

Triglav

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Triglav (lat. Triglaus, Триглав, Trihlav, Tryglaw, Trigelawus, Triglous, Tryglav) represents at Kiev a group of three gods: Perun, Dažbog si Stribog. At Novgorod in 9th century, *The Big Triglav* represents Svarog, Perun and Svantevit. Before this period of time, in Novgorod, Triglav was represented by Perun, Svarog and Veles. At Czechs, Triglav was represented by three heads of goat, who represented strenght and tenacity. This triad was represented by an idol with three heads (polycephaly)¹, at Szczecin in N-V of Poland, were more temples dedicated to this God. Otto from Bamberg² reports us that Baltic Slavs were doing sacrifices in name of Traglav triad. He state that Triglav was *summus deus* (Ebbo, *Vita Ottonis*), being venerated in Wolin and Branderburg cities too. Referring to word etimology, we can see that Triglav represents only an epithet of supreme God. At Victor Kernbach, his name should be translated as "the three-headed". An other explanation of etimology would attributes greeks origins to the name. Greeks named Hecate *Tricephalos* Goddess as "the three-headed goddess". It's possible that monks who mentioned God name under Triglav form, to pick up the greek name to define this Slavic deity, like late Roman authors used Gods names roman pantheon in German deities. At Tacitus, Wotan is Mercury. In central part of Serbia, near Kralijevo city, there is a massif called Troglav. In Slavic world existed tricepfal idols named "The little Triglavs", which in comparison with "Big triglavs", were bringing together little deities. Some Slavic mihtology researchers thought that Triglav was god of war at old Slavic. At South Slavs, because of emperor Traian, the cult have produced an interference of this with Slavic Triglav deity.

The oldest news about Triglav cult, as deity, we find from the biography of Prieflingensis monk, from *Prieflingen monastery* who recorded the distruction of Triglav idol moment from Szczecin, in 1127 A.D. About deity appearance we find that the three heads who represented the divine triade, were covered by triple tiara which was hung a veil long to the God mouth.

According to Ebbo report, one of the Otto's biographs at Szczecin exists three mountains, of which the one in the middle, the higher one, it's dedicated to *the greatest god of pagans Trigelywus*. He is described as a stutue with three forms who had eyes and lips covered with gold. Idols priests explained the existence of these three heads by the fact that the greatest god ruled on three emperors: the Sky, the Earth and the Inferno, and their faces were covered not to see the humains sins. Triglav had a black horse who played an important role, as oracle, also the white horse of Svantevit god. Bishop Otto form Bamberg mad of the idea of christian misionarism, sold this horse, convincing Slavs that he was better to pull up a carriage than make predictions. After another biography version of Otto, only a gold and

¹ Polycephaly is a condition of having more than one head. There are many occurrences of multi-headed animals, in real life as well as in mythology.

² Otto was a medieval German bishop and missionary who, as papal legate, converted much of Pomerania to Christianity (1060-1139).

silver saddle was kept in one of Triglav's sanctuary. Because of the fact that in Szczecin temple, the idol of Triglav had silver face not gold, would contradict the interpretation of being god of the Sun, because silver was associated to the Moon. As well polycephaly appears to Celtic deities, were is thinking that exists certain influence of celtic religious cult among Baltic Slavs.

Oracular ceremonial that take place only with black horse help was the same as the oracular ceremony of Svantevit's horse. After the saddle was put on the black horse, this one was brought by the priest who took care of him to pass three times through a lance stuck in the ground labyrinth. If the horse passes through them without touching them, then this fact was considered a good sign, in special in military plan. Next armed expedition representing a succes. Herbord, one of bishop Otto's biographs, reports us that at Szczecin, Triglav had four temples, who he named them continae. About one of the four temple, we know the was adorned, decorate with statues that represent people, birds and quadrupeds which were so beautifully sculpted that seemed so real. These statues were painted with paints that could not be decolourated by natural causes, like rain or snow. A big part of captured catch by Slavs from enemies, arrived at temples. Herbord also inform us about distruction of Triglav idol from Szczecin. He mention that the idol was destroyed by bishop Otto and his priests. When he sees that god don't defend the Slavs burst on Triglav and his temples, dividing riches between them. After, the bishop took the three-headed statue and took it to Rome were he presented it as his personal trophy, which means the conversion of pagans and the victory of christianism in front of the "demons". According Herbord statements, Triglav reigns above the sky, the eath and underground world.

Biogrph Ebbo reports us that in bishop Otto's order a Christian church was built on the place were a Triglav temple was Also, Ebbo tels us that after the bishop departure, pagan priests tried to come back at the idol veneration cult, couldn't use with the idea of losing a considerable part of the incoming brought in the temple. Pagan priests will get advantageges after an epidemy starts in the city and the Christian church and a part of it's altar were destroyed and which in front of it they will get scared. Ebbo confirms us the exitence of Triglav cult at Wolin. There Otto demands to be destroyed all the sanctuares and idols of this God. Then, the Slavs saved an idol, the most precious one covered in gold and hided it in a tree hollow, leaving it under proctection of an old widow who leaved in a modest house and by that they escaped of any suspicions. The old woman protected the statue by hollowing the hollow of a massive tree and she closed the image of Triglawus covered with a coat unable to be seen or touched by anybody. So the slavs could enter in that place only to give sacrifices. The cult of the God surviving this way. Otto, being afraid of comming back of slavs at the old pagan cult, he tried to still the idol but he didn't succeeded. The bishop will be constrained to give up at this action by the simple frear of beeing cosidered greedy by the Slavs, because the statue was very precious. Two Christian churches were built at Wolin, by bishop Otto's order. To win the support of Slavs from this propaganda action, Otto ordered that the two churches patron

should wear slavic saints names: Adalbert of Prague³ (Vojtěch, Vjačeslav) and Wenceslaus I (Václav), patron saint of Czechs.



Triglav idol in Polish town of Wolin

³ Adalbert of Prague (956 – 997), Czech Roman Catholic saint, a Bishop of Prague and a missionary, was martyred in his efforts to convert the Baltic Prussians. He evangelized Poles and Hungarians. St. Vojtěch was later made the patron saint of Bohemia, Poland, Hungary and Prussia.



Triglav statue in the town of Rethra, Germany

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