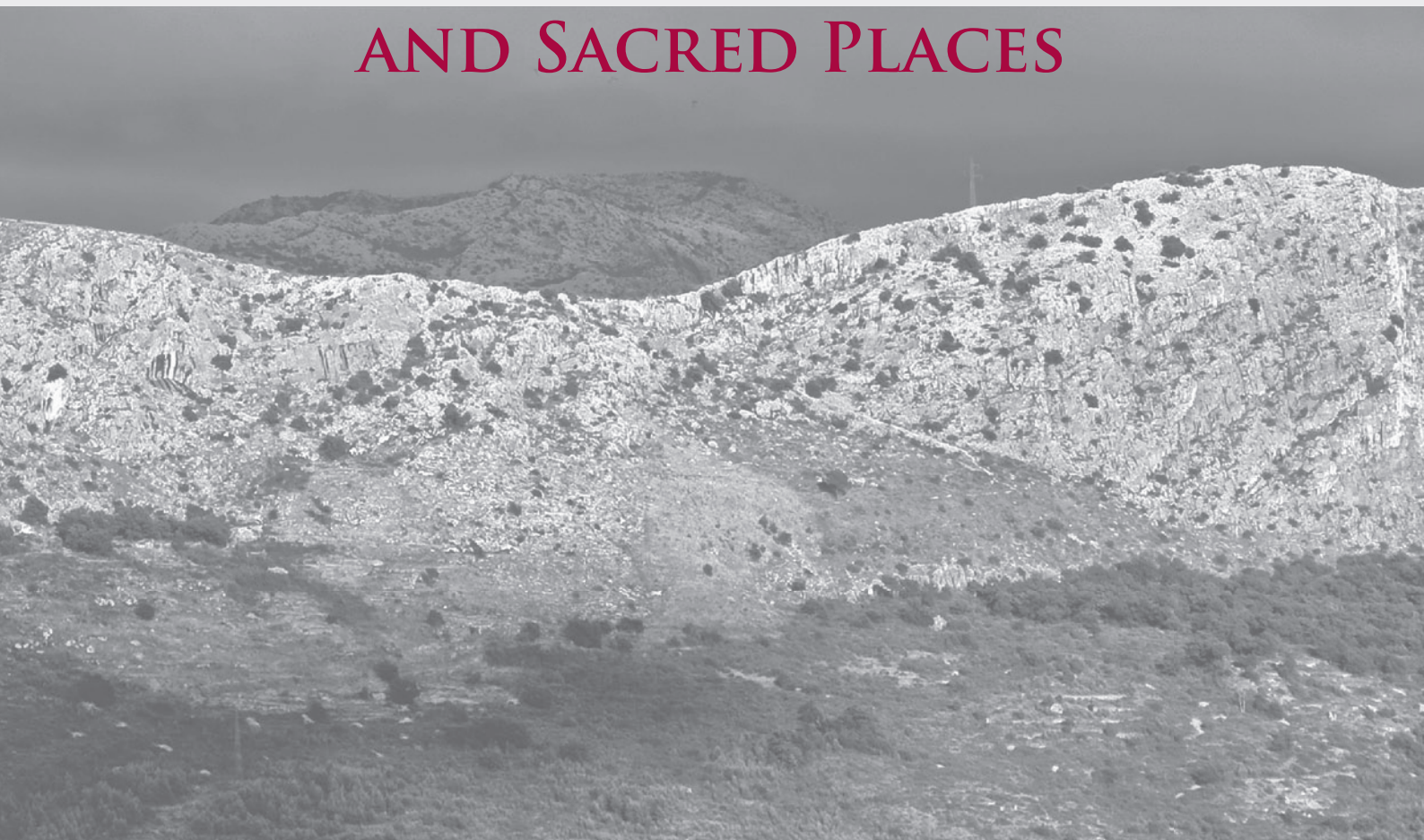


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SACRALIZATION OF LANDSCAPE AND SACRED PLACES



Edited by Juraj Belaj, Marijana Belaj, Siniša Krznar, Tajana Sekelj Ivančan and Tatjana Tkalčec

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FOREWORD

Human settlement of landscape raises the question of marking the landscape with one's own religion. Changes of religious systems or their coexistence documented in the landscape raises further questions, particularly those pertaining to broader socio-cultural phenomena and dynamics. Even if such processes are not documented in written sources, they could often be recognized in toponyms, folklore, archaeological finds and in contemporary religious practices.

Keeping this in focus, **the Institute of Archaeology** organized the 3rd International Scientific Conference of Mediaeval Archaeology, entitled ***Sacralization of Landscape and Sacred Places***. The Conference took place on the **2nd and 3rd June 2016**, at the **Archaeological Museum in Zagreb**, Croatia.

This is the third in a series of conferences designed to thematise mediaeval archaeology. However, for this third conference we have conceived a much broader framework – our intention was to stimulate an exchange of experiences and knowledge among participants with different research perspectives and disciplines and from different geographic areas and chronological periods.

As many as 74 participants took part in the conference, coming from Croatia, Hungary, Estonia, Slovenia, Romania, Latvia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Italy, Czech Republic, Germany and Iran. All in all they contributed a total of 57 presentations.

Introductory plenary lecture "Sacral spatial arrangement of landscape" was given by prof. ddr. Andrej Pleterski, Research Advisor at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

The Conference was divided into the following panels: Human and sacred landscape: paradigms; Traces of sacred sites: prehistory; Myth in landscape; Sacred place - the arena of religious discourses; Social realities in the sacralization of space; Narratives and practices in the sacralization of space; Reading of holy places and sites in Islamic tradition; Traces of sacred sites: antiquity; (De)Sacralizations: spatial biographies; Christian spatial symbolisation.

Most of the presenters at the conference readily adapted their presentations into papers. This publication presents analyses of sacred landscape from the perspective of: archaeology, folklore, ethnology, cultural anthropology, literature, architecture, history, art history, mathematics etc., and at the same time covers the period from prehistory, through antiquity and Slavic period and the Middle Ages to the modern period and contemporary times. In addition to this, it also compares different processes from different regions and times, by and large from Europe.

All the contributions were separately reviewed by carefully selected experts from the international academic community according to their particular discipline or research perspective. By publishing a book in English, we have tried to provide to the authors the widest visibility in the international scientific community.

I would like to thank once again all the participants of the conference for excellent cooperation, as well as to the institutions that helped make it a great success. Special thanks are reserved for the reviewers of individual papers and the proceedings on the whole for their effort, expertise and contribution, as well as for the colleagues from the Institute of Archaeology for their help in the organization of the conference and the publication of these proceedings. We are grateful also to the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb for their support in the organization of the conference. We sincerely hope that the contributions gathered in this publication will encourage colleagues from various scientific disciplines, especially researchers of younger generations, to engage further with the sacralization of landscape and sacred places.

Juraj Belaj