fascination with Caratania. However, this will not occur as a result of the way in which it is promoted. There are more written sources about it than about any other part of the Eastern Alpine territory, and these are also accompanied by a significant number of archaeological sources. And when we analyse the archaeological sources, Carantania stands out on its own, albeit significantly differently than the modern interpretations of written sources show.

Above all, this is going to be merely one of the topics that derive from archaeological sources.

3. METHOD

This chapter will present my conceptual starting points that lead and aided me in my research, and explain the used methods.

3.1 PREMISES AND CONSIDERATIONS

3.1.1 The area of influence of churches

Medieval **churches** are not merely a **materialization of Christianity**, but also the materialization of the **political ideology and authoritarian power** of the time. The area of influence of the newly erected churches can be seen on the map as the simultaneous abandonment of burial sites without churches (*Figs. 17; 18*).

Two scenarios. In the Middle Ages, burials in church cemeteries were one of the basic requirements demanded from the newly baptized population (Vargha, Mordovin 2019, 141–145). The implementation of this requirement depended on the political authorities and their power. We must keep in mind at least two possible scenarios, which amongst others, depended on the number of holders of political power. The first scenario focuses on a single ruler who needed ideological support as he tried to rule as a ruler independent from the will of the political community. The teaching that authority is given by God and therefore any rebellion against authority is a rebellion against God himself and worthy of God's punishment was an excellent aid to such efforts. Its starting premise can be found in the 13th chapter of Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans (Romans 13, 1,2), which is repeated in his own words by a member of the highest Saxon nobility, Bishop Thietmar of Merseburg, in his chronicle written at the beginning of the 11th century (Thietmar V, 32). According to the second scenario, Christianization was a collective decision of the entire political community that wanted to preserve a common law, as was the case in Iceland (Íslendingabók, c. VII). According to both scenarios, Christianization was primarily a political decision. Where violent forms of Christianization have taken place, this can be described in modern parlance as the imposition of a world view in the service of a political ideology.

3.1.2 Slavs and the wet environment

The observation that early Slavic settlements throughout Europe appeared on the edges of river banks is well established and widespread. At this, the role of the Pripyat Marshes is unclear and is often used in the literature only as a pejorative metaphor, a so-called Slavic ethnogenesis: Slavs, people from the Pripyat Marshes. So far, we have not yet found an answer to the question

as to what made wet environments so attractive to the Slavs. Why was a wet environment so popular amongst the Slavs? A possible answer is provided by ethnological material on the use of wet areas in Krško polje (Krško Plain) during the 19th and 20th centuries (Rihter 2019). Not only were the wet areas an excellent source of food and raw materials for various purposes, they decisively complemented the dry environment of the higher lying fields. Rihter pointed out that settlements were positioned on river banks, on the border between the upper dry and lower wet environments. This helped the inhabitants decisively rise their chances of survival in extreme weather conditions. In years of drought they were saved by the wet environment, while in the wet years they could turn to the dry environment (Rihter 2019, 12–13). Therefore, both wet and dry environments must be considered. Even Andrej Magdič, while studying the microregion of the Drava Plain (north-eastern Slovenia) within the territory of the South-eastern Alps, noticed that Early Medieval settlements were generally located so that their fields consisted of soils of different pedological classes. If we take a closer look, we can establish that most settlements were not only located on the border area of pedological classes, but were located right on the border of two pedological classes: automorphic and hydromorphic soils (Magdič 2024 in this volume), i.e. wet and dry environments. Even in the alpine environment of the Bled microregion, the Early Medieval settlers were drawn to light soils with high water retention capacity (Lozić 2021). Everything said so far does not mean that the described environmental opportunism was known only to the Slavs, but it was undoubtedly characteristic of them, and it also helped them become masters of survival.

3.1.3 Considering the models

I proceed from the assumption that all current representations of the past are merely models (see the definition *model of the past*). The usefulness of the model is measured by its interpretive power. This shows how much information from the past can be accommodated by the model without breaking down the proposed interconnection of its components. Of course, the model of the past can be completely invented in the present, but in my research, I gave priority to models that were created as close as possible to the space and time under my research. There is an expectation that the proximity of space and time increases the probability of the relevance of the model of the past.

3.1.4 Considering the identities

People identify themselves in a number of ways daily. We do not use all of these identifiers every day, but we use many throughout our lives. At the same time, we belong to various identification communities, and the intersection of these affiliations is changing over time. People in the past also identified themselves, but their identification criteria were undoubtedly different – in many ways – to those we use today.

The idea of ethnic identities as a subject of research (I am not talking about ethnos as a word) arose in the modern era (Jones 2008), when economic, social and political changes led to the emergence of modern nations. Transposing the modern concept of ethnicity as an interpretive tool for defining identity groups into the past cannot be successful, because there is no reason that what we see in the present existed in the same way in the past.

Of course, this does not mean that people in the past did not differ from each other or were similar to each other without realizing it. Of course they did, they just perceived it differently than we do today. Archaeology can reveal a lot about identity groups and their intersections, which speak about what can be broadly defined as a way of life. What was most important for people living this way, besides life itself, is revealed by the worst punishment. This was excommunication and expulsion from the legal community, which means that belonging to a legal community, its space, was the main and basic condition for survival. This was the most fundamental identification, which did not depend only on the will of the individual, but primarily on the respective legal community (see also the terms *župa* and *primordial political community*).

3.1.5 The idea of spatial-temporal axes

In the systematic input of information for the group of sites, it was possible to make many on-the-spot observations of the repetitions of site characteristics and their interrelationships. The chain of connections between the sacred and the authority deserve special attention. Its instances meander through time and yet maintain the same space. We can deal with a single site that changes its functions over time, or several sites from different periods with different functions, all of which were located in the immediate vicinity. In an idealized form, the chain in the observed period begins with a hilltop settlement in Late Antiquity. We do not know whether this was fortified in all instances, because the archaeological investigation of such sites is always different. In any case, over time, a very definite answer will be given to this question. The next link in the chain are the Early Medieval hoardes of metal artefacts (horse and cavalry equipment, weapons, agricultural tools) and shrines at or near such areas. This is a process of sacralization. This is followed by the construction of fortifications as pillars of political power. Individual rulers tried to increase their political influence by appropriating sacred

spaces. With Christianization, these sacred spaces were replaced by churches. By appointing church officials, the circle of power was completed. The construction of castles followed in the High Middle Ages. Of course, many chains are missing some individual links. Partly because they did not have them at all, since development did not always move in the same way. Partly, however, the apparent lack of links in the chain is a result of the lack of archaeological exploration.

3.2 LIMITATIONS, DEFINITIONS, WARNINGS

3.2.1 Limitations

Only all available information sources that have been preserved from the past can show us the holistic history of life in a certain area. As the size of the observed territory increases, the amount of information quickly grows to the point of being unmanageable. This problem can be partially solved by dividing it into smaller segments. What I will discuss below is a cut in different ways: spatial, temporal, informational. As a spatial cut, this addresses the territory of Slovenia, the Trieste part of the Italian province of Friuli, the Austrian federal states of Carinthia and Styria, both in their entirety, and some neighbouring districts of the Austrian federal states of Tyrol (Lienz), Salzburg (Tamsweg) and Upper Austria (Gmunden, Kirchdorf, Steyr). This is an area with Slavic toponyms that indicate the presence of a Slavic-speaking population during the Middle Ages. On the territory of Austria, the described administrative border in the west corresponds to the consolidated territory of Slavic toponyms. All other borders were arbitrarily set and encompass the core of the territory in which, according to Paola Korošec, in the „first centuries of the Middle Ages"... „the Carantanian Slavs were settled ... the bearers of manifestations of material and spiritual culture", which she described in her extensive synthetic monograph (Korošec 1979, 5; Štular, Belak 2022, 2). This opinion set me a challenge for a new valuation.

The temporal cut deals with the period between 400 and 1100, with a good useful period being between 500 and 1000 (Štular et alii 2022, 9, Fig. 3).

The information cut represents a limitation to archaeological sources. However, even in the group of archaeological resources, further restrictions are needed. These are different levels of observation. Traditionally, we gather most information while observing artefacts, which makes this level of observation the most standardized. The usual levels of observation are also the level of the site as a whole and the level of component parts of an individual site, such as graves in a burial ground and buildings in a settlement. ZBIVA currently enables classified data capturing of artefacts, graves, and sites. For the entire described territory, the database presently only contains data for all sites as a whole. Data is included for thousands of graves and artefacts, but only for selected sites, and not for all. Therefore, the presented data analysis is currently based primarily on the database of sites, their individual time spans and their properties, in as much as they could be determined (for a detailed description, see *3.3*).

3.2.2 Definitions and expressions

The only purpose of the definitions below is to explain how I understand and use individual expressions.

Conversio = *Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum*, a propaganda document that was most likely created in 870 (on this date Lošek 1997, 6; Wolfram 2012, 27) to defend the Salzburg's Church territory of interest against the competition represented by the brothers Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius.

Mythical landscape

This is a form of cultural landscape that people created according to their mythical ideas or at least understood it in that way. With its help they wanted to control the forces of nature (for further details see: Pleterski 2023). The same mythical landscape can simultaneously contain several spatial ideograms.

Since the mythical landscape is materialized, it can be the subject of archaeological research. This can take place on its micro components, such as graves, buildings, on components of a higher level of observation, such as burial sites, settlements, fields, paths, and also on the level of the landscape as a whole. Folk tradition, which provides information about the cultural significance of the components within the space, is also connected to this same space. Therefore, we can study the connections between this tradition and the archaeological remains (cf. Lane 2008).

I prefer the name mythical landscape to definitions such as sacred or ceremonial, ritual landscape, which are already loaded with clearly defined ideas, and usually encompass less than the broad concept of a mythical landscape. Somewhat more conceptual discussions on this aspect of the landscape revolve either within the context of enumerating and treating holy places or on the level of discussing what someone thinks about it today (e.g. Robb 1998; Słupecki 2002; Dobrez 2009). Since I do not believe in the fruitfulness of scholastic wisdom, I prefer to open the horse's mouth and count its teeth in the continuation.

The possible number of sites within a certain period (*Fig. 1*)

I present a fictitious example at this point. The example consists of 9 sites in decades I to VII: N1–N9.

		N 1				
	N 2					
N 3						
	N4			N 5		
	N6			N 7		
N 8				N 9		
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
2	4	5	2	4	2	1

Fig. 1: Possible number of sites from a certain period.

Sites 6, 7, 8, 9 have a time span of one decade each, site 4 spans over two decades, sites 2, 3, 5 span over three decades each and site 1 over four decades. The possible number of sites within an individual decade is the sum of the sites dating back to a single decade. Decade I includes 2 such sites, decade II includes 4 sites, III 4, IV 2, V 4, VI 2 and decade VII includes a single site. Sites with long time spans, which are a result of loose dating, naturally push the observed features back also to a time when they did not actually exist. This should be taken into account in the interpretation. For example, the use of cremation graves only apparently lasts until the second half of the 10th century (*Fig. 13*).

The primordial political community

This is any community that established and maintained a form of social order that included both the organized exercise of authority, including through coercion, as well as the establishment and maintenance of inward cooperation and outward responsiveness. Its population shares norms, values, beliefs, customs and inhabits a territory that is organized and has its own management (see *župa* below). The population internalizes a special communal identity. In this case, the communal territory is more than just an area that people inhabit and that gives them the opportunity to satisfy their physical needs. It is the scene of their actions over time and an integral part of their communal identity as a tangible and definable embodiment of political space. It is a home in which its members have their identity roots (cf. Cirila Toplak, summarizing the research of Lucy Mair and Hannah Arendt: Toplak 2022, 60). Of course, what describes the non-uniformly defined concept of the state also corresponds to the above description. However, with the concept of the state, we can understand a more complex implementation, which is usually defined in the context of political economy. However, one should not forget that already Hannah Arnedt warned that explaining the emergence of the state merely by satisfying material needs is too one-sided and flawed (Parekh 1981, 154).

Model of the past

As a model of the past, I understand the simplistically described relationships between components that are supposed to have existed in the past. These are structures of the ingredients and the processes that changed these structures (Pleterski 2001a). The purpose of this simplification is to make the past easier to understand and to link more easily the information that has been preserved from the past.

The Old Faith

In practical use, the label old faith means the opposite of the new faith. This can be e.g. the contrast between old and new Christian divisions in a certain territory or between Christianity and non-Christianity. In this case it is used as a neutral label, that replaces the pejorative Christian label paganism and, equally, the **Old Faith beliver** replaces a pagan.

Vlachs, Slavs and others

At this point, I am not addressing the question of concrete self-identification of the past population within the territory under consideration. This requires special treatment, which must consciously move away from the definitions we came up with in modern times. However, I consider the assessment (Štular et alii 2022) that a new population with a new Slavic language arrived in the mentioned area in the Early Middle Ages. In order to simplify the description, I call these new arrivals Slavs. I call the natives whom they encountered and shared their habitat with Vlachs. The simplified, generalized technical nomenclature does not in any way mean that the two population groups were homogeneous, so of course they should not be understood as self-evident identities. However, at the same time, both names do not close the door to such an understanding. Similarly, I use names known from the period under consideration, such as Goths, Lombards, Avars, etc.

Župa* [= *a Slavic political community]

I use the word župa to designate the model of the fundamental political territorial unit that supposedly existed among the Slavs in the time before the creation of the so-called medieval states with monarchic authority. People realized their legal identity within the župa, its space ensured their survival. It encompassed a certain number of settlements that were governed by a župan (in modern Slovenian translated as mayor). The župas were similarly structured, they had a related language, laws, customs, and a shared religious system. The image of the župa is illustrated by the example of Bled as a landscape (Pleterski 2013). Over time, župas began to unite into larger territorial, politically connected groups – principalities. As a name, župa naturally changed its meanings through time and space. At the same time, there are indications that the meaning of the župa did not disappear

with the political enforcement of the monarchical power of the medieval state, but survived until modern times as a parallel society in a special political form (Toplak 2022, 55–60 describes it as a heterotopia). In Slovenian oral tradition, these remains carry the names *hosta* (wood), *gmajna* (common land), *dežela* (province) (Pleterski 2022, 131–134). Župa could be the Slavic version of the *primordial political community*.

3.2.3 Expressions that I deliberately avoid

These are expressions that, without defining their content, are generally used in the hope that everyone understands them in the same way and that they sufficiently describe what we want to express. I am convinced that this lazy hope is misplaced.

Ethnos

It is symptomatic that the monumental *Lexikon des Mittelalters* does not include this word as a password. I interpret this as a confirmation of Siân Jones' observation that very few researchers explicitly define what the terms ethnicity and ethnic group mean to them. And there is no consensus among them (Jones 2003, 56). This means that there is no universally valid definition. However, the word ethnos is found in the adjective form in numerous lexicon entries. This means that it conveniently helps in cases in which it would otherwise have been necessary to precisely lay the conceptual foundations and consistently follow them. The words *Volk* and *Stamm* sometimes appear as synonyms (e.g. Wolfram 1997). The beginnings of the research into the concept of ethnicity reached into the 19th century, however, this research became widespread in the 20th century. It was introduced in order to explore, understand and justify modern social identities (Jones 2008). I emphasize, modern and not former.

Tribe (German *Stamm*, Latin *gens*, *natio*)

The word initially referred to a kinship group, however, in the 19th century it began to denote a gentile community linked by language, tradition and place of settlement (Wirth 1997). These are therefore modern criteria that researchers project into the past, which is an exceptional methodological risk.

Carantanian, Kötllach, culture, cultural circle, cultural group (CKC)

This is a technical term used by earlier generations of archaeologists to refer to a special group of Early Medieval enamel jewellery in the Eastern Alps and neighbouring territories. The term was introduced in 1889 by the German antiquarian Otto Tischler, who coined the term Köttlach culture based on the enamel decoration of the special Köttlach style. He adopted the name from the first known find (1853) of crescent circlet and fibulae with enamel decoration in the graves near Köttlach in Lower Austria. The initially different dating of these finds was settled down in 1899 when the German archaeologist Paul Reinecke dated them in the period between the 9th and the 11th century. The Slovenian archaeologist Walter Šmid mistakenly believed that these were limited to the area inhabited by the "Carantanian Slavs", thus proposing the name Carantanian cultural circle in 1911. Later, the compromise, Carantanian-Köttlach double name came into force (Pleterski 2001b).

The expectation of former archaeologists that the concept of ***archaeological culture*** can be equated with a group of people from the same "ethnic" identity turned out to be unfounded. Today, we know that the concept of archaeological culture includes a very modest and arbitrarily defined set of material culture characteristics as seen by archaeologists. These characteristics can be of different origins: chronological, technological, economic, social, religious (Klejn 1988). Since the concept of archaeological culture does not have a clearly defined content, modern archaeologists are abandoning its use. From this point of view, all the discussions that took place in the past about whether the items of the CKC are the material remains of solely Slavs, solely Germans, or even only natives, are methodologically wrong and surpassed. Completely independent of this is the observation that the area where the CKC artefacts appear not only as individual settlement finds but mainly as grave goods is located within a territory with Slavic toponymy.

3.2.4 Warnings

The ZBIVA v3 web interface (http://zbiva.zrc-sazu.si), provides a ***timeline*** which locates all sites that, with their time spans, at least partially touch upon the part of the timeline that we have determined with the two time sliders. The vast majority of these sites have their beginning and end set to precisely 10 years. At this I would like to emphasize that this accuracy does not mean precision. However, this provides great help in overcoming arbitrary psychological time limits and thus in turn contributes to greater accuracy. The Arches platform used for online ZBIVA (v3, 2016–2022) allows 5-year accuracy of the timeline slider movements: 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26 ... If we wish to find all possible sites that reach back to the decade 11–20, we set the sliders to 11 and 16, maybe both, or only to 11 or 16, but definitely not to 11 and 21, as this would also show the possible sites for the decade 21–30.

The analysis below is based on charts that show the possible number of sites with the same feature in the same time period (by decades) and maps of the distribution of these same sites. Due to the accuracy of 10 years, the charts are quite "jagged", while the accuracy of 25 years (Štular et alii 2022) gave more rounded shapes.

All distribution charts and maps, which also have a time value, always show the ***possible number of sites*** (see definition above) within a given period. For reasons of simplicity, I have omitted the label "possible" in the continuation of this text.

Visualization of site density. The location map of the used online ZBIVA (v3) allows zooming in an extremely wide range from satellite height to kneeling on the ground. Location points are marked with rhombuses. A grey rhombus represents merely the existence of a site. A different colour of the rhombus represents one or more selection criteria. Depending on the observation height, the site points are closer together or further apart. When they overlap with the height of the lookout point, they merge into circles. The number in the centre of the circle tells how many sites it combines.

The density of sites strongly depends on the level of exploration. No matter what we map, most maps show that the density of sites in the south is significantly higher than in the north. This is the result of much poorer archaeological research in Austria compared to Slovenia. Our database includes 920 sites in Slovenia (20,273 km^2, 2.11 million inhabitants) and 601 in Austria (on an area of 32,605 km^2 with 2,096 million inhabitants). The density of sites is 18.4 per 1000 km^2 in Austria, 45.4 in Slovenia, and 28.67 per 100,000 inhabitants in Austria and 43.6 in Slovenia. The territory of Austria is not that much less populated, and if we also take into account that Austria has a higher gross national product than Slovenia, we would expect better research there, but in reality, it is so much more modest that it seriously complicates a balanced analysis of both territories. In Austria, the province of Lower Austria stands out in terms of archaeological research (Eichert, Brundke 2020), however, this was not included in our analysis (see above *3.2.1*).

Arbitrarily set time spans. All time spans were determined with the help of archaeological material from individual sites, and in some cases they are the same as the time spans determined by C14 dating, which are otherwise given with an accuracy of one year, but the actual precision is considered to be significantly lower (cf. Svetlik et alii 2019). By an arbitrarily determined time span, I have in mind the span that arises when we have to set a beginning and an end to an otherwise loose dating. Arbitrary set are e.g. the boundaries of the time definition in Late Antiquity, which I have decided to set between 430 and 650. Differently set boundaries would have moved the step within the diagram to a different place, but the accompanying material does not allow for major shifts.

Dating of settlements. Late Antique settlements are dated either by small metal artefacts, jewellery, typochronological pottery groups, or the general image of the settlement. Early Medieval settlements are dated either by calibrated C14 radiocarbon time ranges, or by typochronological groups of pot rims (according to Pleterski 2010, 157–160). The latter have very broad time spans, the boundaries of which are formed by larger fluctuations in the C14 radiocarbon age calibration curve. In addition, there are relatively few pot rims. All of this means that the dating precision often exceeds the period of one century, while accuracy that shows less than half a century is rare.

Verifiability. The database is published online (Štular et alii 2021; for a description of the structure, see Štular, Belak 2022). I mention various sites in the text. The reader can find all the details on these sites and the list of literature in this database. I provide relevant citations in exceptional cases, in which the most recent data is not yet available in this version (v3) of the database.

3.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ZBIVA DATABASE

The working premise was based on the **ZBIVA database** (description: Štular 2019; Štular, Belak 2022), which is focused on the Early Medieval **area** of the Eastern Alps and its outskirts. The ZBIVA database consists of relationally linked databases on archaeological sites, graves, artefacts, and literature. Since 1987 we have been systematically collecting data on Early Medieval sites, which at that time meant an arbitrarily determined **period** spanning from approximately 600 to approximately 1000 (cf. Mirnik Prezelj 1998, 366–367). In terms of settlement, the Early Middle Ages could, in Slovenia, begin with the settlement of the Slavs, because we expect that this led to important settlement, economic, social, and cultural changes that ended in the 11th century, when the feudalism of the medieval Roman Empire finally prevailed in the region. However, the historical causal links are stronger than they appear. Therefore, dissecting the historical flow into fragments is certainly problematic, but on the other hand, it is hard to avoid if we want to at least roughly master the subject of our study. The problem was clearly highlighted with the latest finds, which indicate that the first groups of Slavs came to the territory of the Southeastern Alps perhaps already in the second half of the 5th century, but certainly no later than in the first half of the 6th century (Pavlovič 2013; 2017; 2020; Pavlovič et alii 2021; Pleterski 2015). The transition from the so-called Late Antiquity to the so-called Early Middle Ages were clearly much more united than we have believed so far. In order to understand this transition better, we decided to include 5th and 6th century sites in our database of sites.

In addition to all this, the course of history also includes the history of effects (*Wirkungsgeschichte*). Every entity from the past has its effects even after it had ceased to exist. Like water ripples in a pond, although the stone we threw into it has sunk long ago, we can still tell by the ripples on the water that the stone was there. Over time, it thus turned out that a full understanding of the Early

Medieval situation would also require the knowledge of its effects at least until the end of the Middle Ages. However, since we were unable to expand our database in the midst of the time-limited implementation of the research, we performed this only in certain selected cases, and supplementing the database remains a task for one of the future researches.

Site description input form

ID. A unique identifier in the form of a number.

Name. The published name of the site in the language of the country of origin (e.g. Slovenian, Italian, German or Croatian), which is most commonly used. A null value is permitted. Several different names are also possible. The settlement where the site is located is listed, followed by the administrative location (which, for Slovenia, still adheres to the 1954 directory).

Lat, Lon. Determining the location with coordinates recorded in the latest revision of the World Geodetic System (WGS84); we use the most widely used decimal system with an accuracy of six decimal places. For this purpose, various suitable open access web GIS applications were used, thus providing access to maps (historical and modern) and images (aerial and satellite).

Sources used

– for Slovenia: Atlas voda (https://geohub.gov.si/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f89cc3835fcd48b5a980343570e0b64e) and Register kulturne dediščine RKD (https://www.gov.si/teme/register-kulturne-dediscine/).

– for Austria: KAGIS for Carinthia (https://kagis.ktn.gv.at/), Digitaler Atlas Steiermark for Austrian Styria (https://gis.stmk.gv.at/wgportal/atlasmobile), TIRIS for Tyrol (https://maps.tirol.gv.at/synserver;jsessionid=4FC86C7284D5B64E028D1876844D33F4? user=guest&project=tmap_master), SAGIS for Salzburg (https://www.salzburg.gv.at/sagisonline/(S(lmyzl2llhhu5xretsf2ebyxf))/init.aspx?karte=default&geojuhuschema=Adressen/Namensgut&defaultlogo=sagis) and DORIS for Upper Austria (https://wo.doris.at/weboffice/synserver?).

– for the territory of Trieste in Italy: Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia cartografia (http://irdat.regione.fvg.it/CTRN/ricerca-cartografia/).

All listed Austrian portals also contain the data layer of the Franciscan cadastre. In Slovenia this is incomplete and one needs to help oneself with the MAPIRE portal (https://maps.arcanum.com/en/). In addition, the GoogleEarthPro web service was used for historical satellite imagery as well as verification and retrieval.

The location accuracy score is a quantitative value (1–3) that represents confidence in the location. This helps us define the location precision of the metadata. The least accurate location (1) means that only the location of the nearest settlement is known and that the centroid of the settlement is indicated. Medium accuracy (2) is used when the location in a part of the settlement or the relationship to the settlement is known (e.g. 200 m north-east of the church). In this case, the centroid of the area in question is recorded. The highest level of accuracy (3) is used when the exact location of the area is known (e.g. geodetic measurements exist) and the centroid is recorded.

The description of the site location is a short topographical description that should help the user to the site.

Topographic location refers to the position of the area within the landscape: on an elevation, not on an elevation, in a cave or shelter, an underwater site, the edge of the (river) terrace.

The individual data record of the site does not have merely a spatial determination, but is also defined in terms of content as a functional whole during its duration. In this narrower sense, several sites can be located in the same space, each with its own data record. Some examples: a prehistoric settlement and a later Early Medieval settlement, a prehistoric burial site and an Early Medieval burial site, a Roman preiod settlement and an Early Medieval fort. Sites can also be contemporaneous, such as e.g. a settlement and a burial site.

We defined the following functional *site part*: settlement, burial site, hoard, cult place, castle/tower/fort, communication (road, port, bridge), space interventions (without communication), stray find, other.

Attention should be paid to the category stray find, which is definitely not a useful function of the past. It originates from modern times, when we know that individual artefacts come from a certain area, but we do not yet know what their function there was. With their appearance, they draw attention to the area and time of their use and predict a functionally recognizable site.

For communications such as roads, one would need linear spatial placement. For the time being, we are satisfied with point placement, where the road point means the site of an archaeological excavation where a road was found.

Data quality. Since information on site parts comes unorganized, in different forms, times and quantities, their quality is different and therefore we need their rough definition: archaeological traces, written sources, oral tradition, building remains. The basic decision was to establish the database as a collection of archaeological data. This means that it does not include most rural

areas of the researched period that exist in written sources, such as settlements and cult places (churches). The advantages of this decision lie in greater spatial accuracy, greater objectivity in the description of the time span, and greater representativeness. Of course, we can also expect weaknesses, which will only become apparent later.

We classified the informational *reliability* of collected data into three categories. Number 1 stands for unreliable data, as provided by individual finds, meagre and poorly preserved archaeological remains, all without find contexts. Its opposite is number 3, which stands for information provided by analytical publications of systematic archaeological research. What is more than 1 and less than 3 is marked with number 2.

Finds. Since the artefact database currently exists only for a few site parts, we previously indicated at least the categories of finds for each site. We are interested in pottery, non-pottery vessels, tools, other household items, building equipment, weapons, costume, dress accessories and jewellery, coins, animal bones, natural remains, etc. In doing so, knives were classified under tools (similar to axes, in the event that they were not distinctly battle axes). We classified spurs, stirrups, and bridles as weapons.

Dating. If we want to know how many site parts we have in a certain area, we also need to know the time span of each site part. We defined this with the data *First* and *Last*. Since the site part is also functionally defined, we need to date the beginning and end of the time span of this function. This means that, at this stage, we are not interested in the details of the database for individual stages in the development of a particular site grouping. Thus, for example, we are not interested in the phases of a settlement, but only in its entire duration. If the life of the settlement began in the 8th century and continues uninterrupted until today, its upper time limit is today. We are not interested in individual church buildings at the same place of worship, but the entire time of worship, the beginning of which is determined by the first church building, and its end by the abandonment of the last church building. If it is still in use, the upper time limit is set to today. The same applies to graveyards that are currently still in use, the upper time limit is set to today. Since the timing precision is set to one year, the latest years of the time spans depend on the date of the last entry.

The *First/Last* range tries to determine the time during which the site part was in use as accurately as possible. When we search for sites within a certain period of time, we expect that the found functional groupings actually existed at that time. Since we do not want too much information noise, we did not numerically define sites that are hard to determine in time with First and Last. Burial sites, for which we only know that they included graves with knives, belong to this group, because they can be placed either in Late Antiquity or in the Middle Ages, and sometimes earlier or later periods are also possible. The same applies to the general assessment of the early Middle Ages. General definitions of Late Antiquity, for example, have been numerically defined as the period between 430 and 650. This is, of course, completely arbitrary and the consequences of this arbitrariness must be taken into account in all analytical definitions.

The primary chronology source can be natural science (C14, dendro), according to publication, or one's own typochronology.

Reliability of chronology. We understand that all dating is to some extent arbitrary and depends on the one who signed it. In doing so, he must have performed a self-assessment of the reliability of his dating. Number 1 represents the least reliable dating, and is often the assumption of an arbitrary assessment of the predecessor when considering the site, with a low possibility of verification or even without such a possibility. Number 2 means that there are some tangible temporal bases, but they are few or unreliable. Number 3 means that there are enough verifiable starting points that no major changes in dating are expected in the future.

Descriptive dating. A written justification of the dating is also desired, pointing out what we relied on when dating.

A brief description of the site complements all of the above, as it helps to understand the definitions and creates a rough idea of the site.

Site description. The description of graves and artefacts is already very sophisticated in many ways. This holds much less true for sites, especially Early Medieval ones. ZBIVA's input form represents a modest attempt in this direction, which we have made for burial sites, settlements, cult places and hoards. The greatest possibilities for this are currently offered by burial sites, which are the most abundant and best researched. We have foreseen those data categories that are the most obvious and therefore most often contained in the publications.

The size of the burial site. This is determined by the number of published graves: 1–10 graves, 10–60 graves, 60–150 graves, more than 150 graves.

Location of the burial site: next to and/or in a church, without a church, within a non-Christian cult place, within a settlement. We are interested not only in whether the graves are next to a contemporary church, but also whether they are next to a church that stands today. Of course, the mere location next to a current church does not necessarily mean that under the cur-

rent church building are the remains of a church that is contemporaneous with the graves, but the probability of this is still very high. In any case, it is a causal connection. A non-Christian cult place is a cult place that could functionally exist even without a burial site, because a burial ground in itself represents a cult place. Burials in a settlement are rare, but they do exist.

Type of burial site: flat, burial mound, flat and burial mound. In archaeology, it is traditional to observe the morphology of the burial site: is the burial surface flat, or does it contain one or more mounds? The input form does currently not distinguish between natural and artificial mounds and does not describe in detail whether the graves were in, on, or next to the mound.

Slope: no, yes. If the graves are on a slope, the *Orientation of the slope* is also important. There are eight basic cardinal directions to choose from.

Burial type: inhumation, cremation, cremation and inhumation.

Unusual burials. It is up to the person entering the information to decide whether a grave is unusual.

Distance. Due to the content interdependence of sites with different purposes, we also examined the distance of burial sites from the nearest settlement. We tried to establish whether this distance was shorter or further than 500 m. Currently, the largest known distance between the settlement and the burial site is 450 m (Pleterski 2014, 250). Burial sites that are further than 500 m from the current settlement, most likely belong to a settlement that has since disappeared. One of the ways in which we established the distance from the settlement, was to examine the situation at the time in the Franciscan cadastre, i.e. 200 years ago.

Hoards. We were interested in whether they were found in the area of the settlement, which should help us determine whether this was a possible cult place.

Settlements. We expected that it is possible to observe several characteristics even in settlements: fortification, economic-administrative importance, size, method of building construction. It turned out that this is possible for some Late Antique settlements, but that it is almost completely undeterminable for later settlements due to poor archaeological research.

Cult place: church, other structure, natural environment (without buildings).

4. SELECTED THEMES

An important basic observation is that there are merely a few phenomena that apply to the entire area at the same time. As a rule, we are dealing with a puzzle of regions, each of which lived in its own way (example of the visualization of diversity in relation to the duration of site groups: Štular et alii 2022, Fig. 4).

4.1 SITES THROUGH TIME

The number of sites (*Fig. 2:* 1) fluctuates between 190 and 388. All stepped ascents and descents are the result of arbitrarily set time spans. The next question is the meaning of the decline in the 7th century. At first glance, we think of the fall in population, but the other two lines (*Fig. 2:* 2, 3) on the same chart warn us that this was not necessarily the case. The line depicting graves barely descended in the same area, while the line depicting settlements continued to show a steady decline. It is important that this decline occurred at the same time as the number of burial sites increased. This means that the decline in the number of settlements was not a result of depopulation, but of the change in the visibility of archaeological remains. Since we do not yet have a database of individual buildings within the settlements, we can, at this point, provide merely an intuitive explanation. Late Antique settlements with stone buildings are much more visible than the wooden buildings of Early Medieval settlements. In addition, the latter lie largely below modern settlements. The decline in the possible sites in the 7th century is therefore primarily a crisis of archaeological visibility.

The same conclusion can be drawn from the comparison of the distribution of settlements and burial sites (*Fig. 3*), which shows that burial sites often accumulate where settlements are rare or even non-existent, and that the reverse is also true. The distribution density of each type of site is primarily a result of archaeological research and visibility. However, this does not imply that where there were no sites, this is so only because we have not found them yet (such as, for example, Gutjahr et alii 2024 in this volume). From the mid-19th century onwards, the level of research has improved so much that where no sites are known to us, it is almost impossible to expect undiscovered intensive settlement.

I begin the analysis of the chart of sites (*Fig. 2*) with a detailed examination of the settlement curve (*Fig. 4*). We could observe and record the assessment of the location in relation to elevations already while inputting data: whether they were on an elevation, or not on an elevation, on the edge of river banks, if we simplify this these are lowland settlements. In a proper GIS analysis, which would add the elevation to the sites and at the same time show the distance from the neighbouring valley floor, we might obtain a different determination for some sites,

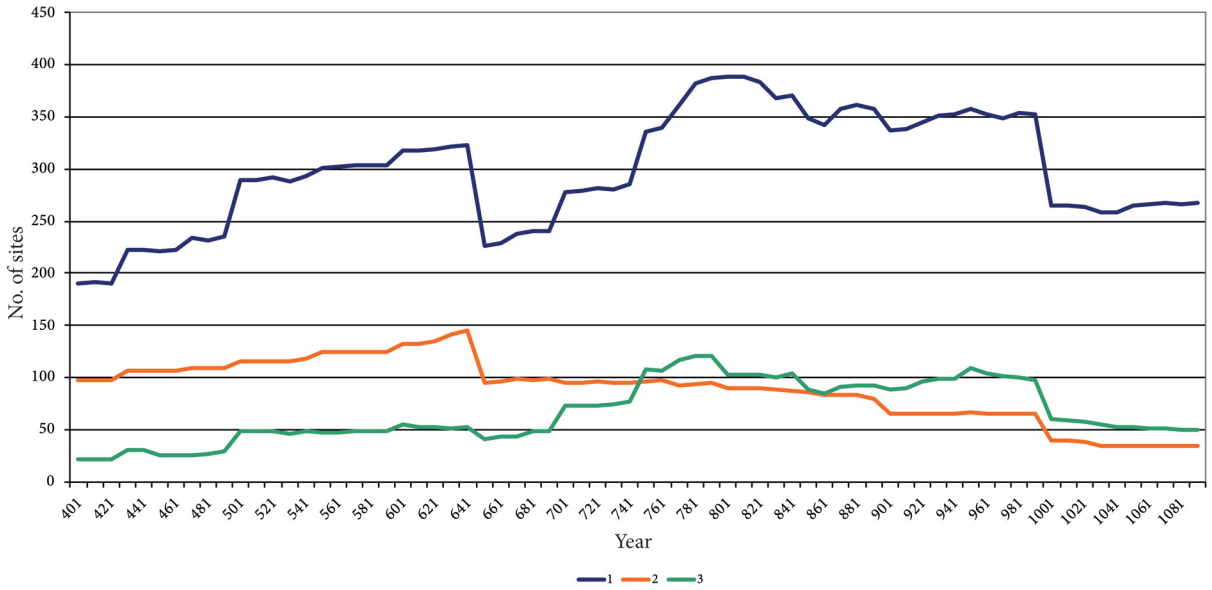

Fig. 2: South-eastern Alps. Sites through time, by decades. 1 – all sites, 2 – settlements, 3 – burial sites.

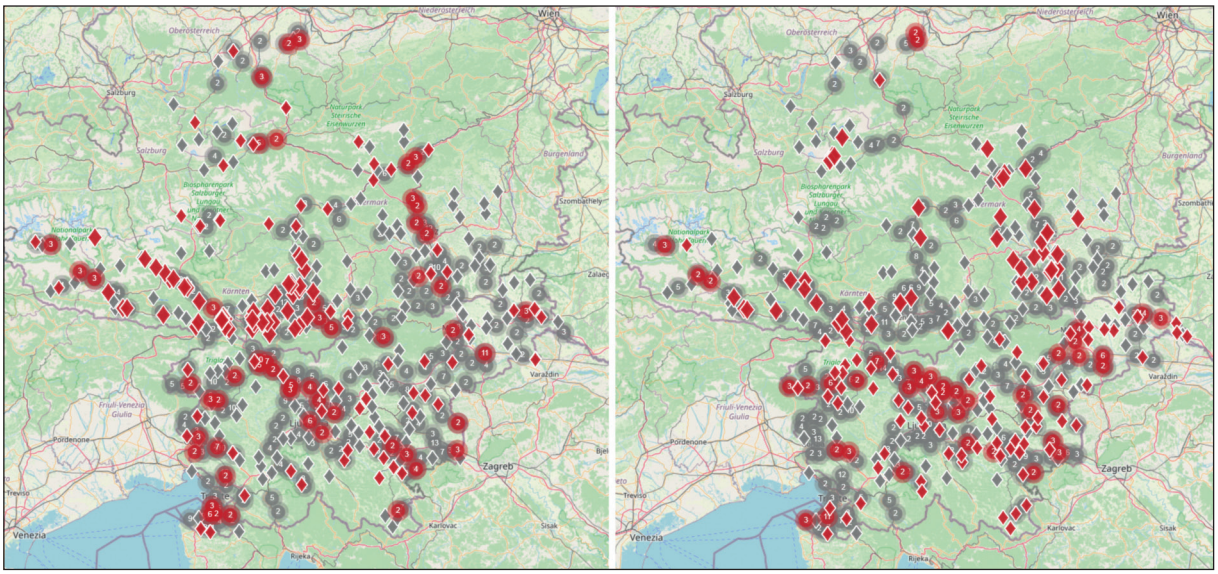

Fig. 3: South-eastern Alps. Sites in the period 401–1096. a – burial site,; b – settlements.

however, this would not affect the overall view. These are the problems of ambiguous determinations. For example, how do we classify a site, which is in a valley that is a part of a mountain plateau? The sites in the mountains, hundreds of metres above the neighbouring valley, can of course be associated with grazing and mining, however, agriculture cannot be automatically excluded, at least to a certain degree. The reverse also holds true for lowland sites. The probability that they are related to agriculture is high, but other forms of economy should also be taken into consideration. It is more than obvious that a change in the dominant economic model occurred in the 7th century, and, of course, this applies to the simultaneous view of the entire territory. Settlements on elevations dominated until the 7th century, after which settlements on lowlands, on the edges of river banks, began to prevail.

4.2 THE DECLINE OF THE ROMAN STATE

The 7th century shift has long roots. I will start with the relatively stable settlement process that took

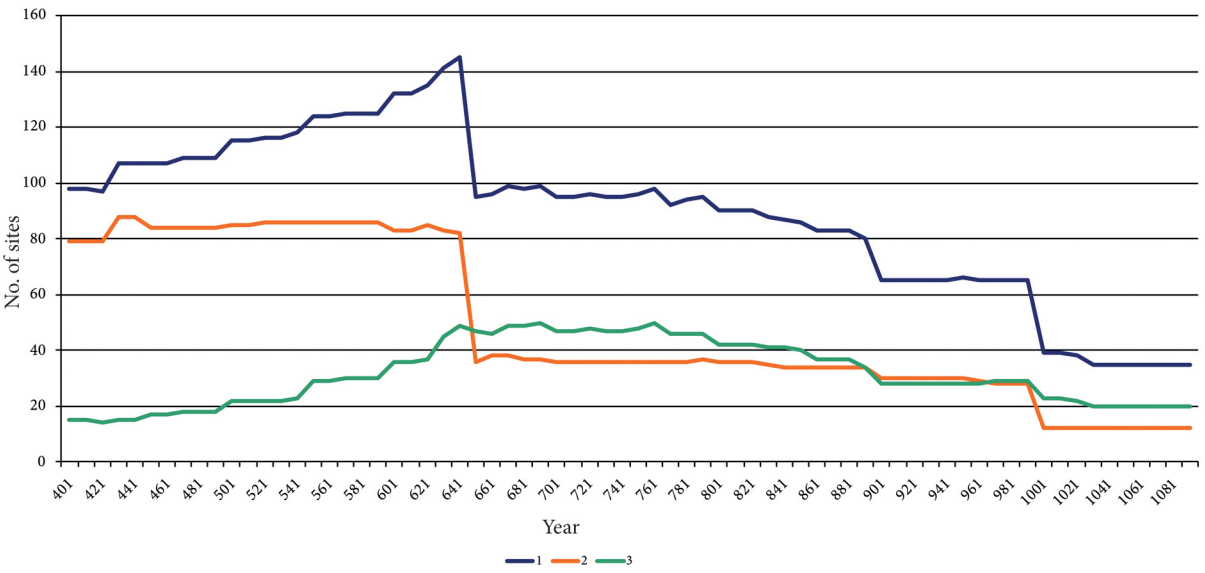

Fig. 4: South-eastern Alps. The changes in the possible number of settlements through time, by decades. 1 – settlements, 2 – hilltop settlements, 3 – settlements on river banks or not on hilltops.

place from the end of the second half of the 5th century onwards (*Fig. 5*), which followed the dramatic changes in the second half of the 4th century and the first half of the 5th century. These changes brought about the collapse of most cities, greatly increased the number of high-altitude settlements and turned the market model of economy in the direction of autarky (Milavec 2021; Modrijan 2020). It is characteristic for this time that the area opening towards the Pannonian Plain was uninhabited (Eastern Styria, Slovenske gorice, Prekmurje) or sparsely populated (Dravsko polje, Krško polje). Elsewhere, settlements are clearly visible, with the leading type being hilltop settlements, which is a characteristic of the settlement change that took place in this area in Late Antiquity (Ciglenečki 2023, 10). The Roman state collapsed and lost its power and this was the result.

The number and distribution of settlements on elevations did not change significantly in the 6th century (*Fig. 4:* 2). However, lowland settlements still existed, although in much lower numbers than high-altitude ones. On closer inspection, it is true that these were settlements that were not located on the tops of hills, but a good part of them were located at altitudes above 1000 metres above sea level, and according to the model of their non-agricultural economy, it would make more sense to consider them as high-altitude settlements. We currently know of very few true lowland settlements (e.g. Mengeš) and they were primarily located in the western part of the observed territory, i.e. far from the Pannonian Plain.

4.3 THE ARRIVAL OF SLAVS

If the 6th century hilltop settlements are viewed together with the lowland settlements that existed in the 6th and 7th centuries (*Fig. 6*), it becomes striking how the lowland settlements primarily occupied the area in the east, which was previously (*Fig. 5*) sparsely populated or even uninhabited. At the level of artefacts, these settlements are associated with the appearance of extremely archaic, handbuilt pottery without everted rims, and in the GIS analysis, they appear as settlements along the soils that develop in a wet environment (Magdič 2024 in this volume). It is true that most of the other observed territory shows a simultaneous decline in market pottery, which involves production on a fast potter's wheel, a predominance of vessels that were made on a slow potter's wheel, in some places even entirely handbuilt vessels, which, at least in terms of design, still try to imitate vessels with strongly everted rims (e.g. Knific 1994, Pl. 5: 6, 7). However, the differences between the vessels from the East and the West remain so great that we can speak of two different pottery traditions (Pleterski, Belak 2002) and, due to the different living environment, also of different ways of life. Settlements, which sought a wet environment, came together with archaic pottery from the east and can be linked to the Slavs (Štular et alii 2022). A closer look provides some clues about their arrival and the beginning of their settlement.

Considering the possibility of dating accuracy (see above), we can focus on the trends of the observed phenomena (*Fig. 4:* 3). The fact that new sites in the 6th

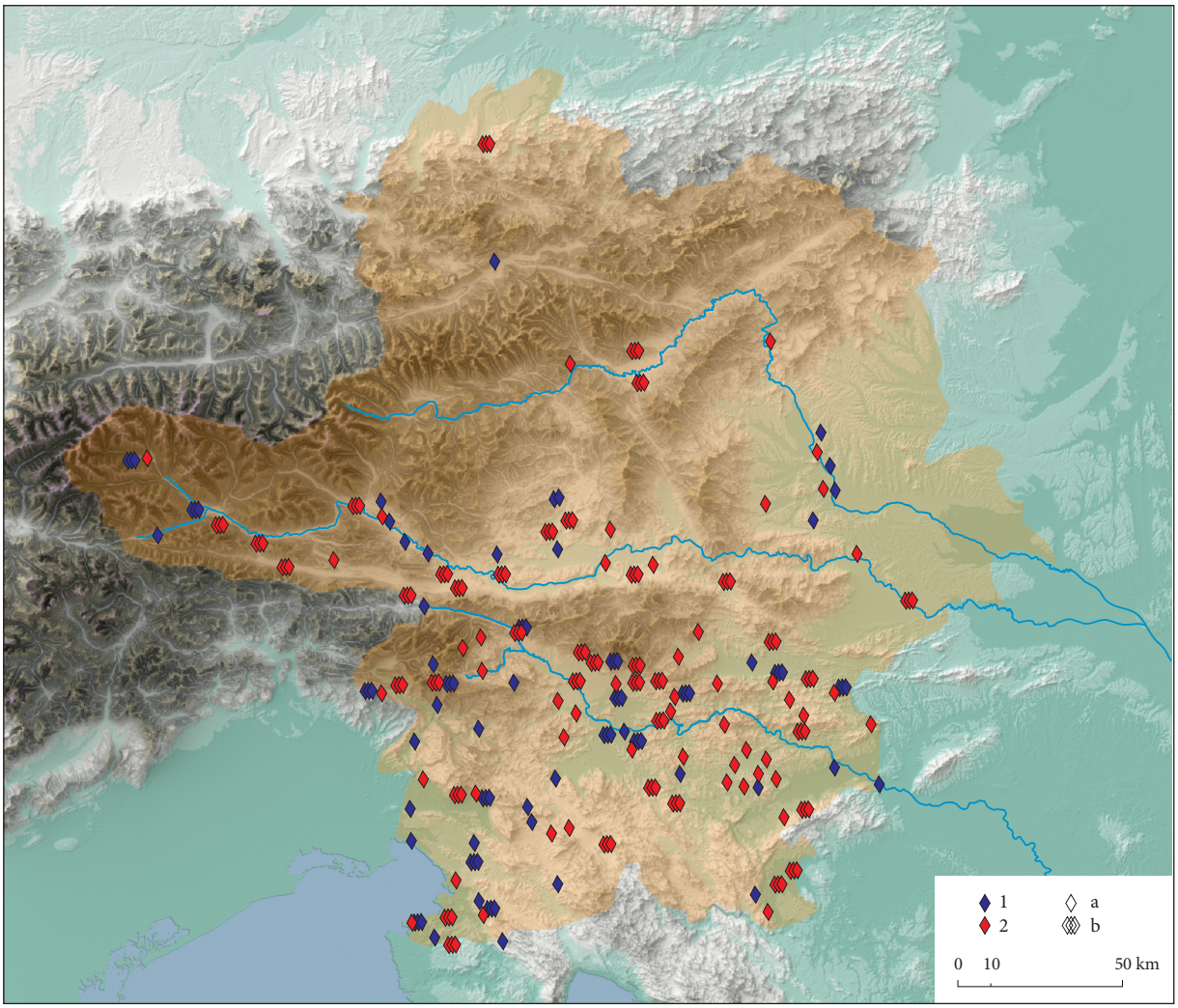

Fig. 5: South-eastern Alps. 451–496: 1 – possible sites, 2 –hilltop settlements, a – one site, b – more than one site.

and 7th centuries appear at intervals of 30–50 years is certainly the result of the rounding up in dating, however, this may also be a result of the emergence of new generations. The gradual increase in the number of settlements looks real, especially because it also appears in space – as the settling of new areas (*Fig. 7*). This shows that the Slavs arrived in small groups that settled in suitable areas and spread from there over the centuries. This is why the old notion of the sudden arrival of Slavs, who flooded the studied territory like a wave, and which could not explain where the multitude of people who populated more than half of Europe came from, is wrong (cf. Kurnatowski 1979).

Linguistic research also shows the diversity and abundance of settlement groups. From the point of view of lexicology, it is almost impossible to doubt that the so-called Alpine Slavic was not a single Proto-Slavic dialect, but a linguistic mixture of different layers (Bezlaj 1967, 5). It is also more likely that the North Slavic lexical elements in Slovenian are the result of several Proto-Slavic migrations (Bezlaj 1966, 13).

Even the analyses of the human genome cannot yet help us determine the groups of new Slavic settlers, as there is a great limitation in the collection of samples. Namely, the Slavs began to abandon the mass cremation of the dead as late as the 9th century, which was the time when they had already reached their western and southwestern borders of their settlement. Therefore, the term "Slavic genome" does not yet have real substance and is currently being reconstructed mainly by analysing modern populations that speak Slavic languages. The rough conclusion that the current speakers of Slavic languages differ genetically from each other primarily due to the different substratum populations they encountered (Lindstedt, Salmela 2020) is logical and can also be archaeologically confirmed. However, at the same time, this means that there are no distinguishing criteria that could be used to distinguish individual settlement

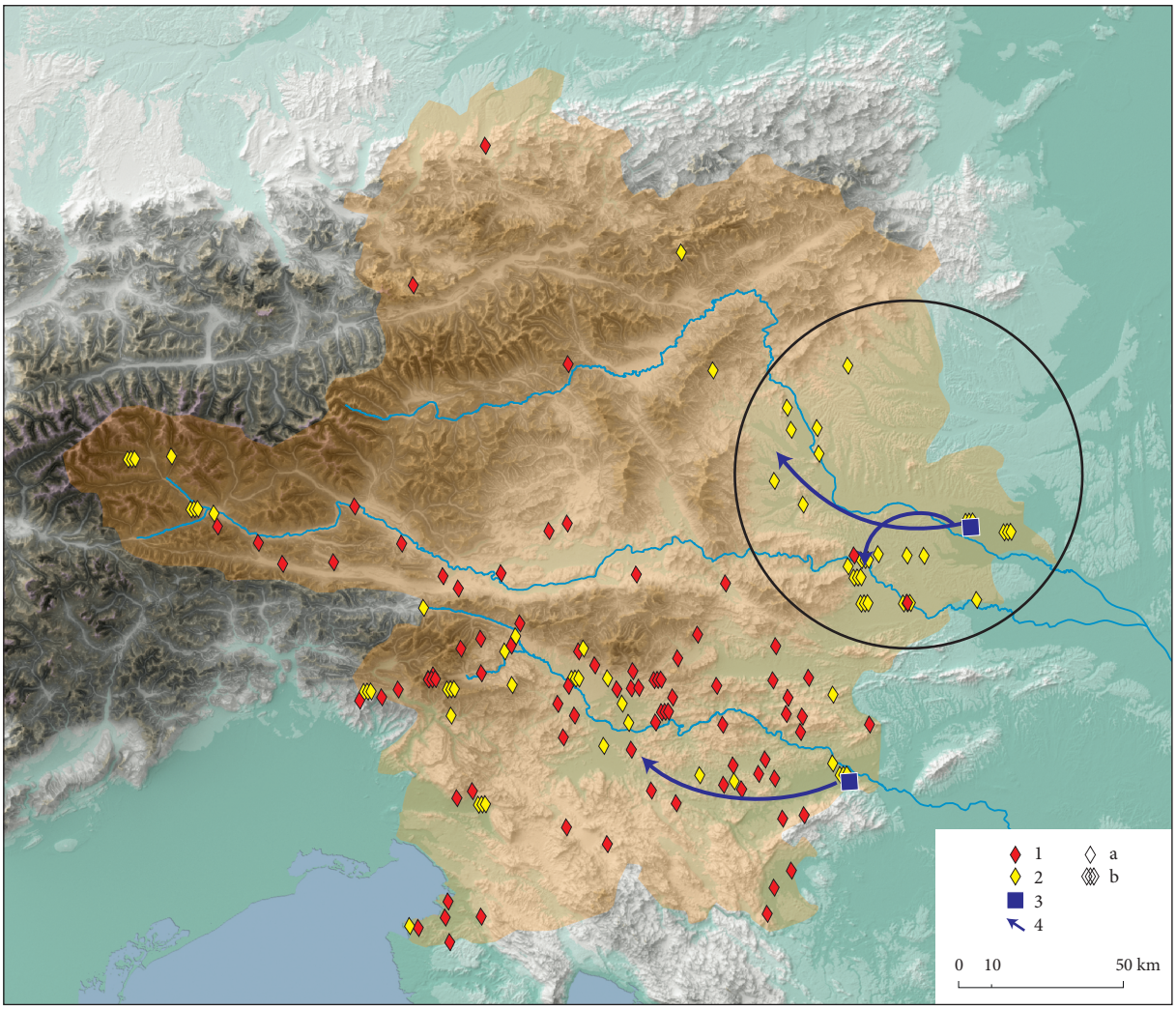

Fig. 6: South-eastern Alps. 1 – hilltop settlements (501–596), 2 – settlements on river banks and settlements that are not on hilltops (501–696), 3 – the beginning of the Slav settlement, 4 – the direction of settlement, a – one site, b – more than one site. The circle denotes the area of the section (*Fig. 7*).

groups of Slavs with the help of genomes during the Early Medieval migrations.

The territory south of Murska Sobota and Cerklje ob Krki currently appear as the earliest areas inhabited by Slavs in the territory under consideration (*Fig. 6*) (Pavlovič 2017; Pavlovič et alii 2021). Their arrival prior to the 6th century is unlikely, as the density of the settlement can only be detected from the middle of the 6th century onwards. However, these first Slavs did not arrive together with either the Avars nor the Lombards. They overtook them both (cf. Pavlovič 2017, 363–367). Lubor Niederle already advocated the very early arrival of individual groups of Slavs even before the 5th and 6th centuries (Niederle 1906, 133–161). His argumentation was not archaeological and was considered unreliable, however, archaeological finds are now approaching it in time and space.

The arrival of Slavs can also be meaningfully linked with the Eastern Gothic crossing of the Soča River in 489, which ended in the next four years with the conquest of Italy (Bratož 2014, 371–375). With the departure of the Eastern Goths, a few settlement niches emerged in Western Pannonia and on its outskirts, which were used at first by individual groups of Slavs and later in greater numbers by the organized Lombards. These first Slavs seemed noteworthy only to Martin of Braga, the biographer of St Martin of Tours, both from Pannonia. In the hymn of St Martin of Tours, Martin of Braga anachronistically listed various peoples that St Martin of Tours converted to Christianity. It seems that Martin of Braga described the conditions he knew from his youth in Pannonia in the first third of the 6th century and he also listed the Slavs among others (Šašel 1976; Bratož 2014, 398–399, 485–486). Martin's record

does not mention the Lombards, which agrees with the idea that the Slavic settlement came before the Lombard settlement.

Of course, the humble Slavic peasants were generally of no interest to Latin and Greek chroniclers and historians. It was only when the Slavs began to be used as military mercenaries and participated in predatory military campaigns that they became a sufficiently unpleasant nuisance to be noticed by various writers of the neighbouring pillaged area.

4.4 THE EXPANSIONS OF SLAVS TOWARDS THE WEST

Already in the 7th century the area of the initial settlement was populated densely enough to suffice afor a noticeable expansion of settlements towards the west (*Fig. 7*), from Prekmurje up the Mura basin and across Slovenske gorice to the Drava Plain (for the latter see Magdič 2021, 131–133). It is not certain whether the expansion upstream the Mura River really took place 30 years before the second expansion along the Drava Plain. The appearance of a larger group of sites 601–626 south of Graz in the Mura basin is the result of their arbitrary dating from 600 onwards. Their beginning could be half a century or even a whole century later (this is what Gutjahr et alii 2024 in this volume justifies with finds and C14 dating). A simultaneous movement along the Mura River and into the Drava Plain is more likely.

Anyway, in the 7th century the basic features of the settlement were already emerging, and the settlement continued. The span of individual sites varied, but they rarely lasted longer than three centuries (*Fig. 8*). In Austrian Styria, the first settlements that continue to this day (Hauptplatz and Sackstraße 18 in today's Graz) appeared as late as the 10th century. This points to another trend, according to which it appears that several settlements emerged simultaneously until the 8th century, while from the second half of the 8th century onwards merely individual consecutive sites appeared. This does certainly not depict the development of population density, but much more likely shows a change in the technology used on agricultural land. Earlier, less sustainable farming was depleting the land to the point in which it was necessary to resettle. Sustainable farming was established around 800 at the latest, and this enabled permanent settlement. Settlements continued to be abandoned, but for other reasons (war, famine, disease, natural disasters). All of the above applies to the eastern, Pannonian region.

The diagram of the duration of these settlements (*Fig. 8*) confirms that the pivotal time for settling took place in the middle of the 5th century. Only one site (Piramida in Maribor) may have extended beyond this turning point, all other settlements started anew. Even with the Piramida, it seems that its time span is primarily

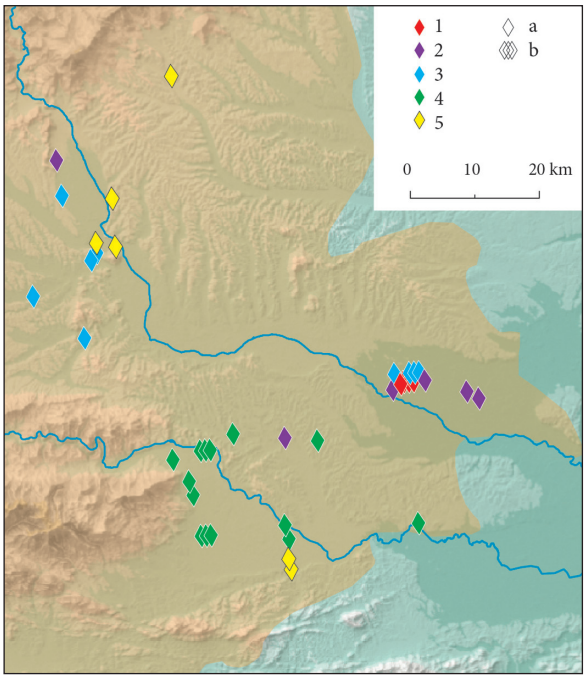

Fig. 7: North-eastern Slovenia and southern Austrian Styria. The beginning of settlements. 1 – settlements 501–546, 2 – settlements 576–596, 3 – settlements 601–626, 4 – settlements 631–646, 5 – settlements 651–696, a – one site, b – more than one site.

a matter of very loose dating. There is never such a break afterwards. Not even during the Hungarian invasions between the end of the 9th and the middle of the 10th century. These invasions did not represent total devastation. However, the number of settlements between 881/886 and 901/906 dropped by almost one third, from 30 to 21. It is almost inevitable that the Hungarian invasion route to Italy led across Prekmurje and past Ptuj along the former main Roman roads (cf. Korošec 1985; Magdič 2017, 449–453). This is also shown by the abandoned settlements within its influential range. However, even here, life did not die out completely (*Fig. 9*).

Archaeological data revealing the course of Slavic settlement further west are still very rare. In any case, the Slavs reached Bled already in the first half of the 7th century (Pleterski 2008, 36–37; 2010, 164) and much later their western edge in Pordenone in Friuli (Italy), where they appeared no later than the middle of the 9th century (Mader 1993, 264). The migration to the west lasted for over three centuries with varying intensity. So far, this is confirmed mainly by funeral customs rather than settlements outside Pannonia and its outskirts. There are two reasons for this. The practical fact is that the known number of Early Medieval settlements declined towards the west, which also saw a domination of burial sites among Early Medieval archaeological sites. The second, substantive reason is that we can observe

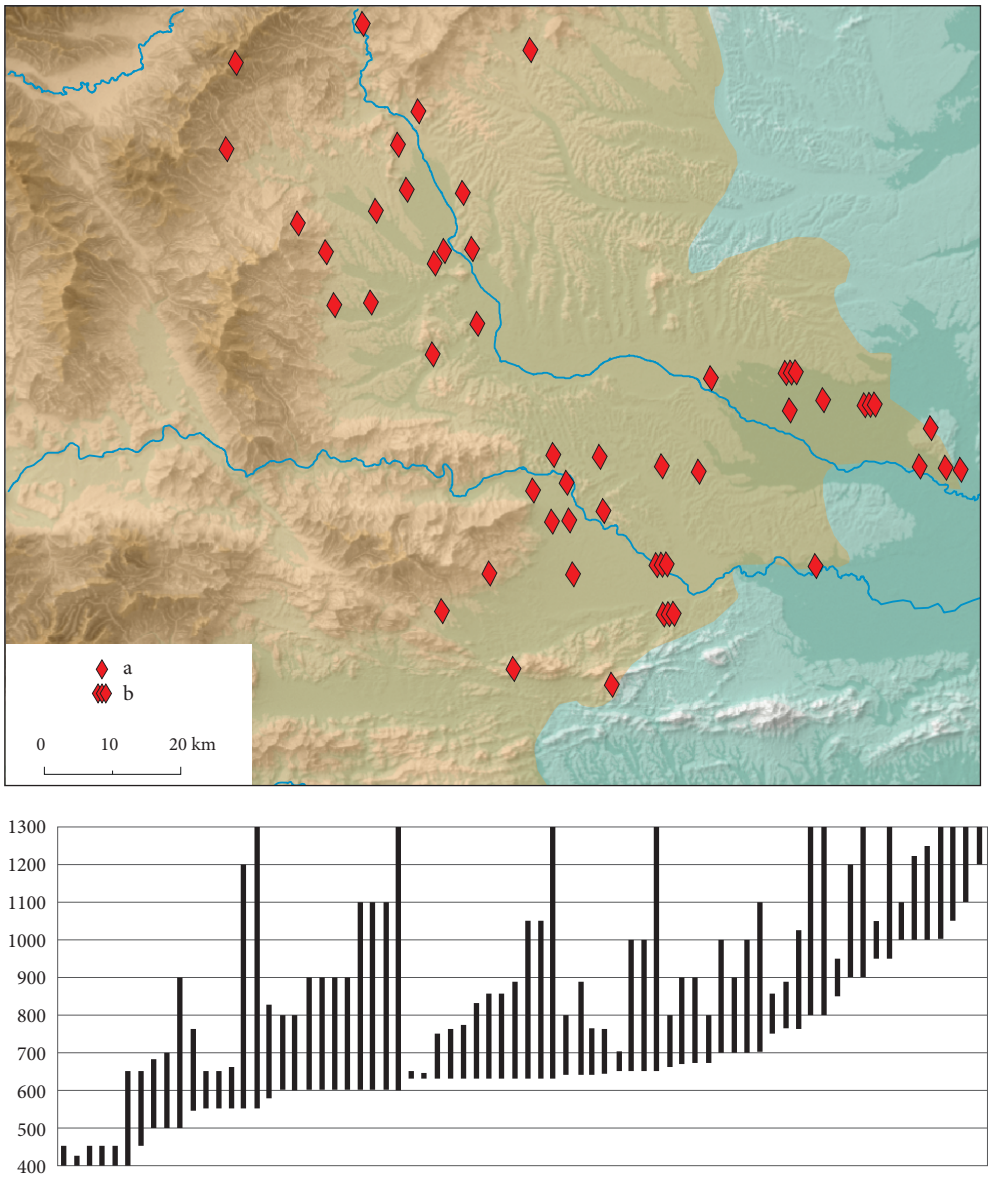

Fig. 8: North-eastern Slovenia and southern Austrian Styria. Distribution and duration diagram of settlements. The cut off points of 400 and 1300 are arbitrarily set, a – one site, b – more than one site.

differences and changes in burials, which cannot be simply attributed to the process of Christianization, but are more likely the result of different belief systems of various population groups (see below). Of course, all of these groups recieved Christianization.

4.5 BURIAL SITES AND THE GEOMORPHOLOGY

Primarily, I am interested in what can be linked to Slavs and what to Vlachs. In doing so, I consider two unavoidable assumptions for this initial stage of research. The first is that the belief system of the Slavs at that time was solid and unified. Its probability is strengthened by the high degree of similarity, which shows ethnological material from Slavic territories even in the 19th and 20th centuries (e.g. Moszyński 1929; 1934; 1939). The second assumption is the unity of the belief system of the Vlachs. It must be admitted that the foundations for this are weak. The question is to what extent can we trust the effectiveness of the process of unification during the time of the Roman state and the formal favouring of Christianity in Late Antiquity (cf. Bratož 2014, 304–307). It is highly likely that there were notable local differences, but because we do not have sufficient data at our disposal, there is no other option

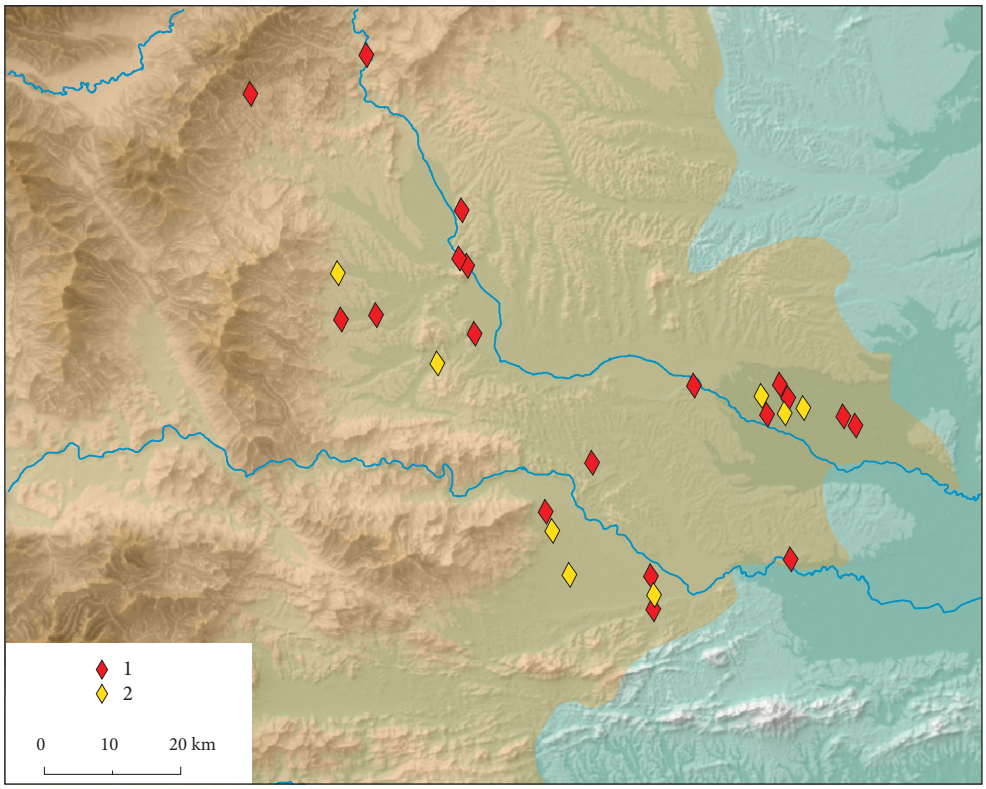

Fig. 9: North-eastern Slovenia and southern Austrian Styria. Settlements in the period 881–886. 1 – those that existed at least until 950, 2 – those that have disappeared by 901–906.

than to consider them as a whole and hope that at least some dominant trends emerge.

The chart (*Fig. 10*) shows the specific shape of the land that was chosen for burials. It includes those burial sites where the **graves were dug into the slope** and **shows the direction in which the slope was inclined**. In order to eliminate the possible criteria used in choosing the location of the church I have considered burial sites without a church separately. I also considered burial sites from two different time spans to establish the possible differences between Vlach and Slavic burial sites. The earlier span ranges from 401 to 641 (51 burial sites, of which 29 with the direction of the slope) and it should comprise predominantly Vlach burial sites. The later span ranges from 701 to 796 (98 burial sites, of which 50 with the direction of the slope), in which Slavic burial sites already had a significant share. The two groups are very similar, the only difference is that in the latter group the south-eastern direction of the slope is clearly dominant, while in the earlier group this peak is extended to the south and south-west direction.

However, since the burial sites of the earlier group are much fewer, we have to ask whether their number is representative and their diagram will not change with newly discovered burial sites in the future. Time will surely bring the answer, but the answer can also be found in other ways. We can take a small number of sites, create its slope inclination chart, add groups of sites and observe the changes in the slope inclination chart (*Fig. 11*). Currently, the grouping of sites does not include the years of discovery that could be used as random numbers to select site groups. Therefore, I helped myself by arranging the sites alphabetically by the names of the settlements and dividing them into 4 groups. Thus, I created four charts: with 7 sites, 14 sites, 21 sites, and all 29 sites. Understandably, from the last chart deviates the most the chart with 7 sites, which has a distinct peak in the southward direction. The graph that covers half of the sites is more levelled and emphasizes the directions from SW to SE. The graph depicting three-quarter of the sites evens out this trend even more and is barely distinguishable from the graph of all sites. This shows that 21 sites represent a sufficiently representative number, while 29 sites are 100% reliable. Of course, this also applies to the charts of later sites from the period between 701 and 796 and burial sites next to churches from the period between 831 and 1101 (see below). Which means that even decades from now, with new sites added, the graphs will be the same.

The third group consists of burial sites next to churches from the period between 831 and 1101 (77

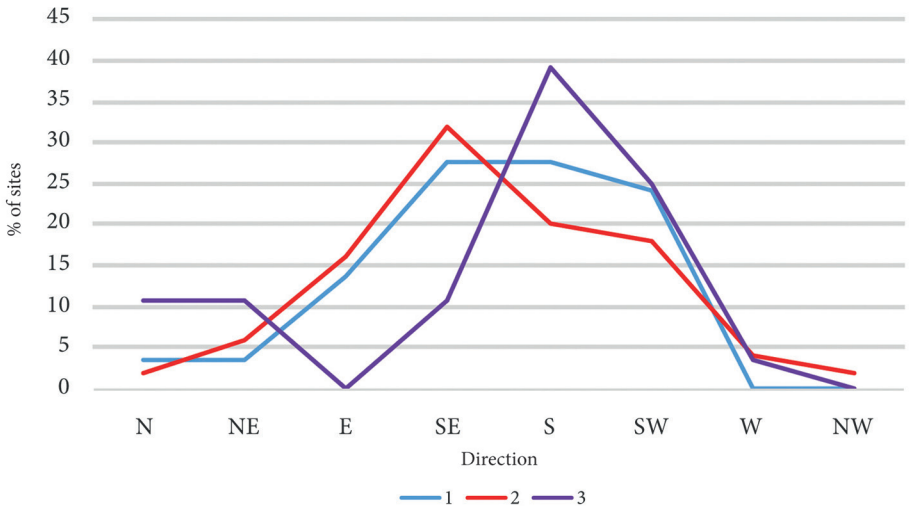

Fig. 10: South-eastern Alps. Direction of the inclination of the slope with a site. 1 – burial sites without a church (401–641), 2 – burial sites without a church (701–796), 3 – burial sites next to churches (831–1101).

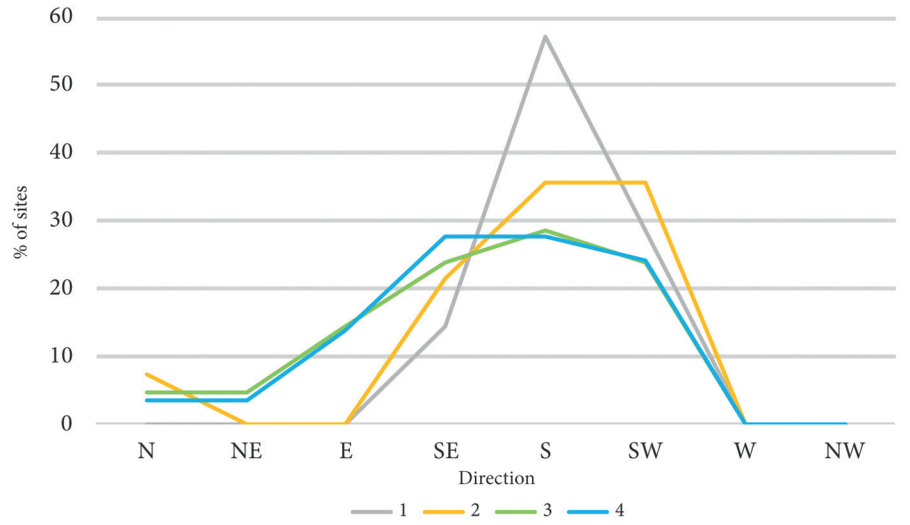

Fig. 11: South-eastern Alps. Direction of the inclination of the slope with a site. Burial sites without a church in the period 401–641. 1– 7 sites, 2 – 14 sites, 3 – 21 sites, 4 – 29 sites.

burial sites, of which 28 with the direction of the slope). In this group (*Fig. 10:* 3) the southward direction stands out, which can be explained by the medieval Christian concept, which derived the nature of the cardinal directions from the natural properties of the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere. The opposition "warm" <> "cold" added east and south to warm, and north and west to cold. "Good" and "bad" were equally distributed. When the opposite "light" <> "darkness", which is related to the movement of the Sun, was added to this, the bad value of the north was reinforced. It became a place of damnation, hell, utter hopelessness. The south is the opposite of the north and therefore the place of the Holy Spirit. The East is the place of beginning and the holy, the West is the place of death (Arentzen 1984, 148–149; similarly already in early Christianity: Sauer 1924, 87–97).

Therefore, if the shape of the charts is reliable, then the difference between the earlier and later group of graves without a church in the south and south-west slope orientation is significant. These are also the directions of the slopes that dominate the burial sites next to the churches. If these are synonymous and not homonymous observations, this could indicate a significant influence of Christianity already on the earlier "Vlach" group of burial sites. In any case, this idea should be veri-

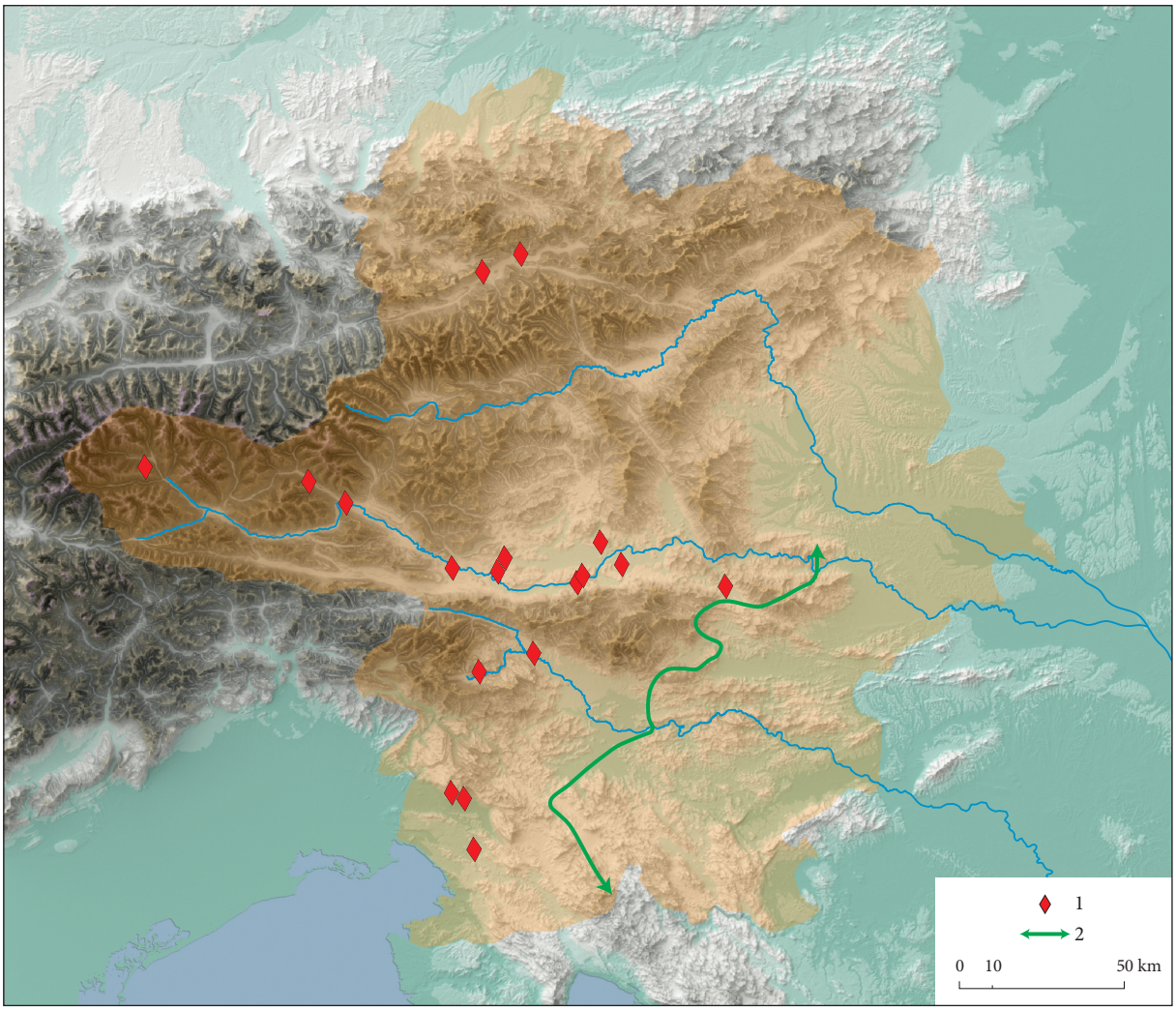

Fig. 12: South-eastern Alps. 1 – Burial sites without churches on slopes facing south or southwest, in the period 701–796; 2 –the border of weak connections between various Slovenian dialect groups (according to Ramovš 1995, Fig. 5, p. 118; Škofic 2016, map on p. 11).

fied in the future with the location of burial sites in the same area in the pre-Christian period. We will establish what the emphasis on the southeast orientation in the later group means when the considered burial sites are examined individually and in greater detail (including individual graves and artefacts) and especially in relation to their position within the respective mythical landscape. We will also see if the orientation of the graves and the orientation of the slope are connected. It is definitely worth checking whether the burial sites are oriented in relation to the sun and moon rise at solstice.

However, we have not exhausted the significance of the south and southwest orientation of the slopes on which burial sites without churches have been located. For the period between 701 and 796, such burial sites were found only in the interior of the Alps and in the vicinity of Italy (*Fig. 12*). The possibility that these are burial sites with the previously described "Vlach" tradition from an earlier period is considerable. I added a belt of slight connections between the various Slovenian modern dialect groups to the map. Fran Ramovš geographically justified the belt as a border between the high alpine world and the more transitory lowland world, which dictated a different linguistic development (Ramovš 1995, 117, Fig. 5). The above map represents a challenge to historical dialectology.

The **location on the edge of the terrace** is distinctive and telling. As a rule, this was alongside a river bank, which could indicate a desire for a wet environment, which was more pronounced in the Slavic Old Faith (cf. Mencej 1997). In the earlier group, 17.6% of burial sites have this position, in the later group 26.5%, and among burial sites next to a church 18%. While the earlier two groups without a church show that 41% and 45.9% of

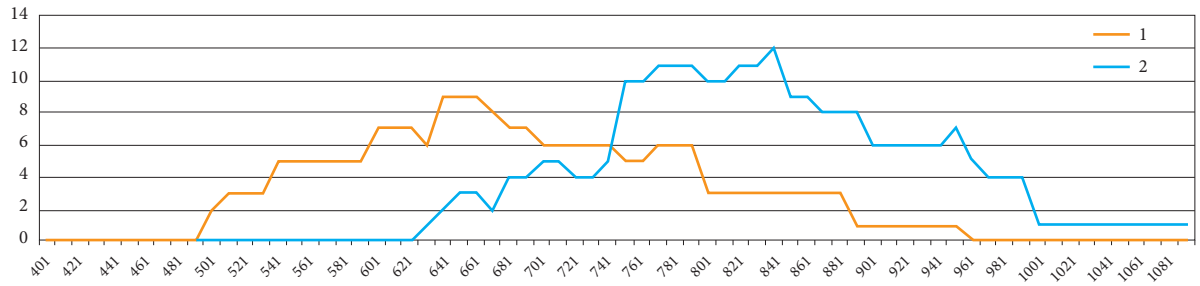

Fig. 13: South-eastern Alps. 1 – burial sites with mounds, 2 – cremation graves.

burial sites are located in the plain, as much as 59.7% of burial sites with churches are located in the plain. These numbers indicate that medieval Christianity brought noticeable differences in the choice of location.

Cremation graves and mound burials are the most telling (*Fig. 13*). In the case of the latter, we are not dealing merely with mounds that were piled at the time of burial, but also with the reuse of prehistoric mounds and the use of natural mounds, most of which were of glacial origin. At the time of their migration west and southwest between the 5th and the 9th century, the Slavs used to cremate their dead. This custom was abandoned gradually, mostly under the influence of Christianity, and to a lesser extent under the influence of neighbours who buried no cremated corpses. Burials in mounds were also not unusual (still the seminal archaeological work on burials among Slavs: Zoll-Adamikowa 1975; 1979).

In the 5th century there were no cremation graves that would reliably belong to this time and the indigenous population. A cremation grave with a shield boss from the Poljubin industrial zone near Tolmin could belong to a Germanic soldier from the last third of the 6th century (Cvitkovič 1999, 42). All other cremation graves most likely belong to the Slavs. These can help us establish the approximate western border of the Slavic settlement in the 7th century. The westernmost grave at the Lamprehtgarten biritual site in Oberlienz (East Tyrol) dates to the first half of the 7th century at the latest. There are cremation graves from the same period in the biritual burial site at Pristava in Bled, while the cremation grave at Repelec in Most na Soči dates to the second half of the 7th century or the mid-8th century. The transition to burials with non-cremated corpses took place in the 8th century, and we currently do not know of a cremation grave that would be reliably dated later than the 8th century. The Dedjek biritual burial site (Moravče pri Gabrovki) as a whole dates to until 960, and therefore the curve of cremation graves also extends until this date (*Fig. 13*: 2), although it is highly likely that its cremation graves date back to the initial period of burials. The relatively quick abandonment of cremating the death naturally indicates that Christianization was not important for this change in our area.

There are no known 5th and 6th century mound burials in the South-eastern Alps. The first mound burials appear as late as the 7th century and all three cases (Kapiteljska njiva in Novo mesto, Branževec near Dolenjske Toplice, Žale near Grad-Bled) are cremation burials. The Großprüfening site near Regensburg (Bavaria, Germany) proves that mounds with Slavic urns could exist as early as the 6th century (Losert 2011). From what has been said, it is obvious that the reuse of burial mounds is connected with the arrival of the Slavic population. Perhaps the faith in renewal and rebirth within the heart of the Holy Mountain was important (cf. Pleterski 2014, 93, 250–256). With the predominance of church cemeteries, the use of mounds naturally disappeared. This continued only at the Jewish cemetery at Judenbichl near Judendorf/Judovska vas near Villach/Beljak.

4.6 CHRISTIANIZATION

By Christianization I do not have in mind the spread of a certain world view, but I show the establishment of the spatial bases of Christianity: churches and graveyards. Of course, this was not decisive for people's intimate beliefs. If we want to observe what the Christianization process relates to in the area and what it can tell us about, we should confront several different phenomena: burial sites without churches, churches, stones with interlaced ornament and graveyards next to churches. The stones with interlaced ornament were a part of the church equipment, and although they are today located in a secondary position, they were a part of the church buildings at the time, which makes them their surviving fragments. Although these did not necessarily stand in the same location as the stones with interlaced ornament stand today, they were certainly not located very far from this location, which, in the macro view, means a negligible spatial deviation.

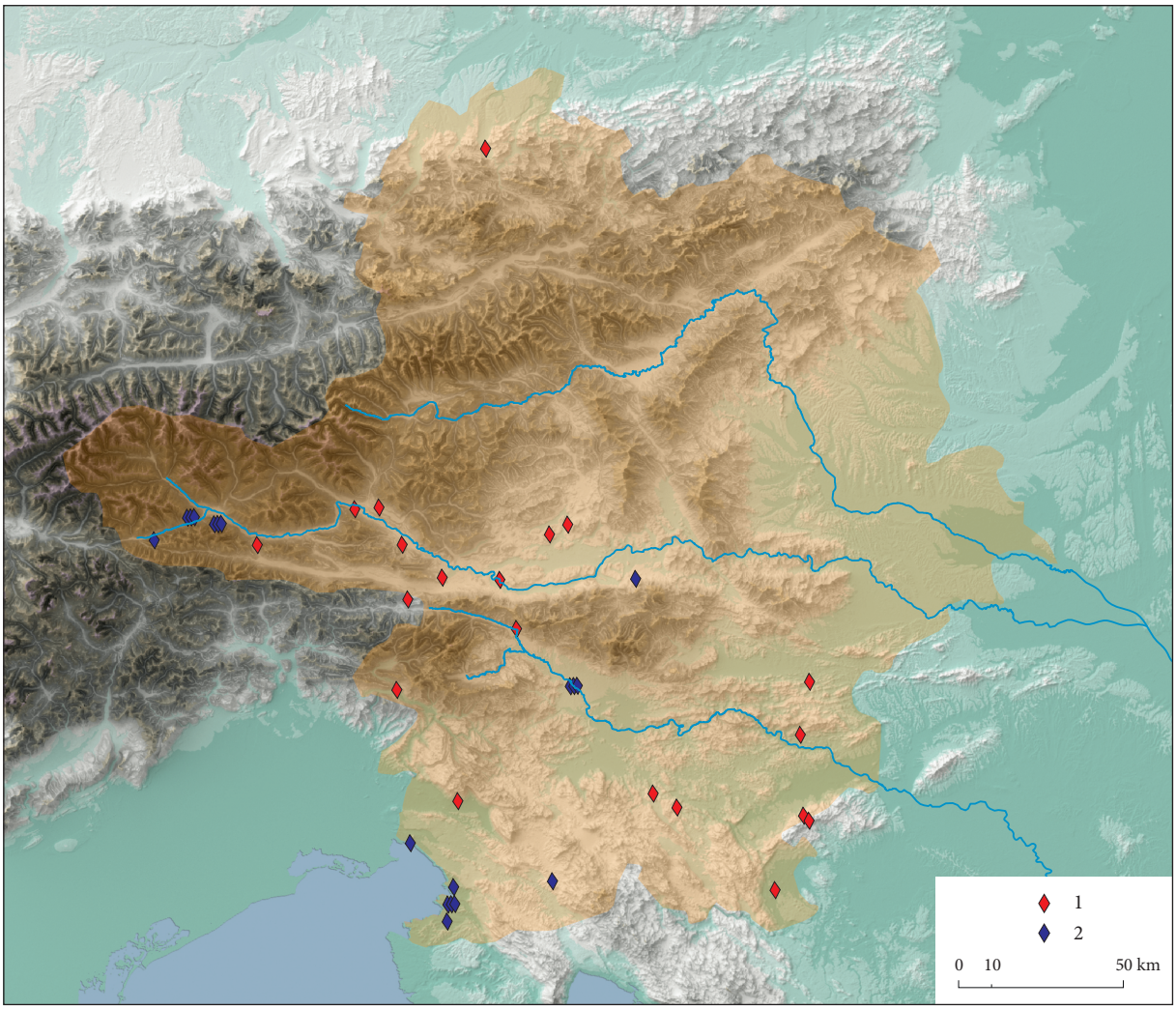

Fig. 14: South-eastern Alps. Churches. 1 – 551–596, 2 – 701–746.

When we talk about graveyards next to churches we have in mind graves next to or in former or current church buildings. Of course, this does not mean that all such burial sites stood next to a contemporary church and therefore automatically prove the existence of a contemporaneous church building, the remains of which have not yet been archaeologically proven. The earliest graves on the Island of Bled were certainly there even before the first church was built (Štular 2020a, 116), and the same holds true for the graves on the Styrian Hohenberg (Nowotny 2005, 223–224), Mali grad in Kamnik (Štular 2009, 47–61) and at Ptuj Castle (unpublished). However, the idea is that these are exceptions that do not change the impression of the whole. In the 9th and 10th centuries the burial sites without churches disappear from use and cemeteries next to churches begun to prevail (*Fig. 15:* 2, 3). The fact that the number of graveyards next to churches decreased in the 11th century may be the result of the poorer archaeological visibility of graves without grave goods. Such graves prevailed in the 11th century. However, this was also a result of the abolition of smaller graveyards next to proprietary churches due to the systematic establishment of parishes with their own graveyards (Höfler 2021, 106; see also *4.8* bellow).

Churches. The relatively modest number of churches stabilized in the 6th century and then decreased in accordance with the abandonment of settlements (*Fig. 14*). The noticeable decrease in the number of churches in the middle of the 7th century (*Fig. 15:* 4) is merely a consequence of the arbitrarily defined end of Late Antique settlements. However, the gradual decrease in the number of churches in the 7th century is obvious, and their numbers fall to a minimum in the first half of the 8th century. Almost all churches in highland settlements were abandoned (the exceptions are Hemmaberg/Junska gora and Kirchbichl above Lavant), yet a few churches in the lowlands were preserved. It is significant

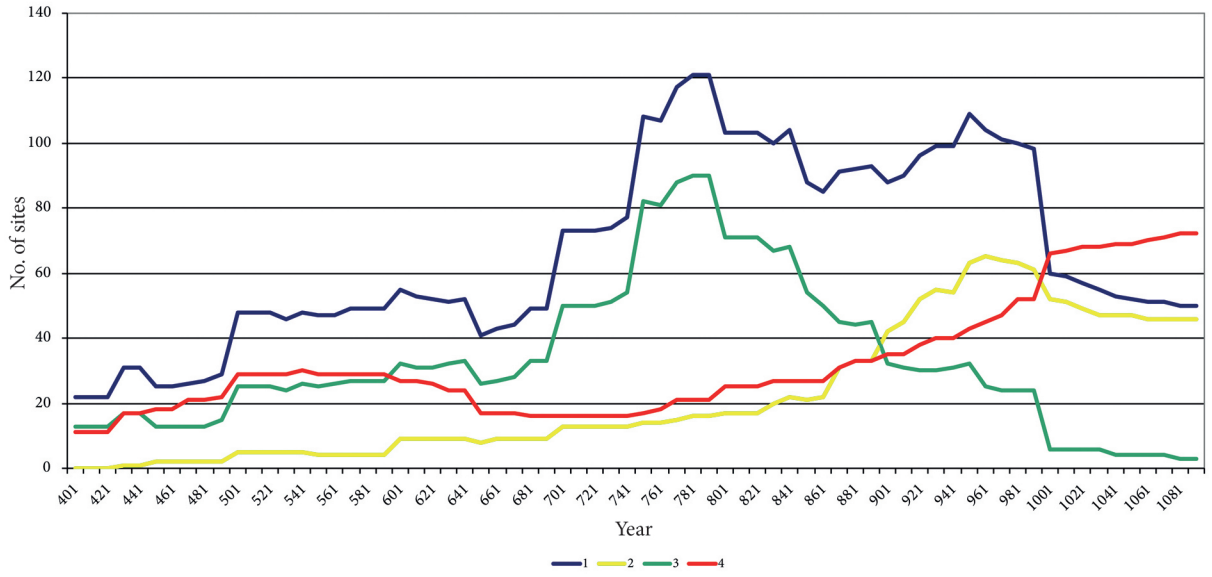

Fig. 15: South-eastern Alps. 1 – burial sites, 2 – burial sites next to churches, 3 – burial sites without a church, 4 – churches.

that these were two closed groups. The first was located in the south-west, on the territory of then Byzantine Istria, and the second was located in present-day East Tyrol. The latter indicates the probability that the Slavic settlement process at the time had not yet covered the Upper Drava basin. This is what makes the existence of churches on Hemmaberg/Junska gora and in Kranj, in the territory controlled by the Slavs, all the more interesting. It would be hard to imagine them without the co-existence of the Christian Vlach natives and the religious tolerance of the Slavs.

Christianization, as shown by the increase in the number of churches, was a slow and long-lasting process. The number of Late Antique churches was apparently exceeded only at the end of the 9th century. It should be emphasized that the well-known Late Antique churches were made of stone, while the new Early Medieval ones were initially predominantly wooden and therefore poorly visible from an archaeological point of view (see *Burial sites and churches* below).

Although the sharp increase in the number of churches in the year 1000 is a sign of the arbitrary dating of many churches from 1000 onwards, there can be no doubt that the number of churches in the 10th century increased noticeably. There can hardly be any doubt that this was also a consequence of the integration into the medieval empire.

Burial sites without a church (*Figs. 15:* 3; *16*)

All Late Antique burial sites, which were not next to churches and appeared before approximately 500, were no longer in use by 650. I already drew attention to the fact that the latter year was set arbitrary. Prominent long time spans belong to loosely dated graves. The reasons behind the time spans of the three burial sites exceeding beyond 1100 are varied. The site in Kammerhof is a single extremely loosely dated grave. Another example is Judenbichl near the village of Judendorf near Villach/Beljak, where the inhabitants of the neighbouring Jewish settlement continued to bury their dead even after the introduction of church cemeteries.

The latest burial site without a church, which appeared around 1050 (Lorenzenberg), is represented by two graves that were discovered between 70 and 90 metres from the present-day church. The probability that they belonged to the church cemetery, despite this distance, is considerable. Since we have not yet systematically included High Medieval sites into our research, we did not cover the phenomenon of cemetery walls (Sörries 2003), which limited the cemetery space around the churches. The cemetery up to and including the 11th century was larger than it was once the graveyard walls were built. A well-documented example can be found in the cemetery next to the parish church in Kranj, where the archaeologically established burial limit is up to a distance of 75 m from the church.

Following the middle of the 9th century, burial sites without churches appeared as an exception rather than a rule and they completely disappeared in the 10th century. The main period of burial sites without churches can be found in the 8th century, when they appeared in their highest numbers. There are noticeably fewer of them in the previous period, which can be attributed to the then prevailing custom of cremating the dead (see *4.5* above), which greatly complicates archaeological visibility. The decline in the number of burial sites without churches

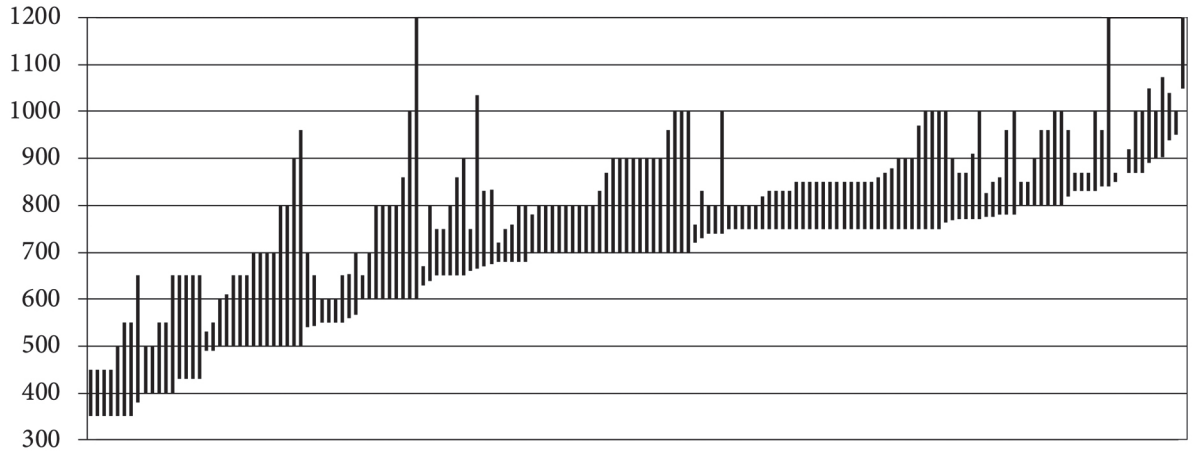

Fig. 16: South-eastern Alps. Time spans of the use of burial sites without a church.

in the 9th and 10th centuries was undoubtedly the result of the introduction of church cemeteries. Charlemagne ordered the Saxons to bury their dead in a church cemetery in 782 (Lammers 1981–1983). Non-compliance to this law was punishable by death penalty, and this is considered to be the beginning of the legal obligation to bury the dead in this way. This burial method spread in different locations at different speeds, primarily depending on the commitment and actual power of individual rulers (a short, broader overview and further details for Hungary: Vargha, Mordovin 2019, 141–142).

Burial sites and churches

The centuries in which the transition from burials without churches to burials next to churches took place can be seen with the aid of four cross-sections with intervals of 50 years. The first shows the situation in the fifth decade of the 9th century (*Fig. 17a*). One can observe the operation of both ecclesiastical and secular rulers. In the 9th and 10th centuries, the territory we are observing was under the jurisdiction of two church centres: the Patriarchate of Aquileia and the Archdiocese of Salzburg. From 796/811 onwards, the Drava River represented the border between their territories of jurisdiction. The seat of the Patriarchate of Aquileia was in Cividale del Friuli at the time, i.e. in the immediate vicinity. Despite this, the activity of the patriarchate in expanding the network of churches has not been observed. If we exclude the group of churches in former Byzantine Northern Istria and its outskirts, south of the Drava River there are only such churches and church cemeteries that can be connected with the local tradition of Vlach Christians: on Hemmaberg/Junska gora, in Kranj and Moste. The church in Volče is on the map most likely only because of its loose dating and was in all likelihood not constructed this early. Slightly higher activity can be noticed on the left, Salzburg bank of the Drava River. However, even there, the group of churches in East Tyrol still belong to the Late Antique Vlach tradition, while the other churches that appear are not found neither in the Conversio nor in the document from 860 (MGH DD LdD / DD Km / DD LdJ, Nr. 102), which supposedly documented the Salzburg missionary activity. The latter document predominantly lists manors, i.e. land holdings, which shows that the interest of the Archdiocese of Salzburg was almost exclusively economic, obtaining as much income as possible. This image shows the considerable probability that until around 830, the primarily Vlach population, that part of it which had been Christian for a long time, was buried next to the churches. Around 830 CE, the number of burial sites next to churches began to increase (*Fig. 15*: 2).

Following the efforts of Alcuin, Charlemagne's adviser, the population of the territories which Charlemagne conquered east of Friuli and Baiuvaria was imposed with a reduced church tax (Bratož 1999, 107). This apparently decreased the interest of the Archdiocese of Salzburg to construct churches, as they saw greater profits in direct land holdings. Thus, the archaeological picture shows the construction of churches on the left bank of the Drava River, however it is not particularly likely that the priests from Salzburg looked after them, but more likely someone else. One also needs to take into account the possibility that at least some churches were not consecrated and were, above all, a gathering place for collecting the contributions of the believers and demonstrating the owner's prestige.

In any case, the non-consecrated church (*non consecrata foret*, the writer expresses his disbelief with the dubitative subjunctive) in Lesce in the Gorenjska region was built no later than the mid-11th century on

the right, Aquileian bank of the Drava River, and the owner appropriated the gifts of the believers for himself as there was no worship conducted in this church *(divina obsequia ibi minime agerentur,* once again dubitative subjunctive). This situation was interrupted only in the first or second decade of the 12th century (Bizjak 2012, 38–41; Hormayr 1803, 99–100, No. XLVII; Schumi 1882–1883, 123–124, No. 133). At this point, I will not describe the meaning of a non-consecrated church without worship, to which believers still came with gifts. This was possible for three centuries after the first half of the 9th century and although this was no longer a normal situation and not a Salzburg territory, it points to the rich possibilities for coexistence and transitions between the Old Faith and Christianity. Therefore, the small church in Lesce also offers a perspective of what the "church" in Millstat in Upper Carinthia, which was restored by Prince Domitian during the time of Charlemagne, might have been (Kahl 1999). Millstatt stands on the left, Salzburg bank of the Drava River. The Domitian's legend, which was written in the second half of the 12th century states that he found a church that was dedicated to idols (*ecclesiam, que demonibus fuit addicta*; Pleterski 1994; 1997), which is an exceptional designation otherwise not found in medieval records. When they discussed Old Faith sanctuaries, they used the terms *fanum, delubrum, templum*. So, did Domitian find a non-consecrated church containing statues that he believed were idols of the Old Faith? The possibility of this thought is confirmed by a fragment of a statue found on Silberberg in Carinthia. It shows a three-faced god, on whose back a cross was later carved (Kahl 1999, 49–50; Glaser 2022). Even if it might have been created as e.g. a depiction of Triglav, the added cross changed it to The Holy Trinity.

The minutes of the 796 meeting of bishops on the banks of the Danube, at the end of the war with the inhabitants of Avaria, somewhere east of Bavaria, describe the pastoral conditions and speak of the existence of three types of otherwise rare Christian priests. One group were those whose baptism was valid, the second group were clerics with no priestly ordination, and the third were illiterate clerics. The minutes do not reveal where these groups were located in Avaria (Bratož 1999, 85–100). However, according to the Western understanding at the time, Avaria began already east of Bavaria and Friuli (cf. Wolfram 2012, 314), which means that it included a good part of the Eastern Alpine territory. We can merely speculate whether the ordained priests of the first group were ordained in Salzburg or by the auxiliary bishop Modestus (cf. Conversio, c.5). In any case, the foreboding of the rather chaotic state of Christianity, indicated by the archaeological sites, is confirmed by the listed written sources.

The last decade of the 9th century (*Fig. 17b*) shows churches were located both north and south of the Drava River. Quantitative comparisons between the two territories are misleading, because the area of Slovenia has been explored better than the area in present day Austria. In any case, the scattered and gradual disappearance of burial sites without churches north of the Drava River is noticeable. They eventually disappear at the northern foothills of the Alps. There is no doubt that the church network south of the Drava River began to expand in this period. However, this depended highly on local conditions (see *4.8* below). It is telling that the situation in the Dolenjska and Zasavje regions remained unchanged, i.e. without churches. This indicates a different nature of the authorities there, which raises the question of the political arrangement south of the Karavanke mountain range: counties or principalities, their number.

By the fifth decade of the 10th century (*Fig. 17c*) graveyards next to churches predominated everywhere. Now burial sites next to churches also started expanding in Zasavje and Dolenjska regions. Only Bela krajina remained without them. As the first half of the 10th century was a period of intense Hungarian invasions (Štih 1983), this offers a surprising image. It is even more surprising that two churches (near Središče ob Dravi and in Tišina near the Mura River) stand on the territory that was supposed to belong to Hungary at the time, which had not yet been Christianized. We will obviously have to change our ideas as regards the border territories, Hungarians and Christianization.

Pécs, which stands next to the ruins of ancient Sopianae, is a settlement with archaeological traces of cultural and religious Christian continuity since antiquity (Buzás 2016, 76–80; Tóth et alii 2020). A similar case can be found on the site of the church of St Martin in Sombathely (Kiss, Tóth 1993). Even in Veszprém, the possibility of a 9th century church predecessor is suggested (Buzás 2020, 8–10). 9th century churches with a continuation in the 11th century can be also found in Zalavár (Szőke 2021, 339–409) and Kaposszentjakab (Molnár 2022, 256). The church in Kostoľany pod Tribečom (Slovakia), which is dated to the end of the 9th or the beginning of the 10th century, St Margita in Kopčany (Slovakia), which is dated after the mid-10th century and the 10th century church in Visegrád indicate the existence and spread of Christianity in Hungary even before the formal Christianization took place (Szakács 2018, 200–203). However, the latest archaeological research places the construction of the church in Visegrád somewhat later, around the year 1000 (Buzás et alii 2017, 214) and thereby excludes it from the group of early churches. The listed churches and of course also the churches in Tišina and Grabe near Središče ob Dravi in the western part of the Pannonian basin show that Christianity, even if in an organized form, did not completely die out after the end of the Carolingian period and the arrival of the Hungarians.

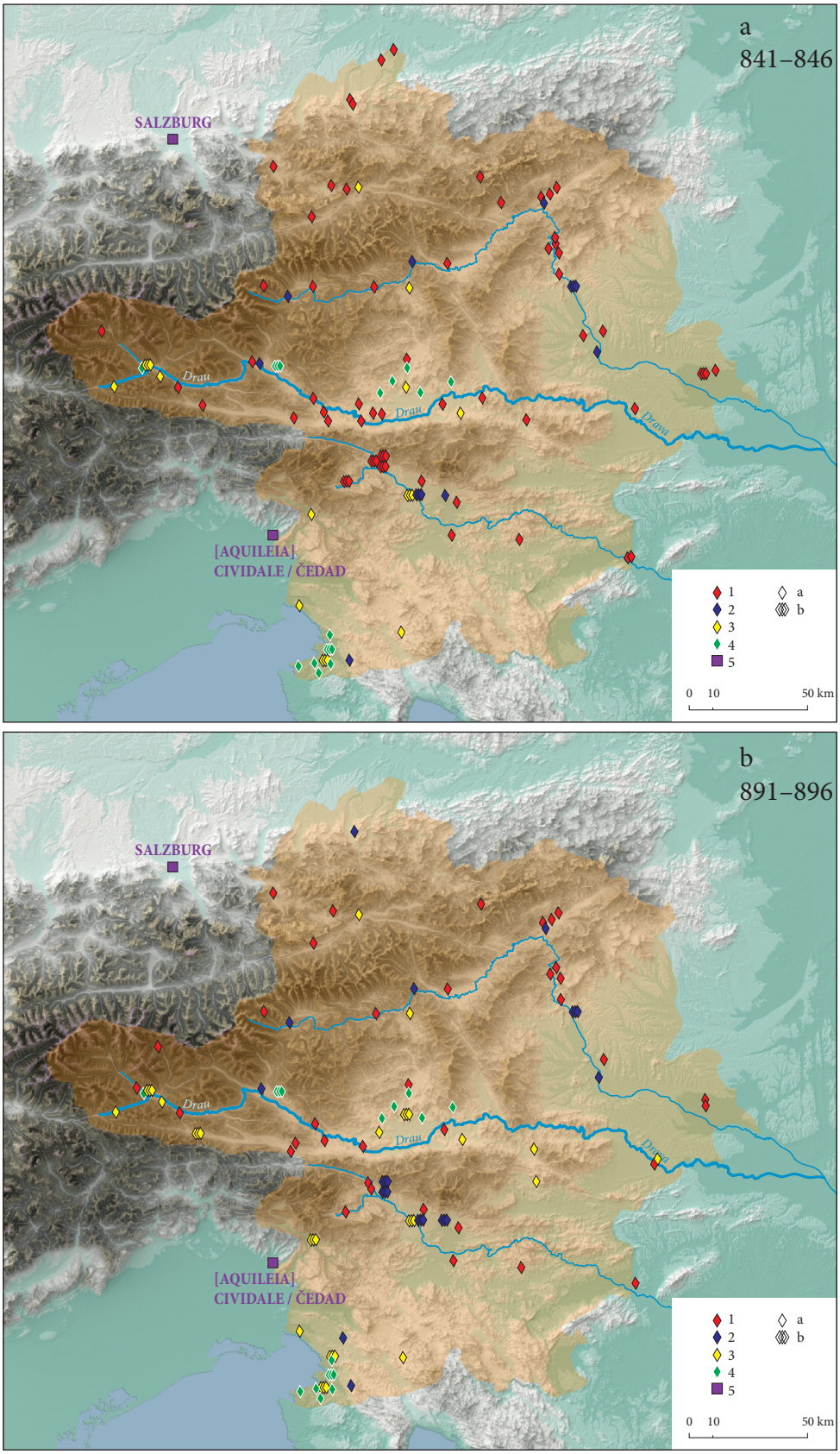

Fig. 17a, b: South-eastern Alps. 1 – burial sites without churches, 2 – burial sites next to churches, 3 – churches, 4 – stones with interlace ornament, 5 – seat of the archdiocese (Salzburg), seat of the Patriarchate of Aquileia (Cividale), a – one site, b – more than one site.

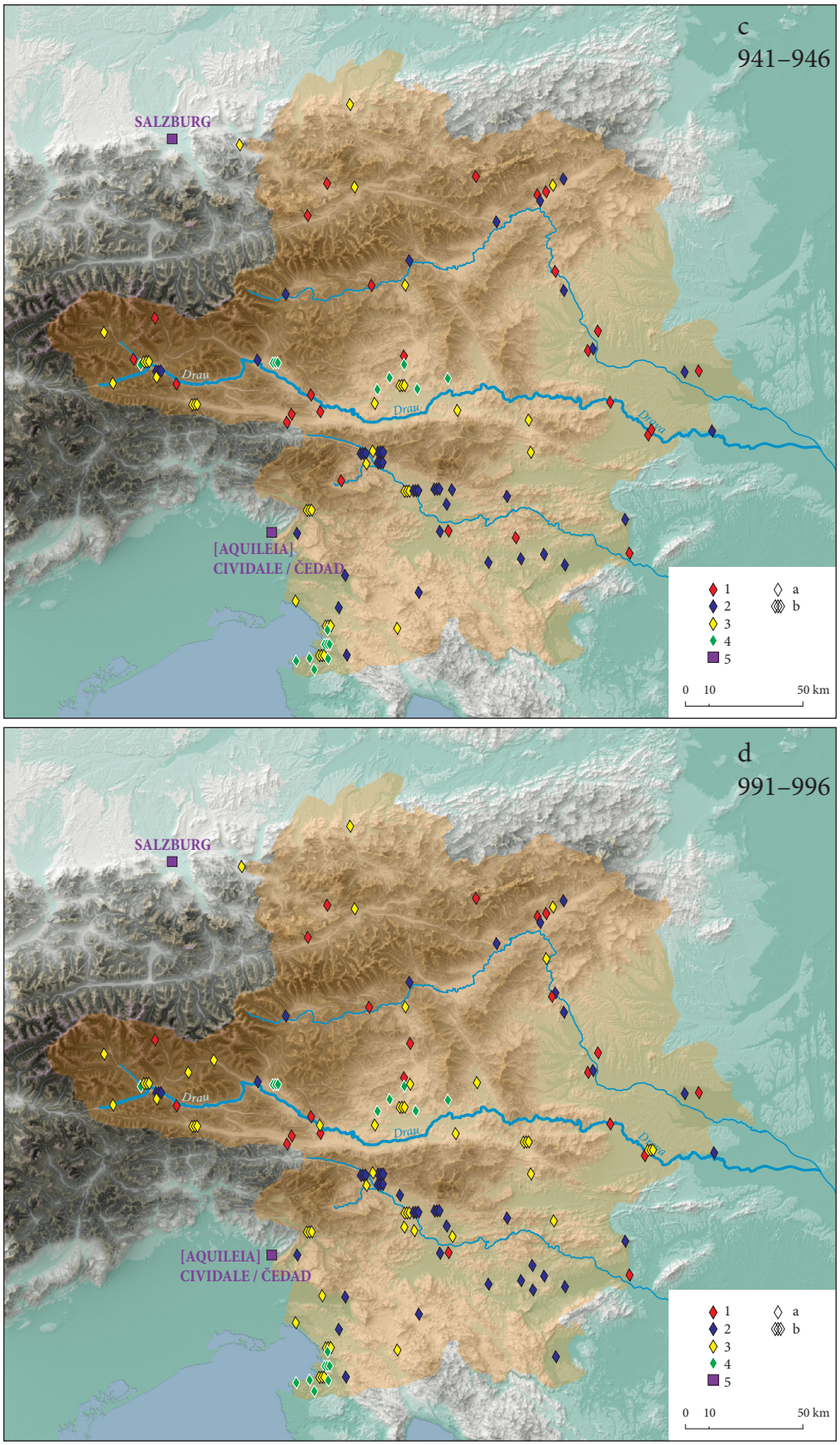

Fig. 17c, d: South-eastern Alps. 1 – burial sites without churches, 2 – burial sites next to churches, 3 – churches, 4 – stones with interlace ornament, 5 – seat of the archdiocese (Salzburg), seat of the Patriarchate of Aquileia (Cividale), a – one site, b – more than one site.

In the last decade of the 10th century (*Fig. 17d*) there were only a few burial sites without churches and by the 11th century they disappeared completely. At that time, control over burial sites was completely taken over by the Christian Church in cooperation with the secular authorities of the Medieval Roman Empire.

4.7 CHURCHES AND BURIAL SITES IN KLAGENFURTER BECKEN/CELOVŠKA KOTLINA AND THE ISSUE AS REGARDS THE ORIGINAL SIZE OF CARANTANIA

The area of Klagenfurter Becken/Celovška kotlina stands out from the general map of burial sites and churches (*Fig. 17*), for it clearly shows the spatial relationship between the placement of churches and burial sites without churches. The largest plain north of the Karavanke mountain range is relatively evenly covered with burial sites without a church, which were in use in the second half of the 8th century (*Fig. 18a*). The fact that they are least numerous in the area of the city of Klagenfurt/Celovec and its surroundings is the result of poor archaeological visibility in highly urbanized areas. We are aware of only two churches in central Carinthia from this period. One stood on Hemmaberg/Junska gora, which continued the tradition of local Late Antique churches and can be imagined in connection with the Vlach population. The second is Maria Saal/Gospa Sveta above Zollfeld/Sveško polje, if we can believe that this was the same Mary's church, which was consecrated by the Salzburg priest Modestus in the middle of the 8th century. At the time under consideration, it is attested only in a written source (state of research and discussions on localisation: Eichert 2012, 35–37).

The answer to the question as to whether the church of St Peter near Moosburg/Možberk already stood there at the time, depends on how we date the stones with interlaced ornament, from Carinthia (Karpf 2001). Stones with interlaced ornament (*Fig. 18b*: 3) are isolated finds and were preserved as spolia in later church buildings. The original locations can be guessed by the number of built in fragments.

In St. Peter bei Moosburg/Možberk stone church equipment, which was decorated with interlaced ornament, was found as spolia. Based on the large number of fragments, the narrower undated building foundations and adjacent graves, which first appeared around 830, we can conclude that a church with a graveyard existed at this location. Kurt Karpf dated the stones with interlaced ornament, with the political situation at the period between 772 and the introduction of the county system in 828 (Karpf 2001, 78). The stones with interlaced ornament in central Carinthia are well placed into the empty spaces between burial sites without churches only in the first third of the 9th century, but they would have been positioned significantly worse among such burial sites in the last quarter of the 8th century, when there were no voids yet (*Fig. 18a, b*). If we arbitrarily place the use of such church decoration in the last quarter of the 8th century, we know of at least two churches that would have stood for several decades before they started burying the dead next to them. These were St. Peter bei Moosburg/Možberk and St Tiburtius in Molzbichl in Upper Carinthia. The construction of perfectly equipped proprietary churches and the gradual transition to church graveyards is therefore much more likely to have happened in the first third of the 9th century. The inscription into the stone slab, which was built into St. Peter am Bichl/Št. Peter na Gori, might also be in line with this. The name Otker carved into this stone corresponds to the name of Prince Etgar (Kahl 2002, 53), who is mentioned in the Conversio (Conversio, c. 10) in the period between 799 and 828 (cf. Wolfram 2012, 169–174).

In the second third of the 9th century there were no more burial sites without churches in the area, which is primarily defined by stones with interlaced ornament, (*Fig. 18c*). This is a territory of 25 × 35 km between St. Veit a.d. Glan in the north and the Drava River or even the foothills of the Karavanke mountain range in the south, the Völkermarkt/Velikovec in the east and the eastern part of the Wörthersee/Vrbsko jezero in the west. We are currently uncertain where to place Jauntal/Podjuna. However, as late as the last third of the 9th century (*Fig. 18d*) the area where there were no more burial sites without a church extended to Villach/Beljak in the west.

The area from which burial sites without a church disappeared is the one in which the ruler asserted his power and forced people to respect his political will. In the first and second third of the 9th century this corresponded surprisingly well to the territory which was home to the later estates belonging to "civitas Carantana". The latter designation is usually identified with Karnburg/Krnski grad (cf. Eichert 2012, 139). In 982, these estates were the manors of Drauhofen/Dravski dvor, Grafenstein/Grabštanj, Gurnitz/Podkrnos (MGH DD O II., Nr. 275). The area described also fits the 5–6 hour walking distance from Karnburg (see Eichert 2012, Fig. 179), which stands at the southeastern foot of Ulrichsberg/Šenturška gora (with the earlier name Carantanian Mountain). Does this mean we are looking at the territory that was, in the first third of the 9th century, ruled by the prince of Carantania? Does this agree with the established belief that the family of Prince Borut had hereditary, undivided and general authority over the Carantanians as early as 740 (Wolfram 2012, 117; similarly Štih 2012, 320)? We must add to this the well-established and widely spread idea that at that time Carantania (*Fig. 21*) comprised the area between Innichen in the west, Semmering in the east, Karavanke in the south and Traunsee in the north (for example: Grafenauer 1964, 332, Map XV; similarly Kahl 2002, 392; Wolfram 2012, 359; Gleirscher 2018, Fig. 126).

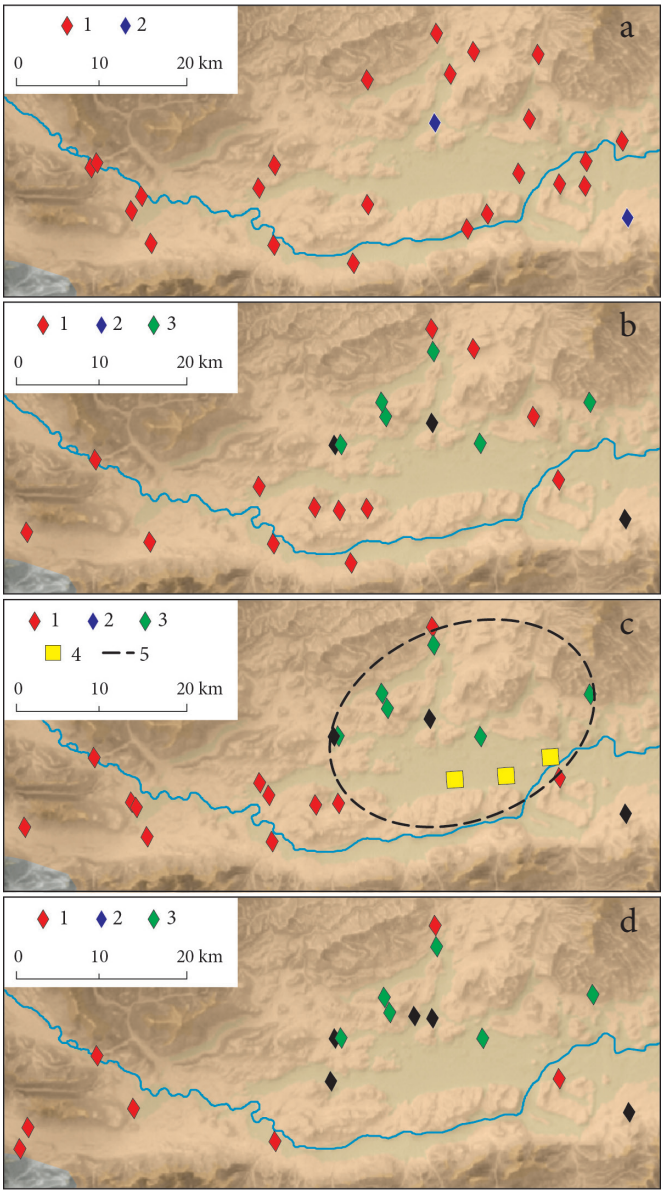

Fig. 18: Austria, Klagenfurter Becken. a – Period 746–796; b – period 801–826; c – period 831–866; d – period 871–896. 1 – burial site without a church, 2 – church; 3 – stones with interlaced ornament, 4 – manor, which belonged to "civitas Carantana" in 982, 5 – an area with no burial sites without churches.

When searching for an answer, the **models** proposed by Stefan Eichert represent a good starting point, because he also noticed a greater density of settlements and churches with stones with interlaced ornament as a sign of authoritarian power in Carinthia. According to the first model, the Carantanian princes established a hereditary central authority over the wide territory of the Eastern Alps and hegemony over other systems whose centres are shown by churches decorated with stones with interlaced ornament. According to the second model, they failed in doing so. Their hereditary authority extended merely as far as the central part of the Klagenfurter Becken/Celovška kotlina. Even Jauntal/Podjuna and the area south of the Wörther See/Vrbsko jezero lake were exempted. The princes of Carantania did not control the neighbouring areas of power, even though an outside observer might believe that they were at least the first among equals. According to the third model, no hereditary dynasty was established in Carantania, but its princes nevertheless gained power over neighbouring areas. However, since power passed from one family to another, they needed a special enthronement ceremony that legitimized each new ruler (Eichert 2020, 126–127). A fourth combination and model is also possible in this relationship between heredity and territorial extent of power. According to this model, no hereditary dynasty

was established in Carantania, and each Carantanian prince controlled solely the central area of the Klagenfurter Becken/Celovška kotlina.

The images of the development of the relationship between churches/graveyards next to churches and burial sites without churches (*Figs. 17; 18*) do not support the idea of a widespread authority of a Carantanian prince. It is believed only for the central part of the Klagenfurter Becken/Celovška kotlina that several churches were built around the same time and that burials at cemeteries without churches stopped. In the first third of the 9th century at least 6 churches stood there. I believe the two sites with stones with interlaced ornament, Zweikirchen and St. Peter am Bichl/Št. Peter na Gori, with an intermediate stone heap as a third site (Glaser 1999) to be the remains of a single church. In most cases churches stood between 6.5 and 15.5 km apart. The westernmost church (St. Peter bei Moosburg/Možberk) and the easternmost church (St. Martin/Šmartin) are separated by 34 km. This is the spatial extent of the group of churches, which did not reach even the legendary Velehrad in Moravia, where St Methodius was buried in the 9th century. There, the maximum distance between the churches in Modra and above Sady is 6760 m (cf. Rajchl 1995, Obr. 4; Galuška 1997). It is absolutely unfathomable that the Carantanian princes would have been so wealthy and interested in such a network of churches at the time. None of the above models fully correspond to this.

Of course, the presented images cannot directly testify to the issue of heredity. However, already written sources can shed some light on this issue. Indeed, the first three Carantanian princes known by name, Borut, Gorazd and Hotimir, were father, son and nephew (Conversio, c. 4). However, the mere kinship of political champions is not proof of heredity. A great example from modern history can be found in the US presidents George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush, father and son, who prove that despite their kinship, the office of the US president is not hereditary. The idea that Slavic societies chose their princes meritocratically, i.e. according to their abilities and merits, is proven by the example of the Frankish merchant Samo in the 7th century. He was chosen by the Slavs as their "king" because of his ability, because he excelled in the fight with the Avars (*Winidi cernentes utilitatem Samones, eum super se eligunt regem*. Fredegar, L. IV, c. 48). We are aware of the criteria for selecting a judge in the Carinthian region, which were, in the second half of the 11th century, described in the proposal of an addition to the Swabian Mirror (Ger. *Schwabenspiegel*) (Grafenauer 1952, 197–203; Kahl 2000). He had to be the most cogent, best, smartest; noble descent was of no importance, but honesty and truth were (Grafenauer 1952, 172). At the same time, there is no indication that the Carantanian prince held a hereditary position. Was the kinship of Borut, Gorazd and Hotimir merely a coincidence? No, because in a meritocracy the merits of the fathers confer prestige also upon his sons. Saxo Grammaticus provided a good example of this in connection with the enthronement of the Danish king in 1137, where he enumerates the merits of the deceased father, but not only birth was important for the successor, but also personal virtues (Saxo Grammaticus, L. XIV, c. 2). However, it is completely unbelievable that the government structures in Carantania would outdate those in Denmark by more than 400 years.

If we cannot possibly consider the heredity of the Carantanian princes, and if the presented images nevertheless show a space of unified authority in central Carinthia (*Fig. 18c*), in the form of a closed area of a group of churches and no burial sites without churches, who was the decisive authority? The answer is provided by the fractal society model of the ancient Slavs. I call it this because we can notice that the structure of this society was repeated in its individual components, once we observe them in greater detail. At the macro level, we can observe a broad spatial network of equal principalities with equal princes. Due to his special powers, neighbouring princes can recognize one of them as a grand prince, and he can also be appointed grand župan (similar to Stefan Nemanja in Serbia). When we take a closer look at each principality, we notice that it consists of individual župas. These were governed by equal župans, but one among them was recognized superiority due to his special powers. He became a prince, and could be appointed grand župan, or given a different title. The župans of the župa were chosen by its free members. – I emphasize that this is merely a model, but I will confront it with some structures that have been determined through archaeological research or in written sources.

Union of Four. In the 12th century Helmold of Bosau described an interesting union of four Slavic peoples (*populi*) along the Peene River (Eastern Germany): Kessini (*Kycini*), Circipani (*Cyrcipani*), Tollensians (*Tholenzi*), Retarians (*Redarii*). Because of their bravery, they were called Volci (*Wilzi*) (= the woolfs) or Ljutci (*Lutici*) (= the furious). The Redarians occupied the city of Retra (*Rethre*) with a famous sanctuary (Helmold, L. 1, c. 2). The Retarians were apparently given their name by their holy city, which was visited by all Slavic peoples. Because of the age of the city and the fame of its sanctuary, the *Tholenzi* and *Redarii* claimed the leadership over the alliance to themselves, which led to a civil war (Helmold, L. 1 c. 21). The *Lutici* had their *principes* (dignitaries) (Annales Magdeburgenses, A. 1169–1176, year 1169). This was therefore a union of at least initially equal political units, each of which had its own dignitaries. However, Fred Ruchhöft believes that the *Wilzi* and *Lutici* were meant to refer to political suc-

cession and that they should not be equated geographically (with an extensive list of different understandings: Ruchhöft 2008, 70).

The size of the župa. The distance of 6.5 km between the churches in Klagenfurter Becken/Celovška kotlina corresponds to the size of the Bled župa (Pleterski 2017), which is naturally limited. This is why I looked at even the smallest distances between neighbouring 10th century hillforts in what was at the time still Slavic Wagria (today eastern Holstein, Germany). Since I measured the distance on a survey map of the sites (Ruchhöft 2008, Fig. 51), the accuracy of the measurement was 0.5 km. The average distance to the nearest hillfort was 7.6 km. Assuming that one hillfort belongs to one župa, this distance confirms that the župas were small (see below *5.1*). This shows that each listed Carinthian church belonged to an individual župa. According to the results of the archaeological research carried out so far, none of the churches stand out and Karnburg was not built as a fortified site before the second half of the 9th century (cf. Eichert 2012, 138–151). Both indicate that the duke of the Carantanians was only the first among equals at the time these churches were constructed. This clue is of greater importance than it might seem at first glance. It does not match the propaganda impression that the Conversio tried to create, according to which the Carantanian princes (in cooperation with the Church of Salzburg) were responsible for the Christianization of the Carantanians (Conversio, c. 5). It does also not match what we usually believe was the course of Christianization among the Slavs, where first the ruling family was Christianized, and then, under the ruler's pressure, Christianity spread down the social ladder (cf. Łowmiański 1979, 282–358).

Law and sacred. First of all, let me remind you of Wolfgang Fritze's research on the legal aspects of the state development of the Slavic Obodrites in today's Germany. He drew attention to several stages of political development. Instead of the word župa, he used the technical term "small tribe" (*Kleinstamm*), and for the župan he used the term *regulus,* borrowed from Latin sources. He suspected that during the settlement process and shortly after it, the "small tribes" were not connected and probably did not have an institutionalized ruler. Until the mid-9th century, there was a union of "small tribes", each with its own *regulus*. They were subordinated to one *regulus*, who had the authority over all. In the period that followed, larger settlement groups (*Teilstämme*) began to unite into political units with a monarchical leadership. This occurred as a result of a foreign policy intervention by the Frankish ruler. In the mid-12th century the ruling family established a unified state through a network of princely castles and their administrative territories (*Burgbezirkverfassung*), and the early "tribal" groups lost their political autonomy (Fritze 1960, esp. 201–208).

In the 12th century Helmold of Bosau described his march through Slavic Wagria (today's northeastern Holstein in Germany), where they came across a fenced grove of sacred oaks of the country god Prove, which was the sanctuary of the entire country. A priest belonged there and performed celebrations and sacrificial rites. Every Monday the people of the country, the priest and the *regulus* met there for the court (Helmold, L. I c. 84). Based on this account, Fritze concluded that each "small tribe" had its own legal and cult systems, which were closely connected, since the court sat in a cult place at certain times. The "tribal" territory appears as a cult district, and the legal arrangement of the local community as a sacred order. The later prince was also subordinated to this. There was sacral inviolability and the "sovereignty" of law. He therefore sees the župa as a settlement, legal and cult union (Fritze 1960, 205–206). It seems that the situation in 8th century Carantania corresponded to the second early phase of the political development of the Obodrites.

Henryk Łowmiański also noticed the connection between law and the sacred. He pointed out that the legal aspect was extremely important in the Christianization process and therefore there were two phases, which were decided by the political community and not by the ruler himself (in the event that he did not have sufficient power on his own). In the first phase, the political community tolerated the missionary work of Christian priests, however, whether one would convert to Christianity later depended on the will and willingness of the individual. In the second phase, the conversion was a political decision of the entire community, which collectively decided for or against Christianity (Łowmiański 1979, 237–263). The best-known and best described example of a group decision to Christianize a political community comes from Iceland, where in the year 1000, after a jointly agreed procedure, a collective decision for a unified law and religion ended the impending threat of a civil war (Íslendingabók, c. VII). This political model provides an excellent explanation as to what took place in Carantania.

According to the Conversio, the auxiliary bishop Modestus and his group of priests dedicated the church of St Mary to the Carantanians (*Carantanis dedicaverunt ibi ecclesiam sanctae Mariae*, Conversio, c. 5) when they arrived from Salzburg in the middle of the 8th century. The concordance analysis of the Conversio shows that it was placed on land that, due to its importance, belonged to the community of Carantanians. It stood alone, outside the territory of neighbouring settlements. Maria Saal/Gospa Sveta fully meets this description. In the 8th century there was no settlement next to the church, for this appeared only later and was named after the church (Pleterski 1998, 256–257). It stands on one of

Fig. 19: Klagenfurter Becken/Celovška kotlina with Ulrichsberg/Šenturška gora. The painting was created by Marko Pernhart. The painting was created between 1864 (the beginning of the railway line between Klagenfurt/Celovec and Villach/Beljak) and 1871 (death of Pernhart). (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Markus_Pernhart_-_Klagenfurter_Becken_gegen_Nordwesten.jpg)

the holy locations within the central sacral area of the Carantanians, which was important for the entire Carantanian community (Pleterski 1996, 482–501). Modestus dedicated the church to this community and not to the Carantanian prince. Burial sites without a church were not abolished in the surrounding area, and a long period of civil wars followed (Conversio, c. 5). We can agree with Łowmiański (1979, 254–255) that the conditions corresponded to the first phase of Christianization according to the above-described model. The appearance of the second phase, which, like many other things, is omitted in the Conversio, is shown by the map of the new churches (*Fig. 18b*). This is a swiftly created space of common faith and common law. This religion is now Christian, and due to the weak prince, this could only be a joint decision of the state community, similar to the decision taken by the Icelanders two centuries later. They decided to convert to Christianity as a group and immediately. This decision was also important for the later spread of the name Carantania and for the preservation of the extremely archaic enthronement ceremony of the Carinthian princes, since it could no longer be influenced by the Old Faith, while the new religion could not gain significant influence and remained on the formalistic periphery. I will not elaborate on either of these at this point. The decision was equally important for the preservation of a broad layer of freemen who maintained their self-government until the end of the Middle Ages. In Slovenian they are called *kosezi*, in German *Edlinger* (Grafenauer 1952, 389–558; Eichert 2014). I will not discuss them in detail here either, I will merely point out the high probability that the two words did not originally denote people of the same social origin and that they are not always interchangeable.

Carantania in the narrowest sense. The territory of common law and the new Christian religion was limited to the central part of the Klagenfurter Becken/Celovška kotlina (*Fig. 18c*). So, this was Carantania in the narrowest sense of the word. Another question is how much were these Carantanians able to spread their influence and name (at least in the eyes of foreigners) to their neighbours. The name Carantanians is mentioned already around 700 by Anonymous of Ravenna (Anonymus Ravennatus, 453) and Carantania by Paul the Deacon (HL, L. 5, c. 22), which would, in the 8th century, hardly be possible if the name was limited merely to Carantania in the narrowest sense.

The model for the spread of the name in pre-Christian times is provided by the previously described

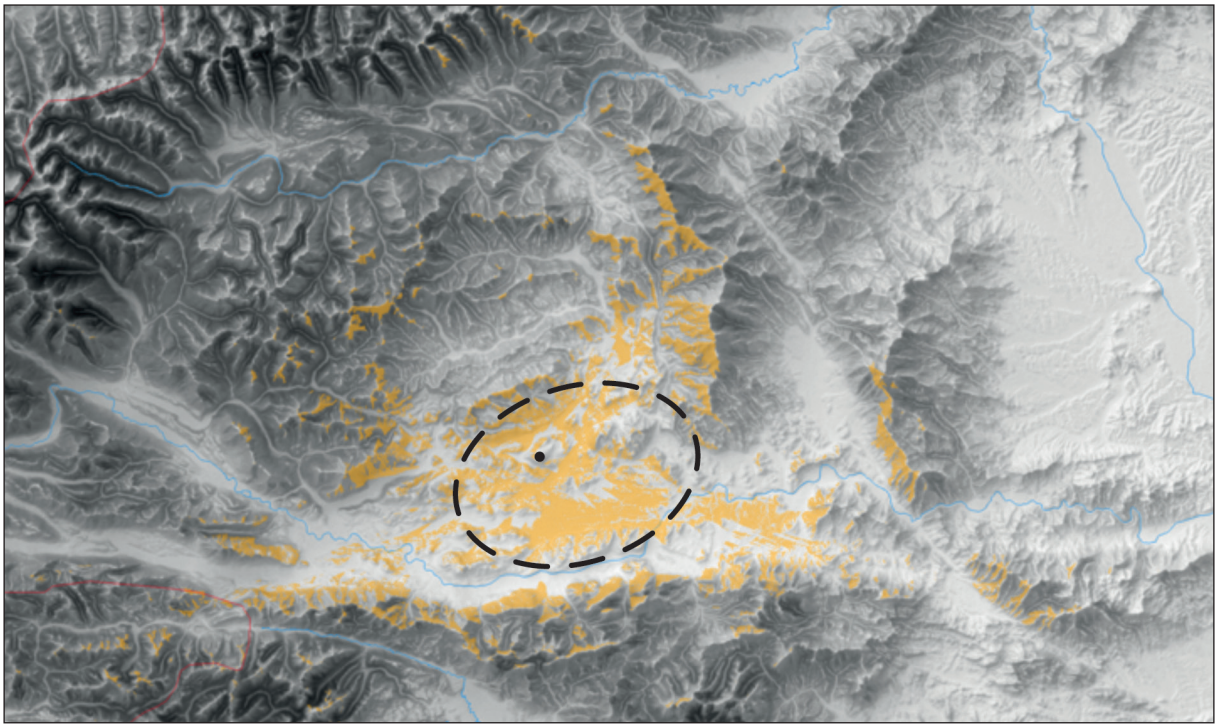

Fig. 20: Klagenfurter Becken/Celovška kotlina. Visibility (yellow) of the peak (black spot) Ulrichsberg/Šenturška gora (realisation Benjamin Štular).

Ljutci and the importance of Radegost's temple in Rethra. Carantanians are named after Caranta. The name is said to refer to the area of Ulrichsberg/Šenturška gora (Kahl 2002, 68–76). Hans-Dietrich Kahl discussed in detail why *mons Carantanus* (with the later name Ulrichsberg/Šenturška gora) is a sacred part of the central sacred space of Carantania (Kahl 2002, 245–252). That the holy mountain that rises in the heart of the Klagenfurter Becken/Celovška kotlina (*Fig. 19*), similar to the holy mountain of Říp in the heart of the Czech Republic, would give its name to the Carantanians (for further discussion see: Štih 2004a, 474-478; Kahl 2007, 355), does not come as a surprise. The most characteristic example of a sacred mountain among the Slavs is Mount Ślęża, which gave the name to Silesia, and was an object of worship (Thietmar, L. VII, c. 59).

With the spatially broader scope of the name Carantania, it is therefore about who recognized the Carantanian Mountain (Ulrichsberg/Šenturška gora) as their holy mountain. The visibility of this mountain was important (*Fig. 20*), for whoever saw the Carantanian mountain was a Carantanian. Visibility on the map is shown as the visibility of the top of the mountain, on its slopes the top is not always visible. Of course, visibility from the plains where people lived on, and not from the surrounding mountain peaks, is important. And just as the Union of Ljutci consisted of several principalities, this could also be the case for Carantania.

The extent of Carantania at the beginning of the 9th century. Charlemagne's 811 ruling on the border between the Archdiocese of Salzburg and the Patriarchate of Aquileia is usually considered as proof that the political unit of Carantania was spatially large from its very beginning (*Fig. 21*). This was the province of Carantania (*Karantana provincia*), which was divided into a northern and a southern part by the Drava River, which flows through its middle (*Dravus fluvius, qui per mediam illam provinciam currit*) (MGH DD Karol. I, Nr. 211). The understanding that this political unit of Carantania covered the territory from Eastern Tyrol to Western Pannonia was constantly overshadowed by the uneasiness of what the Patriarch of Aquileia was given south of the Drava River to make the deal territorially just. In this case, the then political Carantania would have to reach at least as far as Gorski Kotar, which is impossible. If not for anything else, because the principality of Carniola existed south of the Karavanke mountain range (Štih 1995; 2014). My former suggestion that the political unit of Carantania was at the time very small, only a part of the current-day Carinthia (Pleterski 1996), was of course met with strong objections (e.g. Štih 1997), since the Drava River was in fact the church border from East Tyrol to Pannonia. Were we really all talking about the same thing?

It seems that Janez Höfler has found a solution to this problem. He pointed out that in his ruling, Charlemagne did not follow the rule that one (admin-

Fig. 21: South-eastern Alps. Carantania between the mid-7th and the mid-8th centuries (from: Grafenauer 1964, Map XV).

istrative-political) province should belong to a single archdiocese, but decided to split this province (Höfler 2021, 94). Höfler's observation can be understood in two ways. One is his, in which, according to the prevailing understanding, the province of Carantania is seen as an administrative-political unit. And this made Charlemagne a rule breaker.

Of course, the most important was how the word *provincia* was understood in Charlemagne's office. It appears in 8 documents that are said to be Charlemagne's, of which as many as 6 are forgeries from the High Middle Ages (MGH DD Karol. I, Nr.: 219 (293/25), 227 (308/30), 240 (335), 245 (345/35, 40), 277 (412/25), 295 (442/35)). The above ruling is one of the remaining two charters. The second charter was issued in Frankfurt and was addressed to the monastery of Caunes near Carcassonne in France. This one uses the word *provintia* without a name and quite generally as the place of legal acts relating to the monastery (MGH DD Karol. I, Nr. 178 (240/ 30)).

The document that talks about the border along the Drava River was issued in Aachen (MGH DD Karol. I, Nr. 211). Both sides presented their arguments. The Patriarch Ursus of Aquileia arrived with documents, which he showed (*ostendi posse*), while the Archbishop Arno of Salzburg made an oral assertion (*asserebat*). The province they were talking about was once divided into *provincie civitates*, which mark Roman period town territories. If we keep in mind that in Late Antiquity, the area in question

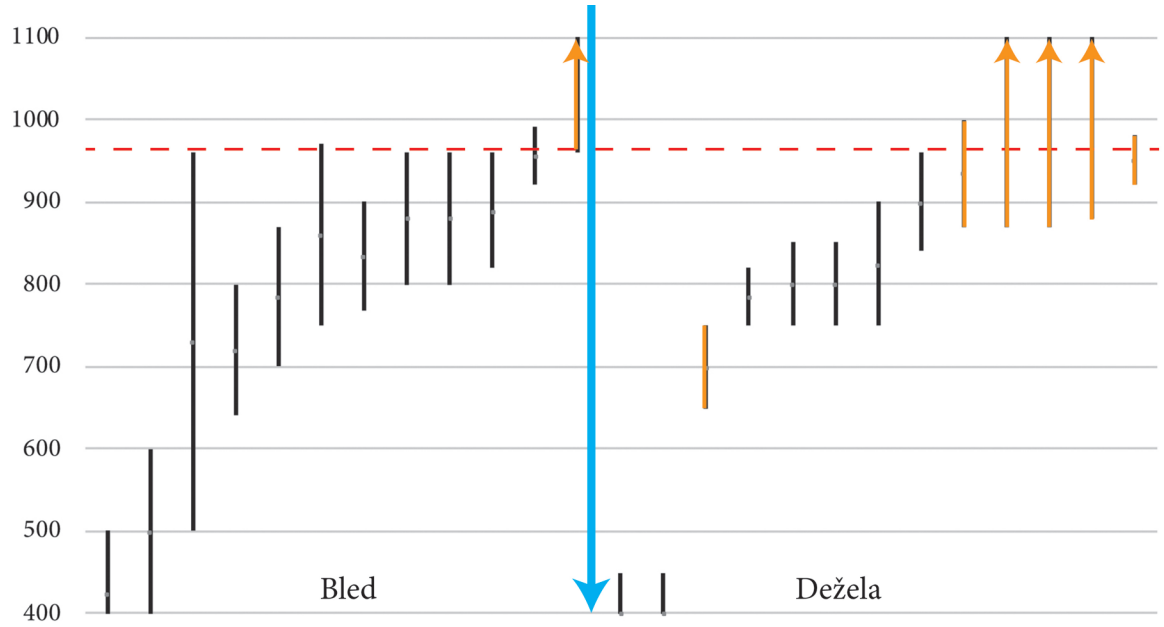

Fig. 22: Slovenia, Bled and the Dežela (Radovljica region). Time spans of burial sites. The blue line is the Sava River, which separates Bled on the right bank from the Dežela on the left bank. The orange lines are burial sites in churches or next to them. The red line demarks the end of burials in Bled. The time limits of 400 and 1100 are arbitrary.

was covered by several names (among the broader ones Venetia, Histria, Noricum, Pannonia), several provinces, even the patriarch could not claim that Aquileia comprised one province. That the ruling at the time spoke of one province was a pragmatic political solution that described the newly conquered area east of Baiuvaria and Friuli. For this area they used a name that the Archbishop of Salzburg could refer to and apparently successfully enforce. The Salzburg approach was expressed once again in the Conversio, when dealing with the dispute over the actions of Constantine and Methodius.

Thus, Höfler's observation can be understood in another way, that Charlemagne did not violate the rule, because the word province here does not mean a political unit, but simply an extensive territory, which was called Carantania by the court office. This second understanding reconciles all apparent opposites. It is highly likely that we can simultaneously speak of the small political unit of the principality of Carantania and, parallel to this, of the broad administrative-territorial name of Carantania, introduced by the officials.

4.8 THE ŽUPAS OF BLED AND DEŽELA (THE RADOVLJICA AREA)

This covers the area of the Bled-Radovljica basin, which is divided into two parts by the deeply incised Sava Valley. On the right bank we find Bled, which, according to folk tradition, was once its own "dežela" (land, area) (information from Jože Čop, Brod in Bohinj). The area on the left bank of the Sava River is even today called the Dežela of Radovljica. It is therefore about two "deželas", most likely a memory of the former župa arrangement, and the word *dežela* is used as a synonym for *župa*. Their comparison shows both local differences and broader shared processes. The archaeological image of the settlements remains incomplete and uneven, so I decided to observe the burial sites, which we already know to a satisfactory extent. Of course, we do not know all of them, and most burial sites are only partially and not fully explored. Nevertheless, there are enough of them to show some obvious changes (*Fig. 22*).

In the second half of the 5th century the settlement in the plain went through a crisis. In Bled, the Bled Castle was settled and the creation of its burial ground at Pristava took place. Although the Bled Castle has an excellent defensive position, it is, together with Pristava, in the middle of the basin, which enabled active contact between Vlachs and Slavs (Pleterski 2015, 236). The graph depicting the duration of burial sites (*Fig. 22*) does not show any interruption.

We are currently not aware of any graves that would reliably belong to the period between the second half of the 5th century and the first half of the 7th century on the opposite bank of the Sava River, however, the high-altitude settlement on Ajdna mountain belongs to this period. Apparently, at least a part of the population retreated to this side of the southern slope of Mount Stol. Their burial site is not yet known, but we can expect that

it will fill the described void. However, the last decades of the settlement on Ajdna were marked by 11 graves that were excavated in the local Early Christian church. It is likely that the inhabitants of Ajdna moved to the valley afterwards. The abandoned settlement began to transform into a cult area, which is indicated by individual representative finds of spurs, a sword hanger, a head circlet, and a belt strap-end in the layer of ruins (similarly at Gradišče above Bašelj: Štular 2020c, 233–241).

And while the Slav settlers in Bled encountered the Vlachs in the accessible valley, in the Dežela of Radovljica they were more likely to look at them from bellow upwards, from the valley towards the mountains. The fact that inhumation appeared in the Dežela of Radovljica as late as the mid-8th century, does not mean that the Slavs only moved there at the time. There was no reason for them not to arrive earlier, as they could not have reached Bled any other way than through the Dežela of Radovljica. Perhaps the earlier phase of cremation burials can be attributed to the find from Smokuč, where decades ago, on the edge of a Late Antique and Early Medieval burial ground, the locals came across a pot and a thick layer of ashes during the construction of a house (I owe this information to the excavator Milan Sagadin). All the graves in Smokuč were inhumation, there were no settlement or prehistoric finds.

The difference between the two "deželas" in the time and manner of Christianization is exceptionally telling (*Fig. 23a, b*). In Bled around 960, burials in the old village cemeteries were abandoned and at the same time, the graveyard at the central Bled church of St Martin appeared. Only burials on the Island of Bled continued for a short time. Perhaps this was done as a favour to a privileged group of people. I have in mind the garrison of Bled Castle, which the manager of the new Bled royal estate took over from the župan of Bled (for more on this see: Pleterski 2013, 170). Anthropological analysis showed that the skeletons from Bled Island were the closest to those found at Bled Castle, while the brachycephalization trend proves that this was chronologically later (Leben-Seljak 2020, 209). The desire for power enables the most unusual unprincipled coalitions. For example, the ultra-Christian emperor Henry II established an alliance with the Old Faith believers Ljutci during a 1017 CE campaign against the Christian Boleslav the Brave and even compensated them for the damaged image of their goddess (Thietmar, L. VII, c. 59-64). With good lobbying support, he was later declared a saint anyway.

A Christian ruler appeared in Bled and he was so powerful that he was able to ban the old burial sites with immediate effect and order that all burials from then on take place in the church graveyard. Periodically, this coincided with the transition of Bled into the political framework of the Ottonian Empire. And we know that King Henrik II was the owner of the Bled estate in 1004, and he later became the emperor in 1014 (Štih 2004b; Pleterski 2013, 168–170). The actual executioner of power was, of course, an unknown high-ranking state official who forcibly removed the župan of Bled. The settlement on Pristava below Bled Castle was destroyed in a fire (Pleterski 2010, 174–175).

The events in the Dežela of Radovljica were very different. Around 860, certainly by 870 at the latest, as many as four church graveyards were established there (Breg, Rodine, Radovljica, Mošnje), and in around 920 they were joined by another one in Žirovnica. The construction of churches roughly coincides with the end of burials in village cemeteries. Typochronologically, there is a noticeable link between the later jewellery from the earlier burial site in Smokuč and the earlier jewellery from the later graves near the church of St Clemens (Klemen) in neighbouring Rodine. However, the time spans of individual design types are such that they overlap at least to a certain extent. However, it is clear that the burials in Doslovče, just a little further away, lasted until around 960. It is also noteworthy that the burials in the 11th century and in the following centuries continues only at three churches out of five. This could be the result of converting the status of proprietary churches into patronage parishes. When this conversion failed, the church slipped to the level of a branch and lost its right to burials (Höfler 2016a 25; 2016b, 64). Höfler's assumption that the graves next to the church of St Radegunda on Breg predated the first church building (Höfler 2019, 23–24), is less likely because they lie in a plain that gradually descends to the south-west, which is more characteristic of burial sites next to churches (see *Fig. 10*). We do not know whether the relatively late patronage of St Radegunda was also the original one. There is no doubt that the mentioned conversion was not successful for the church of St Martin in Žirovnica.

The described events in the Dežela of Radovljica show a completely different state of power when compared to Bled. Undoubtedly, the entire area was not controlled politically by a single ruler. This is confirmed by the large number of contemporaneous churches, as well as the distance between them, which is the maximum 10 km between Žirovnica and Mošnje. This suggests that there were several power holders who responded to the Christianization campaign in the second half of the 9th century, but at the same time there was still some space left for at least one Old Belief society in Doslovče.

The differences between Bled and the Dežela of Radovljica confirm that they were two different political entities (župas). They also show that until around 960, that is, until the final transition to under the rule of the medieval empire, there was no ruler who was able to impose his political will on the local potentates. At this point, I will not enter the debate whether we can talk about any kind of county administration in Carniola

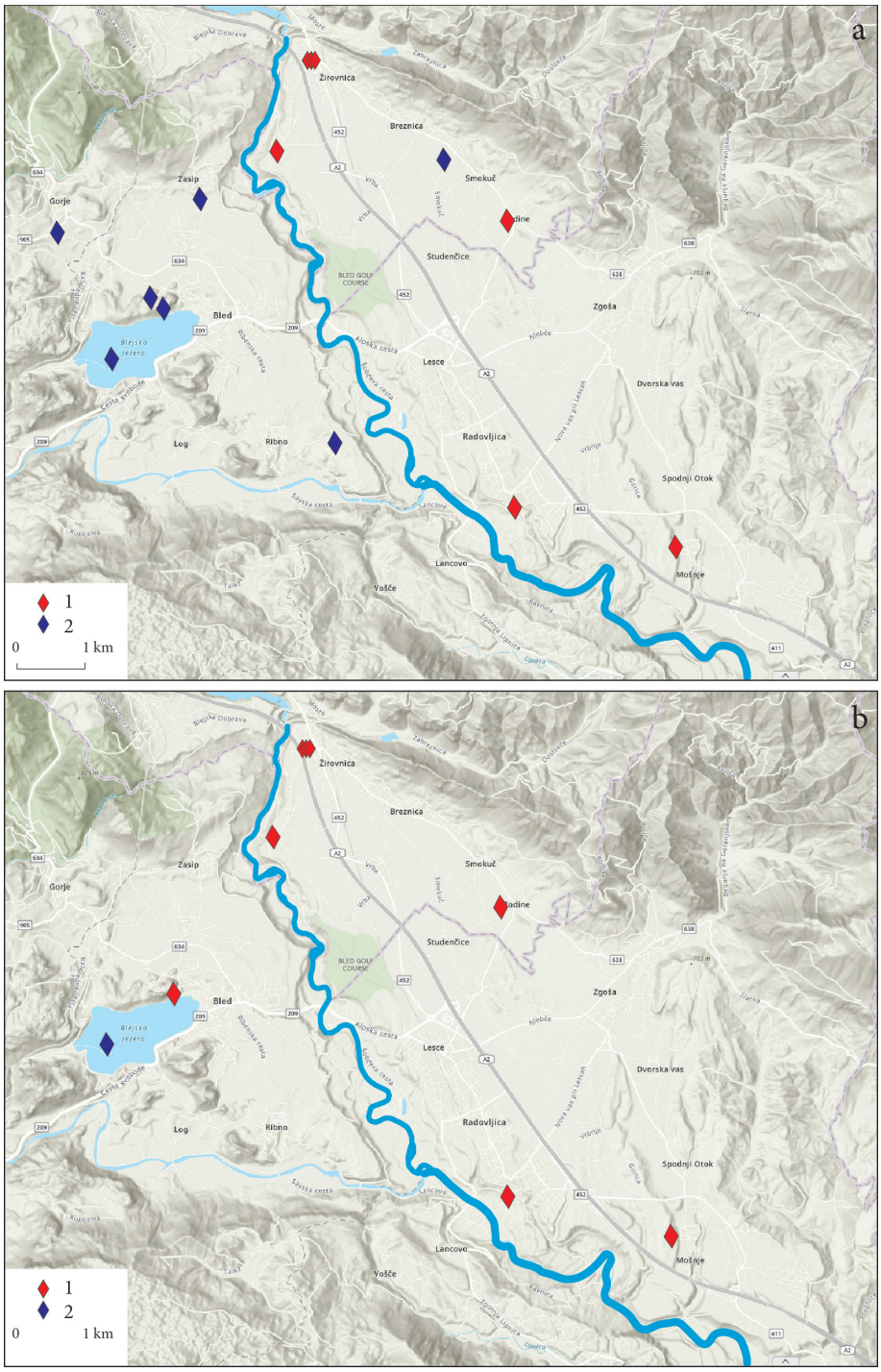

Fig. 23: Slovenia, Bled and the Dežela of Radovljica. a – Period 946-951, b – period 976-981, 1 – Churches and burial sites next to churches, 2 – burial sites without churches (source: LiDAR: Esri, Interman NASA, NGA, USGS; Garmin, Forsquare, GeoTechnologies, Inc. METI/NASA, USGS | MKRS).

before 960, or how influential the potential prince of Carniola was and how far his actual power extended (cf. Sagadin 2008, 184–186; Štular 2020b, 241). Paolo Santonino (1486) described Carniola as a plain between Ljubelj and Ljubljana (Santonino 1943, 190–191), i.e. as the present Gorenjska region. However, it is possible that the imperial administrator of Bled also controlled the Dežala of Radovljica from around 960 onwards. This is indicated by the end of burials in Doslovče around 960.

Merely as a curiosity, I mention the subsequent 1501 record in the land registry of the Lords of Škofja Loka (Peršič, Štih 1982). Historically, this highly confused text,

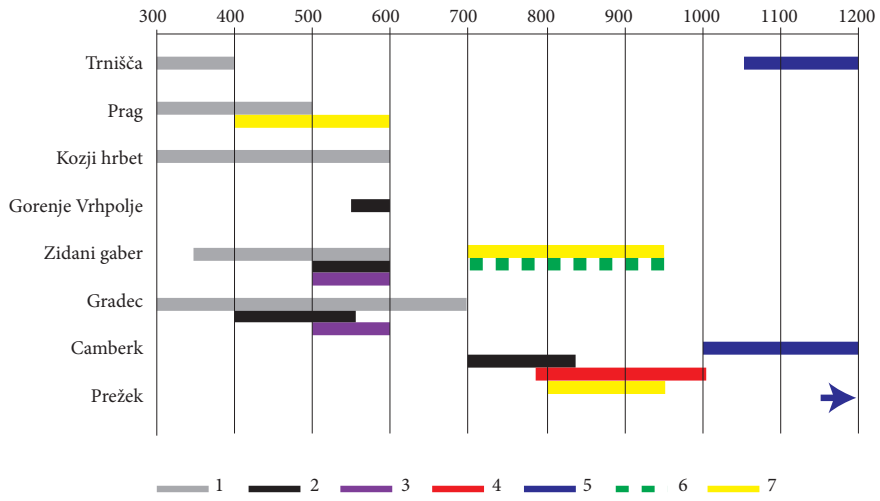

Fig. 24: Slovenia. Development of settlement on the Gorjanci mountains. Time spans: 1 – settlement, 2 – burial ground, 3 – church, 4 – sanctuary, 5 – castle, 6 – individual find, 7 – hoard. The cut-off points of 300 and 1200 are arbitrarily set.

which mixes events, persons and years, attributes the Christianization of Carniola to Henry III (king from 1039 onwards, emperor 1046–1056), definitely to a later period.

4.9 A MODEL OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SLAVS AND THE VLACHS AND THE SACRALIZATION OF SPACE – THE EXAMPLE OF THE GORJANCI MOUNTAINS AND KRŠKO-BREŽICE PLAIN

The rivers Sava and Krka meet in Krško-Brežice Plain (Krško-Brežiško polje), and their meandering created vast wetlands, which were the exact opposite of the intermediate dry plain. The southern outskirts are marked by the Gorjanci mountains. The central area was occupied by the Roman period town Neviodunum, which was abandoned in the turbulent 5th century, as well as the fort in the neighbouring Velike Malence (cf.: Ciglenečki 2023, 35, 238). At the same time, 18 km aerial distance to the south-west, above the villages of Gorenje Vrhpolje, Mihovo, Cerov Log and Gorenji Suhadol, a group of hilltop settlements appeared on the Gorjanci mountains (Križ 2021).

At the end of the 5th or the beginning of the 6th century, the vacated flatlands of Cerklje ob Krki were settled by a group of people. The following immigration criteria speak in favour of this settlement: the area with its immediate surroundings was previously uninhabited, the site has a material culture that has no local tradition (Štular et alii 2022, 9). This is why it was suggested that they were Slavs (Pavlovič et alii 2021). Typically for Slavs, the settlement was placed on the edge of the river terrace, which represents the border between the wet and dry land. In the following three centuries, the population multiplied and settled a good part of the Krško-Brežice Plain. In the 7th century we know of 4 settlements in this area, in the 8th century this grew to 9 settlements, and by the 9th century there were a many as 11 settlements in the area.

The number of settlements in the Gorjanci mountains decreased during this time, but the settlement process did not stop there either. It is best shown by the chart of the time spans of the sites (*Fig. 24*), which spread over an area covering 4 × 4 km. Their displayed time spans reflect the current level of research, which means that the time spans may change over time. Some will lengthen, others will shorten. Despite this, the rough outlines of the settlement process are still visible.

At the end of the 4th century there was a group of as many as five hilltop fortified settlements, which is an extraordinary density that currently has no explanation. In the 6th century three of them were still inhabited, two of which (Zidani gaber, Gradec) were given churches and graves next to them. In the second half of the 6th century, the Gorenje Vrhpolje cemetery was located at the foot of the Gorjanci mountains. So far, we are not certain as to which settlement this belonged to. Settlement in Gradec continued even in the 7th century. Somehow, when the settlement there stopped, the settlement and burial ground on the neighbouring Camberk began. The artefacts in the graves there (Breščak 2002; Udovč 2018) do not differ in any way from those that were used in the valley at the same time. In any case, the location on the top of the mountain ridge is exceptional. What is completely unique for a cemetery without a church is that the slope with the graves descends to the north-west. At this time, we would expect a slope towards the south-east (cf. *Fig. 10*). When we weigh between the possibility that people from the valley suddenly decided

to live in the mountains in the 8th century, and the possibility that the inhabitants of Gradec moved closer to the valley, while still remaining on the plateau, the second possibility seems much more likely. According to this second possibility, the deceased at Camberk can be defined as Vlachs. However, in the second third of the 9th century there are no longer any traces of their presence there, it seems that they moved to the plain. However, a sanctuary or sacred area in which a hoard of iron axes, blacksmith's tongs and chisels was buried, remained in use in the 9th and 10th centuries in the previously settled location. Somehow, during this period, a hoard of agricultural and blacksmith's tools was also buried in the nearby Zidan gaber, from where individual metal finds dating from the 8th to the 10th century were found. In the 11th and 12th centuries the microregion was also the home to two smaller castles in Camberk and Trnišče. These were replaced by the old Prežek castle, which was built in the second half of the 12th century.

The presented settlement development is a good **example of the realization of the model of the space-time axis** (see above), which leads from the peak of the Late Antique settlement through the sacralization of the space to a gentry's castle. However, even if we admit the existence of this axis, we still do not know the mechanisms behind the changes shown by this axis. For something like this, we would need sufficient and detailed researched cases. At this point I can merely string together a few brief thoughts, however, these are closer to research questions than anything else.

The appearance of weapons, tools, and jewellery is a familiar phenomenon at hilltop sites in the period between the 8th to 10th century (for weapons see: Štular, Eichert 2020). These were hoards of groups of items as well as individual artefacts. Since these finds were mainly found with metal detectors, it is difficult to judge how many of them were accidentally lost and how many were deposited for religious reasons. The Vlachs were better acquainted with the highlands than the Slavs, who arrived to this territory as lowland people. The distinction between *gorenci/hribci* (dwellers of the mountains) and *dolenci/poljanci* (dwellers of the lowlands) still exists today. So, were the Vlachs the ones who carried the items to the peaks, or did they just know how to arouse interest in them? And yet the top of Klášťov mountain in Moravia (Hlavica 2009; Čižmář, Kohoutek 2015; Kouřil 2021), where there were no Vlachs at the time, is also covered by hoards of tools and weapons. Was this a process that can be placed at the intersection of the penetrating Christianity and the rise of a political elite that sought means of ideological confirmation in domestic tradition?

How were the Vlachs in the valley accepted? As shepherds, merchants and warriors, as they have been throughout the centuries up to modern times south and north of the Danube? Who were the men with spurs from Brinjeva gora above Zreče and from Puščava above Stari trg near Slovenj Gradac and the man with a sax on Hemmaberg? Who did the valley Slavs choose as their župan according to the principle of meritocracy?

There is also a **folk narrative** about the fate of the people from Gorjanci, as heard by Ignac Kušljan almost a century and a half ago. It refers to the hill Grobišča/Grabišča (different on different maps) between Zidani gaber and Gradec. According to the story, a large town called Pendir stood here, which was named after its head. When, on one occasion, the town was attacked by Pendir's enemies, he had all his valuables carried into a cave called Huda peč [Fierce crag] on the opposite hill, and he also remained hidden until the enemy left (Kušljan 1968, 111). Today, it is not known where Huda peč is located. There was a large Late Bronze Age settlement in Grobišča/Grabišča (information from Borut Križ), and individual metal artefacts dated between the Late Bronze Age and Late Antiquity were found there (Dular 2008, 130). Locals know the form of the name *Grabišča* [a place for raking hay] for the Grobišča and remember the lawns where they used to rake hay. Hence the name Grabišča (information Borut Križ). It is quite likely that we owe the form of Grobišče to someone who tried to excessively convert the apparently dialectal -a into -o. Perhaps to Kušljan, who also changed Suhadol to Suhodol and dreamed of graves in Grobišče (Kušljan 1968, 111). Even the Franciscan cadastre shows no forest in Grabišče, but only meadows.

This leads us to another folk tale, about a fierce spirit in Huda peč, who terrified people who approached it. During the hay racking season, he was especially mean to the people who lived on the top of the Gorjanci mountains. No sooner had the people scattered the piles than the evil spirit spoke: "I will flood this place!" Before they managed to create hay piles, the area experienced such a downpour that all the hay was soaked. After that he shouted: "Scatter the hay, I will dry it!" But as soon as they scattered the hay, the rain poured down again. Because he pestered the locals like this year after year, they began to slowly move to the Brusnice parish in the village of Suhodol. This was the end of their settlement on the Gorjanci mountains (Kušljan 1968, 111). The headman Pendir did not hide in the cave with the evil spirit, for he arrived at the cave before the spirit. This could confirm the possibility that the first story refers to prehistoric times. The second refers to the centuries when they stacked hay in the Gorjanci mountains and for a long time lived in the mountains as well. The departure to the valley is linked to bad weather and the establishment of the village of Suhadol, which was listed as early as approximately 1306 in the land registry of the diocese of Freising. At that time, it had 10 inhabited and six abandoned farms (Blaznik 1963, 18, 173). The village is therefore earlier, it is feasible that it appeared in the

9th century. Today we have Gorenji (Upper) and Dolenji (Lower) Suhadol, however, only Gorenji is located in the lower lands, which is obviously the earlier and the first in the west along with the group of sites around Grabišče: Zidani gaber, Gradec, Camberk. The name Suhadol is not Vlach in origin, which indicates a relatively early linguistic Slavisation of the Vlachs.

The importance of hay shows that the people of the Gorjanci mountains were livestock farmers who needed winter fodder. The story reveals another clue. The evil spirit in Huda peč apparently controlled the weather. Good relations with him were therefore of vital importance. Was this the function of the shrine at Camberk? We can imagine a **model of sacralization**, according to which the Vlachs in the mountains had to maintain the good spirits of the divine forces both when they lived there permanently as well as after they moved to the valley and continued to use the upland. Thus, their former places of settlement and their immediate surroundings became places of communication with divine forces. This model includes for example the cult place in the Early Medieval shepherd's summer settlement Na bleku on the Krvavec Mountain (*Fig. 25*). It also covers the processions to the Jezero [lake] on hill Čuk above Rodik (south-western Slovenia), which also hosts a Roman period sacral tradition where the dragon Lintver, who controlled the weather and waters, lived (Hrobat 2004). When arriving for summer grazing on the mountain Bukovske planine, the inhabitants from the Bohinj area (north-western Slovenia), prayed to the black bull Skočer for good grazing, health and weather as late as the 19th century (Čop 2006).

The influence of Early Christianity in the 5th and 6th centuries was clearly marginal to the local population of the Gorjanci mountains and ended with the disappearance of the ruling elite in the 7th century.

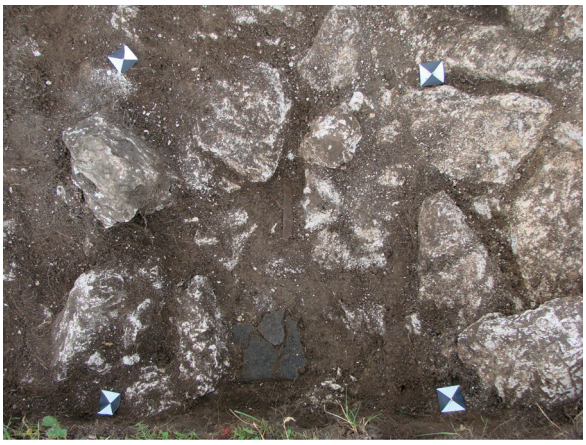

Fig. 25: Slovenia, Na Bleku, Krvavec. Excavation in 2007, Tranch VI. Hole filled with stones, charcoal, a pottery fragment and a knife with the blade and tip upwards.

5. SPATIAL POINTS OF POLITICAL POWER

5.1 STARTING POINTS

Political power takes many forms. That it also exists in space is most visibly demonstrated by state borders. The archaeology of area is still developing its analytical tools. Various authors have already proposed several different models.

The analysis described below is similar to the analysis for the territory of Hungary in the 11th century, carried out by Mária Vargha and Maxim Mordovin. In their case, the individual examples showed the power and spatial connection between castles and the first churches, but the mapping of all known sites gave a less expected picture. Some cases confirmed the assumption of the connection between castles and the first churches, but many did not, because there were both independent churches without castles and castles without churches. This was partly explained by the state of archaeological research, and partly by the fact that the churches were also the strongholds of state power (Vargha, Mordovin 2019).

Janez Höfler analysed, as he says, the building context for the territory under consideration. He compared the formulations of written sources from the 9th and 10th centuries with his art-historical observations and clues he sensed at individual locations. Thus, he developed a building model according to which, in the Early Middle Ages, every manor that was the administrative seat of the estate had a church. From the 12th century onwards, the castles built on the neighbouring hills were supposed to replace the lower-lying manors, while the churches remained where they were (Höfler 2019, 14–17). At this point, I would like to stress that the word "generally" means that there might be exceptions, that this is therefore not a firm rule.

Since it concerns proprietary churches, his second model, which refers primarily to the time after the Synod in Lateran (1059) and regulates the issue of tithe and the right of investiture is also important. The owner of the church handed over the tithe to the bishop, then received a part of it back, and above all, he was also awarded formal parish rights for the church. The main rights were baptism and burials, and the owner could also suggest the priest for the church. Churches with Early Medieval burial sites, which do not show a history of being parish churches, make it possible to conclude that they were proprietary churches, in which the described transition to a parish church did not take place and they became branch churches (Höfler 2021, 106).

While inspecting the sanctuaries, churches and hillfort settlements of Moravia and Bohemia, Lubomír Jan Konečný noticed that the early churches replaced

sanctuaries, but hillforts did not always appear close to churches. From this he drew the conclusion that the main motive for the creation of settlement centres was not to strengthen the power of the princes, but to create a cult spot that united the population of a broader area (Konečný 1980, 133). Over time, the ruler's residence and economic infrastructure could be added to this.

Fred Ruchhöft discussed in detail the development of political territories in the northern part of the Slavic territories in Eastern Germany from the settlement of the Slavs to the end of the Middle Ages. He supported their determination and delimitation for the period of the 7th and 8th centuries with dense settlements and the unpopulated spaces between them. From the 9th century onwards, he believes that the numerous hillforts represented the core of power. He identified them as *civitates*, which were mentioned in the 9th century by an unknown Bavarian geographer and believes that their density was too high in certain places. High density is represented by a distance of 5 km between individual civitates, while low density means 13 km. The administrative territories of individual hillforts (*Burgbezirk*) were assembled into larger political units, most of which can be identified by the names given in written sources (Ruchhöft 2008). Although Ruchhöft spoke of tribal territories, I would prefer to call them principalities consisting of individual župas. In the 18 political territories that he had reconstructed, there were between one and 18 hillforts in each (Ruchhöft 2008, Fig. 29), giving a total of 104, which gives an average of slightly less than 6 hillforts (župas) per political territory (principality).

Michal Hlavica set the analysis of marks and signs on the bottom of vessels found in the territories of Moravia, Bohemia, Slovakia and Lower Austria, all originating from the 9th and 10th centuries, into a broad framework of models that are linked geographically, politically and economically. The models were created in order to understand the market and political structures as explained by the political economy theory (Hlavica 2020). In an extremely simplified way (this simplification is of course mine and not Michal Hlavica's), control over at least part of the products allows political rulers to maintain political power when they distribute the resources thus obtained to their followers. An exceptionally important source of income is said to be the control of trade, both local and long-range. In a political community without a bureaucratic apparatus, the economic-political territory in a uniformly populated plain with a diameter of approximately 60 km, which is supposed to represent a day's worth (16 hours) of walking. This is an area that a political ruler can maintain from his centre alone, without employees to whom he would delegate supervisory and administrative functions. Archaeologically, the design of the market system can be recognized by the spread of marks and signs on the bottom of the vessels. Hlavica believes that there is a causal connection between the nature of the market exchange and the political system, therefore it is possible to draw conclusions as regards the organizational structure of the investigated society, its power strategies, as well as the political economy of its elite components, based on the market system. However, at the same time, he warns that a simple mapping is not possible and additional checks are required (Hlavica 2020, 102). That his caution was justified is proven by the result of his analyses, where he sees the power centres of Pohansko and Mikulčice within the same endogamous market community, but within it, Pohansko reaches the second level B, while Mikulčice only reaches the much lower fourth level (Hlavica 2020, 179, 194). The described 60-kilometre territories have several local centres in addition to the main centre and can be equated with principalities consisting of župas.

5.2 SELECTION OF POINTS

The selection of points naturally corresponds to the material sources for the considered area at a specified time. In another time and place, the selection of points would necessarily be different. The central embodiment of political power in the Early Middle Ages was the **church**. On the one hand, churches require that the construction costs are covered, and above all they need the funds to employ priests, while on the other hand, they demand strong political support, which was necessary in a territory and in a society that was predominantly not yet Christian. If we exclude the rare churches that were most likely built by the broader community (e.g. Maria Saal/Gospa Sveta, see *4.7*; and St Martin in Žirovnica see *4.8*), we must imagine that these churches were proprietary (Höfler 2019, 9–27). Thus, churches were the materialization of the power of individual potentates. As we have seen above, the construction of new proprietary churches begun as late as the 9th century. As I am trying to identify the network of local political entities before they melted into the political structures of the medieval empire, I am looking at the period of the 9th and 10th centuries. There are very few preserved building remains from this period, most of the remains are **fragments of stone church furniture, which were decorated with interlaced ornament**. However, more indirectly, they are indicated by burials next to churches with an unknown building history (see also *4.6*).

At the same time, we must also consider the **Old Faith cult places** (such as Bled Island), which most likely represented a magnet for local dignitaries.

The tacit archaeological assumption that **weapons** can (this is only one of the possibilities) mean authoritarian power has not yet been disproved, and it often seems justified. This is why I also looked for sites with weapons. As the upper time limit I chose the same limit I adopted for the churches, and as the lower one I arbi-

trarily designated the middle of the 7th century, when the structural transition from the "Vlach" Late Antiquity to the "Slavic" Early Middle Ages seems to be the most noticeable (*Figs. 2; 4; 15*).

The first **fortifications** appeared in the 9th and 10th centuries. We are referring to residences of military crews (perhaps Veliki gradec near Jezerca near Drežnica), as well as exposed fortified dwellings of local dignitaries (St. Magdalena near Baldersdorf). In any case, both were related to political power (according to the online ZBIVA timeline 801–996).

We have also noticed that the location of **High Medieval castles** is also important for the understanding and locating of earlier centres of power, however, this realisation came too late for the current phase of our research. The image that could be produced with the listed points therefore does not include High Medieval castles.

5.3 ANALYTICAL TOOLS AND METHOD

My starting point is the spatial statistical method of kernel density estimation, which is included in the ArcGIS Pro software package, and that was used to perform our analysis (for which I would like to thank Benjamin Štular). This method enables the analysis of point and line phenomena. In our case, sites are seen as points. The analysis of point phenomena is suitable for our sites. Mathematically, a smoothly curved surface is placed over each point. The value of the area is the greatest at the location of the point and decreases with increasing distance from the point, reaching zero at the distance of the search radius from the point. The density in each output raster cell is calculated by adding the values of all core surfaces that overlap the centre of the raster cell (method description: https://desktop.arcgis.com/en/arcmap/latest/tools/spatial-analyst-toolbox/how- kernel-density-works.htm, accessed on 9 July 2024). The resulting image (*Fig. 26*) has raster cells that are 1 km^2 in size, the search radius is 5 km, and the maximum area value is the default value of 1. Since I selected the site points according to various criteria (see above *5.2*), there is a possibility that their significance for determining the area of political power differs. Until we recognize the difference in meaning and know how to evaluate them numerically, all points will have the same numerical value. The search radius of 5 km represents the expected spatial extent of the Early Medieval župa and roughly corresponds to the size of the župa of Bled (Pleterski 2013; 2017). ArcGis Pro version 2.8 already has an additional option for the kernel density analysis that also considers obstacles (https://pro.arcgis.com/en/pro-app/2.8/tool-reference/geostatistical-analyst/kernel-interpolation-with-barriers.htm, accessed on 9 July 2024). Mountain ridges and difficult-to-pass river valleys certainly represent such obstacles. The former stand out already in the image and it is not even necessary to define them separately, but the criteria for the hard to cross river valleys will still need to be determined. Undoubtedly, administrative-political and market boundaries also represent obstacles, however, these cannot be determined merely from the shape of the surface. This image does not take into account the obstacles, which provides us with the possibility for further improvements. In the image, the decline in density is arbitrarily divided into nine stages.

The red line marks the border of the considered territory. At this limit, there is a possibility of its effect on the image (edge effect). There may be points of political power right next to the border, but as they are located on the other side it is impossible to see their effects.

The circles that can be seen should not always be equated with early Slavic župas. Perhaps they correspond in most cases, but certainly not in all. A detailed local treatment is necessary.

5.4 DISCUSSING THE IMAGE (*Fig. 26*)

Regardless of the fact that each of the considered site characteristics has its exceptions, it seems that the selection is justified, that the points were created in the process of asserting power. This could be indicated by two indicators. Even though the points are diverse in appearance, they are accumulated in the same area, which is the first indicator. The probable reason for this is that they share a common link – political power. The second indicator is the relatively even dispersion, which could correspond to the distribution of small political units. We still need to ascertain the impact of natural conditions with a special GIS analysis.

The level of archaeological research also has an undoubtful impact on the image. Bled and the Dežela of Radovljica stand out in terms of their strength, as they are the best archaeologically researched. They are united in a single circle, which would not have happened if the Sava Dolinka valley, which represents a demarcation line between them, was taken into account as an obstacle when creating the picture (see. *4.8* above). Since we do not know the boundaries in detail, some of the circles merged. This is particularly visible in the agriculturally favourable areas of the Ljubljana Basin and the Klagenfurter Becken/Celovška kotlina. In these areas, the density of political units could be higher than elsewhere. It is extremely likely that this was the central area of the principalities of Carantania and Carniola, however, we have insufficient data to determine their true borders. This does not mean that there were no other connections between smaller political units in the neighbourhood where there were no such concentrations. We must be aware that our insight is limited.

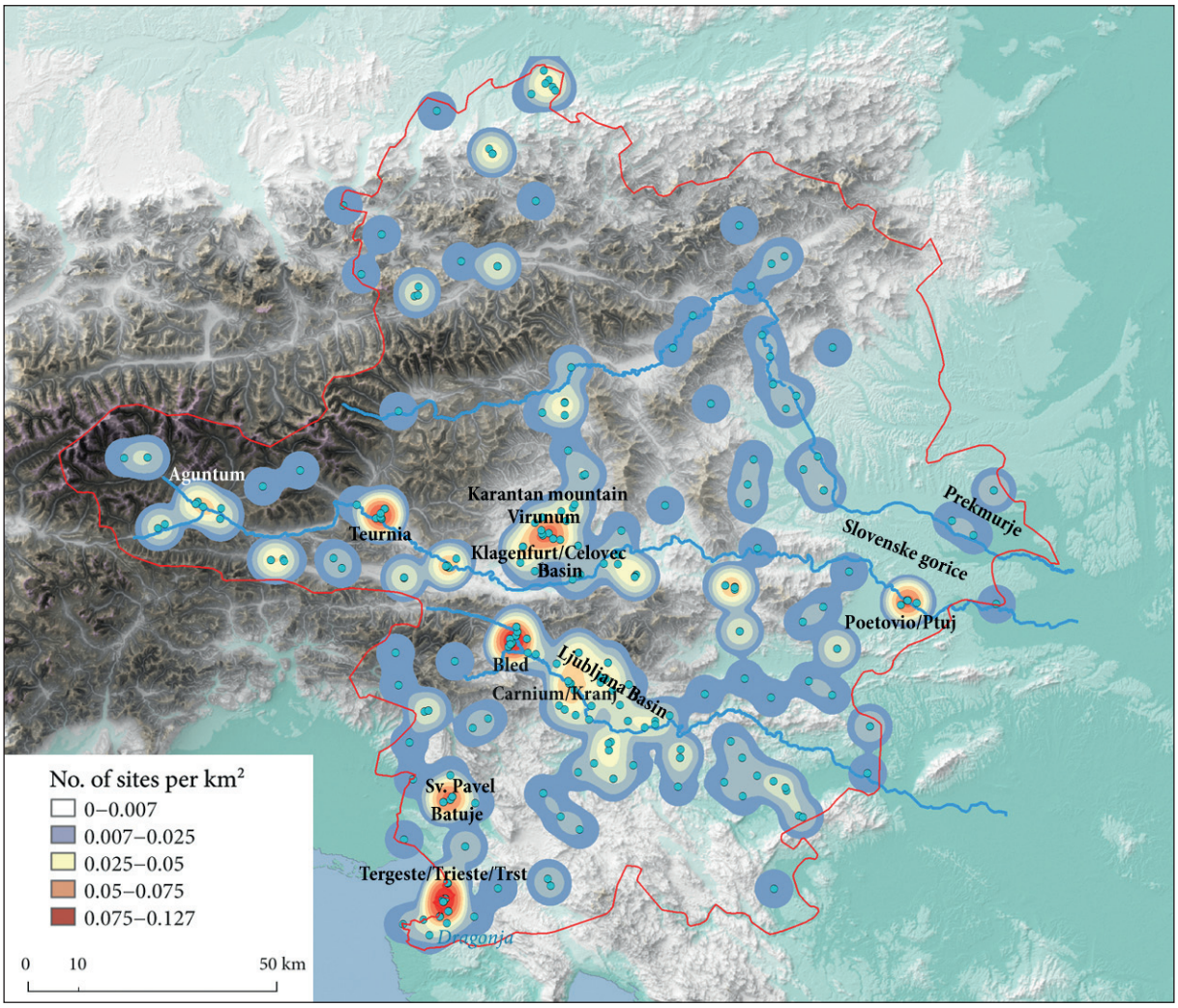

Fig. 26: South-eastern Alps. Core density of the points of political power in the period 651–996 (realisation Benjamin Štular).

Of course, the density of political units would also be expected on the fertile periphery of the Pannonian Basin for the same reason, but there are few points of political power there. In the belt ranging from Slovenske gorice to the north, there are none at all. While the absence in this zone may be explained by the exceptionally sparse settlement, such an explanation does not apply to the well-populated Prekmurje. There it becomes obvious that for the period between the 6th and the 8th century we are simply not aware of the indicators of political power, because these differed from the ones that appeared in the 9th and 10th centuries. This could be a result of the differences and changes in the power and political structure within individual territorial units. In this case, this would be partially connected to the ideological transition from the Old Faith system to Christianity, and to the greatest extent with the individualization of the authorities. This is about an individual trying to usurp the power of political decision-making, which was previously a collective power.

The strongly emphasized area of authority in the south-west, in the coastal region between Trieste and the Dragonja stream, should also be noted. If Istria as a whole was to be included in the same way, this area would undoubtedly extend to a large part of it. This area held a tradition of relatively well-organized government that remained from the time of Byzantine Istria. Later, the Frankish government relied on it, but allowed certain self-government to individual Slav groups (Levak 2007).

The area, or at least the proximity of some Roman period towns and cities, shows that even the Early Middle Ages held the conditions for accumulating political power. This is shown by the "eyes" of power in East Tyrol (Aguntum), Upper Carinthia (Teurnia), around Ulrichsberg/Šenturška gora (Virunum) and in Ptuj (Poetovio). If we exclude Bled and the Dežela of Radovljica, the area of Late Antique Kranj (Carnium) stands out.

In the search for an explanation, the area of the middle Vipava valley, where – following the collapse of the Kingdom of Lombards – political power accu-

mulated between Sv. Pavel above Vrtovin and Batuje represents a challenge.

In any case, the network of small political units shows that looking at macro political demarcations is insufficient if we wish to understand life in the area in question. What is more, such a macro view can blur beyond recognition all that was happening on the local level and influenced everyday life. We need to continue with the studies of the phenomenon of župas and the history of their effects (*Wirkungsgeschichte*), which continues to the present day (see below).

6. A HINT OF PARALLEL SOCIETIES

History is written by the victors, not the defeated, especially if the latter do not use the alphabet. Archaeology transforms material remains into some sort of ideograms that communicate many things that cannot be found in written sources. An ideogram is also a kind of record of thoughts. In the period in question, we can primarily study the process of the transformation of Vlachs into Slavs, however, we also need to take into account the existence of parallel societies that helped the Vlachs survive in the vast areas south of the Danube to this day. This retrospectively raises new research questions. How successful and complete was the Romanization process? Did a parallel society establish itself alongside the nationalized society in that period? Who did the Slavic newcomers encounter? A parallel society? And when it seems that the Vlachs survived in a parallel society that was based on economic differentiation – farmers on the one hand, shepherds, transporters, and soldiers on the other, we realize that even with Christianization, a parallel society based on worldview differences – Old Faith believers on one side and Christians on the other – was formed. Even the expansion of the state-political structures of the medieval empire did not completely erase the structures of the former župas. In many places, these remained connected to the Old Faith and survived as an invisible parallel society until the 20th century. (cf. Pleterski 2022).

7. EPILOGUE

One of the initial questions of the research was also Germanization, whatever we imagine under this term. The analysis carried out did not show its process, which most likely took place later, from the High Middle Ages onwards, and should be studied on a larger number of micro-regional cases.

We are living in a rapidly aging Europe, and many are knocking on our door, expecting a better life or at least survival in this area. This makes it possible to relive the situation during Late Antiquity, which witnessed the collapse of the Roman Empire and the steady influx of various settlers. The debate as to whether we are descendants of the natives or immigrants leads nowhere. Time and time again our ancestors are shown to be both. In the context of the settlement process, I was able to show the arrival of the Slavs as a new population into a sparsely populated or even unpopulated territory. These were people who, as survival opportunists, lived on the border between wet and dry environments, who cremated their dead, who had elaborate ideas concerning the landscape of the dead, and therefore mound shapes and slopes towards the south-east were important to them. According to current data, they arrived in groups from the end of the 5th century onwards. So far, we do not have a more detailed insight. The ancient Vlachs knew how to survive in the mountains, but they occasionally also inhabited the plains, to where they descended by the 9th century and merged with the Slavs who were already living there. Linguistically, the Slavic language was clearly dominant. When we observe artefacts, buildings, graves, burial structures, examine the living, kitchen, and spiritual culture, various branches of the economy, the origin of the ingredients will be better known. The mountainous and dry karst world requires special skills for survival, which the Slavs did not master. Without the cooperation of the Vlachs, this world would be abandoned.

While studying the relationship between the influential spaces of churches and burial sites without churches, an archaeological tool was revealed that outlines the political relations and the extent of authoritarian power at the time the church network was emerging. According to this, the small starting point of Carantania appeared at the beginning of the 9th century, as did many individual župas as primordial political communities in the 9th and 10th centuries. They formed the foundation that has retained its importance in many places to this day. The constant political games of the intervening times were of interest to the chroniclers, but they were rarely important in everyday life and represent a time that did not have as significant an impact on everything below it as we thought until now.

Translation: Sunčan Patrick Stone

Written sources

ANNALES MAGDEBURGENSES = *Annales Magdeburgenses*. – In: H. Pertz (ed.) 1859, Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptorum, Tomus XVI, Hannover, 105–196. (https://www.dmgh.de/mgh_ss_16/index.htm#page/195/mode/1up; accessed on 22 September 2023)

ANONYMUS RAVENNATUS = *Ravennatis Anonymi cosmographia et Guidonis geographica*. – In: M. Pinder, G. Parthey (eds.)1860, Berolini. (https://ia800909.us.archive.org/32/items/ravennatisanony02ravegoog/ravennatisanony02ravegoog.pdf; accessed on 22 September 2023)

CONVERSIO = *Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum*. = Wolfram 2012.

FREDEGAR = *Fredegarii et aliorum chronica. Vitae sanctorum*. – B. Krusch (ed.) 1888, Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum, Tomus II, Hannover. (https://www.dmgh.de/mgh_ss_rer_merov_2/index.htm#page/(I)/mode/1up access 22 September 2023)

HELMOLD = *Helmoldi presbyteri Bozoviensis cronica Slavorum. Accedunt versus de vita Vicelini et Sidonis epistola*. – B. Schmeidler (ed.) 1937, Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum ex Monumentis Germaniae historicis separatim editi 32, Hannover. (https://www.dmgh.de/mgh_ss_rer_germ_32/index.htm#page/(II)/mode/1up; accessed on 6 October 2023).

HL = *Paulus Diaconus, Historia Langobardorum*. – G. Waitz (ed.) 1878, Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi 48, Hannover (https://www.dmgh.de/mgh_ss_rer_germ_48/index.htm#page/I/mode/1up; accessed on 6 October 2023).

HORMAYR, Joseph von 1803, *Kritisch-diplomatische Beyträge zur Geschichte Tirols im Mittelalter mit mehreren hundert ungedruckten Urkunden*. Ersten Bandes, zweyte Abtheilung. – Wien (https://opacplus.bsb-muenchen.de/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma991060220119707356&context=L&vid=49BVB_BSB:VU1&lang=de&search_scope=MyInstitution&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=LibraryCatalog&query=any,contains,BV003736316; accessed on 6 October 2023).

ÍSLENDINGABÓK = Íslendingabók – kristni saga: The book of the Icelanders — the story of the conversion. – Viking society for northern research, Text series Volume XVIII, A. Faulkes, A. Finlay (eds.), translated by Siân Grønlie, London 2006. (http://www.vsnrweb-publications.org.uk/Text%20Series/IslKr.pdf; accessed on 6 October 2023)

MGH DD Karol. I = E. Mühlbacher (ed.) 1906, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Diplomatum Karolinorum, Tomus I, Pippini, Carlomanni, Caroli Magni diplomata*. – Hannoverae. (https://www.dmgh.de/mgh_dd_karol_i/index.htm#page/(III)/mode/1up, access 6 October 2023)

MGH DD LdD / DD Km / DD LdJ = *Monumenta Germaniae historica. Diplomatum regum Germaniae ex stirpe Karolinorum, T. I, Ludovici Germanici, Karlomanni, Ludowici Iunioris diplomata.* – Berolini, 1934. (https://www.dmgh.de/mgh_dd_ldd__dd_km__dd_ldj/index.htm#page/(t01)/mode/1up; accessed on 6 October 2023)

MGH DD O II = *Monumenta Germaniae historica. Diplomatum regum et imperatorum Germaniae, T. II/1, Ottonis II. diplomata*. – Hannoverae, 1888 (https://www.dmgh.de/mgh_dd_o_ii__dd_o_iii/index.htm#page/(t01)/mode/1up; accessed on 6 October 2023).

SANTONINO = *Itinerario di Paolo Santonino in Carintia, Stiria e Carniola negli anni 1485–1487 (Codice Vaticano Latino 3795)*. – G. Vale (ed.) 1943, Biblioteca apostolica Vaticana, Studi e testi 103, Città del Vaticano.

SAXO GRAMMATICUS = *Saxo Grammaticus, Danorum Regum Heroumque Historia.* X–XVI. – E. Christiansen (ed.) 1981, BAR International Series 118.

SCHUMI, Franz 1882–1883, *Urkunden- und Regestenbuch des Herzogtums Krain*. – I. Band 777–1200, Laibach. (https://archive.org/details/urkundenundrege00schugoog/page/n131/mode/2up; accessed on 6 October 2023).

THIETMAR = *Thietmari Merseburgensis episcopi Chronicon und ihre Korveier Überarbeitung*. – R. Holtzmann (ed.) 1935, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, Nova Series 9, Berlin (https://www.dmgh.de/mgh_ss_rer_germ_n_s_9/index.htm#page/(III)/mode/1up; accessed on 6 October 2023)

***

ARENTZEN, Jörg-Geerd 1984, *Imago mundi cartographica. Studien zur Bildlichkeit mittelalterlicher Welt- und Ökumenekarten unter besondere Berücksichtigung des Zusammenwirken von Text und Bild*. – Münsterische Mittelalter-Schriften 53, München.

BEZLAJ, France 1966, Karakteristika slovenskega izraznega fonda. – In: *II. seminar slovenskega jezika, literature in kulture. Predavanja (Slovenian language, literature and culture seminar)*, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, 1–17.

BEZLAJ, France 1967, Slovenščina v krogu slovanskih jezikov. – In: *III. seminar slovenskega jezika, literature in kulture. Predavanja (Slovenian language, literature and culture seminar)*, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, 1–13.

BIZJAK, Matjaž 2012, Listina o izgradnji in posvetitvi lastniške cerkve v Lescah. – In: R. Novak

Klemenčič, S. Štefanac (eds.), *Historia artis magistra: amicorum discipulorumque munuscula Johanni Höfler septuagenario dicata*, Ljubljana, 33–42.

BLAZNIK, Pavle 1963, *Urbarji freisinške škofije*. – Srednjeveški urbarji za Slovenijo 4, Viri za zgodovino Slovencev IV, Ljubljana.

BRATOŽ, Rajko 1999, Začetki oglejskega misijona med Slovani in Avari: sestanek škofov "ad ripas Danubii" in sinoda v Čedadu 796. – In: V. Rajšp, E. Bruckmüller (eds.), *Vilfanov zbornik: pravo, zgodovina, narod / Recht, Geschichte, Nation*, Ljubljana, 79–111.

BRATOŽ, Rajko 2014, *Med Italijo in Ilirikom. Slovenski prostor in njegovo sosedstvo v pozni antiki*. – Dela 1. razreda SAZU 39, Zbirka Zgodovinskega časopisa 46.

BREŠČAK, Danilo 2002, Slovansko grobišče na Camberku nad Cerovim Logom / Slawisches Gräberfeld auf dem Camberk oberhalb von Cerov Log. – In: M. Guštin (ed.), *Zgodnji Slovani. Zgodnjesrednjeveška lončenina na obrobju vzhodnih Alp. / Die frühen Slawen. Frühmittelalterliche Keramik am Rand der Ostalpen*, Ljubljana, 104–110.

BUZÁS, Gergely 2016, A középkori pécsi püspökvár. – In: G. Heidl, György, E. Raffay, A. Tüskés (eds.), *Echo simul una et quina, Tanulmányok a pécsi székesegyházról. Tóth Melinda emlékére*, Pécs, 75–103.

BUZÁS, Gergely 2020, Magyarország korai székesegyházairól / On the early cathedrals of Hungary. – *Arhitectura religioasă medievală din Transilvania / Középkori egyházi építészet Erdélyben / Medieval Ecclesiastical Architecture in Transylvania* VI, Satu Mare, Szatmárnémeti, 7–38.

BUZÁS et alii 2017 = BUZÁS, Gergely, BORUZS, Katalin, MERVA, Szabina, TOLNAI, Katalin 2017, Régészeti kutatások a visegrádi Sibrik-dombon / Archaeological investigations on Sibrik Hill at Visegrád. – *Communicationes archaeologicae Hungariae*, 193–235.

CAVADA, Enrico., Marcus ZAGERMANN (eds.) 2020, *Alpine Festungen 400–1000. Chronologie, Räume und Funktionen, Netzwerke, Interpretationen / Fortezze Alpine (secoli V–X). Cronologia, spazi e funzioni, sistemi, interpretazioni.* Akten des Kolloquiums in München am 13. und 14. September 2018. – Münchner Beiträge zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte 68.

CIGLENEČKI, Slavko 2023, *Between Ravenna and Constantinople: rethinking Late Antique settlement patterns*. – Opera Instituti Archaeologici Sloveniae 46. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610507369

CVITKOVIČ, Jan 1999, *Arheološka topografija srednje in zgornje Soška doline*. – Unpublished BA Thesis, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana.

ČIŽMÁŘ, Ivan, KOHOUTEK, Jiří 2015, Hradisko Klášťov u Vysokého Pole (okr. Zlín). – In: P. Karol, R. Zbigniew (eds.), *Bojna 2, Nové výsledky výskumov včasnostredovekých hradísk*, Archaeologica Slovaca Monographiae XXII, Nitra, 185–194.

ČOP, Jože 2006, O Črnem biku ali Čarnem juncu. – *Studia mythologica Slavica* 9, 345–355.

DIESENBERGER et alii (eds.) 2020 = M. DIESENBERGER, S. EICHERT, K. WINCKLER (eds.) 2020, *Der Ostalpenraum im Frühmittelalter – Herrschaftsstrukturen, Raumorganisation und archäologisch-historischer Vergleich*. – Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Denkschriften 511, Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelaters 23, Wien.

DOBREZ, Livio 2009, New and Old Paradigms: the Question of Space. – In: G. Dimitriadis (ed.), *Landscape in Mind: Dialogue on Space between Anthropology and Archaeology*, BAR International Series 2003, 5–7.

DULAR, Janez 2008, Mihovo in severni obronki Gorjancev v prvem tisočletju pr. Kr. / Mihovo und die nördlichen Ausläufer der Gorjanci im ersten Jahrtausend v. Chr. – *Arheološki vestnik* 59, 111–148.

DULAR, J. 2021, *Gradivo za topografijo Dolenjske, Posavja in Bele krajine v železni dobi*. 3. del. – E-Monographiae Instituti Archaeologici Sloveniae 10/3. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610505105_3

EICHERT, Stefan 2012, *Frühmittelalterliche Strukturen im Ostalpenraum. Studien zu Geschichte und Archäologie Karantaniens*. – Aus Forschung und Kunst 39.

EICHERT Stefan 2014, Die Edlinger und das karantanische Frühmittelalter. Eine archäologisch-historische Spurensuche. – In: B. Felsner, C. Tropper, T. Zeloth (eds.), *Archiv wissenschafft Geschichte*. Festschrift für Wilhelm Wadl zum 60. Geburtstag, Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, 165–182.

EICHERT, Stefan 2020, Herrschafts- und Sozialstrukturen im frühmittelalterlichen Ostalpenraum. – In: Diesenberger et alii (eds.) 2020, 101–128.

EICHERT, Stefan, BRUNDKE, Nina 2020, Ostalpenraum Revisited. Stand und Perspektiven der Forschung zum frühmittelalterlichen Ostalpenraum im 21. Jahrhundert. – In: R. Prien, J. Drauschke (eds.), *Quo vadis, Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie?*, Studien zu Spätantike und Frühmittelalter 9, 171–186.

FRITZE, H. Wolfgang 1960, Probleme der abodritischen Stammes- und Reichsverfassung und ihrer Entwicklung vom Stammesstaat zum Herrschaftsstaat. – In: H. Ludat (ed.), *Siedlung und Verfassung der Slawen zwischen Elbe, Saale und Oder*, Giessen, 141–219.

GALUŠKA, Luděk 1997, The Sacral Area in Uherské Hradiště–Sady and its Significance to the Beginning ot the Moravian Slavs in the 9th Century. – In: D. Čaplovič, J. Doruľa (eds.), *Central Europe in 8th–10th Centuries. / Mitteleuropa im 8.–10. Jahrhunder*t, Bratislava, 142–148.

GLASER, Franz 1999, Inschrift karantanischer Kirchenstifter. – *Archäologie Österreichs* 10/1, 19–22.

GLASER, Franz 2022, Götterbilder der Slawen. – In: A. Cedilnik, M. Lovenjak (eds.), *Na obzorju novega. Območje severnega Jadrana ter vzhodnoalpski in balkansko-podonavski prostor v obdobju pozne antike in zgodnjega srednjega veka*, Ljubljana, 315–337. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4312/9789612970161.

GLEIRSCHER, Paul 2018, *Karantanien: Slawisches Fürstentum und bairische Grafschaft*. – Klagenfurt/Celovec, Ljubljana/Laibach, Wien/Dunaj.

GRAFENAUER, Bogo 1952, *Ustoličevanje koroških vojvod in država karantanskih Slovencev*. – Dela 1. razreda SAZU 7, Ljubljana.

GRAFENAUER, Bogo 1964, *Zgodovina slovenskega naroda I*. – Ljubljana.

GUTJAHR et alii 2024 = GUTJAHR, Christoph, KARL, Stephan, GREINER, Christian 2024, From Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages: The 'Dark Centuries' in Styria (400–650 AD) and the 'New Beginning' of Settlement in the 7th Century. – In: Štular et alii 2024, 153–xx. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610508786_08

HLAVICA Michal 2009, *Raně středověké kultovní aktivity na vrchu Klášťov a jejich odraz v archeologických pramenech a ústní lidové slovesnosti (Early Medieval Cultic Activities on Klášťov and their Reflections in Archaeological Finds and Oral Tradion)*. – Unpublished BA Thesis, University of Brno, Brno (https://is.muni.cz/th/edk8j/; accessed on 6 October 2023).

HLAVICA, Michal 2020, *Značky na dnech velkomoravských keramických nádob jako nástroj poznání ekonomicko-politické komplexity Velké Moravy (Imprints on bottoms of Great Moravian ceramics vessels as a tool to understand the economic and political complexity of the Great Moravia)*. – Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Brno, Brno. (https://is.muni.cz/th/xhz28/thesis_hlavica.pdf; accessed on 6 October 2023)

HÖFLER, Janez 2016, *O prvih cerkvah in župnijah na Slovenskem. K razvoju cerkvene teritorialne organizacije slovenskih dežel v srednjem veku*. – Ljubljana.

HÖFLER, Janez 2016a, Lastniške cerkve zgodnjega srednjega veka na Gorenjskem in njihovo zgodovinsko ozadje. – *Varstvo spomenikov* 49, 64–73.

HÖFLER, Janez 2019, *Lastniške cerkve v Sloveniji. Raziskana, registrirana in potencialna zgodnjesrednjeveška grobišča*. – Ljubljana.

HÖFLER, Janez 2021, Zu den Anfängen der Pfarrorganisation im Gailtal mit allgemeinen Beobachtungen zur Entwicklung der kirchlichen Einteilung im östlichen Gebiet des Patriarchats Aquileia. – *Carinthia* I/211, 93–119.

HROBAT, Katja 2004, Ustno izročilo o lintverju kot indikator ritualnega prostora antične skupnosti Ajdovščine nad Rodikom. – *Studia Mythologica Slavica* 7, 63–78. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/sms.v7i0.1765

JONES, Siân 2003[2], *The Archaeology of Ethnicity. Constructing identities in the past and present*. – London, New York.

JONES, Siân 2008, Ethnicity: Theoretical Approaches, Methodological Implications. – In: R.A. Bentley, H.D.G. Maschner, C. Chippindale (eds.), *Handbook of Archaeological Theories*, Lanham, 321–333. https://alex-bentley.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/ch19_Jones.271233136.pdf; accessed on 6 October 2023).

KAHL, Hans-Dietrich 1999, *Der Millstätter Domitian. Abklopfen einer problematischen Klosterüberlieferung zur Missionierung der Alpenslawen Oberkärntens*. – Vorträge und Forchungen, Sonderband 46, Stuttgart.

KAHL, Hans-Dietrich 2000, Der "Richter des Landes" zu Kärnten in Überlieferung des sogenannten Schwabenspiegels. – *Carinthia* I 190, 133–141.

KAHL, Hans-Dietrich 2002, Der Staat der Karantanen. Fakten, Thesen und Fragen zu einer frühen slawischen Machtbildung im Ostalpen-raum (7.–9. Jh.) / Država Karantancev. Dejstva, teze in vprašanja o zgodnji slovanski državni tvorbi v vzhodnoalpskem prostoru (7.–9. stol.). – *Slovenija in sosednje dežele med antiko in karolinško dobo: začetki slovenske etnogeneze. Supplementum / Slowenien und die Nachbarländer zwischen Antike und karolingischer Epoche: Anfänge der slowenischen Ethnogenese.* Supplementum, Situla 39, Razprave 1. razreda SAZU 20.

KAHL, Hans-Dietrich 2007, Karantanische Streitfragen. Eine Antwort an Peter Štih. – *Carinthia* I 197, 351–364.

KARPF, Kurt 2001, *Frühmittelalterliche Flechtwerksteine in Karantanien. Marmorne Kirchenaustattungen aus tassilonisch-karolingischer Zeit*. – Monographien zur Frühgeschichte und Mittelalterarchäologie 8, Innsbruck.

KISS, Gábor, TÓTH, Endre 1993, A Szombathelyi szent Márton templom régészeti. Kutatása 1984-1992 (Előzetes jelentés a feltárt 9-13. századi emlékekről). – *Communicationes archaeologicae Hungariae*, 175–199.

KLEJN, Lev Samuilovič 1988, *Arheološka tipologija*. – Ljubljana. (English edition: *Archaeological Typology*. – BAR International Series 153, Oxford 1982).

KNIFIC, Timotej 1994, Vranje near Sevnica: A Late Roman Settlement in the Light of Certain Pottery Finds. – *Arheološki vestnik* 45, 211–237.

KONEČNÝ, Lubomír 1980, Poznámka ke kultovněrituálnímu významu dvorce na Pohansku. – In: B. Dostál, J. Vignatiová (eds.), *Slované 6.–10. století*, Sborník referátů ze sympozia Břeclav-Pohansko 1978, Brno, 131–141.

KOROŠEC, Paola 1979, *Zgodnjesrednjeveška arheološka slika karantanskih Slovanov*. – Dela 1. razreda SAZU 22, Ljubljana.

KOROŠEC, Paola 1985, Ungarische Elemente aus der Nekropole auf der Burg zu Ptuj (Madžarski elementi na nekropoli na Ptujskem gradu). – *Arheološki vestnik* 36, 337–350.

KOUŘIL Pavel 2021, Klášťov Hill – an Exceptional Case of Religious Customs and Notions in the Slavic World (Eastern Moravia, Czech Republic). – *Slovenská archeológia* 69, Supplementum 2, Nitra, 431–439. DOI: https://doi.org/10.31577/slovarch.2021.suppl.2.42

KRIŽ, Borut 2021, *Gorjanci med Rimom in Bizancem / The Gorjanci Hills between Rome and Byzantium*. – Novo mesto.

KURNATOWSKI, Stanisław 1979, Demographische Aspekte hinsichtlich slawischer Migrationen im 1. Jahrtausend. – *Rapports du IIIe Congres International d'Archéologie Slave Bratislava 7–14 septembre 1975*, Tome 1, Bratislava, 453–475.

KUŠLJAN, Ignac 1968, Spomini. – In: Pirkovič I., *Crucium. Rimska poštna postaja med Emono in Neviodunom / Die römische Poststation zwischen Emona und Neviodunum. Dodatek. Arheološki spomini Ignaca Kušljana / Anhang. Die archaeologischen Erinnerungen von Ignac Kušljan*, Situla 10, 103–119.

LANE, J. Paul 2008, The Use of Ethnography in Landscape Archaeology. – In: B. David, J. Thomas (eds.), *Handbook of Landscape Archaeology*, The World Archaeological Congress's Research Handbooks in Archaeology 1, Walnut Creek, 237–244.

LAMMERS, Walther 1981–1983, Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae. – *Lexikon des Mittelalters* II, München, Zürich, 1483–1484.

LEBEN-SELJAK, Petra 2020, Blejski otok: antropološka analiza / Bled Island: anthropological examination. – In: Štular (ed.) 2020a, 201–233. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610502609

LEVAK, Maurizio 2007, *Slaveni vojvode Ivana. Kolonizacija Slavena u Istri u početnom razdoblju franačke uprave*. – Zagreb.

LINDSTEDT, Jouko, SALMELA, Elina, 2020, Migrations and language shifts as components of the Slavic spread. – In: T. Klír, V. Boček, J. Nicolas (eds.), *New perspectives on the Early Slavs and the rise of Slavic: Contact and migrations,* Empirie und Theorie der Sprachwissenschaft 6, Heidelberg, 275–299.

LOSERT, Hans 2011. Das Brandgräberfeld von Regensburg-Großprüfening und die frühen Slawen in Pannonien. In Gedenken an Marek Dulinicz, Warschau († 2010). – In: O. Heinrich-Tamáska (ed.), *Keszthely-Fenékpuszta im Kontext spätantiker Kontinuitätsforschung zwischen Noricum und Moesia*, Castellum Pannonicum Pelsonense 2. Budapest, Leipzig, Keszthely, Rahden Westf., 475–489.

LOŠEK, Fritz 1997, *Die Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum und der Brief des Erzbischofs Theotmar von Salzburg*. – Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Studien und Texte 15, Hannover.

ŁOWMIAŃSKI, Henryk 1979, *Religia Słowian i jej upadek (w. VI–XII)*. – Warszawa.

LOZIĆ, Edisa 2021, Application of Airborne LiDAR Data to the Archaeology of Agrarian Land Use. The Case Study of the Early Medieval Microregion of Bled (Slovenia). – *Remote sensing* 13(16), 3228. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3390/rs13163228

LUX et alii 2018 = J. LUX, B. ŠTULAR, K. ZANIER, (eds.) 2018, *Slovani, naša dediščina / Our heritage: the Slavs.* – Vestnik 27, Ljubljana.

MADER, Brigitta 1993, Das slawische Gräberfeld von Pordenone - Palazzo Ricchieri. – *Aquileia Nostra* 64, 241–300.

MAGDIČ, Andrej 2017, New Archaeological Research into the Middle Ages in the Slovenian Regions of Pomurje and Podravje. The Issue of Settlement Continuity and the Development of Agrarian Activities. – In: T. Sekelj Ivančan (ed.), *Srednjovjekovna naselja u svjetlu arheoloških izvora / Medieval Settlements in the Light of Archaeological Sources*, Zbornik Instituta za arheologiju 6, Zagreb, 441–458.

MAGDIČ, Andrej 2021, *Arheološka interpretacija Dravske ravni in okoliških vzpetin med 6. in 12. stoletjem*. – Unpublished PhD Thesis, Podiplomska šola ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana.

MAGDIČ, A. 2024, The Dynamics of the Early Medieval Settlement Development in the Drava Plain in Connection with the Pedological Analysis of Arable Land. – In: Štular et al. 2024, 73–83. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610508786_05

MENCEJ, Mirjam 1997, *Pomen vode v predstavah starih Slovanov o posmrtnem življenju in šegah ob smrti*. – Knjižnica Glasnika Slovenskega etnološkega društva 27, Ljubljana.

MIHELIČ, Darja 1977, Karantanija v očeh zgodovinarjev od konca 15. do 18. stoletja. – *Zgodovinski časopis* 31, 287–328.

MILAVEC, Tina 2021, Crises and new beginnings: collapse, adaptation and strategies of success along the road to Italy. – In: Z. Rácz, G. Szenthe (eds.), *Attila's Europe? Structural transformation and strategies of success in the European Hun Period*, Budapest, 201–211.

MIRNIK PREZELJ, Irena 1998, Slovenska zgodnjesrednjeveška arheologija med preteklostjo in sedanjostjo – pogled z "Zahoda" / Slovene Early Medieval Archaeology between the Past and Present – View from the West. – *Arheološki vestnik* 49, 361–381.

MODRIJAN, Zvezdana 2020, Late antique settlements in Slovenia and their position in the broader trade network of late antiquity (a case of pottery). – In: Cavada, Zagermann (eds.) 2020, 575–593.

MOLNÁR, István 2022, Templom és erődítés a "sötét időkből" Kaposszentjakabon. – In: T.K. Hága, B. Kolozsi, E.G. Nagy (eds.), *Sötét idők hétköznapjai*, Tempora obscura 5, Debrecen, 253–279.

MOSZYŃSKI, Kazimierz 1929, *Kultura ludowa Słowian. Część I. Kultura materjalna.* – Kraków.

MOSZYŃSKI, Kazimierz 1934, *Kultura ludowa Słowian. Część II. Kultura duchowa. Zeszyt 1.* – Kraków.

MOSZYŃSKI, Kazimierz 1939, *Kultura ludowa Słowian. Część II. Kultura duchowa. Zeszyt 2.* – Kraków.

MÜHLE, Eduard 2020, *Die Slawen im Mittelalter. Zwischen Idee und Wirklichkeit*. – Wien, Köln, Weimar.

NIEDERLE, Lubor 1906, *Původ a počátky Slovanů jižních. Svazek I.* – Slovanské starožitnosti II/1, Praha.

NOWOTNY, Elisabeth 2005, Das frühmittelalterliche Gräberfeld von Hohenberg, Steiermark mit Exkursen zur historischen und archäologischen Situation im Ostalpenraum. – *Archaeologia Austriaca* 89, 177–250.

PAREKH, Bhikhu 1981, *Hannah Arendt and the Search for a New Political Philosophy*. – London.

PAVLOVIČ, Daša 2013, *Zgodnjesrednjeveška poselitev severovzhodne Slovenije: primer najdišča Nova tabla pri Murski Soboti.* – Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Primorska, Koper.

PAVLOVIČ, Daša 2017, Začetki zgodnjeslovanske poselitve Prekmurja / Beginnings of the Early Slavic settlement in the Prekmurje region, Slovenia. – *Arheološki vestnik* 68, 349–386.

PAVLOVIČ, Daša, 2020, Who were the lowland neighbours? Late Antique lowland settlement in Slovenia. – In: Cavada, Zagermann (eds.) 2020, 175–197.

PAVLOVIČ et alii 2021 = PAVLOVIČ, Daša, VOJAKOVIĆ, Petra, TOŠKAN, Borut 2021, Cerklje ob Krki: novosti v poselitvi Dolenjske v zgodnjem srednjem veku (Cerklje ob Krki: new findings on the early medieval settlement of Dolenjska). – *Arheološki vestnik* 72, 137–186. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/AV.72.06

PERŠIČ, Janez, ŠTIH, Peter 1982, Pogani na Kranjskem v 11. stoletju? – *Kronika. Časopis za slovensko krajevno zgodovino* 30/3, 197–198.

PLETERSKI, Andrej 1994, Ecclesia demonibus addicta: povedka o poganskem svetišču v Millstattu. – *Zgodovinski časopis* 48, 297–306.

PLETERSKI, Andrej 1996, *Mitska stvarnost koroških knežjih kamnov*. – *Zgodovinski časopis* 50, 481–534.

PLETERSKI, Andrej 1997, Eine heidnisch-christliche synkretische Kirche in Millstatt?. – *Carinthia I* 187, 201–212.

PLETERSKI, Andrej 1998, Lepi, grdi, zli. O metodah, Liburniji, Karantaniji, vojvodskem stolu, Konverziji in Brižinskih spomenikih. – *Zgodovinski časopis* 52/2, 215–277.

PLETERSKI, Andrej 2001a, Proučevanje preteklosti s pomočjo procesov in struktur. – *Arheo* 21, *65*–68.

PLETERSKI, Andrej 2001b, Staroslovansko obdobje na vzhodnoalpskem ozemlju. Zgodovina raziskav do prve svetovne vojne. – *Arheo* 21, 73–77.

PLETERSKI, Andrej 2008, Zgodnjesrednjeveški žgani grobovi v vzhodnih Alpah (Frühmittelalterliche Brandgräber im Ostalpenraum). – In: U. Steinklauber (ed.), *Frühmittelalterarchäologie in der Steiermark: Beiträge eines Fachgesprächs anlässlich des 65. Geburtstags von Diether Kramer*, Schild von Steier 4, 33–39.

PLETERSKI, Andrej 2010, *Zgodnjesrednjeveška naselbina na blejski Pristavi. Tafonomija, predmeti in čas / Frühmittelalterliche Siedlung Pristava in Bled. Taphonomie, Fundgegenstände und zeitliche Einordnung.* – Opera Instituti Archaeologici Sloveniae 19. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789612545666

PLETERSKI, Andrej 2013, *The invisible Slavs. Župa Bled in the prehistoric Early Middle Ages*. – Opera Instituti archaeologici Sloveniae 28. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789612546083

PLETERSKI Andrej 2014, *Kulturni genom*. – Studia Mythologica Slavica – Supplementa, Supplementum 10, Ljubljana. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610503606

PLETERSKI Andrej 2015, Ранние славяне в Восточных Альпах и на соседних землях (The Early Slavs in the Eastern Alps and their Periphery). – In: И. О. Гавритухин, Р. А. Рабинович (eds.), *Славяне на Дунае. Обретение родины (The Slavs on the Danube. Homeland Found),* Санкт-Петербург, Кишинев, Одесса, Бухарест, 227–248.

PLETERSKI, Andrej 2017, Materiale Reste der altslawischen Župa. – In: G. Fusek (ed.), *Archäologische Studien zum frühen Mittelalter,* Archaeologica Slovaca Monographiae. Communicationes 19, Nitra, 91–98. (http://iza.zrc-sazu.si/pdf/Pleterski/Pleterski_2017_Altslawischen_zupa.pdf; accessed on 22 September 2023)

PLETERSKI, Andrej 2022, Verovanje host v sklopu staroverstva na Slovenskem in verovanja starih Slovanov. – In: S. Babič, M. Belak (eds.), *Staroverstvo v Sloveniji med religijo in znanostjo*, Studia mythologica Slavica – Supplementa, Supplementum 17, Ljubljana, 109–143. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610506584

PLETERSKI, Andrej 2023, *Kulturni genom: mitična zgodba in mitična pokrajina*. – Ljubljana. DOI: https://zenodo.org/record/8176676

PLETERSKI, Andrej, BELAK, Mateja 2002, Lončenina z Gradu na Gorenjem Mokronogu in vprašanje prevzema lončarskih znanj / Keramik vom Grad am Gorenji Mokronog und die Frage der Übernahme von Töpfereiwissen. – In: M. Guštin (ed.), *Zgodnji Slovani: zgodnjesrednjeveška lončenina na obrobju*

vzhodnih Alp / Die frühen Slawen: frühmittelalterliche Keramik am Rand der Ostalpen, Ljubljana, 98–103.

RAJCHL Rostislav 1995, Astronomické prvky v orientaci spojnic kostelů z předvelkomoravského a velkomoravského období v oblasti Uherského Hradiště / Astronomische Elemente in der Orientierung von Verbindungslinien der großmährischen und vorgroßmährischen Kirchen im Gebiet Uherské Hradiště. – *Slovácko* 37, 129–138.

RAMOVŠ, Fran 1995, *Kratka zgodovina slovenskega jezika I*. – Ljubljana (first edition 1936).

RIHTER, Jernej 2019, Poplavna ravnica reke Save na Krškem polju kot gospodarsko zaledje kmečkih gospodarstev v prvi polovici 20. stoletja. – *Studia universitatis hereditati* 7/1, 9–61.

ROBB, John G. 1998, The "ritual landscape" concept in archaeology: a heritage construction. – *Landscape Research* 23/2, 159–174.

RUCHHÖFT, Fred 2008, *Vom slawischen Stammesgebiet zur deutschen Vogtei. Die Entwicklung der Territorien in Ostholstein, Lauenburg, Mecklenburg und Vorpommern im Mittelalter*. – Archäologie und Geschichte im Ostseeraum 4, Rahden/Westf.

SAGADIN, Maksimiljan 2008, *Od Karnija do Kranja. Arheološki podatki o razvoju poselitve v antičnem in zgodnjesrednjeveškem obdobju*. – Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana.

SAUER, Joseph 1924, *Symbolik des Kirchengebäudes und seiner Ausstattung in der Auffassung des Mittelalters*. – Freiburg im Breisgau.

SEDOV, Valentin Vasiljevič 2013, *Sloveni u ranom srednjem veku*. – Novi Sad.

SŁUPECKI, Leszek Paweł 2002, Pagan religion and cultural landscape of Northwestern slavs in the early Middle-Ages. – *Siedlungsforschung. Archäologie – Geschichte – Geographie* 20, 25–40.

SÖRRIES, Reiner 2003, Der mittelalterliche Friedhof: Das Monopol der Kirche im Bestattungswesen und der so genannte Kirchhof . – In: R. Sörries (ed.), *Raum für Tote. Die Geschichte der Friedhöfe von den Gräberstraßen der Römerzeit bis zur anonymen Bestattung*, Braunschweig, 27–52.

SVETLIK et alii 2019 = SVETLIK, I. , JULL, A., MOLNÁR, M., POVINEC, P., KOLÁŘ, T., DEMJÁN, P., PACHNEROVA BRABCOVA, K., BRYCHOVA, V., DRESLEROVA, D., RYBNIČEK, M., SIMEK, P. 2019, The Best possible Time resolution: How precise could a Radiocarbon dating method be? – *Radiocarbon* 61(6), 1729–1740. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/RDC.2019.134

SZAKÁCS, Béla Zsolt 2018, Architecture in Hungary in the Eleventh Century. – In: T. Janiak, D. Stryniak (eds.), *Architektura w początkach państw Europy Środkowej / Architecture in the Early Period of Central European States,* Gniezno, 199–222.

SZŐKE, Béla Miklós 2021, *Die Karolingerzeit in Pannonien*. – Monographien des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums 145, Mainz.

ŠAŠEL, Jaro 1976, Omemba Slovanov v pesmi Martina iz Brage na Portugalskem. – *Kronika* 24, 151–158.

ŠKOFIC et alii 2016 = ŠKOFIC, Jožica, GOSTENČNIK, Januška, HAZLER, Vito, HORVAT, Mojca, JAKOP, Tjaša, JEŽOVNIK, Janoš, KENDA-JEŽ, Karmen, NARTNIK, Vlado, SMOLE, Vera, ŠEKLI, Matej, ZULJAN KUMAR, Danila, *Slovenski lingvistični atlas 2. Kmetija. 1 Atlas.* – Jezikovni atlasi, Ljubljana. (https://sla.zrc-sazu.si/publikacije/SLA2-atlas-LowRes.pdf; last access 29 September 2023).

ŠTIH, Peter 1983, Madžari in slovenska zgodovina v zadnji četrtini 9. in prvi polovici 10. stoletja. – *Zgodovinski časopis* 37, 171–201.

ŠTIH, Peter 1995, Carniola, patria Sclavorum. – *Österreichische Osthefte: Zeitschrift für Mittel-, Ost- und Südosteuropaforschung* 37/4, 845–861.

ŠTIH, Peter 1997, O vojvodskem stolu in Liburniji ter o metodi in znanstveni korektnosti neke razprave. – *Zgodovinski časopis* 51, 110–120.

ŠTIH, Peter 2004a, Glose k novi monografiji o Karantaniji. – *Zgodovinski časopis* 58, 467–487.

ŠTIH, Peter 2004b, Prva omemba Bleda v pisnih virih. Listina kralja Henrika II. za briksenškega škofa Albuina z dne 10. aprila 1004 (D. H. II. 67). – In: J. Dežman (ed.), *Bled tisoč let. Blejski zbornik 2004*, Radovljica, 7–34.

ŠTIH, Peter 2012, Ustoličevanje koroških vojvod med zgodovino in predstavami: problemi njegovega izročila, razvoja in poteka kot tudi njegovo razumevanje pri Slovencih. – *Zgodovinski časopis* 66, 306–343.

ŠTIH, Peter 2014, Od Karniole do Kranjske – dolga in zapletena pot nastanka dežele. – In: J. Weiss (ed.), *Studia Valvasoriana: zbornik spremnih študij ob prvem integralnem prevodu / Die Ehre Deß Hertzogthums Crain v slovenski jezik*, Ljubljana, 465–500.

ŠTULAR, Benjamin 2009, *Mali grad: visokosrednjeveški grad v Kamniku / Mali grad: high medieval castle in Kamnik*. – Opera Instituti archaeologici Sloveniae 15. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789612545529

ŠTULAR, Benjamin 2019, The Zbiva Web Application: a tool for Early Medieval archaeology of the Eastern Alps. – In: J. D. Richards, F. Niccolucci (eds.), *The ARIADNE Impact*, Budapest, 69–82 (https://zenodo.org/record/3476712/files/ARIADNE_Impact_October_2019.pdf?download=1)

ŠTULAR, Benjamin 2020a (ed.), *Srednjeveški Blejski otok v arheoloških virih / Medieval archaeology of Bled Island*, Opera Instituti archaeologici Sloveniae 42, 115–128. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610502609

ŠTULAR, Benjamin 2020b, Stratigrafija najdišča / Site stratigraphy. – In: Štular (ed.) 2020a, 115–128. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610502609

ŠTULAR, Benjamin 2020a, One phenomena or many? Considerations on the role of selected sites in Slovenia: Na Bleku, Mali grad, and Gradišče above Bašelj. – In: Diesenberger et alii (eds.) 2020, 231–243.

ŠTULAR, Benjamin, BELAK, Mateja 2022, Deep Data Example: Zbiva, Early Medieval Data Set for the Eastern Alps. – *Research Data Journal for the Humanities and Social Sciences,* 7/1, 1–13. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/24523666-bja10024

ŠTULAR, Benjamin, EICHERT, Stefan 2020, Hilltop sites with Early Medieval military finds in Eastern Alpine Area. Reverse engineering of predictive modelling. – In: Diesenberger et alii (eds.) 2020, 213–230, 459–478.

ŠTULAR, Benjamin., LEHNER, Manfred 2024, Introduction to the Settlement of Eastern Alps in Early Middle Ages. – In: Štular et alii 2024, 7–17. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610508786_01

ŠTULAR, Benjamin, PLETERSKI, Andrej 2018, Prolog. Zgodnjesrednjeveška arheologija jugovzhodnoalpskega prostora: nekoč, danes, jutri / Prologue. Early Medieval archaeology in the South eastern Alpine area: past, present, future. – In: Lux et alii (eds.) 2018, 8–15.

ŠTULAR et alii 2021 = ŠTULAR, Benjamin, PLETERSKI, Andrej, BELAK, Mateja 2021, *Zbiva, Early Medieval Data Set for the Eastern Alps. Data sub-set (1.0).* – [Data set]. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5761811

ŠTULAR et alii 2022 = ŠTULAR, Benjamin, LOZIĆ, Edisa, BELAK, Mateja, RIHTER, Jernej, KOCH, Iris 2022, Migration of Alpine Slavs and machine learning: Space-time pattern mining of an archaeological data set. – *PLOS ONE* 17(9): e0274687. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0274687

ŠTULAR et alii 2024 = B. ŠTULAR, M. LEHNER, M. BELAK (eds.) 2024, *Settlement of the Eastern Alps in the Early Middle Ages.* – Opera Instituti Archaeologici Sloveniae 48, DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610508786

TOPLAK, Cirila 2022, Družbeno-politični vidiki zahodnoslovenske naravoverske skupnosti. – In: S. Babič, M. Belak (eds.), *Staroverstvo v Sloveniji med religijo in znanostjo*, Studia mythologica Slavica – Supplementa, Supplementum 17, Ljubljana, 47–70. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610506584

TÓTH et alii 2020 = TÓTH, Zsolt, BUZÁS, Gergely, NEMÉNYI, Réka 2020, Előzetes beszámoló a pécsi székesegyház altemplomában végzett 2019. évi régészeti kutatásról. – In: G. Böhm, D. Czeferner, T. Fedeles (eds.), *Pécsi Tudományegyetem Bölcsész Akadémia* 4, Pécs, 9–70.

UDOVČ, Katarina 2018, Gorjanci, zakladnica arheoloških najdišč / The Gorjanci Hills, a treasure trove of archaeological sites. – In: Lux et alii 2018, 77–90.

VARGHA, Mária, MORDOVIN, Maxim 2019, Dead Space. Topographical changes of cemeteries – causes and indicators. – *Beiträge zur Mittelalterarchäologie in Österreich* 35, 135–149.

WIRTH, Gerhard 1997, Stamm. – *Lexikon des Mittelalters* VIII, München, 42–43.

WOLFRAM, Herwig 1997, Volks- und Stammesgeschichte. – *Lexikon des Mittelalters* VIII, München, 1827–1829.

WOLFRAM, Herwig 2012, *Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum – Das Weißbuch der Salzburger Kirche über die erfolgreiche Mission in Karantanien und Pannonien mit Zusätzen und Ergänzungen. Herausgegeben, übersetzt und kommentiert und um die Epistola Theotmari wie um Gesammelte Schriften zum Thema ergänzt*. Zweite, gründlich bearbeitete Ausgabe. – Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti, Razred za zgodovinske in družbene vede, Dela 38, Zbirka Zgodovinskega časopisa 44, Klagenfurt, Hermagoras, Ljubljana.

ZOLL-ADAMIKOWA, Helena 1975, *Wczesnośredniowieczne cmentarzyska ciałopalne Słowian na terenie Polski. Cz. I.* Źródła. – Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków, Gdansk.

ZOLL-ADAMIKOWA, Helena 1979, *Wczesnośredniowieczne cmentarzyska ciałopalne Słowian na terenie Polski. Cz. II. Analiza. Wnioski.* – Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków, Gdansk.