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From the history of epidemics

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KAZALO

FOREWORD

More than a year and a half into the new coronavirus pandemic and the response to it, a sense of despair has taken hold of Slovenian society over the prolonged situation that prevents us from returning to the life as we previously knew it, with part of the population failing to understand the virus that causes COVID-19 and calling science into question. The challenges facing us are rejection of protective measures and dismally low vaccination rates.

Conversely, the pandemic presents researchers with a unique opportunity to weigh previous research on the history of healthcare and epidemics in the light of their up-close, first-hand experience with the current health crisis. In other words, it provides an opportunity to generate an insight into how authorities and societies faced epidemics in the past by comparing measures, reactions to them, and post-epidemic life. New research findings can give us a better understanding of the present situation.

The review *Kronika* has regularly featured topics concerning the history of epidemics and healthcare. Special mention should be made of several prominent articles that discussed epidemics in historical context over the past decades. Already in the 1950s Majda Smole wrote about the plague in the sixteenth-century Carniola and Ema Umek about the plague in Styria between 1679 and 1683, in the 1960s Olga Janša-Zorn published an article on the cholera epidemic in Carniola in 1855, and the 1970s saw the publication of Peter Vodopivec's article on the smallpox epidemic in Carniola and Ljubljana in 1873 and 1874.

This special issue of *Kronika* also aims to encourage the public to read and reflect on the history of epidemics and thus spread the knowledge to better cope with the ongoing pandemic. Collaboration with researchers who already addressed such topics in the past has delivered three new studies—two focusing on smallpox epidemics in the nineteenth-century Austrian Littoral and Carniola, and one investigating healing practices related to the plague epidemic in folklore. To further consolidate the knowledge by bringing it together in a single volume, the current issue of *Kronika* republishes three earlier articles on the topic at hand, that is, epidemics of contagious diseases in general as well as the epidemics of cholera and Spanish influenza, with each study discussing how authorities attempted to curb epidemics and how these were faced by the population. Motivated by the global relevance of the subject matter, we decided to publish the contributions fully translated to English and thus share our findings with international experts and everyone potentially interested.

Barbara Šterbenc Svetina and *Katarina Keber*

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Smallpox prevention in the Austrian Littoral

ABSTRACT

The article discusses vaccination as the key smallpox prophylaxis, used in the Habsburg provinces from the beginning of the nineteenth century onward. The analysis of quantitative data for the Austrian Littoral (particularly Koper and Trieste) also points to the scope and frequency of smallpox epidemics in the second half of the nineteenth century, which raises questions concerning the extent to which these prophylactic measures were implemented and the population's willingness to heed the calls for immunization. By creating a regulatory framework, the state sought to attain the maximum possible prevalence of this practice, which nevertheless remained the target of various prejudices for a long time to come. The authorities, the Church, and scientists therefore sought to heighten the popular awareness on the need for immunization through a range of communication channels. Because cowpox vaccination failed to ensure lasting immunity, revaccination was of crucial importance, but its implementation was even more limited.

KEY WORDS
smallpox, vaccination, Habsburg Monarchy, Austrian Littoral, Koper, Trieste, nineteenth century

IZVLEČEK

PREPREČEVANJE ČRNIH KOZ V AVSTRIJSKEM PRIMORJU

Članek obravnava vakcinacijo kot ključno profilakso pri črnih kozah, ki je bila tudi v habsburških deželah v uporabi od začetka 19. stoletja. Analiza kvantitativnih podatkov za območje Avstrijskega primorja (zlasti Koper in Trst) nakazuje na obsežnost in pogostost epidemij črnih koz tudi v drugi polovici 19. stoletja, kar odpira vprašanja o obsegu izvajanja teh profilaktičnih ukrepov, na drugi pa tudi o odzivnosti prebivalstva na pozive k cepljenju. Država je z regulativi skušala doseči čim večjo razširjenost te prakse, vendar pa so jo še dolgo po njeni uvedbi spremljali različni predsodki. S pozivi preko različnih komunikacijskih kanalov so zato oblasti, Cerkev in znanost skušali ozavestiti prebivalstvo o potrebnosti cepljenja. Ključnega pomena je bila tudi revakcinacija, saj cepljenje z govejimi kozami ni zagotavljalo trajne imunosti, vendar pa je bilo njeno izvajanje še bolj omejeno.

KLJUČNE BESEDE
črne koze, vakcinacija, habsburška monarhija, Avstrijsko primorje, Koper, Trst, 19. stoletje

Introduction

Also in the past, one of the most important questions concerning contagious diseases was how to prevent them. Some types of bacterial infections (especially cholera, but also dysentery, typhoid fever, etc.) required different measures, starting with hygienization, which became a widespread and organized practice in the nineteenth century, and social mechanisms to mitigate the consequences of epidemics among socially disadvantaged (and more disease-prone) groups of population. However, in the case of smallpox,[1] the nearly universal and systemic form of prophylaxis was immunization. Variolation and later vaccination, applied to confer immunity to smallpox, also marked the beginning of the history of vaccination, when "practical medicine outperformed theoretical achievements"[2] for no less than a century, until the discovery of viruses, which paved the way to the development of immunology. Owing to its universal prevalence that posed an especially serious health threat to children, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries smallpox received major medical attention to prevent infection.

The paper[3] aims to present some data on vaccination in the nineteenth century as well as certain social discourses that accompanied this practice within the context of concern for the wellbeing of the population. Using fragments of quantitative data (on the examples of Trieste as the key focus of the epidemic and the severely affected nearby Koper), the article also seeks to determine the incidence of variola on the one hand and the effectiveness of vaccination on the other.

Variola epidemics in the second half of the nineteenth century

The long-lasting presence of variola in the European area was one of the main reasons that smallpox[4] gradually became inscribed into the collective consciousness and fear, and indirectly also into a broader discourse on the protection of children's health,[5] including as part of the growth-oriented population policy. Smallpox often accompanied other epidemics, e.g., cholera (in 1873[6] and 1886,[7] for example) and influenza—or the 'Spanish flu'—in 1918,[8] whereas in certain periods it also occurred sporadically.

A major smallpox epidemic that was triggered by the Franco-Prussian War in the 1870s[9] severely affected the Austrian Littoral, especially Trieste. Soon after it reached Austria, the epidemic turned the city into the second largest focus of contagion (with a death toll of 72.2 persons[10] per ten thousand inhabitants and 18.3 in Istria). A year later, it peaked in Gorizia-Gradisca (7.6) and in 1874 in Carniola (51.1) and several other provinces.[11] As shall be seen below, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, variola hit Trieste in several intermittent epidemic waves.

One of the most detailed collections of health statistics available on the occurrence of the disease in Trieste[12] builds solely on the number of smallpox patients who sought help in the city hospital (either because they suffered from a severe form of the disease or because, mostly coming from the city's poorer quarters, they had no other shelter), without providing an overall picture of its incidence among the population. Although reporting smallpox as a contagious disease (in addition to scarlet fever, diphtheria, any type of typhus, cholera, dysentery, measles, and whooping cough) was mandatory under the

1 Smallpox (*variola*) is a contagious viral disease that can be passed from one person to another especially through coughing or sneezing, and by direct contact with body fluids or personal items of an infected person. The first symptoms include high fever, fatigue, malaise, vomiting, etc., after which the infected person develops red rash or blisters. It usually starts on the face, upper arms, and legs (as well as mucous membranes), and then spreads all over the body. The patient is the most contagious at this time. After a few days, the fever subsides, and the rash turns into papules and vesicles with a red ring formed around the edge. Initially, the lesions are filled with translucent liquid, which turns into pus, and after a few days form scabs that dry and fall off, leaving deep pockmarks on the skin. The patient's general condition slowly improves; however, if that is not the case, the disease can also lead to death (cf., e.g., Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 10; Kiple, *The Cambridge world history*, pp. 1008–1012).

2 Borisov, *Zgodovina medicine*, p. 602.

3 The research was partially funded from the ARRS project J6-1800 and program P6-0272.

4 In the first half of the century, F. V. Lipič, physician in Ljubljana, pointed to the widespread use of a single term for cowpox and a disease erroneously identified as human pox (which was, in fact, varicella or chickenpox) (Lipič, *Topografija*, p. 209). Conversely, A. De Manussi from the Trieste hospital tentatively typified smallpox into "vaioloidi" (a mild form of smallpox), "vaiolo vero" (ordinary smallpox with well-developed pustules and "pustule fever"), "vaiolo confluente" (confluent rash and coalescing pustules), "vaiolo emorragico" (hemorrhaging within petechiae), and "purpura vaiolosa" (no papules or pustules but an extremely high occurrence of petechiae on the skin or mucous membranes, with severe hemorrhaging in various organs), without including varicella in his statistical data (De Manussi, *Cenni*, pp. 14–15).

5 On this, see Bratož, Bolni otroci, pp. 438–449.

6 In 1873, 620 persons contracted cholera and 351 died of it in Trieste (Bratož, *Bledolična vsiljivka*, p. 309). Because that same year recorded a remarkably low number of ten smallpox cases compared to the staggering figures (between three hundred and nine hundred) two years before and after that, it seems reasonable to assume that a certain percentage of people infected with smallpox was attributed to cholera as both infections perhaps coincided or the data were collected with less consistency.

7 Cholera killed 560 of nine hundred infected citizens in Trieste (Bratož, *Bledolična vsiljivka*, p. 309).

8 See Bratož, Vojna, lakota, p. 27.

9 Kramar, Epidemije, p. 110.

10 Not even second to Vienna with 52.7 deaths per ten thousand inhabitants.

11 Prinzing, *Epidemics*, p. 275.

12 De Manussi, *Cenni*.

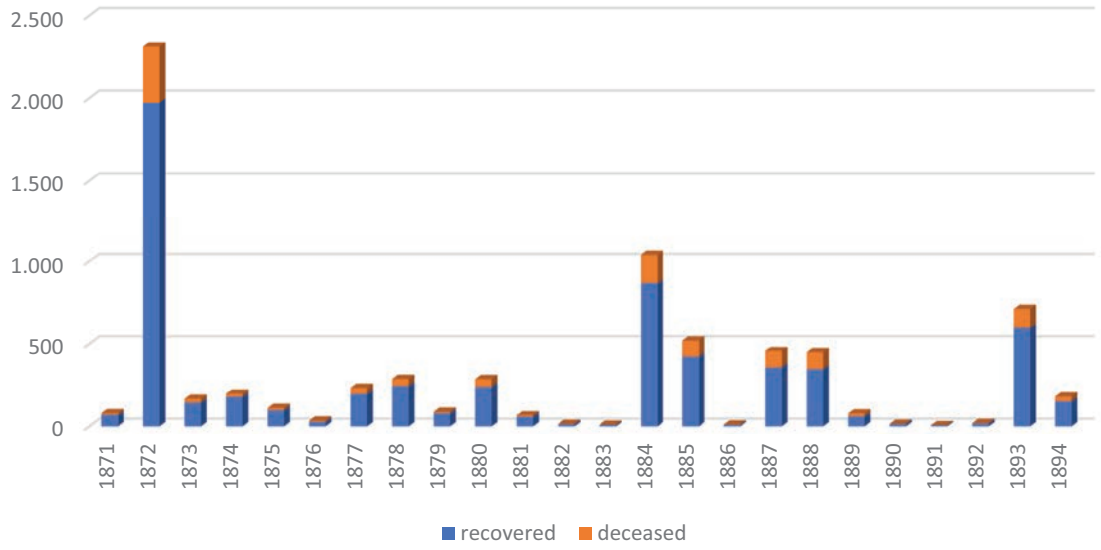

Fig. 1: Smallpox epidemics in Trieste according to the city hospital data (source: De Manussi, Cenni).

law of 1870,[13] the actual number of infected persons remains open to debate. However, based on the numerical data available, several waves of smallpox can be detected in the last quarter of the nineteenth century alone. The Trieste hospital recorded the highest number of infections (1,973) in 1872,[14] after which the disease continued to occur in minor outbreaks until 1880. The number of infections increased again in 1884 (867), and the end of the epidemic waves may be said to have arrived no sooner than four years later. Apart from smallpox, the city was also visited by cholera (which may have contributed to a less diligent recording of infections). Smallpox outbreaks peaked again in 1893 (597) in what developed into a two-year epidemic. According to these data, the mortality rate varied between 17% and almost 30%.[15]

The Koper district also experienced a major outbreak in 1872/73. The data from the city of Koper reveal that 314 persons contracted smallpox and forty-four died from the disease in that period (albeit not stating clearly over what time interval the evidence was collected).[16] A significant number of infected were the inmates of the city penitentiary (together with the wards accounting to about 20%), most of whom successfully recovered (5.8% died). Slightly less than half of infected persons were peasants who made up the majority population in the city, with mortality as high as 18.7%.[17]

On the other hand, according to parish registers, smallpox occurrences in Koper caused fewer fatalities in the last decades of the nineteenth century; the disease manifested more severely between the end of 1884 and the first months of 1885, when it killed six people (including three children) in Koper, and between the end of 1887 and early 1888, when it killed seven (among them three children).[18]

Immunization through the prism of regulations and social discourses

During smallpox outbreaks, particular attention was paid to children's health, also as part of the population policy encouraging the development of medicine[19] and prophylaxis aimed at disease prevention,[20]

13 See, e.g., Bratož, *Bledolična vsiljivka*, p. 189.

14 Other data obtained by the deputation in Trieste provide the following, probably more realistic figures: between early October 1871 and early April 1873, the city registered 2,634 infections resulting in 565 deaths (see Scartabellati, Visibili nemici, p. 534); cf. also the data brought forth by Pinguentini, Cronache, p. 40, stating no less than 4,839 infected and 893 deceased during the epidemic by drawing on monthly statistical data published in the newspaper *Il Cittadino*. His evaluation is also more in line with the estimated number of deaths per ten thousand inhabitants, provided by Prinzing, *Epidemics*, p. 275, whereas official state statistics (see Vodopivec, *Črne koze*, p. 92) set forth 923 smallpox-related deaths in 1872 alone and another fifty-three the following year.

15 De Manussi, *Cenni*; cf. *Resoconto sanitario*.

16 According to the register of infected persons (SI PAK KP 7, t. u. 110, 1872, Elenco dei colpiti, risanati e morti dal vajuolo), the first case of the disease already occurred in the early 1872 and the biggest surge in infections took place in September, but sporadic incidences continued all until the spring of the following year.

17 SI PAK KP 7, t. u. 110, a. u. 2122.

18 ŠAK, register of deaths (Koper), 1875–1899.

19 This also provides an important context for the understanding of the formation and development of pediatrics; see, e.g., Borisov, *Zgodovina medicine*, 342 and 255.

20 However, it seems reasonable to add that, before scientific discoveries were made attributing each disease a specific agent and etiology, smallpox prevention attempts were like those used for other contagious diseases with a more pronounced social component (e.g., cholera, typhus, etc.), including hygienization measures, especially in poor city quarters. Thus, in 1872, there were reports also from Trieste of a high smallpox incidence in poor areas, where dangerously dense population

primarily through immunization. Whereas some discussions[21] explicitly underlined poverty as one of the major factors that contributed to poor reproduction, they also maintained that the demographic growth would indirectly benefit from preventive health measures that prolonged life expectancy or, rather, reduced infant mortality, which was especially true for smallpox immunization. A delayed impact of immunization would, of course, also be ensuring the survival of most children up to an age (from between fifteen and twenty years onward) when they would "benefit society" or the state (workforce, the army, and so on).[22]

The first immunization (inoculation/variolation) procedures[23] against smallpox took place as early as the end of the eighteenth century, with an intradermal introduction of the *human* variola virus on both upper arms. As an enlightened medical accomplishment,[24] immunization in a way represented the triumph of reason and fostered a sense of human dominion over nature and hence also diseases.[25]

Although it generated lasting immunity, variolation also posed a threat of developing a severe or even deadly form of smallpox. Moreover, while recovering from the effects of variolation, inoculated persons could themselves become a source of infection to others.[26] Soon after the English physician Edward Jenner (re)discovered and improved vaccination (administering *cow* vaccine) in 1798,[27] the procedure was gradually adopted by physicians for only causing a milder form of smallpox.[28] However, because this method failed to provide lasting immunity, revaccination was—still unbeknownst to Jenner—required no more than ten years later.

The practice of vaccination took hold in Slovenian territory in the early nineteenth century—after Vincenc Kern and Anton Muznik introduced it to Carniola and Gorizia in 1801[29]—and at about the same time also probably in Istria.[30] Smallpox vaccination was already supported by the first Austrian rule,[31] and the subsequent French government introduced compulsory vaccination across the Illyrian Provinces.[32] In the 1820s, during the restored sovereignty of the Austrian Empire, the government imposed vaccination with instructions,[33] regulated by individual provincial codes.

Changes in government entailed certain modifications in regulating and implementing this preventive practice. Thus, for example, the bureaucratization of procedures, which the Austrian government introduced in Lombardy during the first decades of the nineteenth century (rendering vaccination no longer a philanthropic activity but one imposed on physicians), met with criticism in the following segment of the "Dictionary of Public Health" in 1860: "*In the period of the Kingdom of Italy, under Director General* [pioneer of vaccination in Italy, Luigi] *Sacco, vaccination was an act of genuine philanthropy that devout, esteemed members of all strata, gathered in provincial committees, had taken on with great diligence and religious ardor, and fulfilled it to the tremendous benefit of the population. Yet the moment that the Austrian government pushed it through the door of bureaucracy, it was stripped of all its humanitarian reputation for which it had been embraced and considered desirable, after all those useful committees had to give way to city deputations. The heavy burden was thus placed on physicians administering the vaccine, who shouldered all the responsibility not only for the procedure that they had to perform but also for its results, which they had to verify in nearly all cases.*"[34]

facilitated the spread of infection, making the preparation of provisional space for their transfer urgently necessary (Pinguentini, Cronache, pp. 37 and 41; cf. Scartabellati, Visibili nemici, p. 533; for Ljubljana, see Vodopivec, Črne koze, p. 96). That same year, the authorities in Koper, too, devoted particular attention to ensure the cleanliness of public surfaces, as well as disinfection and control over spatial hygiene (see SI PAK KP 7, t. u. 110, Protocolli della Commissione sanitaria, 1872).

21 E.g., Mascherpa, *Sulla Vaccinazione*, pp. 110–113.

22 Ibid., p. 103. It should be noted that smallpox not only resulted in the staggering death toll, but it also caused blindness or maimed people in some other way that rendered them incapable of work.

23 In his medical practice, the physician Anton Muznik from Gorizia described the procedure very eloquently and wrote down his clinical observations regarding its execution on a few noble children (Muznik, *Goriško podnebje*). On variolation in Istria, see especially Cigui, Le origini, pp. 265–295.

24 Foucault recognized smallpox vaccination as a new type of socio-political response to epidemics. In his opinion, smallpox signified a state "intervention," especially through prevention, and an emphasis on safety and public health (see, e.g., Thacker, *The Shadows*).

25 Cf. Muznik, *Goriško podnebje*, p. 243; Schrom Dye and Smith, Mother Love.

26 See, e.g., Kiple, *Cambridge world history*, pp. 1008–1012; Borisov, *Zgodovina medicine*, p. 245.

27 Borisov, *Zgodovina medicine*, pp. 403–404.

28 As outlined in the Italian Dictionary of Public Hygiene (1860), vaccination was initially performed by dabbing the vaccine into a small incision in the upper outer arm. Later, it became customary to make a "puncture" with a steel lancet or simply a needle. The form most often applied was the liquid vaccine, either arm-to-arm or from animal pustules. The dry powder vaccine (dried scabs) first had to be diluted in cold water on a glass plate (*Dizionario di igiene pubblica*, pp. 785–793).

29 See, e.g., Zupanič Slavec, Goriški medicus, p. 225; Borisov, *Zgodovina medicine*.

30 See also Bratož, Cepljenje proti kozam.

31 Cf. Brisky et al., Introduction.

32 Borisov, *Zgodovina medicine*, p. 405. On vaccination in Istria during the first Austrian and subsequent French sovereignty, see Cigui, Misure di profilassi.

33 Children without proof of vaccination were prohibited from entering schools and other public institutions (Zupanič Slavec, *Mlekarice*, pp. 146–147; cf. Globočnik, *Nauk slovenskim županom*).

34 "*Mentre durante il Regno d'Italia, quand'era direttore generale il Sacco, la vaccinazione formava un compit o di pura filantropia, che persone pie, ragguardevoli d'ogni classe, raccolte in Comitati provinciali si facevano scrupoloso e religioso obbligo di adempire, e lo adempivano con tanto profitto per la popolazione, appena fu*

The Austrian law, issued on November 13th, 1821, partially centralized the vaccination practice by bringing it under government control[35] and making it mandatory for physicians to obtain an additional certificate to perform the procedure. To ensure that the authorities could exert some control over the implementation of this systematic preventive measure, the law, among other things, made the use of certain social mechanisms contingent on vaccination; without it, foundling babies were not to be placed in the care of wet nurses, and unvaccinated children were not admitted to orphanages or other public and private institutions. Anyone who had not received the vaccine (or failed to prove that they had recovered from smallpox naturally by showing their scars) was denied social aid, pension, or a stipend. Furthermore, charity organizations were prohibited from extending assistance to parents who failed to demonstrate that they had recovered from smallpox or present a vaccination certificate,[36] which was a way for "the state to safeguard the money it had invested in people."[37]

Still long after it had been introduced, smallpox vaccination continued to raise controversy, a general sense of unease and mistrust, and it remained the subject of many *pro et contra* polemics. The arguments against it pointed to unreliable effects of vaccination, especially in the light of unsuccessful initial attempts, risks, and the purported possibility of contracting diseases, such as syphilis, erysipelas, and so on, coupled with moral, religious, and other kinds of prejudice for fear of the "unnatural" interfering with the human body, which became even more pronounced after the introduction of the vaccination procedure.[38]

Whereas the newly established practice of vaccination generated the fear of introducing animal matter (humanized vaccine) into the human body,[39] almost seventy years later, when these polemics were particularly fierce,[40] some recognized it (even with the vaccine harvested directly from cows) as a safer option to eliminate the purported risks of spreading certain human diseases. Suspicion that syphilis would be transmitted from foundlings whose parents came from questionable social and moral environments ("… *Hospices receiving poverty-stricken children together with those born in shame … Well, it is these wretched outcasts that must provide the lymph to vaccinate our country's population*")[41] figured as the flagship argument used by those who later championed harvesting vaccine directly from cowpox pustules because the humanized vaccine lost its effectiveness over time.[42]

In this discourse, vaccination partially coincided with what was then considered a pressing social issue and a threat that society recognized in the lower strata, the destitute mob,[43] problematizing the use of vaccine produced in social institutions, such as orphanages and foundling homes.[44] Nonetheless, the

fatta entrare dal Governo austriaco nei cancelli della burocrazia, perdette tutto il prestigio della filantropia che la faceva accetta e desiderata, perche' quei benefici Comitati dovettero lasciar luogo alle deputazioni comunali. Ond'e', che essa a questo modo divenne un pesante fardello pei medici vaccinatori, sugli omeri dei quali si fece d'allora in poi cadere tutta la responsabilità non solo dell'operazione che doveano praticare, ma ben anco dell'esito che doveano essi stessi verificare in quasi tutti i casi" (*Dizionario di igiene pubblica*, pp. 811–812).

35 The implementation of the vaccination program at regional level was entrusted to district governorships (cf. Brisky et al., Introduction, p. 86).

36 *Dizionario di igiene pubblica*, arts. 11, 13, 35, 36.

37 Kozinc, Prebolela sem črne koze, p. 12.

38 Several sources (e.g., *Kmetijske in rokodelske novice*, December 14th, 1861, and Slomšek, *Blaže ino Nežica*, p. 166) report that immediately after the vaccine was administered, some mothers sucked on their babies' arms to extract the "inserted pocks" from their bodies, believing that the vaccine would reverse the effect of baptism (cf. Bratož, Bolni otroci). Regarding Ljubljana, Vodopivec even writes about public agitation against vaccination (Vodopivec, Črne koze). At the end of the century, J. Simonič, the author of a booklet on natural remedies and prolongation of life, characterized vaccination as introducing "poison" into the body, which merely "contaminates the blood" while providing little benefit ("The substance contained in the smallpox vaccine, either taken from an animal or a human, is a dangerous poison, all the more so, if the animal or the child, from which the substance has been harvested, also harbors other pathological substances in the body.") (Simonič, *Kakó postanemo stari?*, p. 183).

39 This was, for example, stressed by the historian N. Durbach in her study on anti-vaccination propaganda in Britain, who saw one of the reasons for aversion to vaccination as an "unnatural practice" in the controversy-ridden "human/animal" antagonism. The introduction of the vaccine of animal origin into the human body signified its symbolic contamination, especially in view of the close relationship between physical and mental health (Durbach, Smallpox, pp. 207–209). The emergence of the anti-vaccination movement was triggered by John Simon, Medical Officer of Health for the City of London, who concluded his research on the spread of smallpox during the 1850s by proposing that the only way to protect the population (the community as a whole) was through a vaccination policy stipulating mandatory, universal vaccination of children, which was subsequently also incorporated into British law (Bynum, Medicina, p. 470).

40 Not only in the local context but also globally (see Agostoni, *Knowledge* (https://journals.openedition.org/nuevomundo/75397 (25. 11. 2020)).

41 "*Ospizi, ove insieme coi figli della miseria sono accolti i parti della vergogna… Ebbene questi poveri reietti sono quelli che devono furnire la linfa vaccinica per innestare la popolazione nel nostro paese!*" (*La Provincia*, May 1st, 1870, p. 517).

42 *La Provincia*, August 1st, 1872, p. 1633, Giovanni Biaggio. Even though others acknowledged that syphilis transmission during the vaccination procedure was rare and more likely to occur when applying tubes with questionable content of unknown origin than in arm-to-arm vaccination, which the physician performed with all due care (Ciatto, *Il Vaiuolo*, p. 29. Ciatto, for example, allowed for two good variants, i.e., animal and humanized, of the vaccine; in Trieste, the vaccine of animal origin was probably administered for the first time during the epidemic of 1872; see Pinguentini, Cronache, p. 37.

43 On various collective fears of the poor or on the poor seen as economic, moral, health, and other kind of threats (including as carriers of contagious diseases), see Čeč, Revščina, e.g., p. 295.

44 For example, two foundlings were mentioned during the vac-

law from 1821 stipulated that foundling hospitals as district vaccination institutions should regularly perform arm-to-arm smallpox vaccination to ensure a stable source of vaccine.[45]

The lower strata were generally considered a direct health risk[46] (as well as a moral one, owing to the strong stigma associated with contracting syphilis as a sexual transmitted disease) for purportedly contaminating vaccine recipients through the introduction of body fluids from social outcasts,[47] first passing the disease to children and subsequently on to mothers and wet nurses.

There were also other ways in which vaccination was associated with social and other, especially public institutions. As stated, before entering school, every child was required to present the vaccination certificate even years after it had been issued. However, during the variola epidemic in 1885,[48] the authorities in Trieste, for example, deemed it reasonable for schoolchildren to present a certificate of revaccination, which was to be carried out every four to five years.[49] On reopening at the end of the epidemic, access to schools was authorized to pupils aged less than ten years and holding the vaccination certificate, whereas older children were to prove having been vaccinated in the last five years or revaccinated on the outbreak of the epidemic.[50]

Whereas institutes undoubtedly ensured that vaccination was well-controlled and carried out with a great deal of consistency, getting the rest of the population to be vaccinated represented a challenge. It seems reasonable to concur that because the smallpox vaccination apparatus lacked a solid and uniform legal and institutional framework, its effectiveness depended on voluntary public participation, as studies reveal.[51] It indeed took a heterogeneous ensemble of actors, among them representatives of lay and church authorities, as well as, of course, physicians, teachers, and so on. Moreover, this process coincided with the institutionalization and centralization of the state and its public health (and social) policies or programs as well as the period of national consolidations.[52] This also explains the vast spectrum of publications propagating vaccination in the nineteenth-century Slovenian territory, encompassing everything from (popular) scientific discussions,[53] handbooks, and instructions, to moral and educational articles, didactic materials,[54] and instructive youth literature.[55] The awareness about the importance of smallpox vaccination was raised using various information channels, especially newspapers,[56] and this continued long after the vaccination practice had been established[57] and improved.

The advice to mayors, issued in 1880 and incorporating the local authorities' important endeavors to accelerate vaccination, reads as follows: "*Some have maintained not long ago that smallpox vaccination is of no use, but the experience teaches us just the opposite. Therefore, a wise mayor ought to promote this work in his municipality to the best of his abilities. Although inoculation is no longer forcibly administered, it is stipulated everywhere that it must be given to all the youth in public institutions and to all the poor that the city feeds, all soldiers, and such. Not only the mayor but also the clergy and teachers should concern themselves with notifying and announcing as they find appropriate when and where smallpox vaccination will take place, so that everyone in need of it can be there in due time.*"[58] The Slovenian press, featuring debates about vaccination, also called on the clergy, the authorities, teachers, medical experts,[59] and 'men of reason' in

cination in 1835 performed on Koper's registered children. However, the vaccine cannot have been harvested from them because they were among the last vaccinated children in the town. Besides, the district physician also used the dry powder vaccine, most probably in the initial phase of vaccination. On concern for foundlings' health, which already included vaccination in the Trieste hospital at the beginning of the century, see, e.g., Čeč, "Da bo dobro izbral", pp. 204–205.

45 *Dizionario di igiene pubblica*, art. 11.

46 What should also be borne in mind is that in some areas the poor held a vigil for the dead in exchange for a meal (see Vodopivec, Črne koze), which could have contributed to them becoming carriers of the disease.

47 An opposite rhetoric adopted at that time centered on the residents in social institutions that were exploited for harvesting the vaccine to benefit the rest of the population and on marginal social groups that were subjected to medical experimentation.

48 The smallpox outbreaks in 1884 and 1885 affected at least 1,290 persons in Trieste, with mortality among hospitalized patients soaring as high as 20% (see De Manussi, *Cenni*).

49 Pinguentini, Cronache, p. 45.

50 *Notificazione del Magistrato civico di Trieste sul vaiolo*, September 10th, 1885 (https://archiviodistatotrieste.it/documento-del-mese/notificazione-del-magistrato-civico-di-trieste-sul-vaiolo/ (25. 11. 2020)).

51 Agostoni, *Knowledge* (https://journals.openedition.org/nuevomundo/75397 (25. 11. 2020).

52 Ibid.

53 E.g., Ciatto's lecture, which was also published (Ciatto, *Il vaiuolo*), and works, such as Kern, *Nauk*, and Robida, *Zdravo telo*, p. 8.

54 E.g., *Vrtec*, March 1st, 1880, June 1st, 1885.

55 Slomšek, *Blaže ino Nežica*; Košar, *Od telesne reje otrok.*

56 See, e.g., *Slovenski narod*, September 7th, 1877; September 8th, 1877; *Kmetijske in rokodelske novice*, February 25th, 1854; September 15th, 1855; December 14th, 1861, January 7th, 1874, etc.

57 On the outbreak of the epidemic in 1872, the authorities of Trieste called several times for vaccination and revaccination (Pinguentini, Cronache, p. 36). That same year, free mass vaccination was organized in the Koper district and performed on nearly three thousand people (*La Provincia*, January 1st, 1873). The general vaccination was carried out in the municipal hall and on Saturday in the house of Mayor Cristoforo de Belli. This was published in the local press, which had by then already attained a relatively wide circulation among the (town's) population (*La Provincia*, February 1st, 1872).

58 Globočnik, *Nauk slovenskim županom*, p. 53.

59 The provincial codices from the period of the second Austrian rule provided for financial bonuses to physicians for their diligent vaccination efforts (measured above all in the num-

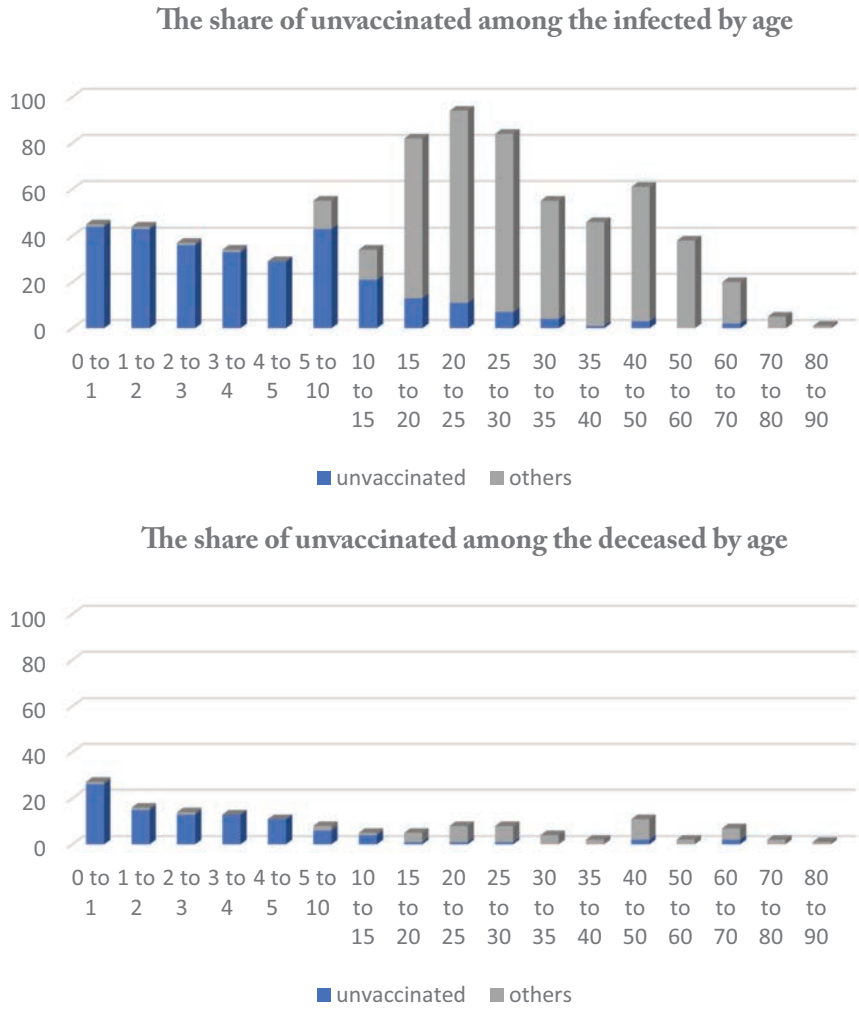

Fig. 2–3: The data on the variola epidemic in Trieste 1892–94 (source: De Manussi, Cenni).

general[60] to take part in promulgating the importance of vaccination.

This rhetoric functioned at various levels, starting with the enlightened logic to achieve the general wellbeing, which had from the eighteenth century onward guided rationalist and utilitarian measures under a special administrative discipline or "police science."[61] The same context also provided the basis for the development of medical police in terms of public health management, instituted by Johann Peter Frank.[62] His comprehensive work covered nearly all the aspects of human life associated with diseases, especially epidemics. His central argument was that a disease could not be prevented by individual medical practitioners but by the state alone, which also had a duty to ensure the wellbeing of its citizens through centralized control performed by the public sanitary service and the public health system. This, in turn, went hand in hand with the idea of constituting a numerically strong and healthy population as the foundation of a sound state[63] in accordance with the cameralist concept of increasing the country's wealth, followed by demographic growth.[64] Against this background, the population had been (and remained) the central object of the government ever since the Enlightenment.

The public discourse thus emphasized in various ways the importance of actively preventing children's diseases, while smallpox had already become ingrained with its lasting presence in the European-wide broader discourse on (children's) health protec-

ber of vaccinated persons) (cf. Brisky et al., Introduction, p. 86).

60 Kern, *Nauk*, p. 9, cf. Globočnik, *Nauk slovenskim županom*.

61 See, e.g., Čeč, Revščina, p. 294.

62 See, e.g., Bynum, Medicina, p. 473. Frank, among other things, also successfully performed several vaccination trials on children during the epidemic of 1800, when Jenner's method was still making its entrance into the world of medicine (Borisov, *Zgodovina medicine*, p. 404).

63 See Bratož, Umazane ulice; cf. Borisov, *Zgodovina medicine*, pp. 393–394.

64 E.g., Hamlin, Commentaries.

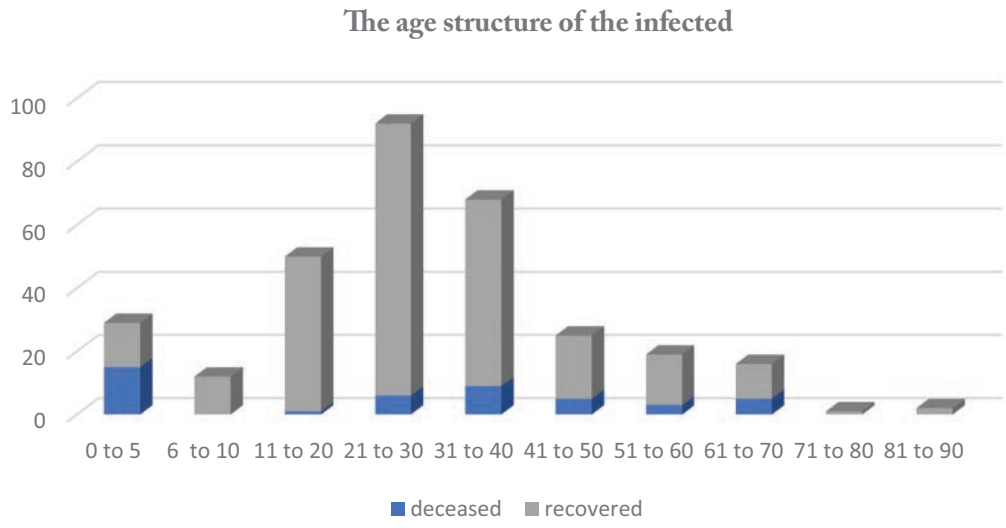

Fig. 4: The smallpox epidemic in Koper in 1872 (source: SI PAK KP 7, t. u. 110, a. u. 2122).

tion and disease prevention,[65] also in association with national rhetoric and collective responsibility for the health of young people. Although this aspect may no longer have been at the forefront in the nineteenth century, vaccination still occupied an important place in the discourse on preventive measures, health protection, and an individual's responsibility toward collective wellbeing. This period also witnessed the secularization in perceptions of health and diseases; although the Divine Will remained upheld, God was no longer conceived as the central or sole guarantor of a child's health; instead, there was a growing belief that the child's custodians or parents (especially the mother) could, at least to a certain extent, protect his or her health by taking a proactive approach.[66] This was especially reflected in the medical and specialist literature, which argued that childhood deaths were common, even expected, and at the same time maintained that the offspring[67] could be protected with proper care and prevention.[68] In the light of the objectives of the 'population policy,' part of the responsibility was therefore shifted to parents, who were to follow the government's and scientists' instructions. What remains open to debate is the extent to which such endeavors met their target.

Much can be inferred from the data collected in Trieste during the epidemic at the end of the nineteenth century. For the duration of the epidemic wave, which began at the end of 1892 and lasted until 1894, the Trieste hospital registered 767 smallpox infections. Senior doctor Alessandro De Manussi,[69] who took good note of the statistical data, also provided the number of unvaccinated patients, albeit knowing that it could not always be confirmed with certainty. This number was particularly high in the youngest age group (up to five years) and in children aged up to fifteen years, and something similar held for the share of unvaccinated persons among the deceased. To a certain degree, this may be indicative of an irregular implementation of vaccination or its inadequate scope.[70] Children aged up to ten years represented a 31.9% share among the infected, and the same age group accounted for as much as 61.8% of all deaths.

Conversely, the effectiveness of vaccination can be indirectly inferred from numerical data on morbidity that were collected during the above-mentioned epidemic in Koper in the 1870s, when (no more than) 13% of children aged up to ten years became infected (perhaps owing to regular vaccination of children in a certain period), and the age group between twenty-one and forty represented the largest segment, almost 51% of all infected.[71] The disease posed an especially serious threat to the youngest children (up to the age of five), as shown by the ratio between recoveries and deaths in this age group. Specifically, more than half of children aged up to five years died

65 For more on these issues, see Bratož, Bolni otroci.

66 Schrom Dye and Smith, Mother Love, p. 338. Nonetheless, the parents' responsibility for the health of their children was also understood in moral–religious terms (Cf. Košar, *Od telesne reje otrok*; Kern, *Nauk*, p. 9).

67 Schrom Dye and Smith, Mother Love, p. 345. Apart from the key question regarding the kind and size of audience that such literature reached, nothing is also known about the reception and interpretation of these arguments (Schrom Dye and Smith, Mother Love, p. 337).

68 See, e.g., *Kmetijske in rokodelske novice*, December 14th, 1861.

69 De Manussi, *Cenni*.

70 According to some authors, however, vaccination usually covered most, even 90% of Trieste's population, with no major resistance against this practice being reported from at least 1840 onward (Scartabellati, Visibili nemici, p. 532).

71 There was quite possibly no routine vaccination of adults to boost their immunity against smallpox. What should also be borne in mind is that this age group was mostly composed of active population, characterized by occupational mobility, which means that a part probably came from elsewhere.

from smallpox—a significant share, given that lethality in other groups did not exceed 13%.[72]

(Re)vaccination in the nineteenth-century Littoral

In the first half of the century, smallpox vaccinations in the Koper district were implemented fairly regularly among the youngest children, both in towns (Koper, Muggia) and rural areas.[73] When faced with an imminent outbreak, the authorities also revaccinated children and adults. Revaccination was particularly crucial because vaccination alone did not ensure lasting immunity to smallpox. In 1833, for example, calls for revaccination came in the wake of a smallpox outbreak in the city penitentiary,[74] where the physician Gian Andrea de Manzoni[75] eventually administered the vaccine to 126 inmates who did not reject it or were not prevented from receiving it by their health condition. In the same period, the town registered another 353 vaccinated persons, mostly adults, aged between four and forty-seven years,[76] heralding the beginning of more systematic vaccination and revaccination campaigns. Regular vaccination (of children and unvaccinated persons) also took place on an annual basis, most likely leaning on the data from parish birth registers for the previous year. The physician first performed a test pre-vaccination (a week before compiling the list of vaccinated persons)[77] and then the vaccination itself, followed by the evaluation of results a week later.[78] Because the district physician's responsibility spanned a sizeable territory, vaccination at each of the ten designated points in the countryside was carried out in a day, whereas the target population in the district seat, the town of Koper, was much bigger and required vaccination to take place every eight days over a period of four months.[79]

In 1835,[80] altogether 838 children received the vaccine in the district of Koper—192 in the town itself[81] and the rest across the wider district area. The physician administered the liquid vaccine in nearly 93% of all cases and the dry powder vaccine in others. This may suggest that he applied the dry powder vaccine first for the lack of pustules from which the liquid vaccine was collected. The majority of the forty-two children who did not receive the vaccine were too weak or too sickly to endure the procedure, and only six failed to show up for vaccination. Regular and systematic vaccination continued in midsummer; in 1850, vaccine was administered to 1,145 persons and forty-four of those who had not taken part in vaccination in the previous year. The procedure was performed in the following locations: Koper, Rižana (Lazaret), Dekani, Muggia, Osp, Loka, Kubed, Truške and Koštabona, Krkavče, Šmarje, Sv. Anton, Plavje, Ricmanje (San Giuseppe della Chiusa), Boršt (San Antonio in Bosco), Gročana (Grozzana), Podgorje, Klanec, Pomjan, Marezige, Dolina (San Dorligo della Valle), and Tinjan. In 1852, for example, fifty-seven persons remained unvaccinated from the previous year and 1,174 were revaccinated (hence, altogether 1,231). That same year, revaccination was performed as well, in the town itself strictly limited to institutions: the penitentiary (248 vaccinated), the secondary school for girls (thirty-one) and boys (fifty), the grammar school (thirty-six), and the kindergarten (twenty-seven). Outside Koper, revaccination took place in the above-listed villages; 1,956 people received the vaccine across the entire territory under the care of the district physician.[82]

Preparing for the looming epidemic threat in early 1872, the authorities in Trieste called for vaccination and revaccination and, due to poor response, repeated the call in May.[83] One Trieste physician complained about the low figures in vaccination reports, stating that about six thousand vaccinated persons amounted to no more than 5%—a drop in the ocean compared to the needs of Trieste's total population of 124,855.[84] Dismissing the official mea-

72 SI PAK KP 7, t. u. 110, a. u. 2122. See also Bratož, Cepljenje proti kozam.

73 Villages included in the vaccination of 1831 and 1832, respectively, were Čežarji, Dekani, Osp, Loka, Kubed, Movraž, Topolovec (or Gradin), Truške, and Koštabona.

74 Cf. Kramar, Epidemije, p. 110.

75 A decades-long district physician, Manzoni (1798–1872) was an ardent and several times awarded promotor of vaccination, and one of the first in the province to propose revaccination, which he also administered in Koper (SI PAK KP 304, carton 5, a. u. 9a, Correspondenza officiosa 1854–1857; SI PAK KP 304, a. u. 21).

76 SI PAK KP 304, a. u. 21; see also Bratož, Cepljenje proti kozam.

77 Unfortunately, the data do not show clearly how many persons received the vaccine and whether it was merely the vaccination of children or (also) the revaccination of adults.

78 The law of 1821 already stipulated that a physician must visit every vaccinated person at least twice within the first nine days following the vaccination to make sure that the procedure went well (*Dizionario di igiene pubblica*). However, in addition to poor interest in public vaccination campaigns, medical assessment of vaccination performance was sometimes rendered difficult by parents rejecting to vaccinate their children (see, e.g., *Kmetijske in rokodelske novice*, September 15th, 1855). This is probably also confirmed by Simon Rutar (*Samosvoje mesto Trst*, p. 147), who maintains that of altogether 6,932 vaccinated children in Istria in 1893, 31.6 % cases remained unchecked.

79 SI PAK KP 304, a. u. 21; September 1st, 1831, and September 10th, 1832.

80 SI PAK KP 304, a. u. 21.

81 Of all children vaccinated in the town, twenty-three were aged between one and five years, six between one and two weeks, and 163 between one and eleven months. In the countryside, 98.3% of vaccinated children were younger than two years, and the oldest was aged fourteen.

82 SI PAK KP 7, t. u. 19, a. u. 340.

83 Pinguentini, Cronache, p. 36.

84 Scartabellati, Visibili nemici. Of course, refusing vaccination, which had failed to produce a desirable response, also presented a problem elsewhere; for Ljubljana, see, e.g., Vodopivec, Črne koze.

Vacination of children in the countryside
(Rudolph Carl Gottfried von Geißler: Die Gartenlaube, 1867; Wikimedia Commons).

sures as clearly insufficient, city physicians organized themselves and established a special private vaccination committee[85] which performed vaccination at the Mauroner Theater both against payment[86] (five forints per individual and ten per family) and free of charge for those who demonstrated their eligibility for free vaccination with a certificate issued by the commander of their quarter. Home vaccination was also organized. Unfortunately, even this initiative failed short of producing a significant impact, registering 312 persons vaccinated against payment and no more than 152 persons receiving the vaccine free of charge.[87]

The authorities considered introducing stricter regulations to impose mandatory vaccination; however, the overall social climate made it increasingly clear that a consensus would be difficult to reach. The esteemed Trieste physician with long years of service, Alessandro Goracucchi (otherwise an adherent of the anti-contagionist theory, which rejected the idea that some diseases such as cholera were contagious), for example, opposed mandatory (re)vaccination as contrary to personal freedom and instead proposed using means of persuasion (such as a popular handbook on the benefits of vaccination).[88] Elsewhere, too, the proponents of vaccination clashed with liberal and *laissez-faire* principles, for example, J. Simon in Britain,[89] whose proposal for mandatory vaccination was believed to threat individual freedom of choice for the benefit of collective good. There is no denying that medical debates were also shaped by the economic interests, especially in Trieste as the Austrian maritime trade center, where, invested with the liberal logic, they defied quarantines and any kind of constraint. On the other hand, discordant opinions within the medical science itself were of no benefit to spreading the pro-vaccination propaganda, which often met with broad resistance as it were.

85 A similar private initiative most likely led to the vaccination of 2,100 persons in 1893, as mentioned by Rutar (*Samosvoje mesto Trst*, p. 147), in addition to 4,494 persons immunized within the framework of public vaccination.

86 Apart from resistance, this was undoubtedly another factor that importantly disincentivized many from being vaccinated. Perhaps it seems reasonable to concur that the overall willingness to take the vaccine, no matter how paradoxically it may sound, *declined* during the epidemic because of the growing fear and the increasingly entrenched prejudices (Scartabellati, Visibili nemici, p. 532).

87 Pinguentini, Cronache, p. 37.

88 Ibid., p. 39.

89 Bynum, Medicina, p. 470.

Conclusion

The article discusses the key prophylaxis to prevent smallpox infection and an early form of immunization before the discovery of viruses—vaccination, i.e., application of the cow vaccine, which was in use from the beginning of the nineteenth century. There was a notable emphasis on vaccination as a measure that prolonged longevity (or, rather, reduced mortality in children) and contributed to the general wellbeing of humankind. By creating a regulatory framework, the state sought to maximize the acceptance of this practice; however, still decades after it was introduced, vaccination continued to be targeted by a range of disincentivizing discourses (from the fear of introducing foreign matter into the human body and the fear of moral contamination, to liberal principles promulgating an individual's freedom of decision). The authorities, the clergy, and scientists therefore sought to achieve the broadest possible awareness about the necessity of vaccination through various communication channels.

The examples presented, and particularly the epidemic of 1872, which spread from its original focus in Trieste to the nearby districts (especially that of Koper) and from there to other provinces, including Carniola, also point to the widespread prevalence of smallpox epidemics in the second half of the nineteenth century and in a way testify to the inadequate prophylactic effectiveness. The latter was probably largely based on the engagement shown by health workers in key positions (district physicians), with whom lied the vaccination initiative, and in part also on the level of responsiveness among the population to many calls and the rhetoric of persuasion—an aspect that has so far received the least research attention.

More detailed vaccination records of the Koper district document systematic vaccination campaigns that took place both in cities and rural areas, where the vaccine was administered to newborns in an especially consistent manner. The first vaccination of children was regular and systematic, and the general revaccination was mainly carried out when facing an epidemic threat. The effectiveness of revaccination was much more questionable, as also confirmed by a considerable share of the infected in some young and old age groups who had been vaccinated but most likely only once, in their childhood. Yet it was precisely revaccination, for which the various authorities' public appeals were the least successful, that was most urgently needed for maintaining the population's immunity, given that the effectiveness of the vaccine wore out within ten years of the first administration.

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POVZETEK

Preprečevanje črnih koz v Avstrijskem primorju

Članek predstavlja izvedbo vakcinacije (cepljenja z govejo vakcino) kot ključne profilakse pri črnih kozah, ki je bila tudi v habsburških deželah v uporabi od začetka 19. stoletja. Analiza kvantitativnih podatkov za območje Avstrijskega primorja (zlasti Koper in Trst kot pomembno epidemično žarišče) kaže na obsežnost in pogostost epidemij črnih koz tudi v drugi polovici 19. stoletja, kar odpira vprašanja o obsegu in kontinuiteti izvajanja teh profilaktičnih ukrepov, na drugi pa tudi o odzivnosti prebivalstva na pozive k cepljenju.

Država je z regulativi tudi poskušala doseči čim večjo razširjenost te prakse, vendar pa so jo še dolga desetletja po njeni uvedbi spremljali različni odklonilni diskurzi. S pozivi prebivalstvu preko različnih komunikacijskih kanalov so zato oblasti, cerkev in stroka skušali ozavestiti širše množice o potrebnosti cepljenja, ki se je umeščalo v diskurz državne skrbi za dobrobit prebivalstva in zmanjševanja otroške umrljivosti. Ključnega pomena pa je bila tudi revakcinacija, saj cepljenje z govejo vakcino ni zagotavljalo trajne imunosti. Če je za obravnavano območje značilno dokaj redno in sistematično izvajanje cepljenja novorojenih otrok, katerih število je bilo mogoče natančno nadzorovati, je za splošne revakcinacije prebivalstva veljalo, da so bile izvedene predvsem ob neposrednih grožnjah epidemij, njihov domet pa je bil veliko bolj vprašljiv.

An early 19th century cartoon that reflects the fear of the effects of Jenner's vaccination (James Gillray, 1802; Wikimedia Commons)

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Newspaper reporting on the smallpox epidemic in Carniola in 1873–1874

ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the smallpox epidemic between 1873 and 1874 in Carniola through reporting of Slovenian and German newspapers. These also provide the basis for a detailed study of the spread of the disease in Carniola, measures adopted by the provincial authorities and their infringement, as well as the consequences for the population that smallpox left in its wake. With a further focus on Ljubljana, the article also investigates the number of the deceases and their social structure at the zenith of the epidemic. By analyzing these processes, it aims to demonstrate the course of the smallpox epidemic in Carniola as reported in newspapers and the way in which newspapers set on notifying the public daily about the disease.

KEY WORDS
Carniola, Ljubljana, epidemic, smallpox, newspapers

IZVLEČEK

POROČANJE ČASOPISJA O EPIDEMIJI ČRNIH KOZ NA KRANJSKEM V LETIH 1873–1874

Članek analizira epidemijo črnih koz v letih 1873 in 1874 na Kranjskem skozi poročanje slovenskega in nemškega časopisja. Pri tem s pomočjo časnikov podrobneje raziskuje širitev bolezni na Kranjskem, ukrepe deželnih oblasti in njihove kršitve ter posledice, ki so jih črne koze pustile pri prebivalstvu. Dodatno, s poudarkom na Ljubljani, raziskuje število umrlih ter njihovo socialno strukturo na vrhuncu epidemije. Z analizo teh procesov skuša članek prikazati, kako je potekala epidemija črnih koz na Kranjskem glede na poročanje časopisja ter na kakšen način so se časniki lotili vsakdanjega obveščanja javnosti o bolezni.

KLJUČNE BESEDE
Kranjska, Ljubljana, epidemija, črne koze, časopisje

Introduction[1]

Smallpox (Ger.: *schwarze Pocken* or *Blattern*) was a contagious disease in humans caused by two known variants of the variola virus: the severe *variola maior* (ca. 30% mortality) and the milder *variola minor* (ca. 1–2% mortality). The virus was spread by droplets from the mouth and nose when sneezing, coughing, or through contact with contaminated body fluids and objects (e.g., clothes). The symptoms included red rash, fever, vomiting, fatigue, and often also dehydration. Those who successfully recovered from the disease were usually left with scars all over the body (especially on the face, which often had psychological consequences), and not a small number of people suffered partial or complete blindness. The disease could only be contracted once, and on recovery a person developed lasting immunity to smallpox.

There was no medicine for smallpox, and the only way to prevent infection was through immunization, which was achieved by using two methods. The first one, *variolization* (derived from the term *variola*), was used to confer immunity by inserting the material collected from the vesicle of an infected person into an incision in the skin, which most often resulted in a milder form of the disease. After successful recovery, a person developed lasting immunity to smallpox. The second example was *vaccination* (from the Latin word *vacca* or cow),[2] a similar procedure that used the cowpox instead of the smallpox virus. Unlike *variolization*, this method only generated short-term immunity, which required revaccination, but it also had a somewhat lower mortality than *variolization*.[3]

The disease already occurred in the Habsburg Monarchy before the nineteenth century in a wave of European epidemics, and it also aroused attention of many physicians that worked in Carniola at one time or another.[4] One of the last smallpox outbreaks in Europe took place in Yugoslavia in 1972, where the disease first appeared in Kosovo, whereas Slovenia recorded not a single case of infection, thanks to strict measures and mass vaccination.[5] Today, smallpox has been eradicated worldwide, as also confirmed by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1980.[6]

Patient infected with the smallpox virus (https://novice.svet24.si/clanek/zanimivosti/585aafb431e94/bolezen-moderne-dobe)

Although the smallpox epidemic also raged in Carniola between 1873 and 1874, it is not often treated in Slovenian historiography. The only exception is a detailed discussion by Peter Vodopivec, who drew on newspapers, annual statistics, and other sources from the Historical Archives Ljubljana and the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia. His article *Črne koze na Kranjskem in v Ljubljani v letih 1873/74* (Smallpox in Carniola and Ljubljana in 1873/74) was later also summarized by Andrej Studen in *Kronika 19. stoletja* (The Chronicle of the Nineteenth Century) for the purposes of composing a short lexical entry *Huda epidemija črnih koz* (Devastating Smallpox Epidemic). On the other hand, several historians have written about smallpox (especially the eighteenth-century epidemics) and vaccination in general. In her contribution *Bolni otroci in starševske skrbi: odnos do otroškega zdravja na primeru prepričevanja koz v 19. stol.* (Sick Children and Parental Care. Attitude toward Child Health and the Case of Smallpox Prevention in the Nineteenth Century), Urška Železnik describes, among other things, the overall attitude toward smallpox vaccination and ways in which the government sought to motivate the public to get vaccinated. Drawing on the statistical analysis and the documentation of the physician Gian Andrea Manzoni, the same author also provided a detailed study in her article *Cepljenje proti kozam v koprskem okraju v 30. letih 19. stoletja* (Smallpox Vaccination in the Koper District During the 1830s) about the process and the extent of smallpox vaccination in Koper and its surroundings. Although Marjana Kos devoted a segment of her Master thesis *Življenje v Ljubljani ob koncu 18. in na začetku 19. stoletja* (Life in Ljubljana at the End of the

1 The article is based on a term paper for the study course Selected Chapters from the Nineteenth-Century Slovenian History under the mentorship of Katarina Keber.

2 Vaccination and revaccination were also widely used during the period discussed in this article.

3 "Smallpox" (https://www.britannica.com/science/smallpox (October 23rd, 2019)); Grignolio, *Kdo se boji cepiv?*, pp. 49–52; Kos, Epidemija, pp. 288–292.

4 The disease was, among others, described by the physician Fran Viljem Lipič in his work *Bolezni Ljubljančanov* and before him by the physicians Balthasar Hacquet from Idrija, Anton Muznik from Gorizia, and Vincenc Kern from Ljubljana.

5 Epidemija črnih koz v Jugoslaviji (http://zgodovina.si/epidemija-crnih-koz-v-jugoslaviji/ (October 15th, 2020)); Lipič, *Bolezni Ljubljančanov*, pp. 153 and 160.

6 "Smallpox" (https://www.who.int/csr/disease/smallpox/en/ (October 23rd, 2019)).

Eighteenth and in the Early Nineteenth Century) to the smallpox epidemic between 1873 and 1874, her work largely focuses on analyzing vaccination as well as the treatment and burial of smallpox victims. Kos also wrote the article *Epidemije črnih koz v Ljubljani v drugi polovici 18. stoletja* (Smallpox Epidemics in Ljubljana in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century) based on death registers, newspapers, and administrative materials, in which she described the spread of both types of vaccination to Carniola and studied smallpox epidemics in Slovenian territory in the second half of the eighteenth century.[7]

This article aims to fill certain gaps in the knowledge about the course of the epidemic between 1873 and 1874, as well as bring forth the first study of newspaper reporting on smallpox in Carniola and determine the social structure of the deceased with an emphasis on Ljubljana when the epidemic reached its peak.[8]

The onset of the epidemic in the Habsburg Monarchy and rare cases of infection in Carniola

After the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871), a new smallpox epidemic swept through Europe, causing the greatest devastation in the Habsburg Monarchy between 1872 and 1874 during its gradual spread across its territory. The most affected provinces were Lower Austria, Salzburg, Silesia, and Trieste in the south.[9] In 1873, the disease also took hold in Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola, where it peaked in the first quarter of 1874.[10]

Until March 1873, smallpox incidences in Carniola were hardly ever mentioned in Slovenian and German newspapers and remained in the shadow of drawing up the new election act.[11] On March 7th, 1873, *Slovenski narod* was the first to report "*that smallpox and cholera patients [were] admitted to the city hospital for such time as [was] necessary to prevent these diseases from escalating into epidemics, after the provincial hospital could not accommodate them in a separate area.*"[12] This clearly shows that smallpox incidence rate in Ljubljana and Carniola did not deviate from the average at that time. Two days later, the same newspaper reported on smallpox infections in Kranjska Gora and stressed that the number of patients in the provincial hospital in Ljubljana had slightly increased, even though it still indicated individual, unrelated cases from various areas across Carniola.[13] At the end of March, *Slovenski narod* reported on new smallpox infections and lack of space in the provincial hospital, but without causing alarm over the slight increase in morbidity.[14]

In early April, newspapers again reported on a few new smallpox infections and a death (of a woman), adding for Ljubljana that although "*the disease [had] not evolved into an epidemic, the city [continued] to register individual smallpox infections*", and called on the population to protect itself to the maximum extent possible.[15] Then, the news of smallpox and infections quieted down until the end of April and reappeared again in early May 1873 with reports on a few infected individuals and a small (unspecified) number of victims.[16] At the end of July, new reports about the diseases surfaced in Kranj and its surroundings, and a slight increase in infections was also observed in the surroundings of Ljubljana (Vižmarje and Medvode).[17] Nonetheless, smallpox still did not spread widely across the province.

Between August and October, there was again silence, with not a word about the disease to be found in *Slovenski narod* and no news in the newly established *Slovenec*.[18] Only *Laibacher Zeitung* noted a few cases of smallpox in Ljubljana and its surroundings, but it said nothing about an epidemic. Isolated smallpox incidences were casually mentioned together with other seasonal diseases, such as tuberculosis, angina, and typhus.[19]

The mass spread of the disease to Carniola and the adoption of protective measures

In November, *Slovenski narod* wrote nothing specific about smallpox and remained largely concentrated on the election to the provincial assembly, which took place on November 11th, 1873—unlike *Slovenec*, which did report a few times on the disease. In the middle of the month, it published a letter from Graz, where smallpox already seemed to be abating due to winter. However, by mid-month, the Styrian

7 Further details on the works are specified in the list of literature.

8 During the time of writing the article, when measures to reverse the spread of Covid-19 were in place, the figures on deaths from newspapers could not be verified in death registers of Ljubljana's parishes due to the closure of archives.

9 At that time, Trieste, Istria, and Gorizia-Gradisca formed part of the Austrian Littoral, which was severely affected by the epidemic—in all probability, smallpox spread throughout Carniola from there (Vodopivec, Črne koze, p. 92; *Slovenski zgodovinski atlas*, p. 148).

10 Vodopivec, Črne koze, pp. 92–96; Železnik, Bolni otroci, pp. 438–449.

11 For the Austrian half of the monarchy, the above-mentioned act from 1873 introduced direct election to the Imperial Council in Vienna in the form of four curiae (Cvirn, *Dunajski državni zbor*, pp. 128–129).

12 *Slovenski narod*, March 7th, 1873, p. 3.

13 *Slovenski narod*, March 9th, 1873, p. 3.

14 *Slovenski narod*, March 30th, 1873, p. 3.

15 *Slovenski narod*, April 3rd, 1873, p. 3.

16 *Slovenski narod*, May 4th, 1873, p. 3.

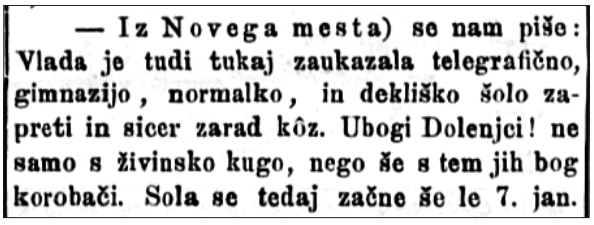
17 *Slovenski narod*, July 31st, 1873, p. 2.

18 The first issue of *Slovenec* was brought out in October 1873. Initially, it was published twice or three times weekly, hence the somewhat limited body of information on the epidemic; *Slovenec*, October 14th, 1873, p. 1.

19 *Laibacher Zeitung*, October 3rd, 1873, p. 3; October 10th, 1873, p. 3; October 20th, 1873, p. 3; October 22nd, 1873, p. 3.

capital observed a new surge in infections, and the press feared that the movements of the army would trigger a mass spread of the disease from Styria to Carniola.[20] Toward the end of the month, the same newspaper started to issue increasingly frequent reports on smallpox-related deaths.[21] Also noting the growing incidence of the disease, in mid-November *Laibacher Zeitung* wrote that smallpox infections were on the rise, causing above-average mortality in children and adults. Nonetheless, in November 1873, tuberculosis still featured as the disease that affected the highest number of Ljubljana's inhabitants.[22]

In mid-December, *Slovenski narod* noted a high incidence of smallpox in Ljubljana's surroundings and "*that several high school pupils in Ljubljana also showed symptoms of smallpox*."[23] On December 19th, 1873, newspapers pointed to the growing number of new infections among schoolchildren, forbidding school attendance to all children whose family members had contracted smallpox.[24] The very next day, the authorities passed even stricter measures by closing the gymnasium, the secondary school (Ger.: *Realschule*), and all public schools in Ljubljana for three weeks. This was also the first time in 1873 that the newspaper wrote about a spreading epidemic.[25] By the end of the month, reports on infections began to circulate throughout Carniola. On Christmas Day, for example, all schools were shut down in Novo Mesto, and the Poljane hospital in Ljubljana, already running beyond its capacity, had to open a new provisional hospital in Trnovo, which reportedly filled up in a few days. Patients also received in-home care from private physicians, and the specifically designated sanitary police was called in to do a house-to-house search for many infected who did not seek medical help at all.[26] On the last day of 1873, the authorities issued a proclamation on extending the closure of schools in Ljubljana for a month (until the end of January 1874) or until the end of the epidemic in Carniola.[27] December 1873 thus brought about a turning point, with smallpox spreading throughout Carniola and newspapers now reporting almost daily on new infections and the provincial government taking the first measures to reverse the epidemic. In the last week of December, *Slovenski narod* regularly criticized the provincial government for its failure to effectively tackle the smallpox epidemic, which now threatened to continue spreading unhindered and to claim an untold number of more victims.


— Iz Novega mesta) se nam piše: Vlada je tudi tukaj zaukazala telegrafično, gimnazijo, normalko, in dekliško šolo zapreti in sicer zarad kôz. Ubogi Dolenjci! ne samo s živinsko kugo, nego še s tem jih bog korobači. Sola se tedaj začne še le 7. jan.

Newspaper article on school closures in Novo Mesto (Slovenski narod, December 25th, 1873).

In the first quarter of 1874, the smallpox epidemic reached its peak in Carniola. On New Year's Day, a permanent (sanitary) commission was set up at the city hall in Ljubljana with the main task to prevent the spread of the epidemic. It was composed of the mayor, four city councilors, two physicians, and the city's chief advisor.[28] At its first session, the commission passed two measures: to augment the capacity of the provisional hospital in Trnovo to receive fifty more patients and to disinfect the patients' clothes, even at the city's expense for those who could not afford it.[29] According to newspaper reports, the number of smallpox deaths surged in January 1874 and the provincial government used the record amount of health funds for treating smallpox and cholera patients.[30] As numerous letters from across the province reveal, in mid-January smallpox continued to spread throughout Carniola, forcing the sanitary commission in Ljubljana to extend the imposed school holiday for (at least) until February 3rd, 1874, whereas the authorities in Novo Mesto prolonged it (at least) until January 27th.[31] The last third of the month witnessed ever more frequent reports about the surge in smallpox infections precisely in Novo Mesto and its surroundings—the local hospital had exceeded its capacity and the dread of the disease was so great that "*no one dared to visit their neighbor's house so as not to contract smallpox*".[32] In the Carniolan capital, an uproar was set off by the news that infected inmates were being transported from Ljubljana Castle to the provisional hospital in Trnovo, as many citizens feared their escape.[33] Then at the end of January, reports on a severe outbreak of smallpox also surfaced in Kranj and its surroundings, also leaving the local inhabitants too afraid to leave their homes. Official reports stated high numbers of infections and deaths among children, and the increasing morbidity

20 *Slovenec*, November 20th, 1873, p. 3.
21 *Slovenec*, November 11th, 1873, p. 4; November 25th, 1873, p. 4; November 27th, 1873, p. 4; November 29th, 1873, p. 4.
22 *Laibacher Zeitung*, November 15th, 1873, p. 4.
23 *Slovenski narod*, December 17th, 1873, p. 3.
24 *Slovenski narod*, December 19th, 1873, p. 3.
25 *Slovenski narod*, December 20th, 1873, p. 3; *Slovenec*, December 20th, 1873, p. 4.
26 *Slovenski narod*, December 25th, 1873, p. 3; December 28th, 1873, p. 4; December 30th, 1873, p. 3.
27 *Slovenski narod*, December 31st, 1873.
28 The press here only mentions a commission without stating the names of its members.
29 *Slovenski narod*, January 1st, 1874, p. 3; *Laibacher Zeitung*, January 2nd, 1874, p. 3.
30 *Slovenski narod*, January 8th, 1874, p. 3.
31 *Slovenski narod*, January 14th, 1874, p. 3; January 15th, 1874, p. 3; *Slovenec*, January 20th, 1874, p. 4.
32 *Slovenski narod*, January 18th, 1874, p. 3.
33 *Slovenski narod*, January 20th, 1874, p. 3.

was soon also observed in adults.[34] At the same time, the sanitary commission in Ljubljana published the following additional measures to end the spread of the epidemic: physicians were to report the number of smallpox infections, all classrooms and personal objects of the deceased were to be disinfected, and school holiday, as already stated, was extended until February 3rd.[35] Although the situation was extremely serious, newspapers reiterated at the end of January 1874 that the epidemic was already losing its breath and that such prolonged school closures were uncalled for. They also repeatedly called on the provincial government to introduce mandatory smallpox vaccination as the most effective and reasonable method of protection against the spread of the disease.

Although schools in Ljubljana reopened on February 4th, teachers already complained that same day about "*many pupils not coming to school, who [were] in perfectly good health but [lived] in the same household as smallpox patients*."[36] All this points to the high numbers of the infected and those in close contact with them continuing to persist in early February. High morbidity is also confirmed by the article published the next day on the hospitals in Poljane and Trnovo being again overloaded with smallpox patients.[37] For the rest of the month, newspapers reported on numerous smallpox cases throughout Carniola, signaling that the epidemic was far from over and thus completely contradicting newspaper reports from the end of the previous month. The disease even reached as far as Mount Nanos, something considered impossible due to its elevation and the constant wind, which were believed to protect those areas from all kinds of epidemic diseases.[38] In February, sections of *Slovenski narod* and *Slovenec* reporting on deaths and their causes still indicated a significant number of persons dying of smallpox. *Laibacher Zeitung* also featured an article assuring that "*ist [...] Impfstoff zur Vaccination und Revaccination in guter Qualität aus der steiermärkisch landschaftlichen Impfstoff-Regenerierungsanstalt [...] stets nach beliebigem Bedarf zu beziehen*" (the substance for vaccination and revaccination coming from the Styrian provincial institution for vaccines is of high quality and readily available in any quantity).[39] The statement most likely sought to persuade the greatest possible number of people to get vaccinated—a method that many newspapers regarded as the most effective in battling the epidemic.[40]

Containing the disease. The end of the epidemic and its aftermath

Still in early March 1874, some areas across Carniola reported on the persisting presence of smallpox and advised caution but added that the epidemic was less severe than in the previous two months. On March 21st, 1874, the end of the epidemic was declared in Novo Mesto, while reports about the epidemic continued to trickle from other parts of the monarchy, especially from the neighboring Styria, where the highest number of cases were recorded in the Savinja Valley.[41] A decline in smallpox deaths was also reported in newspaper sections on deaths and their causes. The provisional hospital for smallpox patients in Trnovo was closed in March but remained on alert for a new possible epidemic outbreak.[42]

Over the next few months, news on the epidemic in Carniola disappeared completely and the morbidity rates returned to normal. This raises the question of what really facilitated the containment of the epidemic. Had the measures imposed by the provincial government and the sanitary commission finally borne fruit? Was the end of the epidemic due to the weather change (the transition from winter to spring)? Or was it owed to a greater proportion of vaccinated population? Although the sources offer no definitive answer, the epidemic undoubtedly had profound physical and psychological implications. As already noted in the introduction, the disease left many survivors with scars and some of them blind. In many families, both parents contracted the disease and died of it, making their children orphans. On March 3rd, 1874, *Slovenski narod* stated an example of an entire family contracting smallpox (both parents and seven children) that was reduced to poverty after having lost their ability to work, source of income and all savings.[43] The impact of the smallpox epidemic on the population in the first quarter of 1874 is even more vividly illustrated by how

— (Bolezen kozé v Ljubljani) se je toliko zmanjšala, da bodo denes zaprli bolnišnico, ki jo je bil magistrat napravil za silo v Trnovem. Vendar bode še pripravljena ostala, ko bi se epidemija, ki nikakor še nij nehala, zopet širiti začela.

Newspaper article on closing the provisional hospital in Trnovo (Slovenski narod, March 22nd, 1874).

34 *Slovenski narod*, January 30th, 1874, p. 3.
35 *Slovenec*, January 29th, 1874, p. 3.
36 *Slovenski narod*, February 5th, 1874, p. 3.
37 *Slovenski narod*, February 6th, 1874, p. 3.
38 *Slovenski narod*, February 17th, 1874, p. 3.
39 *Laibacher Zeitung*, January 5th, 1874, p. 4.
40 Such articles were not a rarity. Throughout the epidemic, many newspapers devoted several sections urging the population to become vaccinated and the authorities to impose mandatory vaccination.
41 *Slovenski narod*, March 21st, 1874, p. 3.
42 *Slovenski narod*, March 22nd, 1874, p. 2.
43 *Slovenski narod*, March 3rd, 1874, p. 3.

the period was dubbed in the press—"the times of smallpox".[44] However, relief for Carniola was short-lived because a new wave of smallpox already hit in 1882.

The reasons for the spread of the disease

One of the main reasons that the epidemic swept across Carniola was improved connections between individual parts of the monarchy and faster mass movements facilitated by new inventions, most notably the construction of the Southern Railroad in 1875, linking Vienna with Trieste and partly also traversing Carniola with its capital Ljubljana. These changes intensified and accelerated the movement of people, trade contacts,[45] and enabled a smoother circulation of soldiers, who were the most common transmitters of epidemics such as smallpox and cholera in wartime. According to the Carniolan press, the epidemic first struck the areas along the Southern Railroad.[46]

Reading the newspaper reports also leaves one with the impression that, despite repeated calls for action, the measures introduced by the provincial government were not swift, adequate, and effective enough to stop the epidemic in its tracks. Yet part of the blame also rested on the Carniolans themselves, many of whom completely disregarded the protective measures or abided by them to the minimum extent possible. Thus, one could read in newspapers about "*a property owner making a three-hour journey to settle legal matters at court, with a scarf wrapped around his head and his face and arms dotted with pustules that had already began to fill with pus*".[47] People often refused to bid farewell from their deceased family members and kept their bodies in their homes for days; many failed to mount black signs signaling an infected household, the sick moved about freely and even frequented common areas (taverns, courts, churches, stores, and so on). Moreover, no prohibition was imposed on visiting patients, whereas hygiene and disinfection remained atrociously poor despite repeated warnings.[48]

According to newspapers, another significant reason for the spread of the disease was resistance to vaccination, observed not only by among many healthy or sick individuals but also among physicians who were skeptical of the vaccine and often even actively agitated against it. In addition, no one was held legally accountable for such actions, because the decree, issued in 1836 for the Austrian part of the monarchy, merely recommended smallpox vaccination. Variolization was introduced in Carniola as early as 1799 by the physician Vincenc Kern, and according to the data for the 1870s, between 13,000 and 14,000 Carniolans received the vaccine (in the form of vaccination and revaccination) annually before the epidemic. Along with physicians, they were given various bonuses and other privileges, whereas the mothers of unvaccinated children were propagandistically labelled as bad and irresponsible. To boost the preventive efforts during the epidemic itself, the city council even imposed emergency vaccination for Ljubljana, which raises some doubt whether the press rightly stated the low vaccination rate as one of the main reasons for the epidemic of such magnitude.[49]

Smallpox deaths with an emphasis on the province of Carniola and the city of Ljubljana

Table 1: The number of smallpox deaths per 10,000 inhabitants.[50]

Province	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875
Carniola	1,2	4,0	21,2	51,1	4,3
Carinthia	1,9	2,7	18,3	27,8	5,6
Styria	1,7	7,0	15,1	22,4	8,0
Trieste	2,1	72,2	4,1	5,9	2,7
Gorizia-Gradisca	1,1	5,5	7,6	5,2	1,4
Istria	0,6	18,3	9,5	8,9	3,0

As the table shows, the most severely affected southern Austrian part was the city of Trieste in 1872, followed by Carniola in 1874, when the epidemic reached its peak in the province.

Table 2: The number of smallpox deaths by year in Carniola.[51]

Province	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875
Carniola	58	187	993	2407	203

Given the data above, it is possible to confirm the statements in newspapers that the epidemic in Carniola peaked in 1874. Between 1873 and 1874, smallpox killed altogether 3,400 persons or about 0.7% of the then Carniolan population of 480,000.

The table 3 clearly illustrates the widespread incidence of the smallpox epidemic in January, February, and March 1874 in Ljubljana, which can also be

44 *Slovenski narod*, March 4th, 1874, p. 2.
45 Trade was especially strong with Trieste, the monarchy's main port—whence the epidemic is believed to have spread across Carniola via the Southern Railroad; *Slovenski zgodovinski atlas*, p. 153; Vodopivec, Črne koze, p. 92.
46 Vodopivec, Črne koze, p. 92; Studen, Huda epidemija, p. 258.
47 *Slovenski narod*, February 25th, 1874, p. 3.
48 Vodopivec, Črne koze, pp. 92–93.
49 Vodopivec, Črne koze, p. 92; Železnik, Bolni otroci, pp. 441–444; Železnik, Cepljenje proti kozam, pp. 259–274; Studen, Huda epidemija, p. 259; Kos, Življenje v Ljubljani, p. 92.
50 Vodopivec, Črne koze, p. 92.
51 Ibid.

gathered from the reporting of Slovenian and German newspapers.

Table 3: The number of smallpox deaths in Ljubljana in the first half of 1874.[52]

Month	January	February	March	April	May	June
Smallpox deaths	31	28	18	10	4	4

Table 4: The number of smallpox deaths in Ljubljana between December 1873 and March 1874 by age group.[53]

Age (years)	0–5	6–20	21–50	50 +
Smallpox deaths	31	12	31	6

Most victims of the smallpox epidemic in Ljubljana belonged to the age groups between several weeks and five years and between twenty-one and fifty years. Not surprisingly, because the disease was posed a particular threat to infants and small children of up to five years. There were also several reports during the epidemic on a somewhat surprising spread of the disease among adults.[54] Of all victims of the epidemic, children aged less than two years accounted for no less than one-quarter of all smallpox deaths in Ljubljana, and the average age of the deceased was around nineteen years of age.[55]

Table 5: Smallpox deaths in Ljubljana between December 1873 and March 1874 by sex.[56]

Sex	Men	Women
Smallpox deaths	37	46

Albeit widely believed to not have discriminated among social strata, between December 1873 and March 1874 smallpox affected much more severely the poor, for example, children of ordinary workers, bakers, and cottagers. Most victims in the age group older than twenty years were cooks, joiners, carpenters, shoemakers, bakers, maids, farmhands, locksmiths, and housewives. Only 15% of all the deceased were from the middle and high social strata (teachers, accountants, judges, and so on).[57] The reasons for this could be, among others, that members of lower and less educated strata were more reluctant to receive the vaccine, which then reflected in higher morbidity and mortality rates. At the same time, low mortality rates in higher strata can also be attributed to better hygiene, higher living standard, and better healthcare more readily available to them in the event of infection, compared to lower strata.[58]

To conclude

The analysis of Slovenian and German newspapers in Ljubljana shows no noticeable deviation from the average number of smallpox infections before the autumn of 1873. Until November 1873, spotlight was on political developments, such as the drafting of the new imperial council election act from April 1873 or the election to the Carniolan provincial assembly, which was held in mid-November that same year. A slight increase in the number of infections can be observed in early autumn through newspaper reports on several unrelated cases across Carniola without mentioning any kind of epidemic. This changed in December, when the number of smallpox infections sharply increased. Only then did Slovenian and German press begin to write about an epidemic and call for maximum participation in vaccination as a crucial step toward ending the epidemic. The provincial government joined efforts with the local authorities in adopting a series of measures, such as school closures, organizing a sanitary commission, disinfecting the clothes of the infected, and opening a provisional hospital in Trnovo. Despite all measures, however, the press frequently urged the authorities to impose additional restrictions. At the end of January 1874, newspapers reported that the epidemic began to lose its breath, but these statements turned out to be false as hospitals began to fill up again with smallpox patients. At this point it seems that reporting rapidly switched from one extreme (demanding further action) to another (overly optimistic forecasts of the end of the epidemic). Contrary to the assessments provided by newspapers, the epidemic then started to abate in March, followed by the relaxation of some measures and the closure of the provisional hospital in Trnovo. Overall, reporting on smallpox put the main spotlight on Ljubljana and, somewhat surprisingly, the news of the epidemic was always featured on the penultimate page,[59] most probably so as not to cause excessive or unnecessary panic among the population.

52 Ibid, p. 95.
53 *Slovenec*, December 2nd, 1873, p. 4; December 11th, 1873, p. 4; December 13th, 1873, p. 4; December 20th, 1873, p. 4; December 30th, 1873, p. 4; January 6th, 1874, p. 4; January 8th, 1874, p. 4; January 17th, 1874, p. 4; January 22nd, 1874, p. 4; January 24th, 1874, p. 4; January 29th, 1874, p. 4; January 31st, 1874, p. 4; February 5th, 1874, p. 4; February 7th, 1874, p. 4; February 12th, 1874, p. 4; February 19th, 1874, p. 4; February 21st, 1874, p. 4; February 26th, 1874, p. 4; February 28th, 1874, p. 4; March 5th, 1874, p. 4; March 7th, 1874, p. 4; March 12th, 1874, p. 4, March 14th, 1874, p. 4; March 17th, 1874, p. 4, March 26th, 1874, p. 4; March 31st, 1874, p. 4.
54 Železnik, Bolni otroci, p. 440.
55 See note 53.
56 See note 53.
57 See note 53.
58 Železnik, Bolni otroci, pp. 442–447.
59 At the time, *Slovenski narod*, *Slovenec*, and *Laibacher Zeitung* most often only comprised four pages.

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POVZETEK

Poročanje časopisja o epidemiji črnih koz na Kranjskem v letih 1873–1874

Po francosko-pruski vojni (1870–71) se je v Evropi ponovno pričela širiti epidemija črnih koz. Habsburško monarhijo je epidemični val dosegel leta 1872 in se po njenem ozemlju postopoma širil naslednji dve leti. Med najbolj prizadetimi deželami monarhije so bile Spodnja Avstrija, Šlezija in Salzburg, medtem ko sta bila med najbolj prizadetima južnima območjema monarhije mesto Trst in dežela Kranjska. V slovenskem in nemškem časopisju pred jesenjo 1873 na Kranjskem ni mogoče zaznati večjega odstopanja od povprečnega števila primerov črnih koz. Nekoliko povečano število obolelih zasledimo šele novembra 1873, medtem ko je epidemija vrh doživela med decembrom 1873 in marcem 1874. Bolezen se je po poročanju časopisja najbolj razmahnila predvsem v Ljubljani, Kranju ter Novem mestu. Za zajezitev epidemije v deželi so posamezne mestne oblasti skupaj z deželno vlado sprejele številne ukrepe, med drugim ustanovitev sanitetne komisije, obvezno dezinfekcijo prostorov ter osebnih stvari obolelih, zaprtje šol in izredno cepljenje. Kljub temu moramo poudariti, da je časopisje deželne oblasti pogosto pozivalo, naj za zajezitev epidemije uvedejo dodatne omejitve, prebivalce pa je naprošalo, naj se udeležijo cepljenja. Ukrepi med Kranjci velikokrat niso bili upoštevani, saj so ljudje odhajali v skupne prostore (gostilne, cerkve, sodišča …), se zadrževali pri umrlih za črnimi kozami in vzdrževali nizek higienski standard. Časopisi so že konec januarja ocenili, da epidemija izgublja sapo, vendar se je ta pričela mimo njihovih napovedi umirjati šele marca, skladno s tem pa so deželne oblasti sprostile nekatere ukrepe. V letih 1873 in 1874 je na Kranjskem za črnimi kozami skupaj umrlo 3.400 oseb, kar predstavlja okoli 0,7 % takratnega prebivalstva dežele. Največji delež umrlih v Ljubljani med decembrom 1873 in marcem 1874 predstavljajo osebe iz starostne skupine od nekaj tednov do pet let in osebe iz starostne skupine od 21 do 50 let. Med žrtvami črnih koz največkrat najdemo pripadnike nižjih slojev, kot so otroci navadnih delavcev, pekov in kajžarjev, medtem ko so žrtve po 20. letu starosti prav tako opravljale poklice, značilne za najnižje sloje, to so bili hlapci, dekle, kuharice, gospodinje, čevljarji in tesarji. Razloge za takšno socialno strukturo umrlih lahko najdemo v večjem odporu proti cepljenju med nižjimi sloji ter v večji higieni, kvalitetnejših bivalnih razmerah in boljši oskrbi za obolele pri višjih slojih prebivalstva.

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Folktales about the Plague and Healing Practices against It in Narrative Folklore

ABSTRACT

The contribution discusses the narrative folklore about the plague, most notably how it spread, how people tried to protect themselves against the disease and how they treated it in Slovenian territory and, to some extent, within the wider European framework. The first part presents the analysis of folktales in which the Plague, personified as a demonic figure, roams from place to place, from one land to another. The second part focuses on steps taken to prevent the disease from spreading and means of protection against it, as well as healing, charms, incantations, and other vernacular practices during the epidemic.

KEY WORDS
plague, pandemics, folk narrative, Slovenia, folk medicine

IZVLEČEK

PRIPOVEDI O KUGI IN ZDRAVILNE PRAKSE PROTI TEJ BOLEZNI V LJUDSKEM IZROČILU

Prispevek obravnava pripovedno izročilo o kugi, predvsem tisti del, ki govori o njenem širjenju in načinih obrambe in zdravljenja pred to boleznijo v slovenskem prostoru in delno v širšem evropskem okviru. V prvem delu so analizirane pripovedi v katerih se Kuga kot poosebljeni demonski lik bolezni širi iz kraja v kraj in iz dežele v deželo, v drugem delu članka pa je obravnavan predvsem načini preprečevanja širjenja in zaščite pred to boleznijo ter zdravljenje, zarotitve, zagovarjanje ter druge vernakularne prakse ljudi v času epidemije.

KLJUČNE BESEDE
kuga, pandemije, slovstvena folklora, Slovenija, ljudska medicina

Folktales about the plague, the contagious disease, which had stricken humanity several times throughout history, have been preserved in oral tradition as depictions of conditions imposed by the plague epidemic as well as protection against the disease and its treatment or as folktales about the plague—the demonic creature that killed people and cattle. Especially in Europe, people described it as a supernatural being very akin to their conceptions of death, nightmare, hunger, and various other diseases. Its personifications featured in the demonologies of many cultures and represented one of the greatest horrors whenever and wherever it raged.

The set of distinctive motifs used in plague folktales is very comprehensive; in his catalogue "The Migratory Legends" (1958), the Norwegian folklorist Reidar Christiansen classified them under the chapter *Legends concerning the Great Plague*, referring to the following narrative types:

> 7080. The Plague, in the shape of an old hag, passing from district to district with a rake or, and, a broom.
> 7085. The hag is ferried across a river or lake by some one who in the end recognizes her, and asks to be spared. The hag consulting her book refuses, but grants him an easy death.
> 7090. The survivors, a boy and a girl, and their fate.
> 7095. The rediscovery many years after of deserted houses or a church.[1]

However, as materials preserved in the archives of research institutions and in printed sources suggest, folktales about the plague were thematically much more diverse.

The plague and hunger

Ivan Grafenauer was one of the few Slovenian folklorists who wrote about the plague accompanied by hunger in the form of the fabled insatiable creature Netek.[2] The plague was commonly associated with hunger, personified in Slovenian folklore as the Netek. However much he ate, he was never satisfied, and he always craved for more. Hence the name "ne tek," which literally translates to English "no appetite," although it is more correctly rendered as "never full."[3]

In the oldest preserved Slovenian folktale *O Neteku*, published in 1847 by Josip Drobnič, the association between the Netek and the plague is not made explicit. The author merely states that *in any house that wants to drive the Netek away without offering him food and drink, he will eat and drink all the human and animal supplies and make sure that the local fields, vineyards, and orchards will bear no fruit for three years. But whoever receives him with kindness, there he will show his gratitude*.[4]

Similarly, no such association between the Netek and the plague was made by the Slovenian novelist Janez Trdina, who wrote about the creature in 1881.[5] Grafenauer derived the connection between the Plague and the Glutton (equivalent to the Netek in Slovenian folklore) primarily by drawing on traditions about a voracious little man, the Glutton, that have been preserved in some Alpine areas, especially in the Central European territory, among the Romansh people in Switzerland, and in Vorarlberg in the Austrian Alps:

> *The Glutton / "Der Fresser"*
> *In the early seventeenth century, the plague swept through the Bregenz Forest in the drainage basin of the Bregenz River in the northern part of Vorarlberg. One morning, a foreigner walked into the former "Sun's" inn. He ordered lunch for twenty people and then set out toward Ellenborgen. He returned at noon, alone, and he ate all the food down to the last crumb by himself. The innkeeper found this atrocious, and she turned to the parish priest for advice. He told her to charge nothing for the lunch. When the foreigner asked how much he owed her, she said that everything had already been paid for. The foreigner thanked her and said that the plague would no longer spread. No one ever saw him again.*[6]

Oral traditions of other regions also talked about war and hunger that followed on the heels of the plague. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the latter was said to be followed by a year of hunger.[7] Bracing for the plague, believed to roam around in the shape of a woman, Rumanian farmers would leave plenty of food on the side of the road for all travelers to fend off the arrival of the disease.[8] Furthermore, many historical sources maintain that the plague usually brought general shortages and the economic turmoil in its wake.[9]

1 Christiansen, *The Migratory Legends*, pp. 214–215.
2 Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica".
3 Ivan Grafenauer also stated the names of plants and animals with the common root: netečje = berries that do not make one full, mostly cranberries; netečnik = *bobnarica* or mire drum (Ardea stellaria), a type of bird that was given this common name for the male's distinctive call. (Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica", pp. 164–165).
4 Drobnič, Slovenska pripovedka; Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica", p. 171.
5 Trdina, Verske bajke, p. 537.
6 Beitl, *Im Sagenwald*, p. 65, no. 82; Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica", pp. 159–160.
7 Softić, Zapisi usmenih predaja, p. 165.
8 Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica", pp. 188, 190.
9 Mal, *Stara Ljubljana*, p. 81; Golec, Kužne epidemije, p. 59.

The plague personified as a woman, a man, a boy, a girl, or a plague pair

According to popular belief, the plague was the evil spirit that killed people and cattle. Especially in Europe, people described it as a supernatural or fabled creature very akin to their conceptions of death, nightmare, hunger, and various other diseases. People sometimes imagined that the plague was caused by witches, sorcerers, or by Satan.[10] Where the word "death" is of masculine gender, the plague was often presented as a man, and where it is assigned female gender, the plague, too, was analogously featured as a woman. In line with these conceptions, the plague—often dubbed the Black Death in folklore—took on a personification of its own.

The Rhaeto-Romance people in Switzerland conceived of the plague as an old woman. Arnold Bühli published a tale about the plague that in 1566 made its way to Ladir via Basel and Bern, personified as an old woman dressed in black:

> *She knocked on the window of a house at the top of the village and asked if she could spend the night there. No, she was told, there was no room in the house, but she could sleep in the barn if she wanted. Then they saw the old woman wrapped in black enter the barn. After that, no one saw her again. The next day, the plague broke out in the village.*[11]

In Croatia, stories circulated about the plague that lived in the woods near Pavlovac, a village in the county of Bjelovar.

> *One evening, a farmer crossed these woods with his wagon. The plague sat by the fire, roasting horse meat and human flesh. She offered the farmer human flesh, and he ate it. When he returned to Pavlovac, the plague broke out, killing all inhabitants.*[12]

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the plague was depicted as a woman holding a broom in one hand and a lantern in the other to find and 'sweep away' as many people as possible.[13] To save themselves from the plague, people ran to the mountains or other places.[14] In Slovenian folklore, an old saying has it that: "[i]f the plague appears, buy yourself a pair of sturdy shoes and run until the soles fall apart."[15]

Germanic peoples depicted the plague in the form of a man or a boy. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm published, among others, the following folktale about the plague personified as a tall man:

> *The Tall Man in the Murder Lane in Hof*
> *In 1519, just before the plague killed so many people in Hof a large, tall black man was seen in Murder Lane. His wide-spread legs reached both sides of the street, and his head rose far above the housetops.*
> *My great-grandmother, Walburg Widmann, herself, saw how he walked along this street one evening with one foot at the tavern's entrance and the other foot across the street in front of the large house there. She was so frightened that she did not know which way to go. In God's name and making the sign of the cross, she advanced in the middle of the street and passed between his legs. Had she not dared to do this the ghost would have followed her. She had barely escaped when the ghost clapped his legs together so hard that all the houses in Murder Lane nearly collapsed. Soon afterward the plague befell the city, and it was first felt in Murder Lane.*[16]

Similarly widespread in Central and Northern Europe, and even in Iceland[17] were the notions of a plague pair, a man and a woman wandering from place to place together, bringing the plague. According to the German folktale from Schweinfurt on the river Main, male death cut grass and his wife, female Death (the Plague) raked behind him, and only what slipped through the tines remained alive.[18] In Bavaria and Germany, too, the notions are documented of male Death and female Death wreaking havoc across the land in the form of the Plague. One such folktale has been preserved in Austrian Carinthia:

> *Once male Death said to female Death: "I take the scythe, you take the rake; I'll cut, you'll rake after me." So, male Death and female Death climbed Mount Malta (Maltaberg). When they reached the last farmer, male Death started to cut grass from the top of Mount Malta to the bottom, and she raked the cut patches behind him and piled them into a heap. Meanwhile, the plague raged across the mountain, leaving no man alive; male Death cut them all down.*[19]

Folktales in Vorarlberg narrated about the plague coming to Feldkirchen and killing almost to the last villager. Thenceforth, when someone sneezed, people would say, "God help you!"

> *Die Pest in Feldkirchen / The plague in Feldkirchen*
> *Two monsters from Lichtenstein came to the river Ill, one carrying a broom and the other a shovel. By the river, one said to the other: "You go here and dig through here and I'll go there and sweep through*

10 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, pp. 72–73.
11 Bühli, *Sagen aus Graubünden*, 2, p. 210; from: Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica", p. 186.
12 Krauß, *Südslavische Pestsagen*, p. 36.
13 Softić, Zapisi usmenih predaja, p. 166.
14 Ibid., p. 165.
15 Slekovec, Kuga na slovenskem štajerskem, p. 142.
16 Grimm, *Deutsche Sagen*, no. 167, p. 243: "Der lange Mann in der Mordgasse zu Hof."
17 Gunnell, Mists, Magicians, pp. 49–50.
18 Bronner, *Von deutscher Sitt*, p. 262; from: Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica", p. 183.
19 Graber, Sagen aus Kärnten, no. 258; from: Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica", p. 184.

there!" So, they divided the valleys between themselves, causing an untold death toll. If the monster so much as looked at someone, that person staggered and blackened, and whoever sneezed came down with fever and perished that same day. The disease announced its presence through sneezing, and people would say: "God help you!" or "God help us all!"[20]

Sneezing was considered one of the symptoms of the plague, and this expression became widely used throughout Europe. According to Jacqueline Simpson, in the plague-ravaged seventeenth-century England, too, people started to say, "Bless you!" or "God help you!" when they heard someone sneeze, and this custom has been preserved to the present day.[21]

Swedish folktales narrate about the plague that came from the south, looking like a beautiful little boy rasping with an iron grater, leaving one or two household members alive; after him came the plague damsel ("pestflicka"), who swept her broom in front of the gate, causing everyone in the village to die.[22]

In the Estonian folklore, the plague came in the form of a male figure, depicted as a boy or a black man:

/…/ Near Suure-Jaani the farmer of the Tooba farmstead was in the forest and saw the plague spirit dancing and singing under the trees: "Patt-patt-patt to Paelamaa [farmstead], kõps-kõps-kõps to Kõnnu [farmstead], topp-topp-topp to Tooba [farmstead]!" The farmer understood that it was the plague and said: "Let's see!" He went home, took a rowan cudgel, carved three five-pointed stars on it and started waiting. In the night someone came and asked to be let in. The farmer opened the door and saw a black man. The farmer started beating the man with his cudgel until the plague started begging that the farmer let him go. The farmer said: "When you promise that you won't go anywhere anymore to kill, I will stop." The plague promised and the man stopped beating.[23]

As seen above, stories about the plague also frequently named places that were visited by the Plague. According to the Estonian folklorist Reet Hiiemäe, within the framework of the legends about dangerous places—for instance of the places where the spread of plague is mentioned in the legends—a mental map can be established, which covers the emergence of the threat in the community as well as their escape from it.[24] In a similar vein, Timothy Tangherlini observes based on Scandinavian plague narratives that in folk belief, quite logically, people tried to narratively map the route of the plague spirit as the personification of the disease.[25]

People in Iceland and also in some other European countries narrated that the Plague appears as a fog, mist or cloud which lay across the lowlands, killing people and livestock, and that people saved their lives by going to the mountains.[26]

The plague will let itself be carried or ferried, because it cannot cross water by itself

Folktales about the plague traveling a predesignated route to selected destinations and letting itself be ferried across a river or a sea to an island are mentioned by both Timothy Tangherlini in Scandinavia (1988) and Reet Hiiemäe in Estonia (2016), and they are also documented in the French-Breton, Prussian, and Polish folklores. The Southern Slavs, too, narrated that the plague was unable to swim across a river or a sea and therefore found itself a means of transport. Many folktales were published by Matija Valjavec[27] and Friedrich Krauß,[28] for example:

The plague came to a piece of water. Just then, the river Sava spilled over, and she could not wade, so she asked a man riding in a boat to take her across, oblivious of a dog under his seat. He took her into his boat and started rowing. Once they reached the middle of the water, the dog woke up, saw the plague, and charged at her. The plague asked the man to set her free, but to no avail, as the dog was already tearing at her and grabbing her until she fell into the water. Thus, she barely reached the far bank of the river and threatened to avenge all her wounds until all dogs died. Well, thank God, that did not happen, and there are more dogs every day.[29]

Many folktales describing how the plague let itself be carried or transported from one place to another mention its fear of dogs[30] and cats, and that it was repelled by the rooster's crow. Juniper sprigs were also used to keep the plague away:

The plague asked a ferryman who transported people from the Littoral to a nearby island to take her there across the channel. She would do him no harm, but if he did not trust her, he could place thorns and juniper sprigs in the middle of the boat, between himself

20 Beitl, *Im Sagenwald*, p. 65 no. 82; from: Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica", p. 184.
21 Simpson and Roud, *A Dictionary of English Folklore*, p. 280.
22 Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, p. 994; from: Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica", p. 187.
23 Hiiemäe, *Esti kratkupärimus*, p. 124; Hiiemäe, Narrative Maps, p. 180.
24 Hiiemäe Narrative Maps, pp. 179–181.
25 Tangherlini, Ships, Fogs and Traveling Pairs.
26 Gunnell, Mists, Magicians, p. 49; Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 76.
27 Valjavec, *Narodna pripovjedke*, p. 243.
28 Krauß, *Südslavische Pestsagen*, p. 14, Krauß, *Volksglaube*, pp. 64, 67.
29 Valjavec, *Narodne pripovjedke*, p. 243; Krauß, *Volksglaube*, p. 64; from: Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica", p. 190.
30 The plague also avoided dogs according to the Bosnian and Herzegovinian folklore; cf.: Softić, Zapisi usmenih predaja, p. 164.

and the Plague. The ferryman did so and was left unharmed, while the Plague sowed death all around.[31]

Such folktales also inspired the Slovenian poet Anton Aškerc and his ballad "Ponočna potnica" (*Midnight Passenger*).[32]

Prophylactic actions and remedies

The plague and agrarian rituals

The memory of ancient agrarian rituals in the Southern Slavic region has been preserved by the folktale about

the Plague and Death, who were believed to be sisters from Sarajevo. One killed people and the other took them to the otherworld. Once, they promised a man to do him no harm if he would carry them to another place on his back and protect them from being ravaged by dogs. On their way, the farmer asked them how people could be saved from the plague. They advised to yoke a dozen naked young men and a dozen naked young women to plows and make them plow the same furrow around the village seven times. When the man left them, many villagers died that day. Then, heeding his advice, they sent two dozen young men and women to plow a furrow around the village and saved themselves from the plague.[33]

Similar folktales and rituals of "plowing out the disease" were known in other parts of Central and Southern Europe, as confirmed by the memory of a custom that was preserved in Loška Dolina in Slovenia until the end of the nineteenth century. Women plowed out the plague by dragging the plows around the village, some having them tied to their waists and others holding them by the handle. In this way, they plowed the same furrow around the village three times.[34]

Aiša Softić discovered similar methods of protection against the disease in Bosnian and Herzegovinian manuscripts. The following folklore has been preserved around Bosanska Gradiška:

People in the village found twin sisters and two black oxen born of the same cow. A new plow had to be built overnight and then the sisters, completely naked, plowed a furrow around the entire village with the oxen. Thus, they fended off the plague.[35]

In such narrative traditions, Softić highlights the belief that it was important to draw the magic circle around a person, a group of people or, as in this case, around the entire village for protection against evil forces. However, this custom also attributed a special magic power to dragging a plow around the village as a magic act, where it was also important who performed the plowing and how.

Incantations and apotropaic acts

One of the rare reports on how people warded off the plague and cured it was provided by the English writer Daniel Defoe, who preserved a fictionalized account of life in London in 1665 in his book *A Journal of the Plague Year* (1722). He described various herbal remedies, preventive charms, as well as omens and portents of the plague. Herbs that were believed to prevent the spread of the plague were garlic and rue (Ruta graveolens), as well as tobacco and vinegar. In his novel, he also wrote about charm papers, tied up on the person with many knots, and certain words or figures written on them, among them the word *Abracadabra* formed in a triangle.[36]

Similar approaches were documented elsewhere in Europe. In Slovenian territory, reports on incantations against the plague have been preserved from as early as the sixteenth century—specifically, one from 1583, in which Bishop Paolo Bisanti notified the patriarch of Aquileia that Slovenians in Gorizia region practiced incantations against the plague.[37]

An incantation or a spell of some sort against all contagious diseases from 1851, preserved in the Book of Incantations by Jakob Rant from Dolenčice in Poljanska Dolina reads as follows:

pokličem jest Jaka vimen Svetga Benedikta in vimen Tega Nar Svetišga Čez nebeške Moči nar Nar visokišiga Čez Svet zijan z zinaji Adonoji
Attanatos Deous
Bog tanar Močnejši U Presveti Trojici
zpik = tro = ik = volf
toje Aleluja Aleluja Aleluja
trikrat križ naredit in trikrat gor dihnit še 4 nebeška znamenja se morja dat (. S ♁ . . S S ♁ S S o. L. ♀) vžit Nato se moli 7 očenašov h Čajsti Presvetej Trojici in teh Patronov.
[I call Jacob in the name of Saint Benedict and in the name of the holiest of Saints in the Heavens and on Earth, looked on with *zinaji* (?) of *Adonis* (?)
Attanatos Deous
God the mightiest of the Holy Trinity
zpik = tro = ik = volf
This is Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah
Draw three crosses and take three breaths in the air, and then make four heavenly signs *using* (?) (. S ♁ . . S S ♁ S S o. L. ♀). Then pray 7 Our Fa-

[31] Krauß, *Volksglaube*, p. 67; Grafenauer, Neték in "Ponočna potnica", pp. 190–191, note 24.
[32] Aškerc, Ponočna potnica, p. 385.
[33] Krauß, *Südslavische Pestsagen*, pp. 25–30.
[34] Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, pp. 130, 392.
[35] Softić, Zapisi usmenih predaja, p. 163.
[36] Simpson and Roud, *A Dictionary of English Folklore*, p. 280.
[37] Gruden, *Zgodovina slovenskega naroda*, p. 1061; from: Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 33.

St. Roch Church in Dravlje and a plague column on the Celovška Road.

Plague column from 1743 in Maribor's Main Square, by Jožef Straub. Saint Mary is surrounded by six saints–intercessors against the plague. The monument was erected as a token of gratitude for putting an end to the plague (1681), which killed one-third of the population in the seventeenth century.

thers in honor of the Holy Trinity and the Patron Saints.].[38]

People also used defensive magic symbols or letters and spells against the plague, very few of which have been preserved.[39] The oldest known Slovenian *zapretek* or charm against the plague is contained in the Carinthian *Duhovna brauna* (Spiritual Defense) from 1740:

Gospod Franzhiskus Salorius shkof v Salmonii je ana prizha de v leti 1547 se je sgodivo, da so utrenti per Conziliumu al rati ukupe bli sbrani shkofi in drugi kuoshterski tavishi, k so Rat dershali, da je she zhries 20 shkofou inu tok vishah na kugi umerlo, tedei je ta patriarh od Austicie, usam te prizhiozhe buhstabe ratou, kteri so od s. Zahariusa shkofa, v Jerusalem resvoshani, inu sa kuo gorei sehranjeni bli, inu poterdeni, to majo kako ano shishno pomuzh, kader je kuga de je imamo udrukano per sabe nositi. K so tu sturili ni obeden vezh na kugi umerou inu kader se bushtabi na ane duri sa shribajo, so usi pred kugo obuarani, kiri pod isto streho bonajo.

Buhstabi sa kugo so leti: + ZDIA + BIZ + SAB + ZHGP + BFRS.

[Sir Franciscus Salorius bore witness to bishops and other men of the cloth having gathered to hold a council in 1547. Because twenty bishops and several senior clerics had already died of the plague, the Patriarch of *Antioch* (?) recommended using all letters (*buhštabi*) that Bishop Zacharias from Jerusalem had approved to protect homes from the plague. They were to be printed and worn on the body. People heeded the advice, and no one died of the plague again; and when they wrote them on their front doors, no one ever died of the plague from that house again.

These are the letters against the plague: + ZDIA + BIZ + SAB + ZHGP + BFRS.].[40]

People would also wear little pouches around their necks, with incantations, charms, and magic symbols sown in to protect them from the plague.

Saints—protectors against the plague

To triumph over the plague, people also erected plague columns, churches and chapels dedicated to patron saints against the plague, especially St. Roch, St. Sebastian, St. Rosalie, and St. Barbara, as well as St. Oswald in Carinthia.[41]

As evident from the folklore that has been preserved in the village of Povir in the municipality of Sežana, St. Fabian was another powerful intercessor against the plague:

The plague in the shape of a black girl stood on top of a hill, calling: "Fabian, Sebastian, when you summon your strength, you keep me away from Povir!"

At the Church of St. James, people especially worshipped St. Sebastian and St. Fabian, who were also invoked against the plague.[42]

In 1644, when the plague raged in Zapuže and Dravlje near Ljubljana, the inhabitants of the Dravlje neighborhood swore to build a church and honor it with a ceremonial procession every year on the Feast of St. Roch (August 16th), which usually ended with a fête.[43]

In his sermon dedicated to St. Roch from the collection of sermons "Sacrum promptuarium" (1691), the Baroque preacher and author Janez Svetokriški wrote about the devastating plague in Slovenian territory and about processions that people attended on that day for St. Roch to protect them against this dreadful disease.[44]

Closures and quarantines

According to folklore, a cross alone, erected on the road or in front of a tunnel leading to another region, could prevent the plague from spreading. Thus narrates the Carinthian tradition:

The road from Mežica to Črna ran through a tunnel on which a cross was mounted some time before the plague struck. There being no other path connecting the town with Mežica, the cross prevented the plague from advancing to Črna.[45]

Violations of the ban on traveling to other places where the plague had not yet erupted could sometimes be very serious, and they could also result in death:

Hundreds of years ago, the plague raged in Mežica. For this horrid disease not to spread elsewhere, they posted military guards at Reht to prevent any villager from leaving. At the Kajžar Cross on the right bank of the river Meža, they dug a deep pit and threatened to bury alive whoever came to that pit and wanted to proceed toward the village.

Kajžar had a beautiful daughter. This beauty reached the pit first on her way to run errands in Mežica. The soldiers grabbed her and threw her in the pit. Deaf to her earnest implorations and heart-wrenching cries, the cruel soldiers buried her alive. Thenceforth,

38 The Book of Incantations by Jakob Rant, locally known as Kočar from Dolenčice no. 9 in Poljanska Dolina. The manuscript from 1851 was kept by Janez Dolenc; from: Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, pp. 23–24.

39 Some examples are in: Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, pp. 79–80.

40 Dolenc, *Zagovori*, p. 45.

41 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 33.

42 *Zgodnja Danica* 33, September 10th, 1880, p. 294; from Kropej, *Od ajda*, p. 300.

43 Mal, *Stara Ljubljana*, p. 82.

44 Svetokriški, *Sacrum promptuarium*, pp. 53–54.

45 Möderndorfer, *Koroške narodne pripovedke*, p. 62.

the plague was never seen again. According to the soldiers' and popular belief, it had transformed into Kajžar's beautiful daughter and that was the only way to do away with it forever.[46]

A tale, preserved in Treibach in Austrian Carinthia, narrates about the misfortunate fate of a victim—a girl that was thrown into a pit and buried alive to stop the plague from spreading. The memory of the pestilence that raged at that time is kept alive by a plaque, mounted near the tower in the cemetery adjacent to the Church of St. Kosmas and St. Damian, bearing the inscription: "Plague 1715."

When the plague ravaged the land in 1715, the villagers decided to dig a ditch in front of the church during Mass, where they would bury alive the first person that would come out from the church before the end of Mass. Such misfortune befell a little girl who rushed home early to tend to her ill mother. She was buried alive, and the plague never entered the village again.[47]

Town folk sought to fend off the plague by posting guards outside the town walls and preventing entrance to foreigners and beggars. The so-called plague guards prohibited passage to people and goods without health certificates or "fede." Newcomers from infected areas were sent into mandatory quarantine at the lazaretto station.[48] As a rule, any outbreak of no matter how locally limited epidemic prompted the closure of provincial borders and a severe restriction or suspension of traffic, which had an adverse impact on the provincial economy.[49]

Sources also report that in 1598, when the plague swept through Ljubljana, a wooden fence was raised around the village of Krakovo, completely cutting it off from the world, and the same steps were taken in other plague-ridden settlements. Infected houses were marked with a huge plague cross painted on the front door.[50]

Protection with herbal remedies and apotropaic acts

On the onset of an infectious disease, people also tried to protect themselves against it by smoking the house and barns with juniper (*Juniperus communis*) and charcoal, mixed with Alpine valerian (*Valeriana celtica*), myrrh (*Commiphore*), and incense.[51] The inhabitants of Styria also believed that they could ward off the plague by sharpening their scythes.[52]

To keep the plague away, the inhabitants of Trebija in Poljanska Dolina in Upper Carniola buried the plague victim's clothes in the ground for three days, after which they hung them for three days on the roof under moonlight, and then finally left them exposed to sunlight for another three days.[53]

According to the "Večna Pratika" almanac, diet helped keep the plague at bay by avoiding cooked herbs, such as spinach, sorrel, chicory, garlic, anis, parsley, and sage. It recommended to abstain from salted fish, mushrooms, all kinds of meat, bacon, old rotten cheese, melons, and onions, as well as from beverages, such as apple and pear cider, hard wine,[54] distilled wine,[55] and boiled water.[56] It was beneficial to drink celandine (*Chelidonium maius*) boiled in wine, juice from the leaves and roots of wall germander (*Teucrium chamaedrys*), or to mix wine with the dried powder of its leaves and roots. Wealthier families used lemon (*Citrus limonum*) and orange (*Citrus aurantium*) peels soaked in wine.

Protection against the plague was also provided by common rue (*Ruta graveolens*) and acorn as well as by ingesting the root of wild angelica (*Angelica silvestris*) or "the root of the Holy Ghost" after fasting. Another herbal remedy held in esteem was burnet-saxifrage, also called solidstem burnet or lesser burnet (*Pimpinella saxifraga*), a grassland plant resembling caraway with spicy roots tasting like pepper. Its roots and leaves were used to make tea. In Rosental (Slo.: Rož) in Austrian Carinthia, burnet-saxifrage also had a reputation as a remedy for cholera, which was considered as serious a threat as the plague. The following story has been preserved:

In Rosental, too, a terrible cholera once broke out, killing people like flies. Every house counted dead bodies, and some went completely extinct. Markele's cottage, too, had already buried its master, his wife, and their children, leaving only the old grandfather sitting sadly on the bench in front of the house. While he contemplated the fate of his children, a bird flew by, repeating:

"Burnet, burnet, burnet!"

The man did not know what to make of it. The bird flew away and soon returned and dropped from its beak an herb that looked like caraway. The old man picked up the herb and went to forage it. He brewed its roots into a tea and drank it. The Black Death did not catch him or anyone else who drank such tea or rinsed their mouths with its decoction. The herb was named burnet (Pimpinella saxifraga)! Thenceforth, cholera has no longer wreaked such havoc among those that are familiar with this remedy.[57]

46 Ibid., p. 61.
47 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 33.
48 Mal, *Stara Ljubljana*, p. 84.
49 Golec, Kužne epidemije, p. 26.
50 Mal, *Stara Ljubljana*, p. 82.
51 Košir, Ljudska medicina, p. 30; from Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 23.
52 Pajek, *Črtice*, p. 84.
53 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 31.
54 Wine containing a high concentration of acid, tannins, and usually also alcohol.
55 Cognac or brandy.
56 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 31.
57 Möderndorfer, *Koroške narodne pripovedke*, p. 62–63.

People would also carry burnet in their pockets, apart from garlic and juniper, which were ascribed similar apotropaic effects. In Carinthia, it was customary to soak burnet in liquor and always have a bottle of this alcoholic concoction on hand. Styrians, however, would carry on them the seeds of pimpernel or chicken blindness (*Anagallis phoenicia*) to drive away evil spirits and wear the cross of St. Benedict around their necks.[58] During the plague, they protected their nostrils, eyes, ears, temples, and veins with wine vinegar, in which they soaked rue and elderberries.[59]

The healing benefits of sunlight and honey are presented in a folktale from Mežica, Carinthia:

> *The plague killed all the inhabitants of Mežica, except a man on the Pustotnik farm. He defended himself against the plague by eating nothing but honey and by soaking in the sun every day, lying face down at the foot of the hill.*[60]

Fire was deemed a natural disinfectant; in some plague-afflicted areas, every newcomer had to pass by the fire before they were permitted to meet the local inhabitants. In Lower Carniola, every participant in the Midsummer Day celebration would jump over the bonfire three times to protect themselves from the plague. In White Carniola, farmers would, still in more recent times, light bonfires in their courtyards during the plague and drive their cattle through the embers.[61]

In Styria, a time-honored tradition was preserved until the end of the nineteenth century to start the Easter morning by lighting bonfires or the so-called *vuzenice*, in firm belief that as far as their smoke reached, there the plague would never come, and buckwheat would never be nipped by frost.[62]

Water was attributed a similar defensive power against the plague. The inhabitants of Motnik in Upper Carniola believed that the plague would not come to them if they ran to the running water and washed themselves in it on Holy Saturday before "untying the church bells."[63]

Treatment

The plague was primarily treated with medicinal plants, vinegar, wine, honey, tobacco, and many other natural remedies. In the countryside, people most often turned for help to village healers, and witch doctors, whereas physicians, if at all accessible, primarily tended to patients in towns and mansions. During the plague, they would put on special protective outfits not to get infected by the disease themselves. They wore leather cloak and covered their faces with beaked masks and spectacles. The long beaks were filled with a mixture of aromatic herbs that were believed to protect against infection.[64]

Although already running rampant in Ljubljana in 1198 and 1230, the Black Death caused the greatest devastation between 1347 and 1350. It revisited Ljubljana in 1568 and 1569, and after it broke out again in 1586, a small lazaretto was set up near the walls of the Šentpeter cemetery on the bank of the river Ljubljanica. Lazaretto stations were subsequently expanded, and a plague hospital was also constructed.[65]

People fought the plague with herbal remedies; in *The Glory of the Duchy of Carniola* (Die Ehre deß Hertzogthums Crain, 1689), Valvasor already wrote about butterbur (*Petasites officinalis*), a plant growing near waterbodies and in the valleys around Šmarješke Toplice that purportedly cured uncurable diseases and even the plague itself. In the same volume, he also mentioned the roots of angelica (*Angelica silvestris*) and stressed that he could not recommend them enough for their healing power against the plague, adding that the Carniolan soil provided herbs that beat the plague. Apart from the two stated above, these were also: *Doronicum*, *Pimpinella saxifraga*, *Scorzonera*, *Galera*, *Veronica*, *Juniperus communis*, *Succisa*, *Gentiana*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Veleriana*, *Chelidonium maius*, and *Imperatoria ostruthium*.[66]

In Carinthia, Vinko Möderndorfer wrote a tale about the already mentioned *Pimpinella saxifraga*, which was believed to cure the plague:

> *There was no known cure for the plague. Then birds, completely unfamiliar to the inhabitants of Mežica, flew in from somewhere, calling: "Use burnet, use burnet, use burnet!" And people, indeed, helped themselves with burnet (Pimpinella saxifraga) and recovered.*[67]

Another plant held in esteem was starch-root (*Arum maculatum*). The juice extracted from its leaves and roots was added sugar. People drank it every morning and evening, in the hope that it would take away the plague, fever, and other contagious diseases.[68]

During the plague and febrile diseases, it was further recommended to drink wine mixed with juice from the leaves and roots of starch-root and a concoction of wine boiled with burnet-saxifrage (*Pimpi-*

58 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 32.
59 Ibid., p. 30.
60 Möderndorfer, *Koroške narodne pripovedke*, p. 62.
61 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 31.
62 Pajek, *Črtice*, p. 84.
63 *Letopis Matice Slovenske*, 1887, pp. 88–167; from Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 32.
64 Golec, Kužne epidemije, p. 37.
65 Mal, *Stara Ljubljana*, p. 81.
66 Valvasor, *Die Ehre*, III, pp. 377–380; from: Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 34.
67 Möderndorfer, Koroške narodne pripovedke, p. 62; Kelemina, *Bajke in pripovedke*, p. 395, note 196/VII.
68 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 23, 34.

nella saxifraga). Great benefits were also ascribed to powdered wall germander (*Teucrium chamaedrys*)[69] and a decoction of sorrel and *terjak* (black elderberry juice mixed with sugar).

Popular remedies against the plague in Murska Sobota were pine (*Pinus*) and anise (*Pimpinella anisum*).[70] It was advisable to drink "Ehrenpreis water" mixed with powdered heath speedwell (*Veronica officinalis*) every morning and evening,[71] and people also cooked wine soup with added garlic. A highly esteemed remedy was the king's egg or the golden egg, prepared with egg yolk, *terjak* tea, and saffron.[72] In some areas, an egg white or a prune was placed on the pustule, and the inhabitants of Murska Sobota treated infected wounds with dried toads.[73] Toads were considered a valuable plague cure by drawing out the poison. Some cooked them in milk or vinegar and ate them, or they were put as bandages on infected wounds. For this reason, people looked for them during the days of celebrating Marian masses.[74]

When the plague erupted in the autumn of 1680 near Leskovec in Haloze, a story circulated about a woman who recommended an infected man to cook a toad in vinegar. Heeding her advice, the farmer ate the toad and drank the soup in which he cooked it. He sweated profusely and fully recovered the next morning. The news spread like fire across the neighborhood, and toads became celebrated as the most effective cure for the plague. People throughout Haloze searched for toads and cooked them, as well as carried them around alive.[75]

Other plague cures were deer and chamois horns, sulfur, and vitriol used as powders, drinks, dressings, and bandages.[76] "Večna pratika" recommended wearing neck pouches with powdered spider (*Araneida*) or toad (*Bufo vulgaris*), as well as *žilštajn* (*snake stone*).[77] On their pilgrimages, Carinthians bought devotional images of Mother of God and put them in patients' food to ward off the plague.[78]

Believing that the demon of the person's disease can be defeated by the positive spirit, people also practiced a magical treatment: "hammering of the plague" into a tree. They bore a hole into a tree (linden, oak or willow tree) which was supposed to be a holy tree. Next day at sunrise they put into the hole a bit of the sick person's blood, nail or hair, than they crammed the hole, nailed up the tree with a nail, and hoped that the demon of the disease would be defeated by the spirit of the tree.[79]

The plague kills cattle

The plague also threatened cattle. Cattle plague was widely conceived of in animal form, especially in the shape of a pig, a goat, and a three-legged calf covered with spots of many colors.[80]

Whereas the memory of the murderous plague largely dissipated in the nineteenth century, it was still in the 1990s that the inhabitants of Slovenian Prekmurje described

> *the plague as Divine Punishment roaming the world, from village to village, from house to house, killing cattle in barns and chickens in henhouses. In ancient times, it also killed people, who then shut themselves in their houses and drove it away with prayers and superstitions*.[81]

According to another folktale that has been preserved in Prekmurje, people imagined the cattle-killing plague in the shape of a multicolored calf:

> *Küga*
> *Kuga [the plague] resembles a calf of many colors. It tends to appear in the courtyard or in the fence. Its apparition is always a bad omen. A cow or some other animal will die at the house where the plague has made itself seen. Sometimes, the plague will also trick people into thinking that it is heading somewhere at night. In the same way, it once lured Špilak, a* rojar *(beekeeper) from Bratonci, to the* ulnjak *(beehive). On returning home, he found that his most beautiful cow had died*.[82]

In the folktale above, cattle plague was also attributed features characteristic of supernatural beings that made people stray from their paths, such as witches or nightlights.

Another folktale from Prekmurje has it that the plague took on the form of a white calf wandering around at night and barking like a dog. When it roamed about settlements, it caused people and animals in the villages to die. Cattle plague is white and has a bovine head, and pig plague is white and has a pig head.[83] People warded off pig plague by attaching blessed sticks behind barn pillars. To protect pigs from infection, it was also customary to hang a toad in the barn. In Slovenian Istria, many barns still have horseheads and horseshoes mounted on the walls as defensive masks. In White Carniola (Slo.: Bela Krajina),

69 Ibid., p. 34.
70 *Slovenski gospodar* 18/12, March 20th, 1884, p. 94.
71 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 23.
72 Ibid., p. 34.
73 *Slovenski gospodar* 18/12, March 20th, 1884, p. 94.
74 Gruden, *Zgodovina slovenskega naroda*, p. 1076; from Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 34.
75 *Slovenski gospodar*, 1885, 198; from Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 32.
76 Valvasor, *Die Ehre*, III, pp. 377; from: Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 34.
77 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 32.
78 Košir, Ljudska medicina, p. 103.
79 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, pp. 78–79.
80 Krauß, *Südslavische Pestsagen*, p. 36.
81 Rešek, *Brezglavjeki*, p. 91, no. 35.
82 Kühar, *Narodno blago*, p. 58, no. 50; reprint: Kühar, *Ljudsko izročilo*, p. 148.
83 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 29.

they also used to mount them on beehives and place brooms turned upside down on entrances to barns, as well as pierce tiny holes into doors with a knife.[84]

In Dražgoše, it was customary to place the cross of St. Benedict on the barn door and in the Podjuna Valley (Ger.: Jauntal) in Austrian Carinthia a *tatrman's*[85] head carved in wood.[86] Slovenians in the Raba (Hun.: Rába) Valley drilled holes in the horns of their cattle and put pieces of paper in them with various defensive spells or charms.[87]

Widely used in the eighteenth century was a book written by the veterinarian and healer Johannes Gottlieb Wolstein. In 1784, it was translated into Slovenian by Jožef Ignacij Fanton de Brunn from Ljubljana, a veterinarian of the province of Carniola and a physic in Idrija, who titled it *Bukuvze od shvinskih bolesni sa kmeteshke ludy* [The Book on Cattle Diseases for Rural People][88] His translation was later corrected by Anton Tomaž Linhart, who published it under the title *Bukve od kug inu bolesen Goveje shivine, tih Ovaz inu Svin* [The Book on Plagues and Diseases in Cattle, Sheep, and Pigs]; released in 1792 in Ljubljana, the volume also contains advice on how to treat cattle plague.

Cattle was also treated with herbal remedies. In the hills around Škofja Loka, it was still in recent times that people protected their animals against the plague by adding the roots of gentian (*Gentiana*) and especially juniper and garlic to fodder on Christmas Eve and Holy Saturday.[89]

Epilogue

The plague retreated from Slovenian territory after the Ottomans were finally driven out from the central Danubian region.[90] In subsequent periods, it gave way for other epidemics, most notably cholera, smallpox, typhoid fever, Spanish influenza, and currently the pandemic of Covid-19. Although the memory of the plague has all but faded in the light of scientific and particularly technological advances of the modern developed world, the Covid-19 pandemic has rekindled it and brought it back into the popular mental discourse, shining a new light on the long forgotten narrative folklore, literature, and visual art associated with these periods.

In such difficult situations as epidemic or even pandemic outbreaks, people adapt to the new circumstances and seek a way out of the crisis. Daily practices and narratives offer an insight into how people sought to protect themselves against the plague epidemic and how they cured the disease. Throughout history, folklore has approached epidemics earnestly and with great concern. Moreover, folktales about the plague epidemic, often presenting the plague in personified forms, narrate how it spread and where, how it traveled, and how it behaved.

Now, centuries later, it is interesting to observe many similar protective measures, for instance road barriers, border closures, and quarantine as well as penalties for their infringement, a list of active substances and nutritional ingredients helping to fight the disease. Notable differences are in the narrative culture, which now spreads through the internet,[91] and especially in major medical advancements.

84 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 32.
85 In Carinthia, *tatrman* was—often in the form of a water sprite—depicted on water wells and buildings for apotropaic purposes.
86 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 32.
87 Ibid, p. 32.
88 Štrekelj, *Zgodovina slovenskega slovstva*, p. 465.
89 Möderndorfer, *Ljudska medicina*, p. 29.
90 Mal, *Stara Ljubljana*, p. 84.

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P O V Z E T E K

Pripovedi o kugi in zdravilne prakse proti tej bolezni v ljudskem izročilu

Pripovedi o kugi so se v ustnem izročilu ohranile bodisi kot opis razmer in obrambe pred epidemijo kuge ter zdravljenja te bolezni bodisi kot povedke o kugi – demonu, ki mori ljudi in živino. Motiviko ljudskih povedk o kugi je v svoj katalog »Migracijske pripovedke« (1958) uvrstil že norveški folklorist Reidar Christiansen pod številke 7080–7095. Vendar pa je tematika še precej bolj raznolika, kar lahko razberemo iz gradiva, ki se je ohranilo v arhivih raziskovalnih ustanov in tiskanih virih. Eden redkih folkloristov, ki je v slovenskem prostoru pisal o kugi in spremljajoči lakoti v podobi nenasitnega bajeslovnega bitja Netka, je bil Ivan Grafenauer (1958). Kugo so namreč ljudje pogosto povezovali z lakoto, ki jo je v slovenskem izročilu pooseblja Netek. Podobne pripovedi so se ohranile v alpskem svetu, predvsem v

srednjeevropskem prostoru, med Retoromani v Švici ter v Vorarlbergu v avstrijskih Alpah v liku požerušnega možička Snedeža. Tudi drugod je ustno izročilo poročalo o tem. V Bosni in Hercegovini so pripovedovali, da kugi sledi leto lakote (Softić 2020). Romunski kmetje so, ko so pričakovali prihod kuge, ki naj bi hodila naokrog v podobi ženske, ob cesti nastavili obilo hrane, s katero so gostili vse popotnike, da bi s tem preprečili prihod kuge.

Kugo so si v evropskem prostoru ljudje predstavljali poosebljeno v podobi žene, moža, dečka, dekleta ali kužnega para. Kjer je beseda »smrt« moškega spola, je bila tudi kuga pogosto predstavljena kot moški, kjer pa je beseda »smrt« ženskega spola, je bila analogno temu tudi kuga prikazana kot ženska. Pogoste so bile tudi predstave o kužnem paru – možu in ženi, ki sta hodila od kraja do kraja in morila ljudi. V nemški povedki iz Schweinfurta ob reki Majni je smrtnik kosil, žena smrt (kuga) pa je grabila. Podobne pripovedi so bile dokumentirane tudi na Bavarskem v Nemčiji in na Avstrijskem Koroškem.

Švedske povedke pripovedujejo, da je prišla kuga z juga v podobi majhnega lepega dečka, za njim pa je prišlo kužno dekle (pestflicka), ki je dokončno pometla z metlo pred vrati, tedaj pa so vsi v vasi pomrli.

V estonskem izročilu je bila kuga poosebljena v moški podobi, kot fant ali črni mož. Reet Hiiemäe je ugotovila, da je mogoče v teh povedkah, ki naštevajo kraje, kam vse je kuga namenjena, določiti mentalni zemljevid, ki je določal kraje, ki jim je grozila kuga, pa tudi možnost, kako ji ubežati oziroma preprečiti njen prihod.

V Evropi so bile razširjene predstave, da kuga ne more sama čez vodo in da se pogosto da prenesti ali prepeljati v drugi kraj. Timothy Tangherlini je ugotovil, da so v Skandinaviji ljudje pogosto pripovedovali o kugi, ki potuje po vnaprej določeni poti v kraje, kamor se je namenila in se da prepeljati čez reko ali morje na otok. Podobne povedke so bile dokumentirane tudi v francosko-bretonskem, pruskem in poljskem izročilu. Veliko tovrstnih pripovedi so poznali južni Slovani, številne sta objavila Matija Valjavec in Friedrich Krauß, navdihnile pa so tudi slovenskega pesnika Antona Aškerca (Ponočna potnica, 1890). V povedkah je pogosto omenjeno, da se je kuga bala psov in mačk, odganjalo pa jo je tudi petelinje kikirikanje.

Ohranil se je spomin na stari agrarni ritual, s katerim so v južnoslovanskem prostoru skušali »kugo zaorati«. Ljudje so namreč, da bi se obranili bolezni, kugo »zaorali« na različne načine, na primer tako, da so ženske okoli vasi vlekle plug in z njim trikrat zarisale brazdo okoli vasi. Izročilo iz okolice Bosanske Gradiške pripoveduje, da so v vasi našli dve sestri dvojčici in dva črna vola. Čez noč je bilo treba narediti nov plug, nato pa sta sestri povsem goli zaorali eno brazdo okoli cele vasi. Pri tej šegi je imelo poleg risa – kroga, ki naj bi branil pred zlimi silami – magično moč predvsem oranje okoli vasi kot čarno dejanje, poleg tega je bilo pomembno, kdo je oral in kako je bilo oranje izvedeno.

Proti kugi so se ljudje skušali zaščititi tudi z zagovori in obrambnimi čarnimi znaki ali črkami ter izreki zoper kugo, vendar se jih ni veliko ohranilo. Najstarejši znani slovenski »zapretek« proti kugi je zapisan v koroški *Duhovni brauni* (Duhovni brambi) iz leta 1740. Okoli vratu so nosili tudi vrečice, v katere so zašili napisane zagovore, »zapretke« in čarovne znake, ki naj bi jih branili pred kugo.

Da bi premagali kugo, so postavljali kužna znamenja, cerkve in kapelice, posvečene zavetnikom pred kugo, predvsem svetemu Roku, svetemu Boštjanu, sveti Rozaliji, sveti Barbari in na Koroškem svetemu Ožboltu.

Kršitve prepovedi prehajanja v drugi kraj so lahko bile zelo ostre in so zahtevale človeško žrtev. Pripoved, ki se je ohranila v Treibachu na Avstrijskem Koroškem, govori o nesrečni usodi deklice, ki so jo vrgli v jamo in živo pokopali, da bi preprečili širjenje kuge. V mestih kužne straže prišlekom in blagu niso dovoljevale prehoda brez zdravstvenih spričeval, imenovanih »fede«.

Pred kugo pa so se branili – in jo tudi zdravili – predvsem z rastlinami in apotropejskimi dejanji. Prostore v hiši in hlevih so pokadili z brinjem (Juniperus communis) in ogljem, ki so mu dodali spika (Valeriana celtica), mire (Commiphore) in kadila. Med rastlinami so posebno moč pripisovali predvsem česnu, bedrencu (Pimpinella saxifraga), angeliki (Angelica silvestris), repuhu (Petasites officinalis), šterkovcu (Arum maculatum) in jetičniku (Veronica officinalis). Kot zdravilo ali apotropejsko sredstvo pa so uporabljali tudi krastače (Bufo vulgaris), pajke (Araneida) in kačji kamen.

V težkih situacijah, kakršna je izbruh epidemije ali celo pandemije, se ljudje prilagajajo nastalim razmeram in iščejo pot iz krize. V vsakodnevnih praksah in pripovedih se kaže, kako so se ljudje skušali braniti pred kužno epidemijo in kako so jo zdravili.

Ljubljanski Zvon
Leposloven in znanstven list.

Štev. 7. V Ljubljani 1. malega srpana 1890. Leto X.

Ponôčna pótnica.

Balada po národnem motivu.

Po nebu ščlp plava,
Šumí, šumí Drava . . .
»Prepêlji, brodník, me takój!
Oh, méni mudí se;
Še predno zdaní se,
Mi daleč je priti nocój.«

Po nebu ščlp plava,
Šumí, šumí Drava . . .
Čez reko čoln črni letí;
A pótnica pôzna,
Orjaška in grôzna
Z brodníkom v njem tiho sedí.

»Obràz — kost in koža,
Tvoj stas — kost in koža . . .
Mrtvášk iz úst diše ti puh!
Pod čêlom prikrita
Dva óglja gorita . . .
Živ človek si, ali si duh?«

»»Káj znoj si otíraš?
Káj v mé se oziraš?
Naprèj, naprèj tiraj svoj čoln! . . .««
In žena vzravná se,
Glej, véča se, ráse:
Ves čoln že je skoro je poln.

Po nebu ščlp plava,
Šumí, šumí Drava . . .
Pri bregu! Čoln búti na kràj . . .
»Kdo tujka si grôzna?
O, pótnica pôzna!
Brodníno odštèj mi sedàj!«

»»Za máno smrt bleda,
Puščôba in beda,
Strah, stok in drgèt pred menoj!
Kdo tvoja sem drúga?
Imé mi je — Kúga!
Nocój grem na désni breg tvoj.

»»V dom vsak se odpravim,
Ljudí vse podavim . . .
A tebi naj milost storím!
Ne boš čul vpijóčih
In gledal ne mróčih —
Zdaj prvega têbe vmorím!««

A. Aškerc.

25

UDK 616.9(497.4 Dolenjska)"15/17"

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Plague Epidemics in Lower Carniola between Tradition and Reality*

ABSTRACT

The contribution deals with the consequences of infectious epidemics in Lower Carniola, thar is in the part of Carniola where plaques between the 16th and 18th centuries took the most victims. By confronting contemporary sources and the exaggerated summary accounts on the number of the deceased the demographic consequnces of epidemics are in most cases given a more realistic image. Due to temporary closure of the roads the plaque caused most damage in economy, although it was fatal fort he people as well. With sources confirmed portion of the deceased town population during various outbreaks of the plaque exceeded one fifth. In the years 1599 and 1625 the plaque epidemic thoroughly vacated the town Novo mesto, badly affected Metlika and Krško in the years 1646–1647, and in the years 1691–1592 Črnomelj. Not negligible were the human victims of the last large (infectiuos) epidemic in 1715.

KEY WORDS
Plague, Epidemics, Lower Carniola, Towns, Boroughs

IZVLEČEK

KUŽNE EPIDEMIJE NA DOLENJSKEM MED IZROČILOM IN STVARNOSTJO

Prispevek obravnava posledice kužnih epidemij na Dolenjskem, v tistem delu Kranjske, kjer so kuge med 16. in 18. stoletjem zlasti v mestih zahtevale največ žrtev. S soočenjem sodobnih virov in pretiranih sumarnih navedb o številu umrlih so demografske posledice epidemij v večini primerov dobile realnejšo podobo. Kuga je zaradi začasnega zaprtja prometnic povzročila največ škode na gospodarskem področju, vendar je bila v posameznih primerih resnično zelo pogubna tudi za ljudi. Z viri potrjeni deleži umrlega mestnega prebivalstva so med različnimi izbruhi kuge presegali eno petino. Leta 1599 in 1625 je kužna epidemija dodobra izpraznila Novo mesto, v letih 1646–1647 huje prizadela Metliko in Krško, 1691–1692 pa Črnomelj. Tudi človeške žrtve zadnje velike (kužne) epidemije leta 1715 niso bile zanemarljive.

KLJUČNE BESEDE
kuga, epidemije, Dolenjska, mesta, trgi

* This article is an updated version of the contribution published in the review *Kronika* 49, 2001, nos. 1–2, pp. 23–64.

Among all Slovenian provinces, Lower Carniola was probably most often visited by various kinds of contagious disease epidemics of the Early Modern Period and, along with Istria, also most severely affected by them. Such an impression is largely justified, considering the downright alarming figures on deaths and devastation set forth either by contemporary sources or by subsequent interpretations contained in various records and the literature, starting with Johann Weichard Valvasor. Sources primarily focus on towns and market towns—and quite understandably so, because they stood out from the rest of the empire's border province as population conglomerates and social organisms performing specific, especially economic functions. Compared to rural areas, towns and market towns shouldered a heavier burden of epidemics, with a number of documents shedding light on their implications.

Overall, among all Slovenian continental towns, those in Lower Carniola, mostly miniature in size and of marginal importance, undoubtedly bore the brunt of contagious disease epidemics, and none more so than Novo Mesto, the second most important town in Carniola and the only one of seven Lower Carniolan towns with a population of more than a thousand. The small size of Lower Carniola's urban settlements makes the excessively high numbers of deaths in sources even more striking and unparalleled elsewhere in Carniola. The credibility and weight of the number of deaths therefore represents one of the key questions to which this article will aim to find a reasonably satisfying answer. Another, equally important question related to the demographic losses concerns the economic and social implications of epidemics. Due to the practical impossibility of being measured with reliable indicators, these are even less ascertainable and for the most part do not allow historians to move beyond the descriptive content and the frame of reference offered in contemporary reports.

In defining the problem of contagious disease epidemics, the author leaves aside one of the most essential questions, that is, what types of diseases occurred in the given examples. Sources of that time assigned them different names but the same underlying meaning. They were referred to as the plague in the contemporary literature, including Valvasor (*Pest*), alongside other general designations, such as: *laidige Contagion, laidige Infection, Sterbelauf, Seuche*, and so on. Despite their varied manifestations, all plague epidemics broke out suddenly and violently. Incidences of some other similar epidemic can only be inferred from scarce indications of symptoms or dismissals of it being the "true plague." For example, in the first half of 1599, Novo Mesto was merely affected by the "Hungarian disease," whereas the so-called plague of 1634 in Krško raises some doubt for having primarily wreaked havoc among children. Due to a lack of distinction among different types of epidemics, the common term—plague—was established to denote nearly all types of contagious diseases that occurred during the Early Modern Period. In history and vernacular language, the plague stands for any type of contagious disease (epidemic) that suddenly breaks out in a certain area, lasts for a few weeks or months, causes a spike in mortality, and then gradually abates. In addition to the true plague (*pestis*), the name refers to about ten other diseases, including smallpox, typhoid fever or typhus, cholera, and influenza.[1] Epidemic dimensions of different diseases and their indistinct designations therefore command the use of a compromise term—the plague epidemic. Finally, this notion also seems justified because the article is not concerned with the nature of individual epidemics and because the latter remains largely unidentifiable drawing on scarce contemporary sources.

Lower Carniola and its urban settlements were disastrously affected by six major and several minor epidemics recurring in decades-long intervals between the mid-sixteenth and early eighteenth century. Conversely, there is no known connection between Lower Carniola on the one hand and late medieval plagues and recorded epidemic outbreaks elsewhere in Carniola during the first half of the sixteenth century on the other. Featuring prominently in reports are the plague of 1578, an epidemic wave with its peak in 1599, the epidemic of 1623–1627, the longest plague of 1645–1650, a locally limited outbreak in 1691–1692, and the epidemic of 1715. Except for the penultimate plague wave, which occurred at the end of the seventeenth century in Črnomelj and its immediate surroundings but not elsewhere in Carniola, all above-mentioned epidemics had large-scale implications that often reverberated well beyond the Carniolan provincial borders.[2] Not only did Lower Carniola suffer in all major waves of plague epidemics that affected Carniola, but as a gateway province lying on the empire's frontier, it was also frequently the first target of the Black Death penetrating through the nearby borders of the Ottoman Empire.

The fundamental issue with the topic discussed is the lack of contemporary, particularly neutral records of events, rendering the examination of facts a rather difficult task. A specific problem are poorly preserved sources from the time of individual epidemics. Somewhat more proliferous are descriptions of their consequences written in later periods, indirect reports, and above all subsequent interpretations as the least welcome yet all too often inevitable (and the only) type of source, which may readily provide a fertile ground for erroneous conclusions and expla-

1 Cf. Zupanič Slavec, Epidemije na Slovenskem, p. 202.
2 Cf. Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, pp. 95 f.; Koblar, O človeški kugi, pp. 39 f.

nations. The discussion at hand undertakes an unenviable task of verification through analogies and comparisons of all momentarily available data.

In terms of structure, the sources available can be divided into two periods. The first one, lasting until the end of the sixteenth century, was characterized by extremely rare and limited contemporary reports without quantitative estimates of deaths. A few epidemic outbreaks are only known from subsequent lapidary mentions, and one can only speculate on the number of deaths and the depopulation of settlements by establishing property ownership (dis) continuity in rent-rolls and towns' tax registers. The second period, which started at the end of the sixteenth century, is slightly more generous with summary information on the number of deaths, and it also improves the possibilities of verifying the data by allowing comparisons of more neutral and mainly indirect reports. The end of the seventeenth century eventually saw the emergence of a new and still quite rare primary source—death registers and lists of infected and deceased persons.

The discussion at hand prioritizes two problems: the chronological sequence of events and the demographic implications facing individual towns and market towns in Lower Carniola. In addition to highly limited official reports compiled by plague commissioners, the developments can be reconstructed based on extremely rare contemporary sources, first and foremost, for example, on registry protocols and files of the Carniolan provincial estates, and exceptionally for the town of Višnja Gora, on a few town judges' annual accounts. As for the sources of more recent origins, town annals provide little detail, various town leaderships' complaints and reports lack in credibility, and more neutral information is set forth in commission and vidame town visitation reports.

As mentioned, the data for this poor part of Carniola and especially its towns and market towns characteristically convey shocking figures on deaths, followed by significant or complete depopulation and economic decline. After individual epidemics were quashed, the most alarming and sometimes hardly credible figures came from Lower Carniolan towns, including, for example, on more than eight hundred deceased from Novo Mesto in 1599, whose number grew to over a thousand according to another report a few years later. Two mutually independent reports for the plague of 1625 again state high figures for Novo Mesto (322 and 400, respectively), and the town reportedly buried 331 corpses during the last plague epidemic in 1715. According to less credible reports from Metlika, written four decades after the events, this White Carniolan town lost seven hundred inhabitants in 1646 alone and another five hundred the following year. Most figures above were brought forth by the fathers of the affected towns, where the amount of time elapsed played no insignificant part, but the documents also contain some information of a (more) neutral provenance. Town leaderships penned several other disturbing figures expressed in overall percentages of town population and levels of abandonment, such as more than half of the population dead in Višnja Gora in 1599 or the half-deserted Novo Mesto, Metlika, and Črnomelj after the plague of 1623–1627. Lastly, complaints drawn by town dwellers themselves profusely blamed the plague for the economic and demographic decline. The more time elapsed since the events, the greater were the possibilities of generalizing and exaggerating. Thus, for example, the inhabitants of Črnomelj wrote fifty years after the plague of 1691–1692 that the town had completely died out (*ganz abgestorben*) and been abandoned (*verwiestet*).[3]

Some statements and figures above became firmly ingrained in historical memory without being properly verified and considered. Moreover, having made their way into the historiographical literature more than a hundred years ago,[4] they continued to be perpetuated uncritically in popular works and especially various kinds of local historical surveys until the most recent period.[5] Rather arbitrary summarizations and errant interpretations of lapidary data would often wildly overstate rather dry descriptions offered by original records or Valvasor, for instance, as the only source for some facts.

The demographic losses and their ramifications should be assessed variably, depending on the time distance and the authorship of reports. Sources are replete with overblown rhetoric and cliches, typical of the age. Shocking data on the dying town dwellers and the abandonment of towns underline not only reports that the town leaderships issued a few years after the plague but also statements produced fifty years later, or more neutral reports compiled by the provincial authorities. The style of writing therefore makes the task of extracting facts extremely difficult, especially in the face of lacking evidence provided by other contemporary sources. Particularly challenging are repetitive indications, highly emblematic of the period concerned in general, on the level of abandonment of urban settlements and the overall share of deceased inhabitants: for example, one-quarter of the town abandoned, one-third, over one-third, half or more than half of abandoned houses or dead. The more precise the numerical data are, the greater at-

3 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 279, fasc. 142, lit. T II–5, May 22nd, 1744.

4 The data on eight hundred deceased inhabitants of Novo Mesto, obtained from an archival source, was published by Ivan Vrhovec (Vrhovec, *Zgodovina Novega mesta*, p. 79). The figure on 1,200 plague-related deaths in Metlika was already taken from a letter to the vidame of 1686 by A. Dimitz (*Geschichte Krains*, pp. 61–62) and cited from him or directly from the source by Podlogar, Požari v Metliki, p. 46.

5 Dular, *Metlika skozi stoletja* (1978), p. 11; Dular, *Metlika skozi stoletja* (1986), p. 13; Jarc, Iz preteklih stoletij, p. 44.

tention they attract, be it in terms of years, sums of money, or other numerical indications (houses, inhabitants, abandoned homes, and so on). By the logic of things, such data could be based on a relatively detailed verification, if not on (unpreserved) specifications, with the author's integrity lending the sole guarantee for their validity. The numbers of plague-related deaths provided in this manner would also gain in credibility if produced immediately after the events or no more than a few years later.

Another issue is presented by numerical data. The already scarce summary data on deaths can rarely be incorporated into the property and demographic structure of a town, on top of which not a single case features the following two comparable specifications: the number of the deceased and the number of all masters of the house before the plague. The assessment of the impact of deaths also crucially rests on the composition of the deceased; in other words, a plague that devastated the economically vital part of the population or the population at procreative age cannot be compared to an epidemic that primarily targeted children or the poor strata of the town population.

In addition, the demographic implications presented in sources are always associated with other, especially economic ones—quite understandably so, because plague epidemics often left profound and lasting scars on the economy. An outbreak of an epidemic was usually followed by isolating (quarantining) the infected area, which meant cutting communications and suspending trade and traffic flows. In other areas, the provincial and various local authorities set up plague guards to prevent people and goods from crossing the border without health certificates known as "fede." No matter how locally limited, an epidemic outbreak typically resulted in closing the provincial borders and restricting or completely suspending traffic, which had variably adverse impacts on the entire provincial economy. Lasting closures, in particular, could lead to devastating losses in a range of industries, the impoverishment of some social strata, the inability to pay tax (ultimately exhausting the provincial treasury), the shortage of life's basic necessities and other items, and finally, hunger.

The following sections provide a chronological presentation of the consequences of plague epidemics. Too little is still known about the factual basis to address the topic from a strictly problem-oriented perspective. Moreover, the work methods and the specificity of sources used require longer discourses and occasional distancing from the central problem.

Minor plague epidemics until the end of the sixteenth century

The scope of plagues in Lower Carniola before the mid-sixteenth century is open to speculation, and it will likely remain so unless new sources are chanced on. In the Littoral and Carniola, the first early modern plague raged especially in 1511–1512, with reliable data only available for Trieste. As for Carniola, according to V. Travner, the plague claimed many victims among White Carniolans. He arrived at this conclusion by drawing solely on L. Podlogar's statement that the Chapel of St. Sebastian in Črnomelj's town grove was erected after 1510.[6] There are likewise no direct references to a likely pandemic in **Novo Mesto**, with twenty-four of its 272 non-peasant properties (Ger.: *Hofstatt*) abandoned or completely ruined pursuant to the oldest preserved census from 1515.[7] The survey, conducted in the largest Lower Carniolan town for fiscal-military purposes, is especially revealing compared to a census carried out in the town of Kamnik a year later, which makes no mention of abandoned houses.[8] Still, this does not necessarily suggest their non-existence, just as the abandoned houses reported in Novo Mesto are nowhere explicitly stated as an aftermath of the recent epidemic. Even without the Black Death, there were plenty of other reasons for the economic downturn and the consequent depopulation of this border town.

The first plague that found its echo in sources swept across several parts of Carniola during the 1550s. The epidemic spread to the province in 1553 from the Croatian foci in Zagreb and Samobor. Even though contacts with the infected areas were prohibited, the disease engulfed Carniola one year later, forcing the authorities to suspend trade and close all roads to Italy.[9] In Lower Carniola, it claimed the life of one person in **Višnja Gora**, the single documented victim. A splendid neutral source for following the developments—and one can only wish for more of those—is provided by three consecutive annual accounts (1552–1555) of Višnja Gora's town judges, without which it would be impossible to even suspect that the epidemic also affected the Lower Carniola. The sheer nature of this invaluable source makes it worthwhile to examine the developments in Višnja Gora in full detail.

The news of the plague first startled the inhabitants of Višnja Gora on August 6th, 1553, when, apart from a regular feast, the provincial messenger was paid additional 6 pfennigs "because of the epidemic." The messenger was entitled to an extra fee for having been exposed to danger while making his

6 Cf. Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 95. Cf. Podlogar, *Kronika mesta Črnomlja*, p. 64.

7 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 105, fasc. 59, lit. R V–1, Der zaichnus abschrifft der hoffstett der statt Ruedolphswerth anno 1515.

8 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 108, fasc. 61, lit. S XVII–1, fols. 157v–160v. Publication: Luschin v. Ebengreuth, Ein Protokoll der Stadt Stein, pp. 38–67.

9 Šmole, Kuga na Kranjskem, p. 98. Cf. Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 96.

rounds through towns and seigniories. However, the population of Višnja Gora still felt rather safe, given the bustling road reparations and stone-cutting at the town's quarry for this purpose. Five days later, on August 11th, 1553, the provincial messenger brought some decree concerning the plague and on September 6th a general mandate. Meanwhile, the provincial authorities' decree to close the roads due to the epidemic had caused the town judge Vincenc Steirer significant losses as the leaseholder of the town's tollhouse. Therefore, it was already on September 5th that he persuaded the town council to reduce his lease from 136 to 100 gulden, although the danger was still not imminent. A few days later, Višnja Gora held its annual onion fair and carried on with road reparations. The provincial messenger returned with new, obviously stricter epidemic mandates from Ljubljana on September 23rd and October 13th, which prompted the town council to assign a supervisor at each of the two town gates every Sunday to prevent the entrance of travelers from the infected areas. On the day before Christmas, the town judge's annual account focuses exclusively on the infected villages and then provides a list of payments to the supervisors. By January 7th, 1554, the two men had received 4 kreuzer each for every Sunday in an arrangement that was considered more a protective measure rather than a complete closure, there being no plague in Višnja Gora. The only days that raised concern were Sundays when people from the surrounding villages and foreigners would flock into the town. After February 23rd, 1553, the provincial messenger brought another plague mandate and, not long after that, the town messenger took some documents concerning the epidemic to the parish priest at Šentvid pri Stični. By spring, the threat neither grew nor did it completely abate. Provincial messengers continued to bring various ordinances and general mandates, including an undated ban related to the plague, together with a general mandate on tax backlog. Shortly afterward, Judge Vincenc Steirer and his attendant could ride to Ljubljana without restrictions. On May 22nd, the town held the Feast of Corpus Christi and the annual fair as usual. After no reports on "plague supervisors" were hung on the town gates between the Epiphany and the early summer of 1554, they were again posted every Sunday, starting with July 1st.

On July 25th, the plague also broke out in Višnja Gora, in the house of Hans Šeluti, who died after contracting it. There may have been a connection between his death and two town dwellers searching for a surgeon in Ljubljana, where they traveled to bring the collected tax. The town council immediately hired three male and an old female gravedigger to bury Šeluti and then instructed them to wait for the deaths of others and bury them as well. The male gravediggers were promised a crown each and the woman a Rhenish gulden, earning a total of 5 gulden and 36 kreuzer according to a statement of payments drawn up a month later. Five days after the plague struck the town, on July 30th, the town council again posted two supervisors, one at each town gate, to prevent the entrance of people from the infected areas. Judging from the weekly pay of 15 kreuzer, this time they must have been posted every day of the week and continued to control the town gates until July 1555. The plague seems not to have spread after the death of Šeluti, whose life was most likely the only one claimed, as no later than August, the inhabitants of Višnja Gora already went ahead with road reparations and stone-cutting in the town's vicinity, holding their regular onion fair in September, engaging in vibrant trade, and traveling to Ljubljana in search of various necessities.[10]

On the other hand, as stated, nothing is known about the plague elsewhere in Lower Carniola. It highly likely left Novo Mesto unaffected, or else its inhabitants would not have forgotten to mention it in their report to the sovereign in 1564, exhaustively describing the town's tribulations and the reasons behind them.[11] Nonetheless, the plague did make its way into Lower Carniola in the above-mentioned 1564, after it spread from Gorizia to Carniola, where it devastated Ljubljana and drove the provincial estates to Kamnik. In Lower Carniola, the plague took the heaviest toll in Šmarje and Šentrupert.[12]

It then visited again twelve years later, on crossing the border with Styria at Radeče pri Savi in 1576, and then raged across Upper Carniola and the Littoral.[13] In November, the provincial estates' registry protocols report on the plague in Radeče, the nearby Kum, and Zagorje. By 1577, the Black Death had already spread throughout Carniola. Special mention is made of Ljubljana and its surrounding area, while in Lower Carniola the peasants around Šentrupert resisted the general mandate on the plague. In December, the parish priest of Trebnje was ordered to stop conducting burials at Šentjurjeva Gora "during the time of infection" and move them to the nearby succursal church.[14]

Valvasor mentions this plague only once, when describing the market town of **Radeče**, which, as he writes, God scourged with an infectious disease.[15] The severity of Divine retribution can only be speculated on using a rather unreliable method of com-

10 SI AS 166, Mesto Višnja Gora fasc. IV, town account books 1552/1553, 1553/1554, and 1554/1555.
11 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 256, fasc. 133, lit. R II–1, April 25th, 1564.
12 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 96; Koblar, O človeški kugi, p. 50.
13 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 97.
14 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 854, registry protocols no. 6 (1567–1577), pp. 391, 403, 409, 409, 427, and 430.
15 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 464.

paring property holders' surnames. Some insight can be gathered by comparing the names of the Radeče market town dwellers in the provincial princely rent-roll from 1576[16] and on the list of firearms owners, compiled six years later, in 1582.[17] The rent-roll contains the names of thirty-four property holders in the market town and another thirty-five in the part called Krakovo, altogether sixty-nine, whereas the list of the market town's firearms owners contains no more than fifty-two. The lower number comes as no surprise because not every house had a man fit for battle, and it in no way suggests that the number of populated houses had shrunk by seventeen or nearly one-quarter. A more revealing piece of information is that only twenty-six surnames had been preserved in this six-year period, eighteen borne by the same masters as in 1576, who in 1582 accounted for merely 50 % of the same families as six years earlier. Although the two censuses use different sampling frames—applying to property holders and firearms owners, respectively, in the market town of Radeče—they clearly point to demographic discontinuity. At the worst, the plague could have partially or completely emptied forty-three or three-fifths of altogether sixty-nine houses, and further considering the different sampling frames, this share would still amount to about half of all homes. Such dramatic changes in property ownership could not have been possible in a short six-year span without a brutal external intervention. In other words, the changes that occurred in the period between 1576 and 1582 are numerically equal to those that took place in the twenty-year period between 1582 and the next rent-roll of Radeče from 1602.[18] Over these twenty years, the market town had retained the same twenty-one masters and five surnames or precisely half of families appearing on the list of 1582. In the quarter of the century that transpired between 1576 and 1602, the number of property holders in Radeče had declined from sixty-nine to sixty-five, with surviving twelve masters and eleven surnames, i.e., altogether about one-third of surnames from 1576.[19]

There are several other examples available to compare the dynamics of changes in property ownership during the second half of the sixteenth century. Strong continuity of property holders' surnames is best illustrated by the market towns of Litija and Ribnica. During the twelve-year period between the rent-rolls of 1566 and 1578, Litija had seen a decrease in the number of property holders from nineteen to eighteen, the disappearance of only three surnames, the emergence of two new ones, and the continued presence of as many as fifteen (or 83.3 %) masters.[20] In 1619, Litija still counted eighteen masters, three the same as before, and seven surnames identical to those from 1578, representing a high 55 % of unchanged surnames in the forty-year period.[21] Slightly poorer continuity was recorded in the seigniorial rent-rolls of 1564 and 1573 for the market town of Ribnica, where the number of masters had increased in nine years from thirty-three to thirty-five and forty, respectively, taking into account that some property units were divided between two or more masters. Compared to 1564, fourteen (42.4 %) persons and ten (30.3 %) surnames had remained unchanged, and nine (27.3 %) old families had disappeared. In the meantime, ten new masters and co-masters had settled in the market town, and nearly three-quarters of old families had remained.[22] The difference between the two above-mentioned market towns and the market town of Radeče, where up to half of families had disappeared in no more than six years, is more than obvious.

According to contemporary sources, the plague of 1576 affected not only Radeče but also the nearby area of the Kum Mountain. The rent-rolls of the seigniory of Radeče for 1576 and 1602 draw the following picture on eighteen villages around Radeče and the Kum Mountain. The number of masters had slightly increased from 135 to 138, fourteen (10.7 %) masters or at least their namesakes had remained the same as had sixty-two (47.3 %) surnames, and fifty-five (42 %) new surnames had emerged on the old property units, many already widely used in the area during the time of the earlier rent-roll. The most prominent discontinuity of surnames is recorded in two rent-rolls, one for the market town of Radeče and the other for its two nearby villages of Spodnje Radeče and Njivice. Compared to the elevated areas, the rapid change in property ownership in these lowland villages was undoubtedly owed to several factors; however, according to the list of Radeče's firearms owners from 1582, the time of intense changes clearly coincided with the plague. Out of sixty-four market town surnames in 1602, only twenty-three (35.9 %) were known in 1576, or precisely one-third

16 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 107, fasc. 60, lit. S X–1, rent-roll of the Žebnik or Radeče seigniory 1576, s. p.

17 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, I. reg, carton 424, fasc. 289, pp. 863–878.

18 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 107, fasc. 60, lit. S XI–2, rent-roll of the Radeče seigniory 1602, s. p.

19 Of the latter, three masters and four surnames cannot be found on the list of firearms owners from 1582, which testifies to its incomplete status vis-à-vis the total number of property holders.

20 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 124, fasc. 70a, lit. W XXIII–3, rent-roll of the Višnja Gora seigniory 1566, s. p.—SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 205, no. 35, rent-roll of the Višnja Gora seigniory 1578, s. p.

21 SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 205, no. 36, rent-roll of the Višnja Gora seigniory 1619, s. p.

22 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 105, fasc. 59, lit. R I–5, Ribnica tax register 1564, s. p.—SI AS, AS 774, Gospostvo Ribnica, vol. 1, rent-roll of the Ribnica seigniory 1573, s. p.

of the sixty-nine property holders listed in the earlier rent-roll. The same share of surnames (six out of eighteen) had remained unchanged in Spodnje Radeče, and in Njivice only one out of nine units of property had disappeared by 1602, whereas surnames had changed on six units and remained the same on two (22.2 %). A considerable change in surnames was observed in the villages at the foot of Kum Mountain, where the plague was also mentioned in November 1576. By 1602, over half of homesteads had changed surnames in Završe (three out of five), Briše (five out of seven), Spodnje Jelovo (three out of four), and slightly less farms scattered across Podkraj (five out of ten), Kum (three out of seven), and Spodnje Vode (three out of seven). Given the ordinarily lasting presence of surnames on isolated farms, the changes in the above-mentioned villages around Kum are rather noticeable: in the twenty-six years' period, sixty-seven units of property in two lowland and six elevated places had changed forty-one (61.1 %) surnames and retained no more than twenty-six (38.9 %), including those of four unchanged masters. By contrast, the remaining ten villages under the Radeče seigniory exhibited a much stronger continuity of property holders, with sixty-eight units of property having retained no fewer than fifty (73.5 %) surnames, including those of ten unchanged masters.[23] The almost reverse ratio of continuity and discontinuity in both halves of farm holdings must have been the result of a sudden shock—most probably the plague of 1576.

A detailed outline of events that unfolded during this plague can only be traced in **Višnja Gora,** thanks to the annual account that the town judge Marx Raab compiled for 1576/77. Life was almost normal, except for the annual fair on the Ascension Day in 1577, which saw less trading and poorer turnover due to the plague and fairs concurrently held in other towns. A decree on safety measures to be taken in view of the plague that erupted in the Venetian area reached the town no later than July 22nd, 1576, followed by a general mandate and another decree, both shortly before and after All Saints' Day. As stated in the town judge's account, some master carpenter performed his work in May or June 1577 outside the town walls during the epidemic (*in Sterbleuff*).[24] Unfortunately, the Višnja Gora judicial account has not been preserved for 1578, considered the "year of the plague" in Carniola, and the discontinuity of householders' surnames between the first (1567) and the second tax register (1581) does not point to any spike attributable to the epidemic.[25] Nor was the plague in Višnja Gora mentioned by Valvasor or any other contemporary source.

The plague ravaged many areas across Carniola two years later, **in 1578**; however, its chronological course is poorly documented. In the provincial estates' registry protocols, the first decrees were imposed on individual Inner Carniolan seigniories at the end of September 1578. In July the following year, a general mandate was issued, banning fairs and assemblies as well as instructing to avoid the infected areas. In August 1578, the provincial estates considered transferring their offices to Škofja Loka after the plague in Ljubljana showed no sign of relenting. In October, the secret court council in Graz reported that the transfer had indeed taken place—however, not to Škofja Loka, which was no longer secure, but to Kranj. The epidemic wave appears to have died down before January 1580, with a single isolated case of infection reported in June that same year in the Moravče Valley.[26] Barring a few mentions of places in Inner and Upper Carniola, there were no news about the epidemic in Lower Carniola. Limited reports on the plague can only be found in subsequent writings, including, first and foremost, Valvasor's. Valvasor states that the plague reached and decimated the town of Krško in 1578. He mentions Novo Mesto in relation to the plague of 1590 and maintains that it also claimed a heavy toll both in the small province and town of Kočevje.[27] The more recent literature then mentions it in Ljubljana and Cerknica, as well as Lower Carniola in the Temenica Valley, Šentrupert, Krško, Novo Mesto, and Kočevje.[28]

Although the epidemic delivered an especially devastating blow to **Novo Mesto**, which had burned down only two years before that in 1576, no mention is found on the plague itself, except in Valvasor's writings. The same holds for **Krško**, where the comparison of property holders, drawing on the Krško provincial princely rent-roll from 1575 and the list of armed subjects in the plague year of 1578, nevertheless allows for certain conclusions regarding the impacts of the epidemic on the local rural population. However, as the more recent list bears no precise date, it is impossible to determine whether it was compiled after or already before the plague. In the brief three-year period (1575–1578), the entire seigniory of Krško recorded a change in surname on 20.1 % farm holdings and the abandonment of 3.9 %. The "mountain office" registered a new surname on 12.7 % farms along the Sava, and on no less than 26.8 % units of property in Krško Polje. Nearly twice as many

23 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 107, fasc. 60, lit. S XI–1, rent-roll of the Radeče seigniory 1576, s. p.; XI–2, rent-roll of the Radeče seigniory 1602, s. p.

24 SI AS 166, Mesto Višnja Gora fasc. IV, town account books 1576/1577.

25 Ibid., fasc. II, tax registers 1567 and 1581.

26 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 860, registry protocols no. 7 (1578–1584), pp. 91, 96, 101, 121, and 146.

27 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, pp. 242, 488, and 199.

28 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 97, citing Valvasor (Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, pp. 199 and 717).

farms (4.8 %) were abandoned on the plains than in the hills (2.8 %). The changes are especially evident compared to those that occurred in the period between 1570 and 1575, which witnessed a peasant uprising in 1573, followed by harsh retaliation. In those five years, householders' surnames had changed—to a large extent, also due to the uprising—on a roughly the same share of farms in both rent-roll offices and the seigniory as a whole (between 16 % and 17 %). About 5 % of units of property had been abandoned. Comparisons to the dynamics of changes in landownership in other periods show that the seigniory of Krško suffered many hardships during the 1570s. Moreover, given that the situation between 1575 and 1578 was even more extraordinary than in the years prior to the peasant uprising, it seems safe to assume that the changes in property ownership were largely owed to the plague.[29]

After that, Carniola experienced the plague in the 1580s and the 1590s, when the epidemic took an especially devastating toll among the inhabitants of Škofja Loka (1580 and 1582) and Ljubljana (1586–87) and staged the ghastliest *danse macabre* yet on the eve of the new century.[30]

The plague of 1599

At the end of the sixteenth century, Carniola was hit by the thus far most severe—and, as previously, poorly documented—epidemic. Still highly lapidary, the provincial estates' registry protocols from that period provide little else than references to general decrees and correspondence with the provincial estates of the neighboring provinces. Between July 1598, when the plague first appeared in sources, and November 1600, when it found its belated echoes, the protocols make not a single mention of it in Lower Carniola but only associate it with Ljubljana and the province of Carniola as such.[31] Although from an overall perspective, the correspondence of the provincial estates' committee of four noble delegates (*Verordnete Stelle*) is equally scarce, it happens to provide a better overview precisely of the plague in Lower Carniola than in other parts of the province.

The epidemic reached Carniola in the spring of 1599 through Lower Carniola, where it was spread from Rijeka and its surroundings.[32] On May 1st, the provincial vidame and estates sent two plague commissioners appointed from among Ljubljana's city councilors to thoroughly investigate the situation. The undated commission report, undoubtedly drawn that same month, mentions incidences of the plague in Šmarje, Šentjanž, Šentrupert, Radeče, and Raka, as well as the seigniory of Spodnji Mokronog and around Krško, where not a single village was reportedly left unaffected. Novo Mesto and its surroundings attract more attention owing to a more recent report from 1606 on the dramatic mortality with over eight hundred deceased town dwellers, whereas in May 1599 the town leadership reassured the plague commissioners that only six persons had died by that date in Novo Mesto and even those deaths were, as the physician, the pharmacist, and the witch doctor affirmed, owed to the so-called Hungarian disease rather than the plague. On the other hand, the local parish priest wrote about three hundred deaths within a short period in the nearby parishes of Šmarjeta and Št. Peter, and a high death toll was reported from the settlements of Trška Gora and Bajnof north of Novo Mesto. According to the report, the plague had thus far spared Višnja Gora, Stična, Trebnje, and Velika Loka.[33] By June that same year, it had reached Ljubljana and then gradually spread toward Upper Carniola.[34] In Ljubljana, the plague first erupted precisely in the homes of both plague commissioners on their return from Lower Carniola, where they had most likely contracted the disease. The provincial offices were immediately transferred from the capital to Kamnik, and despite safety measures in place, the disease spread to the north unhindered, and it continued to intensify until the end of the year.[35]

Exhaustive reports, written while the epidemic was still running rampant in the provincial capital, shed a highly informative light on the chronology of the disease, safety measures, and various other details. Disproportionately less is known about the developments in Lower Carniola, where high mortality was reported for three towns: Novo Mesto, Višnja Gora, and Kočevje. A few years later, the inhabitants of Novo Mesto provided fairly accurate figures on the deceased and masters of the house, which, for this reason alone, are considered worthy of attention. Because early historiography accepted them uncritically and without consulting contemporary reference sources, the figures on over eight hundred dead inhabitants, including 149 masters of the house, in 1599 were insistently stated all until Ivan Vrhovec

29 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 81, fasc. 46, lit. G VIII–4, rent-roll of the Krško seigniory 1570, s. p.—SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 141, no. 29, rent-roll of the Krško seigniory 1575, pp. 481–529.—SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 81, fasc. 46, lit. G VIII–1, list of firearms owners 1578.

30 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, pp. 98–100.—Koblar, O človeški kugi, pp. 50–51.

31 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 444, fasc. 291 d, pp. 739–744, May 1st, 1599, ad May 1st, 1599.—Cf. Smole, Kuga na Kranjskem, p. 98.

32 Cf. Smole, Kuga na Kranjskem, p. 98.

33 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 444, fasc. 291 d, pp. 739–744, May 1st, 1599, ad May 1st, 1599.—Cf. Smole, Kuga na Kranjskem, p. 98.

34 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 857, registry protocols no. 11 (1598–1601), pp. 11, 20, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 49, 67, and 84.

35 Smole, Kuga na Kranjskem, p. 98.

published his *Zgodovina Novega mesta* (The History of Novo Mesto; 1891).[36] In 1606, Novo Mesto reported these figures to the vidame's commission, shortly before it visited to examine the destitute, depopulated, and partially burnt town.[37] The credibility of the figures is further questioned in view of the thousand deceased stated in Novo Mesto's appeal for assistance a few years later, in 1615.[38] Whereas the growing time distance alleviated the affected population's grievances over the recent events, reports of over eight hundred and eventually the spectacular thousand deaths partly stemmed from the belief that the provincial authorities' understanding of what actually took place in Novo Mesto in 1599 had meanwhile been blurred.

Far less ascertainable is the figure on the deaths in Višnja Gora, stated a decade after the epidemic. In 1609, Archduke Ferdinand received a petition from the judge, council, and municipality of Višnja Gora for a tax waiver and a visit by an assessment commission. The petition stated that the plague of 1599 had killed no less than half of the town's inhabitants and landless peasants, leaving desolated and unpopulated houses in its wake, and that the massive death toll had brought the outstanding personal income tax to the staggering 152 gulden in 1599 alone. It is impossible not to notice what the authors really tried to convey. In the continuation, they blamed the town's failure to pay its tax debt on Vlach troops that had torched and demolished houses and granaries while advancing toward Kaniža (1601), and by causing mayhem decimated its population, households, and the craft industry.[39] Like in the slightly earlier report from Novo Mesto, the plague suddenly no longer figured as the principal evil, despite having purportedly killed half of the town's population. Not even a carnage of such magnitude sufficed to undermine the town's foundations; it was essential to state other reasons to conceal the blatant exaggeration.

The inhabitants of **Kočevje**, too, wrote about the plague, and they were the first to do so in the early 1601, in a petition for assistance addressed at the court chamber in Graz. Their statements are only known from a summary report, according to which the plague (*Infection*) had been rampant in Kočevje for two years, taking the lives of the most prominent town dwellers and landless peasants, causing this small town to suffer a significant demographic decline. Yet the epidemic should not have been particularly severe, being only mentioned in passing to substantiate the request for a few-years' tax waiver after the fire of 1596.[40] To compensate for the lack of hard facts, the inhabitants of Kočevje resorted to sweeping statements about the deaths of prominent figures and the town's declining population. Translated from an official language, the Black Death had reaped a minor harvest, smaller than in Novo Mesto and Višnja Gora. What should also be borne in mind is that the short time distance between the events and the writing of the petition undoubtedly kept a tight rein on the authors' desire to exaggerate. At the same time, Kočevje's example stands as eloquent proof of how quickly facts could be distorted and fabricated. Immediately after the plague had run its course in April 1600, its inhabitants sent to the provincial estates a request to defer payment of tax, merely stating that the town had been closed off after God struck them with the plague (*vns armen mit einer ruetten der straff, der infection heimbgesucht*), and that the ban on movement had plunged the population into extreme poverty and distress.[41] Aside from the economic downturn, the town of Kočevje therefore suffered no demographic decline, about which its inhabitants wrote much more daringly to the distant Graz a year later.

The question of who copied the descriptions of the plague's aftermath in the first decade of the seventeenth century and whether they indeed did so is of marginal importance. Given that all towns whose reports have been preserved from that period pointed their fingers at the plague, the epidemic was certainly not an innocent event but one that had become deeply embedded in the collective memory, gradually shaping the belief that the true evil began with the outbreak of the plague and that the disease itself had caused all the hardship and the ensuing economic decline. In fact, the plague of 1599 coincided exactly with the time of major political and economic turmoil, which was particularly injurious to Lower Carniola as the province bordering on the battlegrounds of the Long Turkish War (1593–1606). In their subsequent explanations as to when and where the "Golden Age" had ended, the town leaderships most often dwelled on the events of that period, painting the dramatic decline in transit trade primarily as an aftermath of the fall of Bihać and Kaniža.[42]

Returning to the question of what actually unfolded in 1599 in the three indisputably infected Lower Carniolan towns, it should be stressed that,

36 Vrhovec, *Zgodovina Novega mesta*, p. 79.
37 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 255, fasc. 133, lit. R I–2, September 24th, 1606.
38 Ibid., July 2nd, 1615.
39 StLA, Innerösterreichische Hofkammer-Akten (hereinafter I.Ö. HK–Akten) 1611–III–105.
40 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 274, fasc. 139, lit. G I–8, June 16th, 1601.—The petition was also summarized by the administrator of the vidame's office Filip Kobenzl in his report to the court chamber (StLA, I.Ö. HK-Akten, 1601–VII–40, June 16th, 1601.
41 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 446, fasc. 291 d, p. 513, April 9th, 1600.
42 E.g., SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 256, fasc. 133, lit. R II–3, s. d. Bericht A (the last-mentioned year is 1651).

Johannes Clobucciarich's sketch of Novo Mesto (1601–1605) immediately after the plague of 1599.

in connection to the plague, both Valvasor's writings and contemporary sources—especially the registry protocols of the provincial estates and records on the provincial estates' matters—refer solely to Novo Mesto and not once to Višnja Gora and Kočevje. Moreover, when describing the past of Višnja Gora, Valvasor mentions no specific calamity[43] and, on highlighting the deadly plague that devastated the town and province of Kočevje in 1578, he says not a word about the plague of 1599 but writes about the fire from three years before that.[44] Also, a careful reading of his lines on the two plagues in Novo Mesto reveals no distinction between the epidemic of 1578 and that of 1599, which he erroneously sets in 1590:[45] "*Massen sie /Pest=Seuche/ im 1578 Jahr/ und gleichfalls /!/ im 1590/ viel Leute weggerissen/ und so wenig derselben übrig gelassen/ daß das Graß/ auf dem Marckt=Platz/ so hoch gewachsen/ daß man es mit Sensen abmähen können*."[46] There is some internal logic to the statement and its dramatic tone. The grass overgrowing the town's Market Square was not necessarily owed to the dramatic population decline but primarily to the fact that its trade area had not received visitors for weeks and months due to town and road closures. The unpaved square, which ordinarily hosted a bustling wheat market twice weekly, may have quite quickly turned into a grassy area.

As for the demographic losses that Novo Mesto and Višnja Gora suffered in 1599, new sources and discoveries strongly relativize the tendentious statements by their respective town leaderships. Contemporary surveys of the towns' taxpayers and abandoned houses lend particularly valuable support to the common-sense "incredulity." They completely contradict the petitions raised by the inhabitants of Novo Mesto and Višnja Gora to alleviate their fiscal burdens and, notwithstanding all mitigating factors, point to nothing less than deliberate deceit and distortion of facts. At least some figures on the living and the deceased were deliberately changed, either amplified or played down, depending on whom they were addressed at. Because they can only be fully understood in the context of the property and demographic structure of both towns, they will be given further consideration below.

One thing is certain: the plague that rampaged in **Novo Mesto** at the end of the sixteenth century was indeed remorseless. According to the vidame's response to Archduke Ferdinand regarding the situation in the town, chronologically the very first source mentioning the plague in Novo Mesto, dated March 16th, 1600, the town and its surroundings suffered a heavy population loss (*an bevölkerung entplöst*) to the plague in the previous year.[47] Barely seven years after the events, the inhabitants of Novo Mesto would, of course, not dare to fabricate the figures completely, least of all in their report to the commissioners who visited the town to assess the level of devastation and could easily verify their claims. Another question is how many inhabitants of Novo Mesto really died because of the plague or how credible are the indications of more than eight hundred dead, including 149 masters of the house. Not impossible per se, the numbers strike terror, representing more than half of the town's population. A hundred and fifty years

43 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, pp. 628–629.
44 Ibid., pp. 199, 200.
45 Attention to the error was already drawn by I. Vrhovec (*Zgodovina Novega mesta*, p. 79).
46 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 488.
47 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 277, fasc. 140, lit. S XXI–9, March 3rd, 1600, March 26th, 1600.

later (1754), Novo Mesto had 1,485 inhabitants[48] or 5.67 persons per household in a total of 262 houses.[49] During the second half of the sixteenth century, ravaged by firestorms, economic setbacks, and emigration,[50] the population count was most likely even lower. For example, in the mid-eighteenth century, the same number of houses (248)[51] were under the town's jurisdiction as there were populated non-peasant properties (Ger.: *Hofstatt*) in 1515.[52] A slightly lower number of 242 hearths is provided in chronologically the closest summary data from 1541.[53]

As for the number of victims that the plague of 1599 claimed throughout Carniola, the only figure apart from the eight hundred in Novo Mesto is 350 persons in Ljubljana, brought forth by Valvasor.[54] Counting about seven hundred houses at the time, the Carniolan capital and its suburbs were home to approximately five thousand inhabitants according to Valenčič's estimate,[55] converting the 350 plague victims into 7 % of the total population. The difference from the more than 50 % share of deaths established for Novo Mesto is more than obvious.

However, rather than being simply rejected due to its "improbability" and the silence in contemporary reports, the staggering number of eight hundred victims in Novo Mesto[56] is contradicted by far more reliable numerical sources—two lists of Novo Mesto's abandoned houses—and commission reports from the early seventeenth century. These are undated commission surveys of abandoned and burnt houses, and insolvent taxpayers. They may be labeled as lists A and B[57] and placed in the late summer of 1606, when the town received a visit from the provincial estates' commission.[58] The surveys were compiled for an investigation into the abandonment of the town following the plague of 1599 and especially the fire in the autumn of 1605. List A registers abandoned, burnt, and still-populated impoverished houses (109), whereas List B focuses on completely abandoned houses (80), that is, burnt and ruined buildings and uncultivated agricultural land. After subtracting the names of masters appearing on both lists (twenty-seven), the total number amounts to 162 abandoned houses.[59] Had the third commission list—a survey of still-populated houses—from 1606 also been preserved, historians could dispose of a first-rate contemporary source on the town's property and demographic structure, but instead, we can only rely on the summary report at the end of List A. The sum of 162 abandoned houses corresponds to the overall figure on more than 160 depopulated, abandoned, ruined, and burnt houses that paid no tax whatsoever. It also reveals the amounts necessary to cover for the 149 deceased masters and eight hundred deceased in total if multiplying every abandoned house by the usual coefficient of five persons per household. On the other hand, the summary provides a disproportionately low figure of "no more than 125" so-called real, mostly poor masters of their own house. The rest, not stated quantitatively, are labeled as landless peasants (*inwohner*) and thrash-

48 According to the register of marriages kept by the chapter parish, the town had the following number of inhabitants over four consecutive years: 1485 in 1754, 1466 in 1755, 1441 in 1756, and 1390 in 1757 (KANM, carton 66, P/4 1754–1771, s. p.).

49 SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 242 (mesto Novo mesto), no. 23, rent-roll 1756; N 11 (kapitelj Novo mesto), no. 4, February 28th, 1753.

50 Cf. Vrhovec, *Zgodovina Novega mesta*, pp. 76 f.

51 SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 242 (mesto Novo mesto), no. 23, rent-roll 1756.

52 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 105, fasc. 59, lit. R V–1, Der zaichnus abschrifft der hoffstett der statt Ruedolphswerth anno 1515.

53 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 294, fasc. 151, 6/1549, no. 9, s. d. (Gemainer statt Ruedolfswerdt auszug).—Cf. [Dimitz], Beiträge zur fünfhundertjährigen Gründungsfeier, 34.

54 Summarizing the data from Schönleben (Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 718).—Having thoroughly studied materials from the Ljubljana City Archives, Ivan Vrhovec wrote that he could not find any statistical data on the numbers of the infected and the deceased but only tentative indications at best (Vrhovec, Die Pest in Laibach, p. 131).

55 Valenčič, Prebivalstvo in hiše, p. 118.—In 1600, the town's authority covered 359 houses within the town walls, altogether about four hundred, including the forty-two identified houses under other authorities (ibid., p. 112).

56 To substantiate her doubt about the credibility of the data, M. Smole maintained that A. Koblar, whom she cited, did not provide any sources and that the data did not correspond to contemporary conclusions drawn by the provincial commissioners (Smole, Kuga na Kranjskem, p. 98). However, she was not aware about Vrhovec's publication of citations from the original source, and she also neglected the fact that the plague commissioners' reports on the epidemic in Novo Mesto and Lower Carniola only referred to the first half of 1599.

57 List A (1606): SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 258, fasc. 133, lit. R V–4.—List B (1606): ibid., carton 255, fasc. 133, lit. R I–2.

58 Dating both lists to 1606 seems reasonable, given the extremely high numbers of burnt and abandoned houses contained in both lists as well as an indication on List A that the house of Hans Dlaka in the Market Square had already been "abandoned for thirty years since the first fire" (1576). Furthermore, the merchant Adam Gričar declared himself unable to pay the entire amount of tax because he had not engaged in any craft and trading activity for seven years (since the plague of 1599!). Even more accurate is the dating of List B, which sets forth the sum of tax loss amounting to 236 gulden and 27 kreuzer, mentioned in the commission report of September 24th, 1606. The sum refers to the revenues from widows, orphans, and landless peasants registered on List A (SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 255, fasc. 133, lit. R I–2).

59 With only twenty-four names duplicated, most masters of the house on lists A and B were different individuals. Also, instead of three masters from List A, List B states widows and heirs. The conclusion that List A classifies all twenty-seven twice registered houses as completely depopulated and abandoned points with certainty that List B indeed focuses exclusively on completely empty and ruined households. Also, two of four houses that are not explicitly classified as abandoned had long been deserted according to List A.

ers (*drescher*) who paid little or no tax. In fact, these houses should be considered as part of the above-stated 160 abandoned homes, which were nonetheless occupied, albeit by landless peasants. The abandonment of Novo Mesto was therefore first and foremost a structural one: solid masters of the house were replaced by fiscally insolvent occupants, and the aggregate of both summary items reflects a realistic picture of about 285 former homes.[60]

This also seems to solve the mystery of how precisely the inhabitants of Novo Mesto had arrived at the 149 deceased masters and a total of over eight hundred victims of the epidemic—or it allows for at least one probable answer. If the estimate of 162 abandoned houses is reduced by those thirteen clearly listed as newly depopulated homes after being razed by the fire in the autumn of 1605, there remain exactly 149 abandoned houses with the names and surnames of their former masters. This number of completely abandoned and half-emptied homes, which now housed the town's impoverished, could have been presented at any given moment to the visitation commission for whom the information was intended. Yet the inhabitants of Novo Mesto shrewdly portrayed all former homes, many already abandoned for decades, as casualties of the plague. From here, it was only one step to reach the total of over eight hundred deaths. The town fathers merely had to multiply each deceased master by 5.4 family members, which was a slightly lower coefficient than the average of household members in 1754. And finally, as noted, the number eight hundred could also be arrived at using a much simpler calculation: about 160 abandoned households, multiplied by five persons.

To dwell a little longer on the analysis of the 149 of altogether 162 abandoned (completely and partially depopulated) homes; after subtracting the thirteen burnt houses that were completely abandoned after the fire in 1605, it becomes clear that not a negligible part of houses had already been depopulated before 1599. List A alone states thirty-one old, abandoned houses, whereas List B says nothing about the level of abandonment and sets forth above all, if not exclusively, houses that had been consigned to ruin for many years. What remains after subtracting the thirty-one demonstrably old, abandoned houses, some expressly labeled as having been unoccupied for twenty or thirty years, are no more than 118 homes that could have been depopulated by the plague. However, given the above, it seems reasonable to assume that the actual numbers were considerably lower. Besides, no plague would have ravaged with such razor-sharp precision to kill off certain families while leaving others entirely intact. If the plague had indeed claimed the lives of 149 masters, they would have left behind many more widows instead of twelve appearing in both lists combined. To reiterate, the reference to 149 masters of the house was most likely used to cover the same number of completely or partially abandoned houses left without their real, taxpaying owners. After all subtractions, the number of completely vacated homes and the total death toll taken by the plague of 1599 remains open to debate. It is redundant to speculate whether the number of victims was more or less than stated in the source from 1625 (322, including fifteen masters of the house).[61] Suffice it to provide a broad estimate of up to several hundred deceased and certainly much fewer than 149 masters.

Rather than decisive, the epidemic of 1599 was a relatively incidental reason behind Novo Mesto's demonstrably poor demographic and economic status. The investigating commission, which compiled a detailed survey of tax assessments and losses suffered by each house in the late summer of 1606, stated in its final report to the provincial prince that a looming emigration of the remaining inhabitants would drive the town to the brink of collapse without the desperately needed tax relief. The main cause of this calamity were purportedly the Turks, who were blamed for the collapse of the once booming trade with Croatia and the Slavonian Military Frontier.[62] However, the desolation and dramatic impoverishment among the remaining population of Novo Mesto could not have been so much a consequence of the turbulent border as it was of an overall decline in non-agrarian economy, followed by a series of consecutive natural disasters. As if by an unfortunate coincidence, these struck precisely when trade and crafts were undergoing an acute crisis. In a relatively short period, the town was devastated by no less than four fires—1540, 1576, 1584, and 1605—which then various petitions and descriptions persistently described as the fun-

60 In 1515, 272 non-peasant properties (Ger.: *Hofstatt*) fell under the town's jurisdiction, 248 populated and twenty-four abandoned (SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 105, fasc. 59, lit. R V–1). The next complete fiscal source is from 1726, stating 249 populated and forty-seven abandoned houses, altogether 296 house-lots (SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 256, fasc. 133, lit. R II–3, 3. 10. 1726). Although the summary from 1606 affirms that many abandoned land plots in the surroundings of Sv. Jurij were still not registered and that, in the past (*vor zeiten*), the town counted as many as 337 fully occupied houses (*wolbesezte heiser*), there is no source to confirm this in the sixteenth century. The commissioners could arrive at such a high number with a census of all built up or empty house-lots, but a document that refers to a completely unspecified time in the past raises doubt about its credibility. The same source, for example, also states that, "von jarn," the town had over 150 granaries (*gödner*), and yet List B only specifies forty-five abandoned granaries. One could come close to the number 337 by aggregating the latter, all (un)populated house-lots and taxpayers possessing various kinds of land plots.

61 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 255, fasc. 133, lit. R I–2, May 9th, 1626.—Cf. Vrhovec, *Zgodovina Novega mesta*, p. 82.

62 Ibid., September 24th, 1606 (commission report).

damental reason for the town's decline.[63] Already in 1564, the inhabitants of Novo Mesto complained about their fellow townsmen emigrating and leaving behind empty houses or tenants.[64] Three years later, after the town was almost completely razed by the fire in 1576, its leadership lamented the departure of a no small number of families, which had left as much as one-third of the town abandoned or undeveloped (*öder oder unausgebaut verbleibt*).[65] What is particularly striking is that after this fire and that in 1584,[66] all petitions for tax relief fail to mention a single word about the consequences of the plague of 1578, for which Valvasor remains the only known source.[67] The town already suffered significant demographic losses before the plague year of 1599. When they requested for a commission inspection of the town to yield a realistic tax base assessment in 1595, Novo Mesto's inhabitants reported that the biggest and most magnificent houses stood empty and deserted, while smallholdings (Ger.: *Keusche*) languished in poverty,[68] which only grew deeper during the Long Turkish War. The town fathers' petitions remained unanswered until the fire of 1605 turned the wealthiest and most vital part of the town into ashes,[69] eventually branding Novo Mesto as desolate and providing a sufficient ground for sending a visitation commission. The plague, included at the last minute in Novo Mesto's report among the causes for the deplorable situation, is solely mentioned there. Unlike the fires and impoverishment, the plague is conspicuously also missing from both the lists of abandoned houses and the final commission report.

Similar conclusions were drawn on the demographic and economic implications of the plague in **Višnja Gora**, which were substantiated with even more reliable numerical sources. Compared to Novo Mesto, the developments in Višnja Gora are also much better documented in a contemporary source, penned by the local town judge Janez Zore—his annual account for the one-year term of office from June 24th, 1599, to the same date the following year.[70] The document is less revealing than its predecessor for 1553/1554 and paints a picture of an almost ordinary year. Albeit containing no mention of plague-related deaths or specifying the plague gravediggers' names, it nevertheless provides enough information to demonstrate that the risk of infection was real. On the other hand, the epidemic could not have claimed a heavy death toll, which would have manifested in the abandonment of (half of) the town. Again, according to the May report to the provincial estates, Višnja Gora had until then escaped the plague,[71] and the town's complaints to Archduke Ferdinand that reached Graz on June 12th, 1599, say nothing about its outbreak while reporting on no less than one-third of the town abandoned.[72] Considering that it traveled for no more than two weeks, the letter describes the situation in Višnja Gora at the end of May or in early June. The undocumented time up to June 24, 1599, during which the plague should have claimed the heaviest death toll, was less than a month, but on Zore's taking up his one-year term of judicial office, there were still no signs of turmoil and no plague closure, which should have been imposed in the event of mass burials. The newly appointed judge took a lease of the tollhouse at the usual amount (104 gulden and 50 kreuzer), and the town feast cost as much as it did in previous years. The disease must have occurred only later and disappeared by mid-March the following year. Namely, on March 20th, 1600, the town judge set out for Ljubljana in the company of the town clerk to visit the vidame regarding the confirmation of his term of office and the elimination of the plague closure (*Wando*), and on the same morning, the town councilors already met for breakfast at Zore's house without fear. Paralyzed traffic and trade thus delayed the confirmation of the town judge, which ordinarily followed on the heels of the election, for almost nine months, but not necessarily "through the fault" of Višnja Gora's inhabitants. Specifically, in the autumn of 1599, the provincial offices were transferred from the plague-ridden Ljubljana to Kamnik and less urgent matters were postponed to a safer date. The judicial account of Višnja Gora does not provide the exact date on which the closure was imposed on the town, nor does it describe its direct impact. No restrictions seem to have been placed at any time on the passing from and to the town by locals and foreigners, respectively.

63 E.g., SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 255, fasc. 133, lit. R I–2, September 24th, 1606; carton 256, fasc. 133, lit. R II–3, s. d. (Gravamen, after 1637). All three fires were also known to Valvasor, who further added the fourth one of 1664 (Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 488).

64 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 256, fasc. 133, lit. R II–1, April 25th, 1564.

65 StLA, I.Ö. HK-Akten, 1579–VI–11, May 29th, 1579.

66 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 855, registry protocols no. 7 (1578–1584), p. 301).

67 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 488.

68 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 278, fasc. 141, lit. S XXII–16, s. d. (ad June 23rd, 1595).

69 According to Valvasor, the fire engulfed the Market Square and turned sixty houses into ashes (Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 488), whereas around 1640 the inhabitants of Novo Mesto wrote about fifty-six burnt houses (SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 256, fasc. 133, lit. R II–3, s. d., Gravamen, after 1637). The most reliable source, the commission's List A from 1606, does not deviate appreciably from the indications above, stating that fifty-two of 162 abandoned houses were burned down, thirty in the Market Square and the rest in the nearby streets.

70 SI AS 166, Mesto Višnja Gora fasc. IV, town account book 1599/1600.

71 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 444, fasc. 291 d, p. 743, ad May 1st, 1599.—Cf. Smole, Kuga na Kranjskem, p. 98.

72 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko carton 284, fasc. 145, lit. W I–3, June 12th, 1599.

As always, the regular council meeting was held in the autumn, the town envoys journeyed to Graz and back, Višnja Gora received provincial messengers, beggars, and other foreigners, and the town fathers continued to appoint officials.[73] Life in the town was equally busy during winter months: tax was collected on the last day of January and a deal was concluded for the town messenger's house on February 21st, after which the inhabitants of Višnja Gora and the parish priest spent a few days discussing matters concerning the spiritual assistant and teacher—all this during the closure, which was still in place on March 20th.

The town judge's bill of costs only refers to the plague indirectly, through occasional mentions of burials. Between July 28th and August 8th, 1599, for example, two representatives of the town were sent to the parish priest "to discuss the burial of those from the village of Kriška Vas," and in mid-November the town paid for a boy's burial. At the end of 1599 or the beginning of the next year, the town messenger died and was promptly replaced by another, and in January 1600 the town judge included a swineherd's post-burial feast among the expenses. On April 10th, after the town judge and clerk returned from Ljubljana and the closure was lifted, the former gravedigger Matija Arbeiter, who interred the swineherd in January, received the promised payment for his burials (*wegen seiner zuegesagten besoldung der begrebnus halber*). The word "burial" in plural form and the item "1 gulden and 36 kreuzer" suggest that he had buried at least a few people. Interestingly, however, this time one gravedigger was enough, unlike in 1554 when the town hired four and paid them for a month's work an amount almost four times higher than the sum now paid to Arbeiter. Moreover, unlike its predecessor from a little less than fifty years before, which makes several mentions of the epidemic, the town judge's annual account for 1599/1600 contains a single direct reference to the disease, made only after the danger had passed, on June 14th, 1600, when the provincial messenger brought a general mandate on "Infection alda." Meanwhile, the inhabitants of Višnja Gora had been vigorously restoring town buildings, collecting taxes, and litigating, apart from which they also held the Feast of Corpus Christi and the annual fair.

In the light of the above, the contemporary source provides no basis to substantiate the reported deaths of half of the town's inhabitants and landless peasants. In addition, for Višnja Gora there exists a continuous series of annual tax registers issued every few years, starting with 1567. Clearly specifying the composition of the town's population and its ability to pay tax, the registers represent a credible source, also because a vast majority have been preserved in original in the town archives.[74] Yet precisely the registers from 1605–1607, the closest in time to the plague, are only known through doctored transcripts held by the provincial vidame and the Inner Austrian government, respectively.[75] These are dismissed by appreciably different data provided in a tax survey that was carried out the following year, in 1608, for the town's internal use.[76]

An interesting light on Višnja Gora's allegation from 1609 that the plague had killed over half of its population is shed by their above-mentioned complaints to Archduke Ferdinand, which arrived in Graz on June 12th, 1599. More specifically, it was already before the epidemic that more than one-third of houses in the debt-ridden and deteriorating town were abandoned and dilapidated (!). The town leadership also lamented the total absence of trade and crafts, adding that since the onset of the war in 1593 various armies had passed through the town, forcibly grabbing whatever they chanced on and paying for nothing.[77] According to the tax register of 1591, when Višnja Gora had more taxpayers than ever in the following two centuries, the dramatic abandonment should have taken place in a short span of eight tumultuous years. In the year mentioned above, Višnja Gora counted eighty-nine homes, eleven free tenants and landless peasants, and twelve granaries—but no empty houses or insolvent taxpayers.[78] The one-third of abandoned houses from 1599 could correspond to the situation presented to the higher authorities in the tax registers from 1605, 1605, and 1607, when the heavily abandoned town recorded between fifty-nine and sixty-three populated houses.[79] However, the three surveys above served to substantiate the petitions to cancel the outstanding tax debt, whereas the original register for the following year 1681 already listed many more homes (seventy-six). The probability that seventeen abandoned houses became populated within a year should be flatly dismissed. According to the comparison of the stock of masters' names, certain persons and surnames only appeared in 1591 and 1608 and were simply suppressed or attributed to abandoned

[73] A partial standstill in view of the "ex silentio" of dates can only be observed between August 15th and November 11th, and even that period saw autumn assemblies, an overview of the judge's and chamberlain's accounts for the previous year, and a visit from the provincial debt collector, accompanied by indispensable feasts.

[74] SI AS 166, Mesto Višnja Gora fasc. IV, tax registers 1567–1740.

[75] SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 284, fasc. 145, lit. W I–4, tax register 1605, 1606.—StLA, I.Ö. HK-Akten, 1611–III–105, Steuer register 1607.

[76] SI AS 166, Mesto Višnja Gora fasc. IV, tax register 1608.

[77] SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko carton 284, fasc. 145, lit. W I–3, June 12th, 1599.

[78] SI AS 166, Mesto Višnja Gora fasc. IV, tax register 1591.

[79] SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 284, fasc. 145, lit. W I–4, tax register 1605, 1606.—StLA, I.Ö. HK-Akten, 1611–III–105, Steuer register 1607.

homes in the registers for 1605–1607. Even before 1608, the actual number of populated houses must have been higher than about sixty, and it could not be significantly lower than seventy-six, at which it stabilized for at least the following two decades.

Bearing eloquent witness to that is the population continuity in Višnja Gora. Although the discontinuity of property holding families was higher in the seventeen years between 1591 and 1608 than in the ten years between 1581 and 1591, the different durations of the periods make the difference negligible. In the first period (1581–1591), 48.2 % of all householding families remained on the same property and 32.6 % in the second. In other words, between 1581 and 1591, 4.4 households changed their master each year, and during the crisis-, war-, and plague-ridden period 1591–1608 no more than 3.5 households, including the thirteen abandoned ones.[80]

Still, it is important to note that between 1591 and 1608 the number of householders in Višnja Gora dropped from eighty-nine to seventy-six or by a little more than one-seventh (14.61 %) compared to the initial situation. Since the changes from eight years before 1599 and in the six years leading up to 1605 are not documented, the population fluctuations that took place in the meantime and during the plague year can only be speculated on. What the figures above nevertheless confirm is that one-third of the town's houses could not have been abandoned just before the plague in 1599, let alone that the disease had killed half of the population. Knowing about its rampaging in other parts of the province, ten years later, in 1609, the inhabitants of Višnja Gora simply inserted the epidemic in their petition for the cancellation of tax debt. The number of deaths, which could at most reach a double-digit figure, was inflated to half of the town dwellers and landless peasants, amounting to over two hundred persons in view of the eighty-nine populated houses in 1591. The plague thus only played a marginal role in the devastation of Višnja Gora, which is also why its mention is completely omitted from both the vidame visitation report in 1609 and from the report to the provincial prince on the town's status, which otherwise provides an exhaustive list of every possible reason for stagnation.[81]

At the end of the sixteenth century, Višnja Gora suffered from the same economic crisis as the rest of the province. According to the vidame, crafts and trade took a severe blow, forcing much of the population to live off the land.[82] A conglomerate of reasons ushered in the first stage of the town's abandonment, which did not end until the early seventeenth century. How much the plague of 1599 directly or indirectly contributed to the weakening of the town's economy remains unclear. That year, for example, the town judge Janez Zore collected almost half the amount of tax less (63 gulden and 40 kreuzer) than his predecessor in 1596 (116 gulden).[83] The plague was at least partially responsible for this, given the town's closure and the restricted movement of people and goods throughout the province.

The plague between 1623 and 1627

The next major epidemic threatened Carniola indirectly from Gorizia and Styria since the spring of 1623, when strict safety measures and provincial border closures were put in place. The plague first visited Upper Carniola in 1624 and then settled for two years in Lower Carniola.[84] The estate registry protocols first recorded it on Carniolan soil in March 1624, after a series of closures and guards had been set up since February 1623 to prevent the spread of the disease from the infected neighboring provinces. In December 1624, the secret court council in Graz issued a decree to put Ljubljana under guard, a measure that the provincial estates criticized as unnecessary. The provincial princely infection decree was issued no earlier than August 1625, when the plague had already reached full swing both in Carniola and, again, in Styria. The regest of reports, bans, and decrees, issued between December 1624 and the end of 1625, lists the following places in Lower Carniola: Žužemberk, Ribnica, Soteska, and Novo Mesto with its surroundings. Before the end of 1625, the plague receded for a while and then hit with full force again in May 1626, prompting the provincial estates to renew the patent of the plague commissioner for Lower Carniola, after which the abbot of Stična demanded to impose a ban on fairs. The epidemic finally came to an end sometime before November 1626, when the provincial estate registry protocols began to feature nothing but physician and commissioner reports, and costs incurred.[85]

Among Lower Carniolan towns and market towns, the plague was best documented in **Novo**

80 Between 1581 and 1591, thirty-one homes (36.5 %) retained the same master and ten (11.8 %) the same surname, and five persons and seven surnames were passed on to other houses and immovable properties. Between 1591 and 1608, eighteen masters of the house (20.2 %) remained the same and eleven homes (12.4 %) retained an unchanged surname, in addition to twelve surnames of householders around the town (13.5 %).

81 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 284, fasc. 145, lit. W I–4, July 11th, 1609.—StLA, I.Ö. HK-Akten, 1611–III–105, January 24th, 1610.

82 Ibid.

83 SI AS 166, Mesto Višnja Gora fasc. IV, town account books 1596/1597 and 1599/1600.

84 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, pp. 102–103; Koblar, O človeški kugi, p. 51.—SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 480, fasc. 295 b, p. 999–1001, October 20th, 1625.

85 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 860, registry protocols no. 14 (1619–1629), pp. 261, 267, 271, 272, 274, 275, 276, 279, 291, 300, 308, 320, 337, 339, 344, 364, 377, 385, 390, 395, 398, 405, 415, 419, 421, 424, 428, 440, 455, and 478.

Mesto, for which two numbers of the deceased have been preserved. The impact of the plague is best illustrated in the report compiled by the Novo Mesto town judge and council of May 9th, 1626, requesting the provincial vidame to grant the town the right to collect bridge fee. According to the report, the town was undergoing even greater distress and decline after 322 persons had died of the plague in the previous year (*laidige Infection*), including fifteen masters of the house, condemning their widows and children to extreme poverty. Households remained empty and unable to pay tax, whereas the town council, in extending its Christian outreach to everyone, had already drained too much of the town's treasury and their own income to help the poor. The plague hit Novo Mesto in May and ended on November 4th, 1625, although it was still running rampant elsewhere at the time (i.e., May 1626). A few grudgers then reportedly spread rumors and smears to prevent the town from reopening all until March 21st, 1626, leaving the town dwellers with no work, while the excessively long closure caused damage and devastation in the fields and vineyards. The local population was also adversely affected by the exchange of coins in 1624, and all town revenues were used up for treating the infected and for other purposes. The town ordered 100 gulden's worth of medicines from Ljubljana, after which the town pharmacist sought to use the receipt to extort another 300 gulden, increasing the total amount of the town's debt to almost 1000 gulden. The inhabitants of Novo Mesto also owed the provincial estates an outstanding tax debt for 1625 and other liabilities, which they now hoped would be written off.[86]

The indications in the petition seem highly realistic. Even though the plague had ended in the town itself by early November 1625, the closure continued for another four months and a half, hitting the town's non-agrarian and agrarian economy the hardest. That the danger had indeed passed can be gathered from the fact that in January 1626 the physician Janez Scheidt called on the provincial estates for the second time to reopen the town, but they remained unwavering and in June that same year even threatened the town with a tax warrant.[87] Many details regarding the epidemic itself could be obtained from a report on Scheidt's work during the plague that the provincial estates' delegates required from the town leadership;[88] however, no such report, if ever written at all, has been preserved. More is known about the dispute between the inhabitants of Novo Mesto and their pharmacist Martin Anton Mladkovič, who had already at the end of 1625 presented the provincial estates with the specification of medicines (*disponsirten medicinalien*) used during the plague in the town and its surroundings and mainly distributed among the town dwellers and the most prominent town councilors. The delegates then reported to the town judge and council that the provincial estates had no intention of covering the costs incurred and called on them to recover the debt as soon as possible.[89]

Against this background, the epidemic in Novo Mesto was by no means an innocent mishap. 322 dead, including fifteen masters of the house, are realistic and much more credible figures than the overblown statements about the plague twenty-five years earlier. The only reason that the figures do not create the impression of greater credibility is that they are significantly lower this time, which is largely owed to the nature of the report. Drawn up only a few weeks after the plague closure was lifted, this document was much more up to date than the report on the plague of 1599, which was compiled seven years after the events and almost casually woven into the reasons for the profound structural crisis. Conversely, the new report, albeit also written in the form of a petition for aid, provides a detailed description of the epidemic's direct aftermath. Six years later, Valvasor, too, stated that the plague of 1625 killed four hundred people.[90] The 322 and four hundred victims, respectively, in 1625 are further comparable to the still more reliable number of 331 dead in the entire 1715, when a febrile disease took hold among the town's population.[91] Setting both numbers of deaths against 1,485 inhabitants of Novo Mesto in 1754,[92] a little more than one-fifth died on both occasions. However, it seems reasonable to assume that in 1625 the town had a smaller population due to the more than fifty years' period of structural crisis, fires, and epidemics. The 322 dead thus surely accounted for more than one-quarter, if not nearly one-third of Novo Mesto's population. Because the plague of 1625 also sent to the grave many from the surrounding villages, Rudolf Baron von Paradaiser ensured a lasting memory of it by erecting the Church of St. Roch in 1627, just a stone's throw away from his Pogance mansion.[93]

Little credibility is afforded to plague reports that were mainly written in passing. It is interesting to observe how the White Carniolan towns of

86 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 255, fasc. 133, lit. R I–2, May 9th, 1626.—Cf. Vrhovec, *Zgodovina Novega mesta*, p. 82.
87 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 860, registry protocols no. 14 (1619–1629), p. 397; carton 480, fasc. 295 b, p. 1423–1424, June 6th, 1626.
88 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 860, registry protocols no. 14 (1619–1629), p. 419.
89 Ibid., carton 480, fasc. 295 b, pp. 1115–1116, December 20th, 1625.
90 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 488.
91 KANM, carton 66, M/1 1704–1728.
92 According to a summary report in: KANM, carton 66, P/4 1754–1771, s. p.
93 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 103. Cf. Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 449.

Metlika and **Črnomelj** benefitted themselves from Novo Mesto's misfortunes. When the inhabitants of Novo Mesto appealed to the emperor to grant them the right to collect bridge fee and write off a part of their outstanding tax debt, in 1632 the authorities collected opinions from the neighboring towns. The seigniorial steward of Žužemberk as well as the leaderships of Ljubljana, Višnja Gora, Krško, Kostanjevica, Metlika, and Črnomelj agreed to such a form of aid and confirmed that Novo Mesto had indeed been severely debilitated by various calamities, stripped of its population, and abandoned, especially because of the prolonged plague closure a few years earlier.[94] However, the inhabitants of Metlika added that the plague had been more pertinacious in their town than in Novo Mesto and that by killing many young and old it kept Metlika in shutdown for longer. Poor harvests drove the few survivors to the brink of existence, forcing most from both Novo Mesto and Metlika to move elsewhere.[95] Two weeks later, the inhabitants of Črnomelj sent an almost verbatim response, likewise stressing that the plague closure of their town lasted longer than in Novo Mesto and that, like Novo Mesto, half of Črnomelj stood empty (*ödt stehen*).[96] Whereas the inhabitants of Metlika and Črnomelj surely did not invent the long-term closure of their towns, the levels of mortality and abandonment are open to debate for the lack of other sources that historians could draw on for either town, particularly any kind of structural-numerical sources or data regarding their population—for Metlika until the beginning of the eighteenth century and for Črnomelj up to the mid-eighteenth century.[97] No mention of the plague of 1625–1626 is likewise contained in more recent complaints and Valvasor's writings, and the only contemporary report available is a notice from August 1625 concerning the ban on weekly fairs in Metlika.[98]

The epidemic only reached the town of **Krško** in the second wave. According to the annals in the Krško town book, it spread to this urban settlement on the Sava around All Saints' Day in 1626 and lasted until the New Year. The notice on the plague is very meager, especially compared to records on natural disasters and troubles in the ensuing years, making it reasonable to assume that the number of victims was rather limited.[99]

Equally meager are reports on the plague in **Višnja Gora**, otherwise the Lower Carniolan town best documented through local sources. The town judge's annual account for 1623/24 only mentions the epidemic indirectly, in a record dated July 1623 concerning the reimbursement of a messenger who had arrived from Ljubljana on a plague-related matter (*wegen der infection*).[100] Although the judicial accounts have not been preserved for the next two years, Višnja Gora must have been safe from the plague based on a report on the ongoing reparations of the provincial road that the town submitted to the provincial estates in August 1625.[101] The town judge's annual account for the period between the mid-1626 and the mid-1627 then describes a perfectly normal life and a vibrant flow of people and goods. It was only in mid-December 1626 that the inhabitants of Višnja Gora sent a messenger with a plague epistle to the provisional plague administrators in Ljubljana. Beyond the reference to the epistle, nothing is known about its content and the past developments in the town. On the other hand, an evident threat loomed over Višnja Gora's wider surroundings, given that the plague (*der infection halber*) had decimated the town judge's income that year from the tollhouse at Šmartno pri Litiji, which the town held in lease.[102] However, as can be gathered from the town tax registers, the plague certainly had not emptied Višnja Gora's households. After the town registered seventy-nine populated homes and two abandoned houses in 1620, there are barely any detectable differences in 1629, with seventy-eight houses and one abandoned parcel of land, and a steady continuity of property holders' surnames.[103]

Turning to other Lower Carniolan urban settlements, the plague also appears to not have spared

94 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 255, fasc. 133, lit. R I–2, February 7th, 1632, August 31st, 1632, September 9th, 1632, September 20th, 1632, August 1st, 1632, August 15th, 1632, October 30th, 1635.

95 Ibid., August 1st, 1632.

96 Ibid., August 15th, 1632.

97 Metlika's civil registers were started after the fire of 1705 and Črnomelj's no earlier than 1753. The first census of houses in Metlika, contained in the Theresian Cadaster (1752), was produced soon after the oldest preserved census for Črnomelj (1744).

98 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 860, registry protocols no. 14 (1619–1629), p. 428.

99 The following year, in 1628, the wider Krško area was devastated by an earthquake, followed by a flood in August, which exerted a heavy toll among peasants and cattle. Horrific aftershocks continued for another five yearly quarters until the mid-1629. As a result, that and the ensuing year were a period of severe scarcity; "several thousand" people went bankrupt or died of hunger, and "several thousand" moved with their wives and children to Hungary and Turkey and became their subjects.—SI AS 1080, Zbirka Muzejskega društva za Kranjsko, Muzejskega društva za Slovenijo in Historičnega društva za Kranjsko, carton 8, fasc. 11, Civitatensia, Mesto Krško, town book 1539–1679.—Cf. [Dimitz], Annalen der landesfürstlichen Stadt Gurkfeld, p. 84. Cf. Koblar, Iz kronike krškega mesta, p. 22.—Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 103.

100 SI AS 166, Mesto Višnja Gora fasc. IV, town account books 1626/1627.

101 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 480, fasc. 295 b, pp. 729–730, August 4th, 1625.

102 On February 5th, 1627, the judge Janez Markovič received no more than 6 gulden, 22 kreuzer, and 1 pfennig from the tollhouse official Janez Plevnik (SI AS 166, Mesto Višnja Gora fasc. IV, town account books: 1626/1627).

103 SI AS 166, Mesto Višnja Gora fasc. IV, tax registers 1620 and 1629.

the market towns of Žužemberk and Ribnica, both mentioned in the registry regest on "plague reports" from 1624–1625.[104] What kind of reports the provincial estates received from there remains unknown, just as hardly any contemporary source exists on this plague. Only Dietrich Baron von Auersperg complained at the end of August 1625 that the epidemic had left the Žužemberk seigniory in such a shambles that he could hardly draw any benefit and collectable tax from it.[105] According to V. Travner citing an unidentified source, **Žužemberk's** death toll in 1625 was so high that the town cemetery was too small to cope. Burials were moved to the parish field, thenceforth dubbed "Kužni dol" (Plague Hollow), and a tract of land on the right bank of the Krka, where the Church of St. Roch was erected in the village of Stranska Vas the next year in collaboration with the inhabitants of the upper Krka valley.[106] As regards the victims of Žužemberk, the actual demographic losses suffered by the market town itself are still up for debate. Owing to the lack of relevant sources, a tentative answer can be obtained by comparing property ownership in seigniorial rent-rolls from 1619 and 1644, which reveals no major turmoil but, to the contrary, even shows that the settlement of smallholdings (Ger.: *Keusche*) on the right bank of the Krka as much as doubled in the course of twenty-five years.[107] It is also possible to ascertain a steady continuity of property ownership with 57.3 % units of property remaining in the hands of the same families as in 1619.[108]

The only reference to the plague in connection with **Ribnica** is contained in a "plague report" sent to the provincial estates in 1624–1625.[109] Apart from the fact that this period coincided with the construction of the Church of St. Roch in the village of Dolenja Vas,[110] more tangible traces of the epidemic have also yet to be found in more recent sources. Indirect witnesses to the plague are perhaps the rent-rolls of the seigniory of Ribnica. Between 1621 and 1659, marking the beginning and the end of the period, during which Lower Carniola was struck by two severe plague epidemics, the market town suffered a heavy population loss. The rent-roll from 1659 sets forth a downright dramatic decline in the number of both hide owners and smallholders (Ger.: *Keuschler*), with only fifty-one masters of the house or 44 % less than nearly four decades earlier, in 1621, when there were still ninety-one.[111] No major upturn was seen for the next fifty years,[112] despite Valvasor's assurances that Ribnica experienced a new "boom" after the devastating fires in the fifteenth century. What seems surprising is that Valvasor knew about the fateful events of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries but remained mute on the possible plague epidemics or fires in the not as distant seventeenth century.[113]

The 1630s ushered in a period of relative relief to the Slovenian provinces between the major epidemics in the 1620s and 1640s, while the plague ravaged Istria in 1631, hitting the towns of Koper and Pula the hardest.[114] The news about the disease startled Carniolans in the summer and autumn of 1631, when it appeared in Rihemberk in Gorizia and around Ilirska Bistrica and the small town of Lož in Carniola.[115] Conversely, there is no evidence to suggest that it spread to Lower Carniola. For August 19th, 1631, for example, the Višnja Gora town judge's annual account merely mentions the arrival of a provincial messenger bringing reports on sects, outstanding tax debt, and the plague.[116] The Black Death struck again in 1634, when it reaped a particularly heavy death toll in the Vipava Valley and reached the doorstep of Idrija. It had a similarly limited scope in Lower Carniola, where its sole incidence was recorded in Krško.[117] According to the town annals, the disease reached **Krško** around the Feast of St. Luke (October 18th) in 1634 and did not recede until the Epiphany (January 6th) the fol-

104 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 860, registry protocols no. 14 (1619–1629), p. 395.

105 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 480, fasc. 295 b, p. 793, August 30th, 1625.

106 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 103.

107 In 1619, Žužemberk registered eighty-nine property (house-) holders, sixty-eight in the center of the market town on the left bank of the Krka and twenty-one on the other side of the river. Twenty-five years later, the total number of all masters rose to 103—dropping to sixty-two in the center of the market town and climbing to forty-one on the right bank of the Krka.

108 There is a noticeable difference in the continuity of property holding families between the twenty-seven years' period of 1592–1619 (34.04 %) and the twenty-five years' period of 1644–1669 (30.10 %).—ÖStA, HHStA, FAA, A–15–68, Rent-roll Seisenberg 1592–1597, fols. 1–28v; A–15–70, Rent-roll Seisenberg 1619–1624, fol. 1–35v; A–15–72, Rent-roll Seisenberg 1644–1651, fols. 1–28; A–15–80, Rent-roll Seisenberg 1669–1676, s. p.

109 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 860, registry protocols no. 14 (1619–1629), p. 395.

110 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 103.—Valvasor only refers to the Church of St. Roch as the eighteenth Ribnica succursal "nechst bey der Pfarrkirchen" (Valvasor, *Die Ehre VIII*, p. 796).

111 SI AS, AS 774, Gospostvo Ribnica, vol. 2, rent-roll 1621, s. p.; vol. 3, rent-roll 1659, s. p.

112 The seigniorial rent-roll from 1707–1710 states altogether fifty-six hide owners and smallholders in the market town (SI AS, AS 774, Gospostvo Ribnica, vol. 4, rent-roll 1707–1710, fols. 1–46).

113 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 468.

114 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, pp. 103–104.

115 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 861, registry protocols no. 15 (1630–1645), pp. 59, 63, and 66.—Describing the plague, the inhabitants of Lož write about the economic losses rather than the victims, and the plague helped them negotiate the Cerknica fair to be transferred to their town (SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 184, fasc. 104, lit. L I–8, November 28th, 1635; carton 197, fasc. 107, lit. L XX–8, November 16th, 1634).

116 SI AS, Mestni arhiv Višnja Gora, fasc. IV, town account books 1631/2.

117 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 104.

lowing year. Thanks to swift precautionary and preventive measures, it killed no more than twenty-two persons, mostly children.[118] Given the heaviest death toll among the children's population, it would be interesting to determine what type of disease it was. Obviously, the fear of catastrophe was bigger than the actual threat and considering twenty-two as a minor death toll suggests that the plague of 1626–1627 had a deadlier course.

The plague between 1645 and 1650

Spread widely across Carniola, Carinthia, and Styria, this plague epidemic most likely claimed fewer lives than its predecessors, but it etched itself into the popular memory as the longest and the last major plague on Carniolan soil. Four decades later, Valvasor, who in his writings mentions no plague in relation to so many places as this most recent one, seems more objective in estimating its scope than the leaderships of the affected towns. In his words, the plague of 1646 ravaged and took an enormous human toll in Krško and its surroundings. He is similarly unexplicit about Metlika, maintaining that that same year God unleashed a plague which often ran rampant among the inhabitants of the town and its surroundings. In the chapter on Novo Mesto, he also describes Metlika's death toll and, compared to the four hundred death cases in 1625, refers to the victims of 1648 as "no more than eighteen persons." In relation to other towns and market towns, he clearly does not consider the epidemic from forty years earlier as noteworthy, making a sole reference to a plague ravaging the small town of Svibno and its castle in 1646.[119] Nothing is likewise known about the epidemic in other parts of Lower Carniola from contemporary reports, which remain silent on the epidemic in Kočevje and a significant part of western Lower Carniola.

Novo Mesto, which had been drained of much of its population during the plague epidemics of 1599 and 1625, seems to have weathered the plague wave in 1645–1650 much better than some other parts of Lower Carniola. Whereas the historiographical and other literature, except Valvasor, says nothing about a possible incidence of the plague in the Lower Carniolan capital, it mentions its ravages in Krško, Metlika, Svibno, and Radeče.[120] Contemporary reports differ in terms of their scope, content, and purpose, and they have been variably preserved for individual affected towns and market towns. All, including the most important source—the Carniolan provincial estates' registry protocols—are characteristically scarce in content. This was also the first plague to be recorded in church registers that have only been preserved from that period for two Lower Carniolan town parishes: the chapter parish in Novo Mesto and the parish of Višnja Gora. A relatively coherent chronology of the epidemic is provided by the provincial estate registry protocols from June 1646, when it moved from Krško across the Sava to Lower Carniola and settled there until 1650, when the province was safe again.

Mutually independent synchronous reports have been preserved on the epidemic's devastating aftermath in **Krško**. The plague occurred in June 1646 in the nearby villages of Dole and Vrhovlje, which were immediately placed under guard at the behest of the provincial estates' delegation office.[121] By September 1647, the epidemic had caused such destruction, that the authorities also shut down both ferryboats crossing the Sava at Krško and Rajhenrburg, posted guards in the infected areas, and appointed Baron Jošt Moscon as plague commissioner. The plague reportedly raged in Krško in October 1647, after which the registry protocols do not mention it again.[122] According to V. Travner, the entire town street was closed, and the disease reportedly killed many in the nearby areas, especially Leskovec and Turn.[123] Unfortunately, there are no other contemporary reports known on the epidemic, and the keeping of the town annals ceased just before it struck. Valvasor places it in 1646 and adds that the Krško town council commemorated it by erecting the Church of St. Rosalie with broad assistance on the hill near the town the next year.[124]

Produced a little less than a decade later, the long report on the impact of the plague on Krško represents the most comprehensive document on this epidemic from Lower Carniola. The provincial estates' visitation commission, which visited Krško in 1655, reported that the plague had wreaked havoc for two consecutive years, killing many townsmen, women, and children, and preventing others from leaving the town. Unable to sustain a livelihood, the inhabitants became destitute and eventually left.[125] During its visit, the commission compiled a list of

118 SI AS 1080, Zbirka Muzejskega društva za Kranjsko, Muzejskega društva za Slovenijo in Historičnega društva za Kranjsko, carton 8, fasc. 11, Civitatensia, Mesto Krško, town book 1539–1679, s. p.—Cf. [Dimitz], Annalen der landesfürstlichen Stadt Gurkfeld, p. 84.—Koblar, Iz kronike krškega mesta, pp. 22–23.

119 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, pp. 242, 389, 488, and 502.

120 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 110–111.—Koblar, O človeški kugi, p. 51.

121 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 862, registry protocols no. 16 (1646–1652), pp. 43, 46, and 48.—Just like Krško's town judge and council, Baron Moscon, the owner of the Krško seigniory, and the benefice of Krško, both with serfs in the above-mentioned villages, were ordered to provide the villagers with the basic life necessities.

122 Ibid., pp. 141 and 185.

123 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, pp. 110.

124 Valvasor, *Die Ehre VIII*, p. 744.

125 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 171, fasc. 97a, lit. G VIII–8, August 25th, 1655.

abandoned houses. The list has only been preserved in a transcript from 1677, which was added newly abandoned homes and titled: "A Survey of Houses Completely Devastated by the Plague, Constant Burdens Imposed by Stationed Troops, Floods, and Severe Divine Punishment." Sixteen abandoned houses were recorded in the town itself and another twenty-three "below the hill", altogether thirty-nine. However, various levels of abandonment reveal that some houses were, after all, not completely depopulated, and that many had been emptied out before the plague.[126] A total of twenty dwellings had been abandoned in the town and below the hill, five were consigned to ruin, and fourteen inhabited by their impoverished owners or other occupants.[127]

How many households were abandoned because of the epidemic and how many due to other factors at work? Let us recall that the title of the survey of abandoned houses states the plague first, in a way confirming its role in producing the unenviable number of twenty completely abandoned homes, many widows, and houses occupied by day laborers. At a rough estimate, the plague may have killed several dozens or even several hundreds. The share of Krško's confirmedly and possibly abandoned houses may be determined only indirectly, as the exact number of houses remained unknown at least until the mid-eighteenth century. According to the list of those who paid annual dues (Ger.: *Hofzins*) in the seigniorial rent-rolls from 1570 and 1575,[128] Krško counted 141 or 145 dwellings at that time.[129] After a strong depopulation trend, the number of inhabited houses in Krško settled during the first half of the eighteenth century. In 1752, it amounted to 110,[130] which can translate into about six hundred inhabitants.

The example of Krško contributed in no small part to the relativizations in subsequent shocking reports on the economic implications of the plague. In their petition from 1747, requesting the provincial authorities to confirm the town privileges, the inhabitants of Krško complained that their trade had been driven out of existence by the fairs held in the Styrian village of Videm on the other side of the Sava ever since the deadly plague (*leydige Contagion*) had swept across Styria and Carniola. With all river crossings closed, Krško-bound traders and cattle reportedly remained stranded on the Styrian side of the river, in the territory under the jurisdiction of the provincial court of Brežice.[131] In its report to the court office, the Carniolan representation and chamber supported the inhabitants of Krško in their wish to reopen fairs—but with one reservation: if it were found that the fairs in Videm had indeed been established without authorization.[132] The owner of the seigniory of Brežice demonstrated the age of the Videm kermesses with the rent-roll from 1609, stressing that it did not say a word about the fair being transferred or any plague.[133] However, a confirmation that the fairs, more specifically those in 1646,[134] had indeed been moved to Videm due to the plague can be found in the Krško Capuchin chronicle, which was only started in late 1757. According to the chronicle, the town had endeavored to re-establish its fairs until 1757, when the district governor publicly confirmed the town privileges, including the right to hold fairs.[135] Although the plague may have caused the decline in the town's trade, both interpretations regarding the collapse of Krško's fairs and the booming fairs in Videm were produced more than a hundred years after the period in question and the reasons for their transfer across the Sava. In the second half of the seventeenth century, the otherwise revealing town's complaints and petitions contain no such explanation. It is especially noteworthy that the provincial estates' visitation commission in 1655 made absolutely no mention of the fairs in its minute descriptions of both direct and indirect implications of the plague.[136] The fairs in Videm only became a pressing issue for the inhabitants of Krško many years later. In 1674, they negotiated the arrival of the provincial estates' commission to inspect the fairs concurrently held in Videm and Krško. The com-

126 Ibid., Specification B, s. a.—In the town center, one house classified as abandoned was occupied by an impoverished owner and two by poor widows. Two abandoned houses had already been converted into gardens, whereas all trace of another abandoned house had been lost, two had been reduced to wall fragments, three to an empty parcel of land, and five to ruin. Twenty-three houses below the hill were abandoned, nine ruined, and the rest dilapidated but still inhabited by poor widows and the town's day laborers.

127 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 171, fasc. 97, lit. G VIII–8, s. d. (1677, Specification B).

128 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 81, fasc. 46, lit. G VIII–7, rent-roll of the seigniory Krško 1570, s. p.—SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 141, no. 29, rent-roll of the seigniory Krško 1575, pp. 481–529.

129 This number rests on the assumption that granaries did not have permanent residents and that other house-lots (Ger.: *Hofstatt*) in fact indicated buildings. In his reference to 146 families, J. Koropec simply ascribed one family to any of the 146 individuals who paid annual dues (Ger.: *Hofzins*) in money (Koropec, Krško v obdobju, p. 53).

130 SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 239, no. 7, June 13th, 1752.

131 SI AS 6, Reprezentanca in komora za Kranjsko v Ljubljani, carton 49, fasc. XIX, lit. G, no. 1, presented on May 16th, 1747.

132 Ibid., June 8th, 1747.

133 Ibid., September 19th, 1756, Annex B.

134 References to the plague of 1646 were most likely influenced by the widespread knowledge about the plague in that year, which Valvasor mentioned in his description of the town of Krško (Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 242).

135 Kapucinski samostan Krško, Archivum loci Ppff. capucinorum Gurgfeldi erectum anno Domini MDCCLVII, p. 9.—Cf. Benedik, Kralj, *Kapucini na Slovenskem*, p. 435.

136 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 171, fasc. 97a, lit. G VIII–8, August 25th, 1655.

mission confirmed that the fair in Krško had all but disappeared, while the one in Videm flourished.[137] And yet its report says nothing about the plague or the time when the fairs in Videm were established, nor does it explain the situation described in Krško's complaints from 1686, which, for example, have much to say about the economic implications of the Styrian plague of 1679–1683.[138]

Valvasor provides a similar description of the rampant Black Death in **Metlika**, which in 1646 reportedly wreaked havoc not only in the town itself but also in the nearby villages.[139] Whereas the plague seems to have started its *danse macabre* in White Carniola a little later than in the Krško area, it swept into Metlika before it reached the town of Krško itself. Its outbreak in July 1646 alarmed the nearby seigniories, which set up guards no later than August, when the disease had already claimed several lives in Metlika. The threat was declared to have passed in March the following year, when Metlika's town judge and council submitted to the provincial estates the no longer preserved list of deceased town dwellers and requested that the town closure (*Infections Bando*) be lifted, which also happened. However, they had less success with their petition for the reimbursement of 245 gulden of expenses, which the town had incurred because of the plague (*Infectios Uncosten*): in November 1648, the provincial estates' delegation office rejected their request, arguing that the plague was brought to Metlika by one of its inhabitants.[140] However, one can imagine that the provincial estates would have shown more understanding to the poor border town, had the number of deaths actually risen to hundreds, as the inhabitants of Metlika later maintained, leaving the town largely emptied out.

It is equally noteworthy that, unlike in the case of Krško, no complaints or reports have been preserved for Metlika from the time of the epidemic. Judging from reports produced four decades later, the plague also claimed a substantial death toll here. According to Valvasor, the frequent Turkish incursions, the plague, and the fires plunged Metlika into extreme poverty, from which it would not recover until his time.[141] Shortly before that, in 1686, the inhabitants of Metlika tried to portray the plague of 1646 as one of the causes for their demise, reporting an unrealistic number of 1,200 victims it had claimed in two years "about forty years ago," seven hundred in the first year and another five hundred in the second year. Many houses and the town walls were allegedly consigned to ruin at that time, after which all construction came to a halt for the lack of means and a significant population decline. They also maintained that no foreigner wanted to settle in Metlika and that even the locals were leaving the pummeled town, which could no longer pay annual levies.[142] Evidently, even L. Podlogar, who published this data, found the total of 1,200 victims in Metlika exaggerated and simply expanded it to the countryside: "In 1646, a terrible plague killed over 1,200 people in the town and the parish (!)."[143] On the other hand, a source from 1686 makes no mention of the parish but only of the deceased in the town itself. Knowing very well that the number of Metlika's inhabitants was far lower than the number of the deceased alone, Podlogar deemed it more probable that such losses were suffered across the parish. Besides, Valvasor, too, wrote about the plague in the town and its environs (*nicht nur in der Stadt sondern auch in dem umligenden Lande*).[144] For the sake of illustration, let us take the data from 1721, when 3,026 persons were counted on Easter confession in the entire parish of Metlika.[145] Provided that the demographic situation remained relatively constant seventy-five years earlier, it may be concluded that about two-fifths of parishioners were killed by the plague—but it is completely unreasonable to claim that the plague took 1,200 lives in a town that assuredly did not have such a numerous population in the mid-seventeenth century. The oldest preserved census of town houses from 1752 counts 166 homes, including the castle, forty-nine within the town walls and 117 in the suburbs,[146] which can translate into approximately nine hundred inhabitants.

The third Lower Carniolan town that Valvasor and contemporary sources refer to in association with the plague in the mid-seventeenth century is **Novo Mesto**. Here, the epidemic first erupted in August 1646, but by December that same year the town must have been safe enough to receive a "visit" from distressed troops stationed at the fortified town of Karlovac, requesting the town fathers to provide them with urgently needed food supplies. The news about the plague startled the inhabitants of Novo Mesto again in May 1648. After three villages near Šentjernej became infected, the provincial estates' delegates were proposed and immediately appointed two plague commissioners. By June, the plague commissioners already had their hands full in Novo

137 Ibid., lit. G VIII–15, May 4th, 1674.
138 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 171, fasc. 97, lit. G VIII–8, April 13th, 1686.
139 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 389.
140 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 862, registry protocols no. 16 (1646–1652), pp. 56, 63, 122, 123, and 298.
141 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 389.
142 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 233, fasc. 124, lit. M XXXIII–9, May 6th, 1686.
143 Podlogar, Požari v Metliki, p. 46.
144 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 389.
145 DOZA, Abt. Österreich, BÖ, K 304, Specificatio eorum qui per elapsum anni quadrante usque ad 5. 6. anni curentis 1721 etc.
146 SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 242, no. 1, August 1st, 1752.

Mesto alone when, like the town judge and council, they received instructions on further measures and isolating the infected. The guards prevented people from moving between the town and its surroundings for over two months. Although the threat had apparently passed by August 1648, the provincial estates' delegation office specifically advised Novo Mesto's inhabitants not to leave the town and not to harass the guards before the closure was lifted. The threat finally ceased in September, when the town leadership extended its gratitude to the provincial estates for sending the diligent physician Gašper Vizjak.[147] As Sigmund von Gusič wrote to the provincial estates in mid-November, the town had already overstretched its resources supporting the garrison and the plague, following on its heels, kept Novo Mesto in isolation for more than fourteen weeks.[148]

The presence of the plague during the period of isolation is also documented in the register of baptisms kept by the chapter parish of Novo Mesto. The entries of three godchildren on June 1st, 1648, are followed by a separate undated entry of "tempore pestis," and the next baptism took place on June 7th under the suspicion of infection (*in suspectione infectionis seu pestis*). On June 18th and 21st, two newborns were brought to the chapter church from infected homes (*ex infecta domo*), after which no baptism is recorded between June 24th and July 23rd. Furthermore, in June, July, and August, baptism was only performed on the town's newborns because those from the surrounding villages could not even receive the first sacrament.[149] Regrettably, the parish of Novo Mesto still did not keep records of deaths, which could unrefutably confirm Valvasor's claim that the plague of 1648 consigned eighteen persons to the register of deaths. The difference between this number and the four hundred victims, which Valvasor provides for 1625, is obvious.[150] Moreover, these are the only two comparable figures of the same origin. The minor implications of this plague for Novo Mesto are best illustrated in the town's complaints soon after 1651, which describe the impacts of the plagues in 1599 and 1625 but do not say a word about the epidemic from a few years back.[151]

The developments in **Višnja Gora** during the plague waves in 1645–1650 are not documented as thoroughly as other epidemic outbreaks. It should also be stressed that this time the sources available keep silent about any kind of threat to the town or its surroundings. What may attest to the presence of the plague is that Višnja Gora suffered a drastic population decline precisely in the period of twenty-three years delimited by the town tax registers from 1629 and 1655. Meanwhile, during the Thirty Years' War, the town experienced the second and last surge in depopulation, with the number of inhabited houses dropping from seventy-eight to merely fifty-eight or by one-quarter.[152] Yet describing the causes for the town's economic and demographic decline,[153] the inhabitants of Višnja Gora never mentioned any plague or fire, which featured as popular culprits and harbingers of evil in the reports from other towns. Clearly, they would not have forgotten to mention a plague that killed at least a few of their fellow townsmen in the second half of the 1640s or temporarily sealed the town off from the outside world. No such information can either be traced in the relevant contemporary source, Višnja Gora's register of baptisms, in which the number of entries during the years of danger in no way deviates from the number of entries made in other years.[154]

There are likewise no reports of the plague wreaking havoc in **Kostanjevica**, the smallest Lower Carniolan town, even though in September 1646, when the disease had already reached Krško and sowed death in Metlika, the provincial estates reproved Kostanjevica's town judge and council for their negligent security and defiance of the plague commissioner's orders to post more guards. In January 1647, the inhabitants of Kostanjevica were called upon once again to rid themselves of the plague-ridden Uskoks. But the town was evidently not faced with a serious enough threat and its inhabitants continued to ignore the orders in pursuit of their economic interests.[155] The account book kept by the abbot of the

147 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 862, registry protocols no. 16 (1646–1652), pp. 65, 248, 255, 256, 272, 273, and 280.

148 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 503, fasc. 300 b, p. 1027, November 10th, 1648.

149 KANM, carton 63, R/3 1645–1652.—Seven newborns were baptized in June 1648, only two in July, and then five in August. A low number of godchildren in the two summer months is nothing extraordinary and is also characteristic of other years. The epidemic could have led to a decline in the total number of baptisms to the town newborns two years after the plague, in 1649 and 1650. Whereas at least forty-nine newborns from the town alone received baptism in 1646, the same number in 1647, and no less than fifty-seven in 1648, the register of baptisms indicates forty-six for 1649 and no more than thirty-four for 1650, after which their number rose sharply in 1651 to sixty-five, suggesting that the town population had meanwhile completely recovered.

150 Valvasor, *Die Ehre XI*, p. 488.

151 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 256, fasc. 133, lit. R II–3, Bericht A, s. d.

152 SI AS 166, Mesto Višnja Gora fasc. IV, tax registers 1629 and 1655.

153 On this: SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 284, fasc. 145.

154 NŠAL, ŽA Višnja Gora, Matične knjige, R 1638–1656 and R 1656–1672.—In the parish of Višnja Gora, the total number of baptisms in the 1640s (547) amounted to one-third less than in the 1650s (811) and nearly half less in the town itself (60:110). On the other hand, the period, during which the plague raged elsewhere in Lower Carniola, in no way deviates from other annual averages. Unlike the register of baptisms of Novo Mesto, Višnja Gora's contains no mention of the plague.

155 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 862, registry protocols no. 16 (1646–1652), pp. 74 and 110.

Cistercian monastery of Kostanjevica likewise offers no clue to any extraordinary events unfolding in those years, barring the somewhat increased expenses for medicines that a Novo Mesto pharmacist supplied to the monastery between 1645 and 1648.[156]

The only market town mentioned in relation to the plague during the period concerned is **Mokronog**. In August 1646, the provincial estates sent their rapporteur Baron Konrad Rues to the infected Novo Mesto and the areas around Klevevž and Mokronog, where the disease had also erupted. In September, a plague closure was imposed on provincial roads leading through Mokronog to Radeče.[157] Due to a suspicion of contagion (*contagions suspect*), the plague commissioners for this area placed Mokronog Castle and the entire market town in isolation (*in bando gesezt*), ordered the main bridges over the Mirna to be demolished, and prohibited the serfs of Mokronog from performing forced labor. The owner of the castle and the seigniory Ernest Schere von Schernburg rejected their actions as completely baseless and inadmissible, and on the last day of 1646 negotiated from the provincial authorities a decree to abolish all restrictions if his claims were found to be true.[158]

For places where the plague is documented in the literature, the consequences of the epidemic were the least determinable around the then already extinct market town of **Svibno** near the much more important Radeče.[159] Valvasor provides the only known source in which the local epidemic appears at all, whereas contemporary sources neither confirm nor deny its existence. With no rent-rolls preserved, it is also impossible to trace the (dis)continuity of property ownership in the Svibno seigniory, and nothing is known about the plague raging in **Radeče**, as mentioned by V. Travner.[160]

The plague epidemic in the second half of the 1640s probably wreaked less havoc among the inhabitants of Lower Carniolan towns and market towns than its predecessors, especially the two in Novo Mesto. Nonetheless, its persistent presence and repetitive waves left a deep mark on society and a lasting memory embodied in monuments of material culture. Just as elsewhere across Slovenian territory, the erection of several churches here dates to the time immediately after this plague epidemic. Already in 1647, a pilgrimage Church of St. Rosalie was built on the hill above Krško to preserve the memory of the plague in the town and its surroundings. The first of the most important White Carniolan plague monuments, churches dedicated to St. Roch, is the succursal Church of St. Roch in Metlika. In 1646, the inhabitants of Črnomelj, who were evidently spared by the Black Death more than their counterparts in Metlika, are also believed to have enlarged the small Church of St. Sebastian, originally constructed after 1510.[161]

Isolated incidences of epidemics in the second half of the seventeenth century

During the three decades following the long plague wave of 1645–1650, the Slovenian provinces experienced no major epidemics, and there are only sporadic reports of isolated and locally limited incidences of the "plague." In Lower Carniola, it occurred at least twice, with its presence eternalized both times in the minutes of the Kostanjevica abbey. The pest that visited **Kostanjevica** and the nearby village of Slinovce in October 1663 was identified as typhus caused by the Krka's flooding. It reappeared in the nearby areas in 1676,[162] claiming no lives either time in the town itself. This much can be inferred from Kostanjevica's complaints that have been preserved from that period in the form of annals (1618–1684), listing pestilences and woes for nearly every year between 1662 and 1684, without making a single mention of an epidemic.[163] Kostanjevica's town fathers would have undoubtedly reported any however insignificant plague-related mortality or closure, at least in view of the diligence with which they presented fires and floods, and a series of other less consequential events and frustrations, such as the objectionable nearby Uskok community or poor harvests.

Despite the complete absence of reports to confirm it, soon afterward an epidemic of some kind must have broken out on the other end of Lower

156 SI AS 746, Cistercijanski samostan Kostanjevica, vol. 8, account book of the abbot Jurij Zagožen 1638–1659, s. p.—The abbot paid the pharmacist 45 gulden in 1645, 33 gulden and 7 kreuzer in 1646, 55 gulden in 1647, 20 gulden in 1648, and again a larger sum of 42 gulden and 12 kreuzer at the end of 1650.

157 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 862, registry protocols no. 16 (1646–1652), pp. 65 and 345.

158 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 500, fasc. 300a, pp. 1223–1224, December 31st, 1646.

159 In 1602, this small market town only had fourteen masters of non-peasant properties (Ger.: *Hofstatt*) (SI AS 1074, Zbirka urbarjev, II/22u, rent-roll of the Svibno seigniory 1602, s. p.), after its rent-roll from about 1439 still listed thirty (Milkowicz, Beiträge zur Rechts- und Verwaltungsgeschichte Krains, pp. 7–8; cf. Koropec, Žebnik, Radeče in Svibno, p. 56).

160 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 110.

161 Ibid., 110 and 111.—Leopold Podlogar writes the following on the construction of the church in Črnomelj: "The Church of St. Sebastian was erected in the town's grove in 1646, the time of deadly cholera (sic!). The presbytery grew from the former chapel, built sometime after 1510" (Podlogar, *Kronika mesta Črnomlja*, p. 64).

162 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 112, cites the no longer existing "minutes of the Kostanjevica abbey." Only the account book 1638–1659 of the abbot Jurij Zagožen has been preserved (SI AS 746, Cistercijanski samostan Kostanjevica, vol. 8).

163 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 184, fasc. 104, lit. L II–2, March 31st, 1686.—Cf. Dimitz, Zur Geschichte der Städte, pp. 79–80; Dimitz, *Geschichte Krains*, pp. 59–60.

The marking of infected houses in Gorizia

Carniola, given a conspicuous rise in deaths in **Kočevje**, where no news of a suspected plague had been issued since 1599. In the first register of deaths kept by the parish of Kočevje, the oldest such register in Lower Carniola, attention is drawn to the first four years from the beginning of 1669 to the end of 1672, when 317 persons were buried, forty-four from the town of Kočevje. Over the next six years between 1673 and including 1678, the number of deaths and burials amounted to no more than 287, only twenty-seven in the town itself. Although not particularly striking, the contrast between the number of deaths in the first four and the ensuing six years of keeping the death register shows notable differences in the number of deaths by individual years and significant fluctuations among the town dwellers. In 1669, the town of Kočevje registered no less than twenty of altogether seventy-three deaths across the entire parish. Only four deaths were registered in 1670 and two in 1671, after which the number of burials rose again, reaching eighteen in 1672. It is interesting to note that the town itself never counted more than twelve deaths in the seventeenth century, and even this figure was recorded in 1680 and 1681, when the Styrian plague reached its peak.[164]

The parish of Kočevje was also the only one among the towns and market towns discussed to keep records of deaths during the **plague of 1679–1683**. Whereas Carniola largely averted the plague by taking swift and effective protective measures while the disease ravaged Slovenian Styria,[165] Kočevje may be the part of Carniola that had found itself within the grasp of the Black Death. The assumption that the Kočevje peddlers brought the disease from their journeys to northern provinces is open to debate due

[164] NŠAL, ŽA Kočevje, Matične knjige, M 1666–1724.—The numbers of deaths in the town are highly reliable, especially for the 1670s and 1680s, when the register of deaths nearly always states the decedent's place of residence. The ten-year annual average for the town population in 1671–1680 amounted to 10.9 deceased, primarily due to the high mortality in the early 1670s, in 1681–1690 to no more than 4.2 persons, and in 1691–1700 to 5.3 deaths annually.

[165] On the Styrian plague, see Umek, Kuga na Štajerskem, pp. 80 f.

to the complete absence of any contemporary report on this subject and the plague in Kočevje in general. Strongly indicative of an epidemic is the high number of the deceased, namely, eighty-nine in the entire parish of Kočevje in 1680 and as many as 138 a year later. The town of Kočevje itself registered twelve deaths each respective year. However, despite the high figures recorded at the turn of the 1670s and in the early 1680s, the death register lacks any side note confirming that it was indeed the plague or an infectious disease of some kind.[166] Even a surgeon's death during the biggest spike in mortality cannot be considered otherwise than a hypothetical consequence of infection contracted while treating his patients.[167] What caused an increased death count therefore remains subject to speculation. However, it could not have been the same plague as in Styria and Gorizia, if one is to believe Valvasor's reference to the procession of Saint Roch held in Ljubljana in 1683, thanking God for having "miraculously safeguarded the entire province of Carniola against the despicable plague ravaging all the neighboring lands."[168] Finally, the plague could have easily spread to the Kočevje area as the typical transit and peddler hub, just as it had reached the province of Gorizia in 1682 from Croatia and claimed a particularly high toll in the town of Gorizia.[169]

Carniola largely escaped a prolonged plague thanks to the swift, strict, and therefore effective measures that stopped its spread. The provincial border closures were at first understandably much to the chagrin of those whose trade suffered the greatest loss from suspended traffic. However, because the closure also variably affected broader population segments, it met with an overall resistance and infringements in various forms of smuggling people and goods away from the eyes of the plague guards.

An informative light on the protective measures and their infringements at the peak of the Styrian epidemic in the mid-1681 is shed by a fragment from the life of the border town of **Krško**, which depended on the hinterland beyond the Sava more than any other Lower Carniolan town. Soon after the Carniolan-Styrian border was reopened in April 1681,[170] the highest ordinance arrived at the end of June on the heels of a plague outbreak near Radgona and in a Celje quarter, prohibiting entrance to Carniola from Styria even with a "fede" and strictly forbidding serfs from navigating the border river Sava.[171] Soon afterward, in early July, plague commissioners (*contagions comissarien*), mostly from the ranks of noble landowners, were appointed at eight Carniolan-Styrian border crossings and provided with between one and four guards at each crossing. Lower Carniola was protected by guards posted at Litija, Radeče, Impolca, Sevnica on the Styrian bank of the Sava, and Krško.[172] Taking his task very seriously, the Krško plague commissioner, Count Orfeo Strassoldo, reported to the provincial governor and estates at the end of July on his measure serving "as punishment and an example to others who might be tempted to communicate with suspicious characters." Namely, when an assistant harness maker from Ptuj came to Krško, Strassoldo immediately sent him back to Styria after he heard about the plague raging around Ptuj. Strassoldo also notified the guards at Videm and Rajhenburg that the newcomer did not carry a "fede." A few inhabitants of Krško had conversed and drank with the boy and, although the commissioner saw no potential threat in that, he ordered to confine the men to their homes and the town judge provided him with guards to prevent them from leaving. The commissioner then asked the provincial estates' delegates whether to release the men or how they were to be treated.[173]

The inhabitants of Novo Mesto were more cautious, probably having learned something from the example of Krško. At the end of November 1681, the plague commissioner in Brežice sent an interesting report to his counterpart in Krško, Count Strassoldo. The Novo Mesto town judge informed the commissioner of Brežice about the cancellation of Novo Mesto's annual fair on Advent Sunday and requested him to notify the Croats and ensure that no one would cross the Sava to attend the fair. The commissioner sent the notification to Samobor, but to little avail, because many Croats set out in secret to Novo Mesto crossing the Gorjanci (Žumberak) Mountains. The Brežice commissioner then wrote to the town judge of Novo Mesto that every suspicious person be placed in a lazaretto (*in ein Lasareth schaffen*) and punished, and that the goods be burned as contraband.[174]

The most severe implications that the Styrian plague between 1679 and 1683 had on Carniola were of indirect nature by hurting its economy. The prolonged closure of the provincial borders, combined with bans on fairs and all kinds of mass gatherings, delivered a serious blow to trade and trade fair hubs, especially towns and market towns. The bans on holding fairs, for example, drained the Novo Mesto treasury—hence the petitions addressed at the vid-

166 NŠAL, ŽA Kočevje, Matične knjige, M 1666–1724.
167 On June 14th, 1681, died a seventy-three-year-old townsman and town surgeon Bernard Jager.
168 Valvasor, *Die Ehre VIII*, p. 822.
169 Cf. Jelinčič, Črna smrt v Gorici, pp. 116 f.; Waltritsch, Prvi goriški kronist, p. 196.
170 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 538, fasc. 308b, p. 417, April 18th, 1681.
171 Ibid., pp. 655–661, June 28th, 1681.
172 Ibid., pp. 687–688, July 4th, 1681.
173 Ibid., pp. 959–960, July 30th, 1681.
174 Ibid., carton 539, fasc. 308 b, pp. 1373–1376, November 27th, 1681.

ame to write off the town judge's outstanding tax debt for 1681 and 1682.[175] A few years later, in 1686, the town leadership of Krško described the plague in Lower Styria as the main cause for the abandonment of the town. The plague prevented the inhabitants of Krško from accessing their fields beyond the Sava and even more from attending weekly and annual fairs in Styria.[176]

The plague in Črnomelj and its surroundings between 1691 and 1692

Until the end of the seventeenth century, Slovenian territory only experienced sporadic occurrences of contagious diseases, which caused much greater devastation in the neighboring Hungary and Croatia, leading to several provincial border closures. In 1690, a major plague epidemic in Hungary and Croatia threatened the eastern parts of the Austrian frontier provinces, wreaked havoc in Vienna and the Styrian town of Radgona, and in the following year (1691) burst out around Črnomelj in the southeasternmost part of Carniola.[177] This is the first plague on which there exists a sufficient selection of credible sources, mostly produced immediately after it was suppressed. These sources also include the only preserved lists of infected and deceased persons for all plague epidemics.

Carniola once again successfully contained the spread of infection with the practical wisdom gained from tackling the recent Styrian plague. The Črnomelj area was immediately isolated from the rest of Carniola and plague guards were posted on border crossings toward Croatia and in certain parts in the hinterland. The movement of passengers and goods to the entire territory of Carniola was also suspended by Gorizia and the Venetian Republic,[178] despite the relative distance from Črnomelj and Croatia and notwithstanding Carniola serving as their cordon sanitaire. Gorizia still had a vivid memory of its disastrous lack of alertness in 1682.

The plague undoubtedly reached Črnomelj and its surroundings from the nearby Croatian places, where it caused havoc in Karlovac. Local Croatian reports described the disease in quite contradictory terms; once it was purportedly the real plague and at other times an ordinary typhus.[179] In a similar vein, there are no sources clarifying what kind of disease affected Črnomelj and its surroundings. The list of recoveries divides the patients in two categories: those with carbuncles (*carbuneli*) and those with more dangerous buboes (*bubones*), and some exhibited both symptoms.[180] The plague epidemic in Črnomelj was also the first and the last one on which there are known various details, sanitary measures, reactions in the wider area, as well as minute specifications of infected and deceased persons, all worthy of a thorough discussion that will be provided below.

The developments that took place in the town and its surroundings from when the plague broke out and reached its peak are poorly documented. Reports, mainly referring to sanitary measures, only began to proliferate once the disease started to abate, especially during the ensuing weeks. Therefore, nothing is even known about when precisely the disease erupted and when it reached its climax; it must have been no later than December 1691 and probably even a month or so before that. In November, for example, the plague began to recede in the Croatian town of Plaški, where the last patient died on December 12th. Soon afterward, a physician from Novo Mesto, Dr. Janez Krstnik Novak, who had fulfilled his task there, reported to the Carniolan provincial estates from the mansion Pobrežje ob Kolpi. He affirmed that there was no plague (*alda khein Pest gewesen*) in Gradac, the Metlika area, and the provincial court of Podbrežje, even though some of his rare patients indeed had died, including the wife and son of Baron Gusič, a chaplain, and a Turkish girl (a spoil of war) as the first victim of the plague. At the time of reporting, Novak had three patients in his care, whereas everyone inside and outside Gradac and in Podbrežje had completely recovered. Therefore, he requested to be released without further quarantine requirements.[181]

The provincial estates' delegation, of course, rejected his request, as it coincided with the outbreak of the real plague in Črnomelj and its surrounding area. The provincial authorities appointed as the plague commissioner Baron Janez Sigmund Geyman, the commander of the commandery of Metlika-Črnomelj, who resided in Metlika and paid occasional inspection visits to the infected Črnomelj. The town and the infected villages were placed under military guard, deployed specifically for this purpose, and the affected area was in the care of a physician and a healer-surgeon stationed in the commissioner's house in the commandery of Metlika.[182] Strict measures aimed at preventing the spread of the disease soon proved to be impractical, albeit certainly neces-

175 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 255, fasc. 133, lit. R I–9, August 18th, 1681, s. d. 1682.
176 Ibid., carton 171, fasc. 97a, lit. G VIII–8, April 13th, 1686.
177 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 128.
178 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 548, fasc. 311, pp. 305–306, January 21st, 1692.
179 Ibid., p. 361, January 31st, 1692.
180 Ibid., pp. 593–595, ad February 25th, 1692.—The combined summary list of names states twenty-seven individuals with carbuncles and eighty with buboes, altogether 107 recovered patients. At the end, the list only provides the sum of eighty-seven persons, which suggests that twenty patients exhibited both symptoms.
181 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 549, fasc. 311, pp. 1721–1722, s. d. (after December 12th, 1691).
182 Ibid., carton 548, fasc. 311, p. 317, January 21st, 1692.

Črnomelj according to Valvasor, ten years before the plague of 1691; in the center of the town stands the parish Church of St. Peter and Paul with the adjacent cemetery where the plague victims were buried.

sary to ensure the safety of the province. The plague commissioner and the physician Andrej Koppeniager had their hands full with Črnomelj'a inhabitants, who refused to comply with the ban on passing to and from the town. Once frozen in the winter, the Lahinja and Dobličica streams encircling the town from three sides made for an easy exit, forcing the guards to patrol the waterways at night. The plague commissioner, commander Geyman, described the guards as "malicious people" who were in cahoots with the "rebels from Črnomelj," and he even beat their corporal.[183] At Geyman's behest, the physician Koppeniager and the healer Janez Jakob Ubec imprisoned the agitators of "crimes committed by the opposition." After a few were released, they snuck past the guards at night and visited their vineyards in the infected villages. On their return to the town, they shot at and dispersed the guards at Rožanc, who had spotted them and tried to stop them.[184]

All this transpired in the last days of 1691 or the first days of the next year, when the plague lost its vigor and the inhabitants of Črnomelj could breathe a sigh of relief. Between the New Year's Day and the Epiphany, another five persons died in the town's suburbs and lazaretto, respectively, and one in the village of Tušev Dol.[185] The last plague victim in Črnomelj, an old woman, died on January 11th, 1692, after which no deaths or new infections were recorded. Ten days later, all affected areas only registered nine infections, four in the suburbs of Črnomelj. The main task that now lay before the commissioner Geyman was to provide clothes for about a hundred recovered patients, whose personal items had been burned for safety reasons, along with the possessions of the deceased. The provincial estates promised the commissioner to offer their assistance by ensuring means necessary to buy cloth for new clothes. The administrator of the seigniory Poljane ob Kolpi tried to benefit from the misfor-

[183] Ibid., pp. 47–49, January 6th, 1692.
[184] Ibid., p. 235, January 3rd, 1692.
[185] Ibid., pp. 239–240, January 6th, 1692.

tune by offering the commander cloth and linen at an exorbitant price.[186] The provincial estates gave Geyman 300 gulden in German currency to dress the poor, instructed him to buy cloth at a most favorable price, and advised the better-off townsmen and serfs to purchase clothes at their own expense.[187] On another visit to Črnomelj on February 1st, the plague commissioner ordered that the graves be covered with high mounds of earth, despite the cold, to prevent the foul smell coming out and the evil pestilence from spreading further. As all the infected had by then recovered, he notified the provincial estates that he needed new clothes for ninety-one convalescent and destitute patients, whose names were stated on the physician's list. However, closed passages to other parts of the province and an increasing scarcity resulted in a serious shortage of supply. According to the pro-forma invoice—6 gulden and 15 kreuzer for all clothes items per person—the 300 gulden would merely suffice for forty-eight persons, leaving the remaining forty-three with nothing. From this group the commissioner excluded those who could afford to buy their own clothes and included in it the patients' family members, even though they remained healthy in infected households. Finally, he requested the provincial estates for an immediate imposition of quarantine and, on its termination, enable the earliest possible reopening of passages to remedy the damage that the closure had caused to the entire province.[188]

Three days later, on February 7th, the provincial authorities announced that they had no qualms about imposing quarantine for forty days, after which they would decide whether the passages could be reopened or another, shorter quarantine should be imposed. In the meantime, the plague commissioner was instructed to buy the cloth and linen to dress ninety-one persons and submit a specification based on which he would receive reimbursement from the office of the provincial main recipient.[189] The plague commissioner had plenty of work in those days. He rode to Črnomelj twice or three times weekly and made sure that the production of clothes ran smoothly; he ordered that all infected houses be emptied out and smoked a few times daily, and that the infected graves be heaped over with high mounds.[190] A month later, on March 3rd, 1692, the provincial vidame reported to the government in Graz that the infected persons had completed the first of three mandatory quarantines. The second one would commence on March 10th, followed by the third and the shortest one. After the first quarantine, the old clothes were burned under the supervision of the plague commissioner, and the new ones were distributed among the patients with the help of the provincial estates. Meanwhile, the common burial ground had been raised above its surroundings and protected with high wooden planks to prevent people and animals from entering. With the approaching spring, when the soil begins to open, the burial site was to be further covered with a thick layer of lime.[191] At the end of March, a special lime kiln was set up to extract the critically needed lime and use it freshly burned to cover the graves.[192]

However, there were two kinds of graves and two different burial locations, with the cemetery adjacent to the parish church in the town's center also causing controversies later. Still a year after the mandate of plague commissioner was suspended, Baron Geyman, the commander of the Metlika-Črnomelj commandery of the Teutonic Knights, embroiled himself in a dispute with the inhabitants of Črnomelj by depriving them of their right to use the town cemetery at the parish Church of St. Peter and Paul, where they had buried their dead during the plague. In their undated complaint to the provincial commander in Ljubljana, the inhabitants of Črnomelj referred to the plague as "a purported contagious disease" (*in der vermeindten contagion khrankheit*) and stated that they had only buried twelve children in the cemetery and the rest in a separate location outside the town, even though burials in Karlovac and elsewhere continued to take place in cemeteries. They believed that the commander Geyman only wanted to harm them out of spite, as he had done before, and burden them with high legal expenses. In his response, the commander Geyman reported to the provincial commander that Črnomelj had been struck by the real plague (*würkliche pest*) and that more than thirty people had in fact been buried at the parish church. He had instructed its inhabitants to move the burials to the succursal Church of St. Mary in the village of Vojna Vas, but they would not hear of it and insisted on burying their dead in the town. All three provincial authorities—the provincial governor, the vidame, and the provincial estates' delegation office—replied to his report two days later by ordering the town judge and council of Črnomelj to use the cemetery in Vojna Vas situated on the outer boundary of the town. By digging new graves at the parish church, they might uncover the bodies of plague victims and jeopardize the safety of the entire province.[193] The inhabitants of Črnomelj undoubtedly bowed down to the order, which remained in force for as long as the possibility of another outbreak of the epidemic was likely. Burials eventually resumed at the parish

186 Ibid., pp. 315–316, January 21st, 1692.
187 Ibid., p. 330, January 23rd, 1692.
188 Ibid., pp. 381–384, February 4th, 1692; pp. 387–390, Specification etc.
189 Ibid., pp. 407–410, February 7th, 1692.
190 Ibid., pp. 523–527, February 11th, 1692.
191 Ibid., carton 687, fasc. 393, March 3rd, 1692.
192 Ibid., carton 548, fasc. 311, March 24th, 1692.
193 Ibid., carton 550, fasc. 311a, pp. 691–704, May 17th, 1693, May 19th, 1693, s. d.

A list of all the deceased in the wider area of Črnomelj

Place	Total death toll	Deceased men	Deceased women	Deceased children	Families with deceased members	Completely extinct households
Town of Črnomelj	47	10	16	21	21	0
Suburbs of Črnomlja	92	23	31	38	36	3
Total Črnomelj	**139**	**33**	**47**	**59**	**57**	**3**
Tušev Dol	37	6	7	24	11	2
Talčji Vrh	32	9	7	16	9	0
Otovec	24	5	7	12	7	1
Naklo pri Sv. Jakobu	5	1	1	3	1	0
Sela	6	1	1	4	1	0
Svibnik	4	0	1	3	1	0
Butoraj	5	1	1	3	1	0
Total	252	56	72	124	88	6

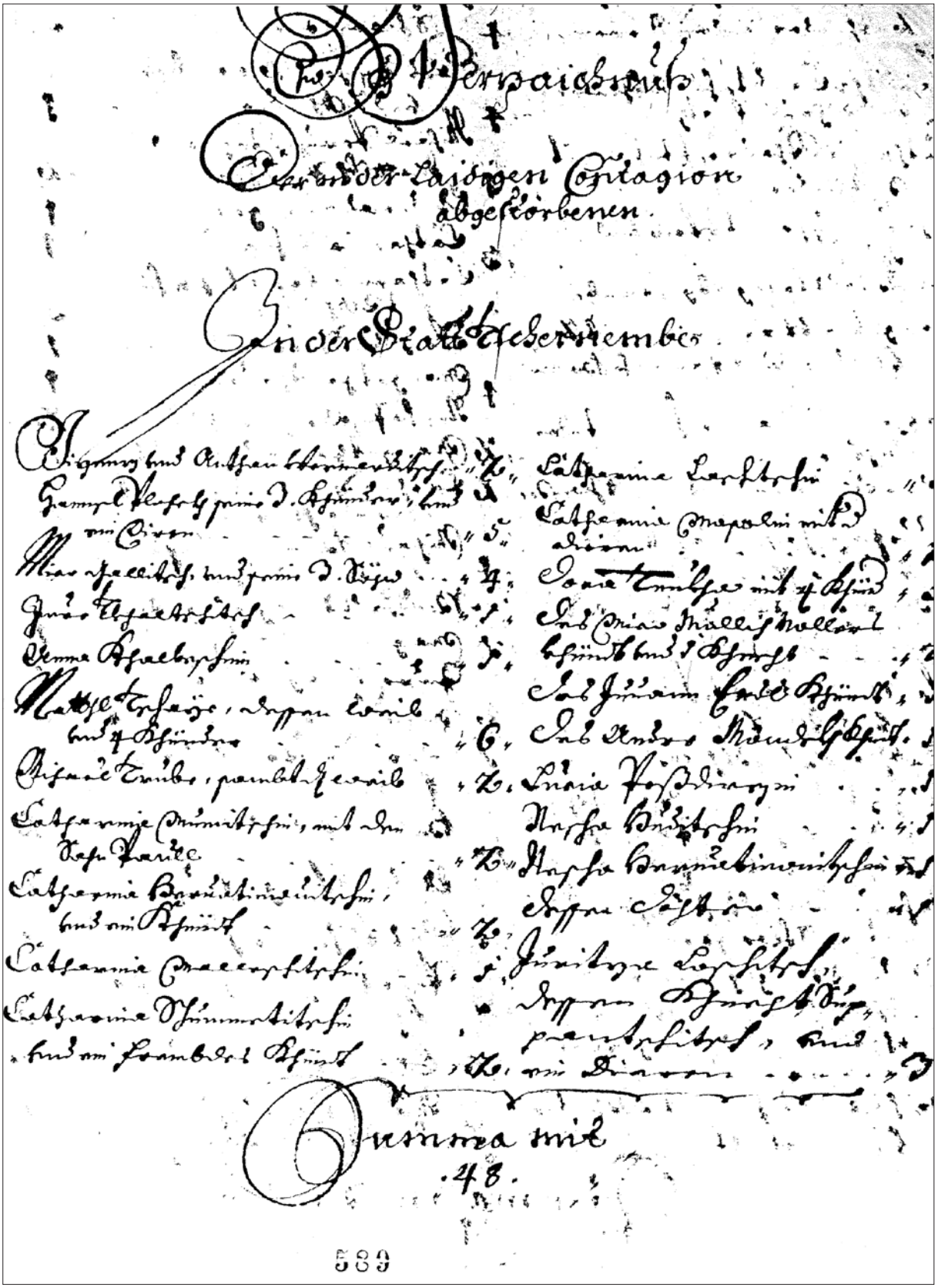
church in the town center and continued to take place there until 1802.[194]

Equally stringent preventive measures were applied to the living. On March 10th, 1692, after no news about the plague arrived even from Croatia, the commander Geyman requested the provincial estates to withdraw the physician Koppeniager, the witch doctor, and the thirteen plague guards.[195] Two days later, immediately on receiving his letter, the provincial estates' delegates ordered him to find a suitable accommodation for the guards at Semič and place them under additional quarantine for fourteen days. The plague commissioner himself was to pass the quarantine at his residence, Commandery in Metlika, where he stayed for the next two weeks in the company of the physician and the witch doctor. At the same time, the authorities informed him that the plague in Karlovac had ended, that the guards had been removed from the border with Croatia, and that border crossings had been reopened.[196] Meanwhile, quarantine was still in place in Črnomelj itself, which understandably put an additional strain on the town. On March 16th, 1692, the commander sent a request to allow the town dwellers to perform their spring work in the fields and vineyards. The provincial estates consented and even granted them permission to trade with their neighbors but prohibited them from leaving the town. On Geyman's reiterated request to allow for unhindered movement of the town dwellers, who were mostly potters and waggonwrights and would run out of food in less than fourteen days, the estates replied on March 27th that the passages toward Črnomelj and Karlovac would open in eight days.[197] This eventually happened on April 9th. The commander also managed to persuade the provincial estates' delegates to lift the quarantine for Dr. Koppeniager, the witch doctor, and Dr. Novak from Novo Mesto,[198] who had joined the former two after passing the initial stage of quarantine at the Podbrežje mansion.[199]

Let us now turn to the central issue of this discussion, that is, **the demographic impact of the plague in Črnomelj**. Had the list of the deceased not been preserved, leaving historians with the above-stated numbers of twelve and more than thirty inhabitants of Črnomelj buried at the parish church, the total number of all plague victims in this White Carniolan town would have been estimated at a little over thirty. Yet the actual death count was at least a few times higher, and it reached a three-digit figure. According to the list of plague victims (*in der Laidigen Contagion abgestorbenen*) that the plague commissioner Geyman sent to the provincial estates on February 25th, 1692, the area of Črnomelj—the town, including its suburbs and seven villages mostly located west of Črnomelj—counted as many as 252 deaths, more than half in the town of Črnomelj and its suburbs, i.e., 139 or 55.2 %.[200]

The list of deaths in Črnomelj is summarized in the table below, dividing the deceased into men, women, and children. The high percentage of adults among all victims particularly stands out, but less so among the deceased men, who represented 23.7 % in the town and its suburbs and 20.4 % in the seven villages. Significantly larger disparities are shown in women and children. Whereas the share of village women amounted to slightly over one-fifth (22.1 %), it was higher than one-third among townswomen (33.8 %). The difference between the dying adult and children population becomes especially obvious in the following ratio: children represented as much as

194 Podlogar, *Kronika mesta Črnomlja*, p. 68.
195 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 548, fasc. 311, pp. 647–648 and 675–678, March 10th, 1692.
196 Ibid., p. 679, March 12th, 1692.
197 Ibid., pp. 683–686; March 20th, 1692; pp. 691–692, March 24th, 1692; pp. 739–740, March 27th, 1692.
198 Ibid., pp. 769–770, March 31st, 1692, April 7th, 1692, April 9th, 1692.
199 Ibid., p. 331, January 23rd, 1692, pp. 371–372, January 31st, 1692.
200 Ibid., pp. 585–588, February 25th, 1692; pp. 589–592, ad February 25th, 1692, Verzaichnuß der in der Laidigen Contagion abgestorbenen.



A list of plague victims in Črnomelj, dated February 25th, 1692.

The deceased in Črnomelj

Number of deceased persons / Number of families	1 Person	2 Persons	3 Persons	4 Persons	5 Persons	6 Persons	10 Persons
Town of Črnomelj	8	8	1	1	2	1	
Suburbs of Črnomlja	13	8	6	6	1	1	1
Total Črnomelj	21 (36,8 %)	16 (28,1 %)	7 (12,3 %)	7 (12,3 %)	3 (5,3 %)	2 (3,5 %)	1 (1,8 %)

The recovered according to the list, dated February 4th, 1692

Place	Total recoveries	Recovered men	Recovered women	Recovered children	Number of households with recovered members
Town of Črnomelj	3	0	3	0	2
Suburbs of Črnomlja	43	15	18	10	21
Total Črnomelj	**46**	**15**	**21**	**10**	**23**
Pri Sv. Nikolaju	2	2	0	0	2
Tušev Dol	16	3	7	6	8
Talčji Vrh	15	3	7	5	8
Otovec	8	1	2	5	8
Sela	1	0	0	1	1
Svibnik	3	1	1	1	1
Butoraj	1	0	0	1	1
Total	92	25	38	29	52

Number of recovered persons according to the list of February 25th, 1692			**Sum of recovered persons from both lists**	
Place	Recovered with carbuncles	Recovered with buboes	Total recovered persons	Number of families with recovered members
Town of Črnomelj	–	–	3	2
Outlaying part of Črnomelj	13	38	74	38
Total Črnomelj	**13**	**38**	**77**	**40**
Tušev Dol	6	18	33	12
Talčji Vrh	6	15	19	11
Otovec	2	4	9	10
Sela	0	1	2	2
Svibnik	0	2	2	1
Butoraj	0	2	4	2
Total	**27**	**80**	**146**	**78**

57.5 % of all victims in the villages and no more than 42.4 % in the town and its suburbs. Interestingly, the difference between the town and its suburbs expressed in percentage is insignificant. For example, adults represented 55.3 % of all the deceased in the town center and 58.7 % in the suburbs outside the town walls.

The following conclusion, which is also important for assessing the demographic impact elsewhere, concerns the number of completely extinct households. The list specifically states six such houses (*das haus ganz ausgestorben* or *völlig abgestorben*), three in the suburbs and three in the nearby villages—a figure fairly consistent with the proportional division of the deceased between the town of Črnomelj and the surrounding countryside. Considering the total number of houses from which plague-infected corpses were taken (fifty-seven), the number of those that had become completely depopulated is surprisingly low. The share of extinct households among all households that witnessed death in Črnomelj represents merely 5.2 % and the percentage of their deceased members (ten) is slightly higher (7.2 %). In addition, the three extinct households in the suburbs were numerically small, composed of four at members at most. The Rupe family had become extinct with the deaths of a husband, a wife, and the mother of one spouse; the Babner family had lost a husband, a wife, and a child; and the four-member Jakša family had seen the departure of a married couple with two children. The share of extinct households among all households with deceased members was also strikingly low in the countryside, where it amounted to 9.7 %, with their fifteen deceased members representing 13.3 % of all plague victims in the rural area.

Given the above, the plague was by no means a selective agent of death that killed certain families with

a surgical precision and left others entirely intact. To the contrary, the number of infected homes was higher than those that had been left abandoned at the end of the epidemic. As is evident from the table below, nearly two-thirds of households (64.9 %) with registered deaths had been bereft of no more than one or two members. Slightly more than one-third of households (36.8 %) had lost only one member and just over one-third (10.5 %) five or more, without any becoming extinct. One of the households with six deceased members had lost both parents and four children and the other a married couple with three children and a farmhand. The house with the highest number of plague-infected corpses (ten), home to an extended family of Jurij Črnugel, consigned to the death register the master of the house, his three sons, two women, and four children.

Two lists shed further light on the dimensions of the plague in Črnomelj. The first, compiled on February 4th, 1692, presents the recovered inhabitants by sex and the other, final list, produced on February 25th, provides an overview by symptoms—carbuncles and buboes.[201] Neither appears to be complete, with the second list featuring only a minor part of names contained in the first one and vice versa. This required a detailed analysis of personal names and surnames, where another problem presented itself: in each family, only one person was usually indicated by the full name. On the first list, other family members are simply marked as children, women, sons, farmhands, and so on, and the more recent list merely states their total number.

The final list that the plague commissioner Baron Geyman sent to the provincial estates on February 25th, 1692, classifies the recovered individuals by symptoms. Rather than distinguish between the town and its suburbs, it combines them under the common name "Bey der Statt Tschernembl." The table below therefore presents the numerical data from the more recent list on its left and an aggregate of the recovered from both lists on its right after subtracting individuals or families that appear on both lists. The thus obtained number of the deceased inhabitants of Črnomelj is appreciably higher (seventy-seven) than that set forth by the first list (forty-six). However, the final sum cannot be divided between the town and the suburbs because no such distinction is made on the final list.

The figures above cover all the dimensions of the epidemic. Given the total of 252 deaths, the 146 recovered persons in the town, the suburbs, and the seven villages represent a strikingly low share at slightly over one-third (36.7 %) of altogether 398 infected persons, suggesting that two out of three infected persons were condemned to certain death. Whereas the question of what symptoms proved fatal remains unanswered, it is known, at least for most recovered individuals, who was diagnosed with buboes, the symptoms of the bubonic plague (thirteen), and who with carbuncles (thirty-eight). For the town of Črnomelj and its suburbs, the number of all deceased and recovered amounts to 216, with seventy-seven surviving patients representing a share almost equal to that of the infected (35.6 %) for the entire area.

Finally, it also seems reasonable to establish how many families in Črnomelj were affected by the plague or, rather, how many families experienced infections or deaths during the plague and what share of the total population was made up by the infected. The results of comparing all three lists are understandably somewhat relative, given that families cannot be determined as complete units based on the same surname alone. There are altogether twenty examples where the surname and location (the town, the suburbs) provide satisfactory evidence to confirm that we are dealing with one and the same family. No more than that many families saw a part of their members die and the other part recover. Therefore, it seems safe to conclude that the plague visited at least seventy-seven families or homes but certainly not more than ninety-seven. Fifty-seven families experienced death and forty saw their members recover, with twenty cases at most involving one and the same family.

As already noted, no censuses of houses or householders exist for Črnomelj until the mid-eighteenth century that would also allow for a tentative estimate of the entire population. The Theresian Cadaster of 1752 specifies 104 houses, including the castle, that is, seventy-four in the town itself and thirty in the suburbs,[202] which amounts to about 572, using the coefficient of 5.5 persons per household. Before that, Črnomelj—like any other Lower Carniolan town—boasted a higher number of populated houses and inhabitants. In 1744, the town leadership specified the existence of 117 homes in the period prior to the recent fire (1740) and stressed that many houses in the suburbs had been lost forever to the fires between 1660 and 1730.[203] This can only be verified with the sweeping evaluation by the vidame's commission in 1573 that the town counted about a hundred houses, excluding those owned by noblemen and members

[201] Ibid., pp. 387–390, ad February 4th, 1692; pp. 593–596, ad February 25th, 1692.

[202] SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 243, no. 6, August 10th, 1752.

[203] SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 279, fasc. 142, lit. T II–4, s. d. (Berichts copia); lit. T II–5, May 22nd, 1744, s. d. (1744, Specification).—There were twenty-one populated houses in the suburbs; the fire of 1740 left fifteen houses abandoned within the town walls, and seven house-lots had already been abandoned for about fifty years. The suburbs also counted sixteen burnt and abandoned houses.

of the provincial estates.[204] 180 years later, in 1752, only eighty houses fell under the town's jurisdiction, fifty in the town itself and thirty in its suburbs.[205]

Compared to the mid-eighteenth century, the years leading up to the plague of 1691–1692 must have seen a greater number of houses and a denser population, especially outside the town walls. Much can be gathered from the fact that in 1752 the suburbs counted no more than thirty houses, whereas the list of plague-related deaths there refers to deceased members of thirty-six families and recovered individuals from thirty-eight households, yielding about forty-six affected homes according to the name analysis. Considering, for example, that there were at least 117 populated homes before the plague as well as presumably before 1740, the population of Črnomelj in 1691 must have been about 650. The 216 infected persons would thus account for about one-third of the total population, the 139 deceased over one-fifth, and the at least seventy-seven affected houses nearly two-thirds of the existing homes. The fifty-seven households with corpses also lead to a chilling conclusion that the death knocked on every other door in Črnomelj. In the town itself, it visited twenty-one families, decimating about one-quarter of households, and in the suburbs, it practically left no house intact. By comparison, Gorizia registered 487 corpses during the plague of 1682 or about one-eighth of the total population of between 3,500 and four thousand people.[206]

As demonstrated by contemporary specifications, the plague in Črnomelj was by no means an innocent event. In this light, it is also necessary to understand a lapidary description of the epidemic penned by the town leadership fifty years later. Explaining the reasons for the town's abandonment and destitution in their report to the vidame in 1744, Črnomelj's town fathers also stated that he must remember how the town had been left completely extinct (*ganz abgestorben*) and abandoned (*verwiestet*) during the plague in 1691.[207]

On the margins of the plague in Črnomelj, this last wave of the death-dealing pestilence in the seventeenth-century Carniola, let us finally dedicate a few words to the **developments in the nearby area**, which suffered serious indirect impacts of the anti-plague measures. The province lived in fear, the movement of people and goods was constrained, and the Carniolan borders were sealed and guarded. Much like during previous epidemics, areas not directly affected by the ravages of the plague defied the impractical and economically harmful restrictions with even greater tenacity. Thus, the inhabitants of Novo Mesto put up an open resistance by holding their annual fair and permitting entrance to suspicious Croats without a health certificate. When this came to its knowledge on September 3rd, 1691, the Inner Austrian government in Graz called on the Carniolan vidame to immediately depose the town judge and organize an early election, which was eventually not held. The regular judicial election was just around the corner, in which the current town judge failed to win retention precisely due to his disobedience, and the inhabitants of Novo Mesto elected another fellow townsman as their leader.[208]

The restrictions on the movement of people and goods also sparked several riots around Novo Mesto and across wider Lower Carniola. In January 1692, the guards at Čatež confiscated a wagon of honey, the property of a merchant Eder from Ljubljana, because the drivers, supposedly coming from Croatia, failed to present their "fedes." The guards also seized an ox-wagon carrying hides, leather soles, bacon, and pork, transported from Croatia by two men from Ribnica, who escaped to the hills while their confiscated goods were burned in the village of Mraševo.[209] The provincial estates' delegates issued a warrant for their arrest and ordered the seigniory of Ribnica to publicly threaten with punishment any individual attempting to travel to Croatia and other infected areas.[210] At about the same time, the guards at Čatež prohibited passage to a few people who had been in contact with the Uskoks (*mit dennen Balachen*) and sent them back "to Wallachia" (*in die Balachey*). The authorities confiscated the house of some Uskok (*Besiakh*) in the hills above Kostanjevica and posted two guards in front of it at his expense for having been in constant contact with the Uskoks and offered them lodging. The permanent guard garrison on the Gorjanci Mountains struggled in the dead of winter; the seigniories of Kostanjevica, Šrajbarski turn, Prežek, and Pleterje had refused to provide them with guardhouses and wood supply,[211] which earned them a good scolding from the provincial estates.[212] These were even more alarmed by the news about two men having made their way deep into Carniola from Croatia. A baker from Sisak first tried to enter the province legally on the Styrian-Carniolan border at Brežice and, failing, then crossed the Sava at Mokronog and arrived in Kranj, where he had a house

204 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 279, fasc. 142, lit. T II–4, Berichts copia.—Archduke Karl issued the decree concerning the commission on October 13th, 1573 (StLA, I.Ö. HK-Rep. 1573, fol. 411).
205 SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 243, no. 6, August 10th, 1752.
206 Jelinčič, Črna smrt v Gorici, p. 119. Cf. Waltritsch, Prvi goriški kronist, pp. 194 f.
207 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 279, fasc. 142, lit. T II–5, May 22nd, 1744.
208 Ibid., carton 257, fasc. 133, lit. R III–1, September 3rd, 1691, November 19th, 1691.
209 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 548, fasc. 311, pp. 309–310, January 21st, 1692.
210 Ibid., pp. 343–344, January 23rd, 1692.
211 Ibid., p. 310, January 21st, 1692.
212 Ibid., pp. 345–346, January 23rd, 1692.

and a family. A man going by the name of Bach, who was supposedly from around Ribnica, bought horses in the Croatian town of Klanjac and then reached Carniola using byways.[213] The provincial estates ordered the town of Kranj and the Ribnica seigniory to investigate and apprehend both men as a warning to other lawbreakers.[214]

These and similar measures seem to have borne fruit. The inhabitants of Novo Mesto, who could still bypass the prohibition on fairs in the previous summer, now became more cautious than ever. On February 26th, 1692, long after the plague in Črnomelj had passed, they denied entrance to an assistant of the town's merchant Jakše,[215] even though the boy showed them his "fede," issued two days earlier in Metlika and demonstrating that he had spent three months there (by force of circumstances) and that the senior plague commissioner gave him the permission to leave.[216] As the leadership of Novo Mesto remained unyielding, the boy ultimately negotiated a signature from the commissioner Mordax and entered the town without the knowledge of the town fathers. The issuer of his health certificate from Metlika did the same for another townsman of Novo Mesto by sending him on his way without a proper "fede."[217] The inhabitants of Novo Mesto complained to the provincial estates' delegates, who reassured them that the danger had passed and that the provincial borders with Croatia would reopen soon. Nevertheless, they called on the town judge and council to instruct their townsmen to avoid any contact with Croats until a proper authorization was issued.[218]

The final blows of plague epidemics in the early eighteenth century

The eighteenth century was the last one in which the plague visited the Slovenian provinces. It ran particularly rampant between 1711 and 1716, and then appeared in sporadic incidences here and there, but continued to sow fear over the following decades by repeatedly sweeping across the neighboring provinces in the east and southeast, reaching all the way to the Slovenian ethnic borders. When in the early 1701, for example, the disease was brought to the Croatian town of Gradiška from the European part of Turkey, the Carniolan authorities closed all borders and prohibited all fairs to prevent the disease from spreading into the province. Facing the greatest threat was again the border province of White Carniola, where the memory was still vivid of the devastating plague from ten years before. For "the territory of Metlika and Črnomelj," the Carniolan provincial estates appointed the plague commissioner Franc Karl von Gusič, who reinforced the guards on the Kolpa to stop the disease from crossing the border with Croatia.[219]

The fear of contagion was considerable and, like in the face of similar threats, further exacerbated by false reports drawn up for one reason or another. On April 2nd, 1701, for example, all three provincial authorities—the governor, the vidame, and the estates' delegation office—ordered **Novo Mesto's** town judge and council to throw a town dweller by the name Strupi in the tower for fourteen days for illegally crossing the border on his way to Croatia. The town authorities were reprimanded for allowing him to return to Novo Mesto after he traveled through Karlovac to attend a fair in Zagreb and returned by the same route. The imprisoned Strupi appealed to the provincial estates to release him and permit him to return to Karlovac. He emphatically denied being a native of Novo Mesto and insisted that he was a merchant from Karlovac. He admitted having traveled to the fair in Zagreb with other merchants from Karlovac but maintained that they had not once been stopped to show their permits. Strupi claimed to have had absolutely no knowledge about the prohibition on border crossing and that he had only come to Novo Mesto to visit his parents. Immediately afterward, on April 12th, the plague in Gradiška had passed, and the provincial governor withdrew all guards from the border.[220]

There are no reports on epidemics in Slovenian territory for the ensuing years, even though the plague, smallpox, and other contagious diseases raged across many European lands, especially the Balkans, Hungary, and Poland. The Black Death inched its way unrelentingly toward the heart of Europe. Between 1708 and 1716, it frequently visited Slovenian territory on the heels or in the company of many other natural disasters. Livestock diseases were particularly rampant in Carniola, and all Austrian provinces suffered for years from smallpox epidemics.[221]

In 1710, the Black Death reached the doorstep of the Slovenian provinces from three sides—the east, the north, and the south. With many areas in Hungary, Croatia, and Venetia infected, the government sealed and guarded all provincial borders. The magistrates of all major towns were tasked with setting up contumacy facilities and lazarettos. However, even in 1710, after the government in Graz appointed two "central contagion deputations" in Graz and Klagenfurt, people defied rigorous measures and continued

213 Ibid., p. 311, January 21st, 1692.
214 Ibid., pp. 341–342, January 23rd, 1692.
215 Ibid., p. 611, February 26th, 1692.
216 Ibid., p. 579, February 24th, 1692.
217 Ibid., p. 611, February 26th, 1692.
218 Ibid., pp. 641–644, February 28th, 1692.
219 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 129.
220 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 687, fasc. 393, March 3rd, 1701, April 2nd, 1701.
221 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 129.

to frequent the infected areas, believing it to be not the real (Asian) plague but an ordinary febrile disease. Indeed, unlike in the past when plague epidemics usually broke out suddenly and violently, death now came in an entirely different form. Patients exhibited no conspicuous and characteristic signs of the plague. The symptoms only manifested postmortem, and the course of the disease took longer, with patients dying a week or two after infection.[222]

Sources of local provenance shed little light on the safety measures in Lower Carniolan towns during that period. The chronicle of the Capuchin Order in **Krško** from 1757 mentions the plague twice: in 1709, when the disease ravaged Hungary and guards were set up at the town gates, and in 1712, when entrance into Krško was prohibited without a health certificate at the behest of the provincial estates. That year, death reaped its harvest in Hungary and in the neighboring Styria, separated from Krško only by the Sava.[223]

Three years later, Carniola was hit for the last time by what sources designate as the **plague of 1715**. The disease spread from Hungary to Slovenian Hills as early as 1710–1712 and settled in Ptuj for two years until 1714. In 1714 and 1715, it was brought from Lower Austria to Upper Styria, whence it reached the area of Maribor and Celje. In the summer of 1715, it spread from Styria to Carinthia, where it remained until mid-1716 and ultimately reached Carniola in mid-1715. By then, Carniola had already had preventive measures and a range of prohibitions in place for two years or, rather, since the first deaths had been recorded in the neighboring lands. However, despite all safety precautions, no later than the spring of 1715, the "plague" reached Lower Carniola, particularly the areas around Stična, Novo Mesto, and Šentrupert, while Ljubljana had since the New Year's Day been afflicted by febrile diseases.[224]

Although contemporary reports again shed little light on the increased mortality in Lower Carniola, they can be directly confirmed with the data from a few preserved death registers, which had by then been undertaken by many parishes across the province. The cause of death was still rarely stated in that period and—as shown on Ljubljana's example—the notion of the plague was a conflation of several different diseases. With respect to towns, the data on the deceased are solely available for Višnja Gora, Kočevje, and partly Novo Mesto. The only market towns for which such registers have been preserved are Žužemberk and Litija.

Before turning to records kept by Lower Carniolan parishes, let us look at the developments that took place in **Ljubljana** and the data contained in its civil registers. As always, there was never a lack of exaggerations, which only grew bigger with geographical distance. In May 1715, for instance, the imperial court asked the Carniolan provincial estates to confirm whether between twenty and thirty people indeed died every day in Ljubljana and whether their sudden deaths were indeed due to buboes leaving many unburied corpses lying on the streets.[225] Ljubljana's physicians submitted a report debunking this disinformation. Whereas most infected patients had recovered after receiving treatment, it was impossible to help so many coming to the city to escape hunger in the countryside. Two or three individuals at most had admittedly collapsed in the street—however, not from the disease but starvation. Besides, the city had set up a lazaretto where patients were treated by physicians and witch doctors.[226] Seven physicians confirmed the presence of febrile diseases since January and assured that most patients had recovered after receiving proper medicines. Fortunately, no patient had exhibited buboes and only a few had developed real plague bumps. Nor did death come suddenly, but it most often lingered for one or up to two weeks.[227] Altogether four hundred patients were admitted to the lazaretto, thirty-nine of whom had died by mid-May. The physician Janez Leopold Raditsch also confirmed that, barring carbuncles and buboes, the symptoms were identical to those he had seen on patients in Vienna and Prague in 1713–1714 and proposed that the graves at the Šentpeter cemetery be dug deeper and covered with lime to prevent hazardous decomposition of corpses in summer.[228]

Eloquent witnesses to mortality in Ljubljana are the registers of death kept by the cathedral parish of St. Nicholas and the suburban parish of St. Peter. In 1714, the cathedral parish buried 124 persons, and this number rose to 231 or by 71.7 % in 1715. 125 people died between March and June, with the highest mortality recorded in April (thirty-six) and May (forty-one).[229] In the suburban-rural parish of Šentpeter, which covered a much vaster territory, the mass dying started as early as the autumn of 1714, in no small part also due to poor harvests and hunger. After 339 burials were entered in the parish death register in 1713, this number climbed to 634 the following year and reached no less than 951 in the plague year of 1715 or 2.8 times more than two years

222 Ibid., p. 130.
223 Kapucinski samostan Krško, Archivum loci Ppff. capucinorum Gurkfeldi erectum anno Domini MDCCLVII, pp. 45 and 47.—Cf. Benedik, Kralj, *Kapucini na Slovenskem*, pp. 460, 462.
224 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, pp. 130–132.
225 SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 688, fasc. 393, May 13th, 1715.
226 Ibid., May 20th, 1715.
227 Ibid., May 18th, 1715.
228 Ibid., s. d., presented on May 22nd, 1715.
229 NŠAL, ŽA Ljubljana—Sv. Nikolaj, Matične knjige, M 1658–1735.

earlier. As the city itself, the parish witnessed a surge in deaths in April (134) and May (201). Already in March 1714, there were reports of four soldiers dying in the lazaretto (*in lazareth*), where the death count started to mount on April 28th, 1715. The number of deaths in the lazaretto peaked in May and June, with only a few deceased being listed by the full name among a host of anonymous deaths. The lazaretto frequently reported five deaths per day, six unidentified victims on May 20th, and a record-high number of seven beggars on June 16th. The last death in the lazaretto was recorded on September 5th. The total number of the deceased in 1715 amounted to a hundred, with fifty-seven marked as beggars. A massive death toll, especially among beggars, was also observed outside the lazaretto, resulting in up to eight funerals held several times per day.[230]

Due to the lack of such sources for Lower Carniola, the figures and reports from Ljubljana serve as a useful starting point for drawing comparisons with the numbers of deaths stated in death registers of the five Lower Carniolan parishes. All civil registers kept by the parishes of Novo Mesto–chapter, Višnja Gora, Kočevje, Žužemberk, and Šmartno pri Litiji reveal an evident increase in deaths. **Novo Mesto** probably suffered the most with the densest population and the highest mortality in both the absolute number and the percentage of deceased per total parish population. As stated on the first page of the oldest death register, the small Novo Mesto town parish, covering the area inside the town walls, counted 331 deaths and burials in 1715 alone.[231] Unfortunately, only this summary data is available rather than records of all buried victims, and it was not until July 5th, when the mass dying started, that the provost Jurij Franc Ksaver de Marotti instructed his priest to keep a register of deaths and enter the names of everyone who died in the town and its surroundings in a specified form. The record-keeping started the next day; however, with at least one sheet missing, consecutive entries are only available for the period from February 1716 onward.[232] Although the number of 331 buried is not verifiable, it is highly probable. According to the death registers from other parishes, a major wave of deaths passed through Lower Carniola in spring and (merely) thirty-four deaths were recorded in the two months of summer. What should also be borne in mind is that not all victims buried here were natives of Novo Mesto. The deaths of foreigners should be subtracted from the high total number and, by analogy with Ljubljana, consideration should also be given to the increased number of beggars and troops, who had already represented an above-average share among the thirty-four deceased between July and September 1715.[233] Compared to the summary indication in the same death register on 110 deceased in 1705 (*hic sepulti*), the number of deaths almost tripled in 1715. However, if one takes an annual average of 47.8 deceased for the ensuing ten-year period (1716–1725), the number of buried victims in the epidemic year was nearly six times higher.

What share, then, of Novo Mesto's population can be attributed to the 331 deceased, only a fraction of whom was made up by those who had not been affected by the epidemic and hunger? Given that in 1754, the town counted 1,485 inhabitants and only one house under the town's jurisdiction less than in 1726 (249), it seems safe to assume that the demographic situation in the early eighteenth century was not much different. In the town with less than 1,500 inhabitants, the 331 deaths of town dwellers and foreigners who had come to the town to find relief from their afflictions could translate into a good fifth of deceased, which comes very close to the estimated percentage in Črnomelj during the plague of 1691–1692.

That same year, the death was equally remorseless in **Kočevje**. The parish of Kočevje recorded the deaths of 246 persons, stating only 145 individually. In addition, the priests buried eighty-two impoverished adults and children without payment of surplice fees but neglected to register the burials of nineteen children. The entries in the death register point to an extraordinary situation seen in no other year than 1715. No summary data on unlisted burials can be found in other death registers kept from 1699 onward, even though the Kočevje area confronted various epidemics before and after. No other year in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries probably witnessed as many deaths as 1715. Given the annual average of 93.8 deaths in the ten-year period 1705–1714, the number of deaths in 1715 increased by 262 %. However, among the 145 deceased individuals listed by their names, only twenty-three can be attributed to the town of Kočevje itself, which does not signify a substantial increase from previous years, with the ten-year average for 1705–1714 amounting to 13.1. On the other hand, the town may have also contributed its share toward the 101 unidentified decedents, suggesting that the number of deceased town dwellers could be much higher.[234]

230 NŠAL, ŽA Ljubljana—Sv. Peter, Matične knjige, M 1690–1736, M 1715–1743.

231 KANM, carton 58, M/1 1704–1728: "Anno 1715—In D(omi)no obierunt provisi sacramentis, ac tumulati illor(um) 331."

232 Only two sheets have been preserved for 1715, recording the deaths of thirty-four individuals: eighteen in July, twelve in August, and four in September.

233 Among the thirty-four buried persons were five beggars, three foreigners, and two soldiers, altogether nine non-locals, among them six unidentified and marked as N or N. N.

234 NŠAL, ŽA Kočevje, Matične knjige, M 1669–1724.

Precise data on the deceased are also provided in the death register of the parish of **Višnja Gora**.[235] In 1715, the parish registered the deaths of altogether 115 individuals, including fifty-two or nearly a half classified as children and adolescents. As many as fifty-eight or a good half (51 %) were buried in spring: twenty-four in March and thirty-four in April. After subsiding in May, death claimed thirty more lives in summer—eleven in June, nine in July, and again eleven in August. Despite an increased mortality, the town of Višnja Gora was less affected than the surrounding countryside. Except for April and July, each registering five deaths, it remained largely unscathed by the plague. The deaths of seventeen locals in the entire year, albeit representing twice the annual average from previous years (8.5 %), fall short of reflecting a surge in mortality across the parish, which registered seventy-eight deaths in 1713 and sixty-three in 1714. There is, furthermore, no noticeable increase in the number of deceased foreigners and beggars, to whom this small town could not offer a hoped-for relief.[236]

In 1715, high mortality was also observed in the parish and market town of **Žužemberk**. Death was rampant from February to August, reaching its peak at the end of May, and claiming sixty-four lives or almost one-quarter of altogether 279 victims that year. The spike in mortality compared to previous years was much like that in Kočevje. Equally devastated were the surrounding areas registering 209 deaths and the market town sixty-eight.[237] Given its population of 521 in 1754,[238] the biggest Lower Carniolan market town had lost about one-eighth of its inhabitants. Nonetheless, this share seems excessively high because Žužemberk was much more populated in the early eighteenth century than fifty years later. Specifically, about 1703, the local seigniory comprised 130 subordinate units and only ninety-six under the Theresian Cadaster.[239]

A surge in mortality in 1715 was also recorded in the parish of Šmartno pri **Litiji**. In the second half of 1714 and the first half of 1715, around 294 persons died, accounting for 2.8 times more than the ten-year average in 1711–1720 (about 821) and, excluding the epidemic year, as much as 5.4 times more than the average (54.1 per year). Interestingly, the market town of Litija was left largely unaffected, registering three deaths at the end of 1714 and not one in the ensuing year.[240] As elsewhere, an unusually high number of beggars were buried in 1714–1715. The death register also contains a note describing the nature of death. After Andrej Bratun's farmhand from Kresniški Vrh passed away on August 24th, 1714, another of his farmhands died a sudden death (*repentina quasi morte*) the day after.

The number of lives claimed by the epidemic and hunger in the parishes of other towns and market towns remains undeterminable due to the lack of preserved death registers. With plenty of patient work, mortality levels could also be traced for several other rural parishes of Lower Carniola and Carniola. However, whereas such research could draw a more complex portrait of dying in different corners of the province, little if anything can be expected from it in terms of concrete reports on the nature of the disease. The so-called plague of 1715 was a conglomerate of two close allies: the epidemic incorporating several different diseases and hunger resulting from poor harvests and disturbances in economic and communication flows.

In connection with the epidemic of 1715, consideration should also be given to **Kostanjevica**, the only Lower Carniolan town where sources make not a single mention of an outbreak of any contagious disease. With more than a little luck, especially considering its exposed border position and the vicinity of the more than unpopular Uskoks, this small town on the Krka seems to have successfully weathered all major epidemics—otherwise, any Black Death harvest, however small, could have been inferred from the structure of preserved sources alone. The period that is poorly documented in sources but proved fateful for Kostanjevica started in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, which includes not only the epidemic year of 1715 but also two other periods marked by higher mortality, which will be discussed below. At that time, the number of abandoned homesteads dramatically increased. According to the census of or shortly before 1727, it only had forty-six populated houses and as many as thirty-one abandoned houses, that is, more than two-fifths of emptied or ruined homes (40.3 %).[241] Because these

235 NŠAL, ŽA Višnja Gora, Matične knjige, M 1713–1748.

236 The deaths of two foreigners in the town in no way coincided with the time of increased mortality. A beggar died in early March and a woman from the neighboring parish of Šmarje died an unexpected death at the end of September.

237 NŠAL, ŽA Žužemberk, Matične knjige, M 1710–1724.

238 The census of souls by individual places, including the market town of Žužemberk, focuses strictly on the serfs of the Žužemberk seigniory (ÖStA, HHStA, FAA, A–IX–22, Conv. 1, Seelen Conscription June 20th, 1754), who represented almost the entire market town population, barring the inhabitants of the castle, the parish house, and the only foreign enclave—a hide subordinate to the local parish priest (SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 32, N 183).

239 ÖStA, HHStA, FAA, A–15–84, Rent-roll Seisenberg ca. 1703, s. p.—SI AS 174, Terezijanski kataster za Kranjsko, N 183, no. 20, s. d. (ca. 1755).

240 There were perhaps a few victims from Litija among the eight children of unidentified name and place, designated merely as "prolis" or "infans."

241 The vidame archive erroneously classified the census as a document on Novo Mesto: SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 255, I/133, lit. R I–9, Specification der hernach benanthen bürgerlihen häyßer weliche bewohnt sein.—Dating the census to the time shortly prior to 1727 was made possible by statements of widows, for whom the register of marriage clearly states when they remarried (NŠAL, ŽA

developments coincided with the epidemic of 1715, which killed one-fifth of inhabitants of the neighboring Novo Mesto, the observations above lead to the assumption that the sudden abandonment of Kostanjevica was largely due to the death of a considerable part of its population. Yet everything points to the contrary, even though the epidemic of 1715 most likely also swept through this town. Namely, in their reports describing the causes for the notable decline of the town during the first half of the eighteenth century, the inhabitants of Kostanjevica mention no plague but three fires, the last of which is unknown from other sources and may be set in the time between 1703 and 1714. Whereas the tax register of 1702 still listed eighty-one unnamed taxpayers and the concurrent visitation stated no more than three abandoned houses,[242] in 1704 the town leadership already reported on twenty-six completely abandoned houses and poverty after the town had been razed to the ground by three fires over the last sixty years.[243] The structural crisis, typical of Lower Carniolan towns in general, obviously discouraged many fire victims from building new homes and compelled them to leave.

The last major plague epidemic in Slovenian territory came to an end in the early 1717, after having raged for about six years. Although the real (Asian) plague also occurred only in sporadic outbreaks elsewhere in the ensuing years, it remained a major and costly concern until the mid-eighteenth century, with its frequent eruptions in the neighboring lands in the east and south severely affecting traffic and trade. For the first time after the great epidemic, the news of a plague in the Ottoman Empire and Hungary already spread in mid-1718, after which it also sowed death in the Balkans and Hungary in 1720–1724. At the same time, a disease called "pleuriditis maligna" broke out in Slovenian territory, especially in Lower Carniola, striking fear into the Carniolan provincial estates that it might reach Carniola as well.[244]

This largely unknown infection could be the reason behind the higher mortality featured in the civil registers of some parishes under discussion during the early 1720s. On the other hand, in that period, death registers still stated nothing about the causes of deaths. The situation was especially dire in **Kočevje**, where the number of deaths in 1721 again spiked to several times the average from previous years. 166 decedents were recorded in the entire parish and twenty-four, among them mostly children, in the town of Kočevje.[245] Still a year before that, in 1720, an increase in mortality was observed in **Novo Mesto**, which buried seventy-three persons and seventy-five in 1724.[246] Mortality in the parish of **Višnja Gora** showed a slight increase in 1721 and 1722, without affecting the town inhabitants as badly as it did in previous and subsequent years.[247] The parish priest of Žužemberk observed a high death toll for no less than five consecutive years, particularly in 1721 and 1724, recording ninety-five and ninety-six deaths, respectively. The market town of **Žužemberk** faced a similar situation in 1721, but with a slightly smaller death toll than in the plague year of 1715. It lost forty-one inhabitants (sixty-eight in 1715) and twenty-three in 1724.[248] Whether any family had become extinct remains unknown; compared to about 1703, the number of households was reduced by (no more than) five until 1731.[249] A significant number of deaths were recorded in 1721 and 1724 in the parish of **Metlika**, where the oldest preserved death register was started no earlier than 1720. 101 persons died the following year and 136 were buried three years later, in 1724.[250]

Unlike in 1715, the causes of increased mortality in **Metlika** are much more profusely documented in 1724. The Carniolan provincial estates sent there the physician Franc Ksaver Zalokar, who on returning to Novo Mesto stated poor hygienic conditions as the main reason for the epidemic in a report of February 26th, 1725.[251] For the past ten days, he had visited patients in the parishes of Metlika, Semič, and Vinica and provided a detailed description of their symptoms, which varied significantly from one place to another. In fact, this was a cohort of several different diseases; apart from the major culprit, "pleuriditis maligna," adults were also dying of pneumonia and contagious catarrh, and children suffered from sore bottoms. Doctor Zalokar proceeded to describe how easily "pleuriditis maligna" could be transmitted through breathing in small houses that he had seen on his visitation route, adding to which was the rapid

Kostanjevica, Matične knjige, R 1723–1770, therein: P 1726–1770, M 1745–1770).

242 SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 185, fasc. 104, lit. L II–7, Stüfft register der Statt Landtstraß v(on) 1702, April 30th, 1703.

243 Ibid., lit. L II–1, August 5th, 1714.—Information is available for the fires in 1663 and 1674, which razed to the ground nearly half and one-fifth of homes, respectively (SI AS 1, Vicedomski urad za Kranjsko, carton 184, I/104, lit. L II–2, March 31st, 1686, August 9th, 1686), but nothing is known from sources about the third and the last fire. Valvasor knew nothing about it, even though he kept abreast of fires that had erupted in other towns during the years leading up to the publication of his *Glory of the Duchy of Carniola*. No references to the consequences of the fire are likewise made in the comprehensive instructions to the town leadership in 1691 (ibid., July 28th, 1691) and the files of the above-mentioned vidame visitation in 1703.

244 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 132.

245 NŠAL, ŽA Kočevje, Matične knjige, M 1669–1724.

246 KANM, carton 58, M/11704–1728.

247 NŠAL, ŽA Višnja Gora, Matične knjige, M 1713–1748.

248 NŠAL, ŽA Žužemberk, Matične knjige, M 1710–1724.

249 ÖStA, HHStA, FAA, A–15–84, Rent-roll Seisenberg ca. 1703, s. p.; A–15–97, Rent-roll Seisenberg 1731–1733, fols. 1–32.

250 ŽA Metlika, Matične knjige, M 1720–1739.

251 Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, p. 132.

cooling and heating of air. The second reason for infection was the bad habit among the local inhabitants to literally roast themselves near the hot embers in their humble and overheated rooms in the presence of the corpse. Not seldomly, houses would also be crammed with lambs and other livestock, and following a huge post-burial feast, called "carmina" by the Croats,[252] where they inhaled the infected air, mourners headed out from the warm house into the cold. On behalf of the provincial authorities, Zalokar prohibited organizing such feasts in the presence of corpses and lighting fire indoors, after a child had burnt itself to death in a room in Črnomelj. He also ordered to separate the dead from the living, as it occurred that during a patient's confession a dead corpse was found under his bed. Patients most often recovered if they were bled immediately after contracting the disease. In several villages, between two and three persons died daily and no more than six in the same parish. The rapporteur compiled a detailed name list of the deceased based on death registers. From the New Year's Day to February 17th, fifty-nine persons died in the parish of Metlika, fifty-two in the parish of Črnomelj, nineteen in the parish of Semič, twenty-five in the parish of Podzemelj, and one of five infected died as early as the Christmas Eve the preceding year in the parish of Vinica. The towns of **Metlika** and **Črnomelj** were variably affected, but the latter not nearly as badly as during the plague of 1691–1692. The Metlika suburbs registered eight deaths and the town itself six, including two newborns conceived by the garrisoned troops. The small town of Črnomelj lost fifteen inhabitants, including five children, and the suburbs six adults and one child.[253]

The period up to the mid-eighteenth century witnessed other concurrent increases in mortality across the Lower Carniolan parishes under discussion, which may be attributed to this or that contagious disease or hunger, but the death registers provide no specifications as to the type of the disease. The most conspicuous case of mass deaths that triggered a wave of unsubstantiated rumors of the plague can be traced to **Novo Mesto** between the autumn of 1736 and the spring of 1737. From November 22nd, 1736, to March 20th, 1737, forty-seven soldiers, their wives, and members from Francis of Lorraine's regiment died of an unidentified disease, a few times up to two or three soldiers per day. Although the army was not the only social segment affected by the plague, it was an agent of its spread and its greatest victim. In January and partly in February, the number of deceased local inhabitants also more than doubled compared to the average from previous years, suggesting that the infection had spread among the civilian population.[254] Measures to reverse the spread of the disease must have been rather stringent and the fearmongering rumors vastly exaggerated. In March, the Carniolan provincial estates' delegation office received two separate letters from the Gorizia provincial estates' delegation office and the health committee of the town of Koper in Venetian Istria regarding the epidemic in Novo Mesto. The inhabitants of Koper inquired whether Carniola and especially Novo Mesto were indeed closed. The Gorizia provincial estates' delegates even received a note from the health committee in Venetian Palmanova, stating that Carniola had imposed a closure after thirty individuals died in Novo Mesto. The fear of the plague was significant and well-justified, based on the carnage it caused that year in Turkish Bosnia. Responding to their counterparts in Koper and Gorizia, the Carniolan provincial estates' delegates explained that these were fabrications invented by malicious tongues that spread rumors of a contagious disease and the closure. What really transpired in the previous year was that seven companies under the Duke of Lorraine's regiment came to Carniola from Hungary with a few infected men among them, who were accommodated in Novo Mesto. The men died of the "Hungarian fever," but no one suddenly and due to carelessness. Moreover, after the troops had had a good rest from their draining march, there had been no news of the disease since autumn. The report, written on March 25th, 1737, was not entirely truthful because the wave of mass dying ended only five days before that. At the end of that same year, the Venetian Republic closed the border with Carniola for the last time because of cattle plague and an epidemic that sowed death across the Generalate of Karlovac.[255]

In addition to sporadic occurrences in Gorizia in 1732, Carniola faced the last direct threat of the plague from Hungarian and Croatian provinces between 1738 and 1741. The plague entailed high expenses for security measures and complete cessation of trade. The last closure of the border with Croatia and plague closures in general were set up in 1744, when the epidemic was swiftly contained. On the other hand, the plague continued to visit Hungary, Croatia, Dalmatia, and Turkish Bosnia almost until the end of the eighteenth century, but apart from harming traffic and trade in the neighboring Austrian hereditary territories, it left no major devastation in its wake.[256]

From the mid-eighteenth century onward, the plague as such and as a designation for an epidemic

[252] Who were in fact White Carniolans (Golec, *Nedokončana kroatizacija*, p. 24).
[253] SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 688, fasc. 393, Sanitetno poročilo iz Bele krajine 1725.
[254] KANM, carton 66, M/3 1736–1752.
[255] SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 688, fasc. 393, Zapora v Beneški Istri 1732, 1737.
[256] Travner, *Kuga na Slovenskem*, pp. 132–133.—SI AS 2, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, Reg. I, carton 688, fasc. 393.

gave way to new and old epidemic diseases that had occasionally already wreaked havoc under its name. In the period, during which Lower Carniola transitioned to a more beneficial period unburdened by real plagues, special mention ought to be made of the dysentery epidemic in the second half of the 1750s.[257] Although dysentery killed several dozen adults and children in several Lower Carniolan towns and market towns in 1757–1758,[258] the aftermath of this and subsequent epidemics can in no way be compared to the earlier plague epidemics, when the fear of infection and the actual threat of a rapid spread struck terror into provinces far from epidemic foci. As a rule, the economic consequences of shutting down main routes and paralyzing the established life flows and functions were disproportionately more severe than the demographic impacts, which—compared to the afflictions suffered in Lower Carniola and surrounding provinces—often yet unfairly seem almost negligible.

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DOZA – Deutschordens-Zentralarchiv, Wien
Abt. Österreich, BÖ = Abteilung Österreich, Ballei Österreich

KANM – Kapiteljski arhiv Novo mesto

Kapucinski samostan Krško

NŠAL – Nadškofijski arhiv Ljubljana
ŽA – Župnijski arhivi: ŽA Črnomelj, ŽA Kočevje, ŽA Kostanjevica, ŽA Ljubljana–sv. Nikolaj, ŽA Ljubljana–sv. Peter, ŽA Mokronog, ŽA Šmartno pri Litiji, ŽA Višnja Gora, ŽA Žužemberk.

ÖStA, HHStA – Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Wien
FAA – Fürstlich Auerspergsches Archiv

StLA – Steiermärkisches Landesarchiv Graz
I.Ö. HK – Archiv der innerösterreichischen Hofkammer
I.Ö. HK-Rep. – Repertorien der innerösterreichischen Hofkammer
I.Ö. HK-Akten – Innerösterreichischen Hofkammer-Akten

ŽA Metlika – Župnijski arhiv Metlika

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P O V Z E T E K

Kužne epidemije na Dolenjskem med izročilom in stvarnostjo

Dolenjska je tista slovenska pokrajina, ki so jo različne kužne epidemije v zgodnjem novem veku obiskale najpogosteje in jo poleg Istre tudi najbolj prizadele. Zlasti njena mesta, povečini miniaturna in malo pomembna, so med slovenskimi kontinentalnimi mesti zagotovo utrpela najhujše posledice. Tudi nasploh so mesta in trgi v primerjavi s podeželjem teže občutili breme epidemij zaradi svoje večje prehodnosti in koncentracije prebivalstva. Na Dolenjskem je nosilo najtežje breme Novo mesto, drugo najpomembnejše mesto na Kranjskem in med sedmimi dolenjskimi mesti edino z več kot tisoč prebivalci. V luči majhnosti mestnih naselij so v virih toliko bolj presenetljive izredno visoke številke umrlih, kakršnih drugod na Kranjskem ni zaslediti. Prav verodostojnost in teža števila umrlih je eno temeljnih vprašanj, na katerega skuša pričujoči prispevek poiskati kolikor toliko zadovoljiv odgovor ob precej neugodni strukturi in naravi virov. Še manj oprijemljive so razsežnosti gospodarskih in socialnih posledic epidemij, ki so praktično nemerljive z zanesljivimi kazalci, zato pri njihovem ugotavljanju le s težavo presegamo deskriptivno raven in besednjak sodobnih poročil. Prav tako skoraj ničesar ne vemo o bolezenskih znakih posameznih kug, na podlagi katerih bi bilo edino moč ugotavljati, za kakšno bolezen je sploh šlo. Pod imenom kuga se v obravnavanem obdobju poleg prave kuge skriva sicer še kakšnih deset epidemičnih bolezni.

Zelo malo je znano o samem dogajanju v času divjanja epidemij, ki ga dokumentirajo le sodniški letni obračuni Višnje Gore v času treh manjših epidemij druge polovice 16. stoletja ter poročila t. i. kužnega komisarja iz Črnomlja v letih 1691–1692, med katera spadajo tudi edini ohranjeni seznami umrlih in ozdravelih okužencev. Ravno za mesta, od koder imamo mlajša poročila o visokem številu umrlih, tovrstnih poročil prve roke ni. Sumarne navedbe umrlih, ki so jih z večjo ali manjšo časovno distanco večinoma posredovala mesta sama, je bilo zato pri preverjanju potrebno soočiti z najrazličnejšimi drugimi sodobnimi viri.

Posebna pozornost in hkrati previdnost veljata natančnim, nezaokroženim številkam, pri katerih dobimo vtis, da so morale temeljiti na sodobnih specifikacijah. Najočitnejši pretiravanji predstavljata sumarna podatka o več kot 800 umrlih Novomeščanih leta 1599, od tega 149 hišnih gospodarjih, in o kar 1200 žrtvah kuge v Metliki v letih 1646–1647. V novomeškem primeru bi šlo za več kot polovico umrlega

prebivalstva, a je analiza imen gospodarjev opustelih hiš pokazala, da je mogoče računati z največ nekaj sto umrlimi. Metlika bi morala izgubiti več prebivalcev, kot jih je mesto sredi 17. stoletja sploh lahko imelo (okoli 900). Veliko realnejši sta navedbi o 322 umrlih Novomeščanih za kugo leta 1625, o »samo 18 umrlih« leta 1648 in o 331 pokopih v celem letu 1715, ki ga je zaznamovala zadnja epidemija.

Nenumerične navedbe v virih o smrti velikega števila ljudi in celo o »izumrtju« mesta Črnomelj je treba razumeti kot način izražanja in ne dobesedno. Med njimi so tudi evidentne neresnice, namenjene višjim oblastvom zunaj Kranjske, kot na primer podatek o polovici umrlih meščanov in prebivalcev mesteca Višnja Gora leta 1599 ali o veliko umrlih najuglednejših meščanih Kočevja v istem času. Pritegnitev davčnih registrov in drugih sodobnih poročil med epidemijo ali neposredno po njej odkriva povsem drugačna dejstva: kuga se je obeh mest le dotaknila, če se ni Kočevju sploh izognila.

Poleg Novega mesta so kuge opazno prizadele še tri dolenjska mesta: epidemija 1646–1647 Krško in Metliko, za kateri število in delež umrlih prebivalcev nista ugotovljiva, lokalno omejena kuga v letih 1691–1692 pa Črnomelj. Tu je obolelo 216 in umrlo 139 ljudi (64,4 %), kar je predstavljalo približno petino vsega mestnega prebivalstva. Vsaj eno petino umrlih prebivalcev je mogoče izračunati tudi za Novo mesto v letih 1625 in 1715, kolikor ni 322 oziroma 331 oseb predstavljalo četrtino ali celo višji delež, bližji eni tretjini.

Šele zadnjo epidemijo leta 1715 je mogoče spremljati po mrliških matičnih knjigah več dolenjskih župnij. Kot vse kaže, tokrat razen v Novem mestu ni šlo za visoke, a nikakor ne za zanemarljive človeške žrtve. To je bila hkrati zadnja velika epidemija, ki jo viri imenujejo kuga, nakar je ta vznemirjala Kranjsko do srede 18. stoletja le še z izbruhi v vzhodni soseščini. Čeprav ni več razsajala po deželi, je tako kot prej že zaradi delne ali popolne ustavitve tovornega in potniškega prometa tudi na Dolenjskem povzročila nemalo gospodarske škode.

Povsem razumljivo je, zakaj se demografske posledice v virih vselej navezujejo na gospodarske. Pojavu epidemije na določenem kraju je namreč sledila izolacija okuženega območja, kar je pomenilo pretrganje komunikacij in ustavitev trgovsko-prometnih tokov. Kužne straže, ki so jih v drugih potencialno ogroženih krajih postavile deželne ter posamezne lokalne oblasti, ljudem in blagu niso dovoljevale prehoda brez zdravstvenih spričeval. Izbruh še tako lokalno omejene epidemije je praviloma povzročil zaprtje deželnih meja in posledično močno omejitev oziroma popolno ustavitev prometa, zaradi česar je tako ali drugače trpelo celotno deželno gospodarstvo. Zlasti dolgotrajne zapore so lahko za seboj potegnile hude izgube raznih gospodarskih dejavnosti, obubožanje določenih slojev, davčno nesolventnost, ki jo je v končni posledici občutila deželna blagajna, pomanjkanje življenjskih potrebščin in drugih artiklov ter končno prave lakote.

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Carniola's Defense Mechanism for Protection against the First Cholera Epidemic in Europe*

ABSTRACT

The Habsburg authority fought against the epidemic of cholera, which firstly reached Europe at the beginning of the 30ies of the 19th century, with identical means as they did in the 18th century against plague. With a system of sanitary cordons, they initially protected the state borders, and after the occurrence of the disease within the monarchy, borders of separate provinces as well. From the example of a sanitary cordon on the Carniolan-Croatian border, which was established for the protection against the epidemic in the Hungarian part of the state, the system of controlled passages trough sanitary cordons (rastel) and quarantines is evident, and causes that lead to general further discontinuation of closing borders as a means of defence against cholera.

KEY WORDS
history of medicine, epidemics, Cholera, sanitary cordon, Carniola, 19th century

IZVLEČEK

KRANJSKI OBRAMBNI MEHANIZEM ZA ZAŠČITO PRED PRVO EPIDEMIJO KOLERE V EVROPI

Proti epidemiji kolere, ki je Evropo prvič dosegla v začetku tridesetih let 19. stoletja, se je habsburška oblast borila z enakimi sredstvi kot v 18. stoletju proti kugi. S sistemom zdravstvenih kordonov so najprej zaščitili državne meje, po pojavu bolezni znotraj monarhije pa tudi meje posameznih dežel. Iz primera zdravstvenega kordona na kranjsko-hrvaški meji, ki je bil vzpostavljen za zaščito pred epidemijo v ogrskem delu države, je razviden sistem rastelov in karanten ter vzroki, ki so vodili k vsesplošnemu nadaljnjemu opuščanju zapiranja meja kot sredstvu za obrambo pred kolero.

KLJUČNE BESEDE
kolera, epidemije, zdravstveni kordon, Kranjska, 19. stoletje

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In the 1830s, Europe experienced what is known as the first Asiatic cholera pandemic. The spread of the disease from Asia to Europe was most likely facilitated by intense trade contacts and increasing traffic between the British Empire and India or, in other words, by Britain's expansion to the east. Cholera spread from India following two main routes: through Persia and along the river Ural northward to Russia, and then to Europe from Mecca through the ports of Istanbul, Turkey, and Alexandria, Egypt. The disease struck Europe for the first time during its second pandemic[1] between 1826 and 1837, a period when most of the world is generally considered to have had the first real experience with cholera. From the Black Sea, the disease reached Europe from two directions: through Poland, after it broke out in eastern Galicia in 1830, and through the Danubian principalities.[2] By 1831, it had engulfed Sankt Peterburg, Berlin, and Hamburg, and appeared in Finland and England. In the Habsburg Monarchy, apart from Vienna, the disease also affected Galicia, Moravia, Silesia, Transylvania, Upper and Lower Austria, Styria, as well as Bohemian and especially Hungarian parts of the monarchy. In a little over than six years, cholera swept across the old continent and the Americas.[3]

State policy

When cholera broke out in the Habsburg Monarchy in 1831, the state responded with a two-phased approach. The first phase of defense was of a strictly preventive nature, and it aimed to protect the state borders against an unknown disease spreading from the neighboring countries by establishing a system of cordons sanitaires along the monarchy's eastern border.[4] The second phase also had a curative character, and it was introduced once cholera had broken through the border protection mechanisms and spread into the monarchy's interior. By isolating infected areas, the state sought to minimize the spread of the disease to other parts of the country and provide for the internal protection of the provinces by appointing provisional emergency health authorities with almost unlimited discretionary powers, such as provincial health commissions, tasked with organizing aid and medical treatment for patients in the infected areas. The first phase of defense against the cholera epidemic will be presented on the example of setting up the cordon sanitaire on the Carniolan-Croatian border.

The plague and cordons sanitaires

The entire defense system of the Habsburg Monarchy built on regulations and practices that had been developed in the struggle against plague epidemics over the previous centuries.[5] In Carniola, too, cordons sanitaires and quarantine were a tried and tested protective measure against the plague, with a known example of border closure imposed in the Karawanks between 1713 and 1716 to prevent the plague from spreading from Carinthia.[6] The protective measures against the first cholera epidemic in the Habsburg Monarchy rested on the *Pest-Reglement*, Maria Theresa's patent of January 2nd, 1770, or the General Health Law on Fighting the Plague.[7] Before that, a number of plague orders (*Infections-Ordnung*) were in place, the first issued by Emperor Ferdinand I in 1551. The first part of the *Pest-Reglement* governs the organization of the medical service across the monarchy and the second provides for a special organization of the medical service in the Military Frontier.[8] The latter *gradually changed from what was initially a strictly military formation into a health-prevention institution whose specific organizational forms and contumacy (quarantine) facilities protected not only Austria but all of Europe against the plague and other contagious diseases and epizootics which constantly spread from the Turkish sultanate.*[9] The cordon sanitaire in the Military Frontier became a permanent institution in 1728. The anti-plague system proved to be highly effective, given that in the second half of the eighteenth century the plague passed through the cordon no more than five times, only once posing a serious threat to the monarchy.[10]

1 Robert Pollitzer broke down the spreads of cholera into seven pandemics or, rather, epidemics of global proportions. The second pandemic encompassed the epidemics in England, Ireland, France with Paris, Quebec, Montreal, New York, and Philadelphia in 1832; Spain, Portugal, the Caribbean, and Latin America in 1833; Italy in 1835, and the Mediterranean in the following years–Carniola was hit by the first cholera epidemic in 1836.

2 Krebs, Die geographische Verbreitung der Cholera, p. 8.

3 *The Cambridge World History of Human Disease*, pp. 645–648.

4 Cordon sanitaire (also sanitary cordon) is a line established around an area to prevent the spread of a contagious disease by restricting passage into or out of the area.

5 Peter Baldwin bases the decision for individual measures in different European countries on the previous experience with prevention, understanding the transmission of the disease, geographical conditions, and the economy. During the first epidemic of cholera in 1831, strict quarantine was typically imposed by autocratic countries in Eastern Europe, e.g., Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Western Europe introduced a slightly milder form of the quarantine policy in combination with other measures, except in major ports, such as Hamburg and Marseille (Brunton, Dealing with disease, pp. 194–195).

6 Koblar, O človeški kugi na Kranjskem, p. 45. See also Žontar, *Zapora proti kugi*.

7 Borisov, *Od ranocelništva*, p. 90; Kobal, O koleri na Kranjskem, p. 74. The term *Pest-Reglement* is cited from Kobal, whereas Grmek writes about *Normativum sanitatis*.

8 SI AS 1079, Zbirka normalij, t. u. 4, Maria Theresa's patent of January 2nd, 1770; Borisov, *Od ranocelništva*, p. 78.

9 Borisov, *Od ranocelništva*, p. 73.

10 Borisov, *Od ranocelništva*, p. 74; Grmek, Sanitarni kordon Vojne krajine, pp. 457–458.

The cordon sanitaire, set up in 1831 to ensure protection against cholera, was organized in accordance with the provisions of the *Pest-Reglement* from 1770 and following the example of its counterpart in the Military Frontier. The cordon remained in force until October 14th, 1831, when the emperor replaced it with regulations applicable to epidemic diseases.[11] All extraordinary measures, such as the border closure or the cordon sanitaire and quarantine stations, were abolished and cholera started to be treated as any other epidemic disease pursuant to the norm of 1806.[12] This document no longer stipulated special state defense measures and in its ten articles merely set out general preventive and curative measures for every individual to abide by in the time of contagion. The norm also reassured that the disease was not new and had already occurred under similar weather conditions and circumstances, but that fairer weather and God's Will should take it away (*Die Krankheit ist nicht neu, sondern wir sahen selbe bey einer ähnliche lange anhaltenden Witterung und unter gleichen Umständen immer entstehen. Wir dürfen auch, da die Jahreszeit nun so weit vorgerückt und bereit besseres Wetter eingetreten ist, es mit Zuversicht erwarten, dass Gott diese Krankheit bald gänzlich von uns hinwegnehmen werde*).[13] The authorities instructed the population to pursue a moderate and healthy way of life, and above all to keep their homes and surroundings clean, they prescribed procedures to be followed in case of illness and advised people to keep up the good spirit and strong faith in God.[14]

The emperor described the conditions that necessitated a change in understanding the nature of the disease and thus a change in the defense strategy against cholera in an imperial letter to Count Mitrowski, Head of the United Court Chancellery.[15] In the letter, he stated several reasons for the regulatory change, the most important being that the defense mechanisms under the *Pest-Reglement* proved to be completely ineffective in tackling cholera epidemics. In mid-October 1831, after the disease had spread widely across the monarchy, the authorities realized that the established system of cordons sanitaires and the network of quarantine institutions were not enough to fight off the disease. Moreover, through the construction of necessary infrastructure and the promotion of employment, this defense mechanism not only drained the treasury, but it also hindered interprovincial traffic and trade, and thus largely contributed to economic stagnation and civil discontent. The latter, further fueled by the flawed public health system and the general distrust toward the authorities, escalated into unrest several times. The norm of February 27th, 1806, therefore primarily aimed at reassuring the population and reminding them to remain god-fearing and refrain from changing their daily habits. The statement that the disease was not something new and unknown was also intended to have a heartening effect. People were encouraged to believe that the government was coping with the situation and that the disease was, after all, not so dangerous as it originally appeared.

The first protective measure introduced by Emperor Franz I in 1830 was the military cordon on the border with Russia, initially considered a success for having temporarily contained the spread of the disease.[16] As the first outbreak of cholera within the borders of the Habsburg Monarchy occurred in eastern Galicia in the spring of 1831, the emperor sought to protect western Galicia and other parts of the state by setting up two military cordons sanitaires on the Vistula and the San, which failed to stop the disease from spreading. The third and the fourth cordons, which protected the northern and southwestern part of Hungary—the right bank of the Danube—from Galicia also proved inefficient after the entire Hungary quickly became the second focus of the outbreak in the monarchy.[17] When the first case of cholera in Hungary was recorded on June 13th, 1830, the existing two military cordons on the San to its discharge into the Vistula and along the borders of Moravia and Silesia protecting the Austrian provinces against the infected Galicia were added a chain of military cordons to safeguard the prov-

11 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fol. 738: proclamation of the Illyrian gubernium of November 17th, 1831; SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (35/Chol), no. 2413.

12 *Laibacher Zeitung*, *Amts-Blatt*, December 1st, 1831, no. 144, pp. 1221–1222; SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fol. 739: *Unterricht in Bezug des Benehmens bei epidemisch ansteckenden Krankheiten von 27. Februar 1806*.

13 *Laibacher Zeitung*, *Amts-Blatt*, December 1st, 1831, no. 144, pp. 1221–1222.

14 Ibid.

15 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (35/Chol), no. 2413. The English translation reads: "When the cholera epidemic threatened to break into my lands, the nature, the origin, and the way in which the disease spread raised doubt. Caution, wisdom, and concern for the wellbeing of my subjects set in motion the tried and tested measures to protect against the most dangerous contagious disease. The provisions of the *Pest-Reglement* (italics by the translator) thus came into force. Yet the failure to comply with them allowed the disease to spread unhindered. Institutions and measures laid bare the shortcomings that proved even more harmful than the disease-induced calamity itself. The closures posed a particularly serious threat to the health of cordoned-off communities, with the locally stationed troops more frequently contracting and spreading the disease against which they were supposed to protect. The fear of the threat of infection, which resulted in all these measures, robbed many patients of the urgent treatment and care, and it also stood as an obstacle to mutual assistance; not least, these measures also affected trade and traffic, as well as crafts—they wrecked individuals' prosperity and robbed thousands of their income..."

16 *Illyrisches Blatt*, October 1st, 1831, no. 40, p. 157, „Über die Aufhebung der Sanitäts-Cordone gegen die Cholera"; *Laibacher Zeitung*, June 7th, 1831, no. 45, p. 461.

17 *Illyrisches Blatt*, October 1st, 1831, no. 40, p. 157, „Über die Aufhebung der Sanitäts-Cordone gegen die Cholera".

inces against the spread of cholera from Hungary.[18] When cholera erupted in northern Hungarian counties, the emperor ordered to set up a cordon sanitaire and incorporate it into the established military cordon toward Galicia, starting at the San's discharge into the Vistula and continuing to the Hungarian border. To this cordon, he then also ordered a rapid incorporation of other existing cordons (*Zoll-Linie*) toward Hungary, lined along the provincial borders of Moravia, Lower Austria, Inner Austria, Carniola, and the Austrian Littoral. These cordons were transformed into cordons sanitaires manned by military units and provided with health institutions.[19] The construction of the defense system was therefore expanded from the Moravian border with Galicia to include the Lower Austrian, Inner Austrian, Carniolan, and Austrian-Littoral borders with Hungary.[20]

Hungary in the grip of fear and uncertainty

Within the Habsburg Monarchy itself, Carniola faced the most severe and imminent cholera threat from Hungary. The epidemic broke out in June 1831 in Tisza-Ujlak, a town situated upstream of the Tisa in the administrative county of Ugocsa, from where it was spread by salt rafters.[21] By mid-July, the disease had reached the Danube and infected nearly all parts of Hungary by the beginning of September.[22] The epidemic peaked between June 13th and September 27th, when 2,269 Hungarian districts and towns recorded 218,183 infections and 87,391 deaths.[23] The city of Pest alone registered 1,648 deaths of about 3,700 infections between July and September.[24] In 1831/1832, Hungary with a population of 8,750,000 registered 435,330 persons infected with cholera or 5% of the Hungarian population, 188,000 of which died. Mortality was 43%.[25]

The United Court Chancellery kept the gubernium in Ljubljana informed about the developments in Hungary. Two major concerns raised by the Hungarian government were the shortage of physicians and the lack of knowledge about the nature of the disease, which was typical of most infected countries and regions. A major challenge facing physicians apart from large distances and poor traffic connections was the overall simple-mindedness. Ordinarily, the rural population placed more trust in the clergy's advice and felt that physicians and the government were hiding the truth about the disease. The sense of powerlessness and fear among the Hungarian population during the epidemic was, for example, manifested in the peasant uprising, the so-called *kolera felkeles,* which was attended by no less than 45,000 people.[26]

On July 17th, 1831, riots also erupted in Pest, after students organized a mass demonstration against the temporary suspension of studies due to the epidemic and gathered at Danube bridge. The student demonstration was sparked by rumors that once Pest had cut its ties with Buda on the right bank of the Danube and closed the bridge, cholera was eliminated from the city and that another disease was affecting its population. The students demanded health passes to return home. After the authorities refused to meet their demand, they set out to cross the bridge and at that point were joined by a crowd of busybodies and idlers. Eventually, the authorities permitted them to pass and reopened the bridge between Pest and Buda. However, while the students cleared the area peacefully, the rest of the crowd went on a rampage, breaking windows on public and private buildings, plundering several taverns, and tearing down the quarantine facility. To establish law and order, the city authorities requested the assistance from the army, which dispersed the crowd, killing seven, leaving several wounded and detaining about two hundred.[27]

Part of the Carniolan public—excluding most of the population, of course—learned about the cholera epidemic in Hungary from the newspapers *Laibacher Zeitung* and *Illyrisches Blatt*. Their articles described the course of the epidemic, informed about the growing number of infections and deaths, and reported on the search for an effective remedy. Whereas *Illyrisches Blatt* focused on publishing problem-oriented and educational articles on cholera, the readers of *Laibacher Zeitung* were provided with aggregate data on infections and deaths for the majority of affected countries and major cities, gubernial circulars, proclamations of the provincial health commission, and official imperial letters. The cluster of articles, titled Letters from Pest (*Briefe aus Pesth*), portrays the atmosphere of fear and uncertainty that took hold of the streets of Pest. People bought excessive supplies of medicines and concoctions of all kinds, with cholera and the cure for it becoming the central topic as much of rumors on the street as of exchanges and debates in theaters, coffeeshops, wine bars, and beerhouses (*Auf allen Strassen, im Theater, in allen Kaffeh-, Wein- und Bierhäusern, wurde nur über zwei Dinge abgehandelt; das erste war die Cholera selbst, und das zweite die Präservative; ein Jeder hatte andere Recepte,*

18 Ibid., pp. 157–159.
19 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 35/14, no. 16142.
20 *Laibacher Zeitung*, July 19th, 1831, no. 57, pp. 226–227; Birkner, *Die bedrohte Stadt*, p. 22.
21 Eckstein, *Die epidemische Cholera*, p. 13.
22 Jankovich, *Die epidemische Cholera*, p. 101.
23 Jovin, *Epidemija kolere*, p. 26.
24 Eckstein, *Die epidemische Cholera*, p. 26.
25 Lukács, Az 1831–1832 évi magyarországi kolerajárvány, p 131 (I would like to thank Eva Lengyel for the translation).
26 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (35/Chol), no. 2371.
27 *Laibacher Zeitung*, August 2nd, 1831, no. 61, pp. 241.

und ein Jeder glaubte im Besitz des Besten zu seyn…). There was talk about individual death cases and a purportedly staggering number of deaths among the predominantly poor strata. Georg von Klepetz described the overall psychosis as the culmination point of the greatest fear (*Kulminations-Punkt der höchsten Angst*).[28]

The cordon sanitaire on the Carniolan-Croatian border

... the disease is on our doorstep. Once it started to spread in Hungary, our beloved Emperor was quick to find a way to also protect Carniolans and Carinthians from this misfortune; hence the strong military presence on the Croatian border, with soldiers denying passage to anyone who has not been placed under contumacy for twenty days like during the plague, to make absolutely sure that the disease will not reach our land...[29]

In 1831, Carniola's anti-cholera defense system was, as already stated, part of broad-range domestic defense measures to protect the Austrian provinces against cholera spreading from Hungary. The existing system of toll stations and border cordons (*Zoll Cordons Linie*) along the Hungarian border was transformed into cordons sanitaires with a reinforced military presence. The Inner Austrian cordon line, for example, was further fortified with four additional battalions. The Court War Council (*Hofkriegsrath*) imposed on the commanding generals in respective provinces that the army must keep a vigilant eye on the entire border line, ensure the continuity of the cordon, and appoint a special commander to this end. The provincial estates were obliged to take part in providing the army with logistical support, which they did, for example, with the construction of military guardhouses.[30] On the Carniolan-Croatian border, the authorities envisaged to man the cordon sanitaire with the battalion already stationed there under the command of Seldenhofen, serving as a security cordon against robbers and bandits in the district of Novo Mesto.[31]

Initially, the measures introduced by the Viennese Central Court Commission for Health in the first half of July 1831 did not impose a total closure of traffic between Illyria and Hungary or, rather, between Carniola and Croatia, and the Littoral. Border toll offices (*Gränzzollamt*) in Jesenice na Dolenjskem, Metlika, and Sv. Matija (Gornji Rukavac), the only points of authorized entrance from Croatia, were at first only tasked with cleaning cattle and smoking letters.[32] Special mention was made of Sv. Matija, where the Istrian (Pazin) district sent its district commissioner. Namely, the tollhouse there was tasked with smoking letters sent from Rijeka and from the now already infected areas, such as Banat and Timisoara.[33]

The organization of cordons sanitaires in the monarchy required collaboration of the military and civil authorities. The military authorities appointed the cordon commander, to whom all guards were subordinated (*Grenzaussichtsposten*). An equal sway in decision-making was granted to district commissioners and local authorities.[34] The Carniolan cordon was a result of the cooperation between district and customs authorities. Because the establishment and the operation of the entire border defense system required a sizeable crew, the authorities employed the personnel from the existing system of border customs and tobacco trade supervisors (*Gränzzoll- und Tabak gefälls Aufsichts Postirungen*), answerable to the Cameral Indirect Tax Administration.[35] The border control crew was thus composed of 209 so-called 'income supervisors'[36] (*Gefällsaufseher*) and border riflemen (*Gränzjager*), as well as 307 soldiers from the border cordon,[37] who had already been assigned to border customs and special tobacco tax collectors. Most 'income supervisors' and border guards were retired soldiers.[38]

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28 *Illyrisches Blatt*, October 8th, 1831, no. 41, pp. 163–164, „Aus Pesth"; *Illyrisches Blatt*, October 22nd, 1831, no. 43, pp. 169–172, „Neuere Notizen über die Cholera"; *Illyrisches Blatt*, October 29th, 1831, no. 44, pp. 173–174, „Neuere Notizen über die Cholera".

29 Potočnik, *Potrebno poduzhenje sa kmeta*, in the address. See Studen, Prva slovenska knjižica o obrambi pred kolero, pp. 183–184.

30 Guardhouses or 'čardaki' (*Czartaguen, Tscartaken*) stood on tall wooden pillars a few kilometers apart, with guards patrolling between them. In: Borisov, *Od ranocelništva*, p. 81.

31 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 35/14, nos. 16560, 16561.

32 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 35/14, no. 16034.

33 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 35/14, no. 16033.

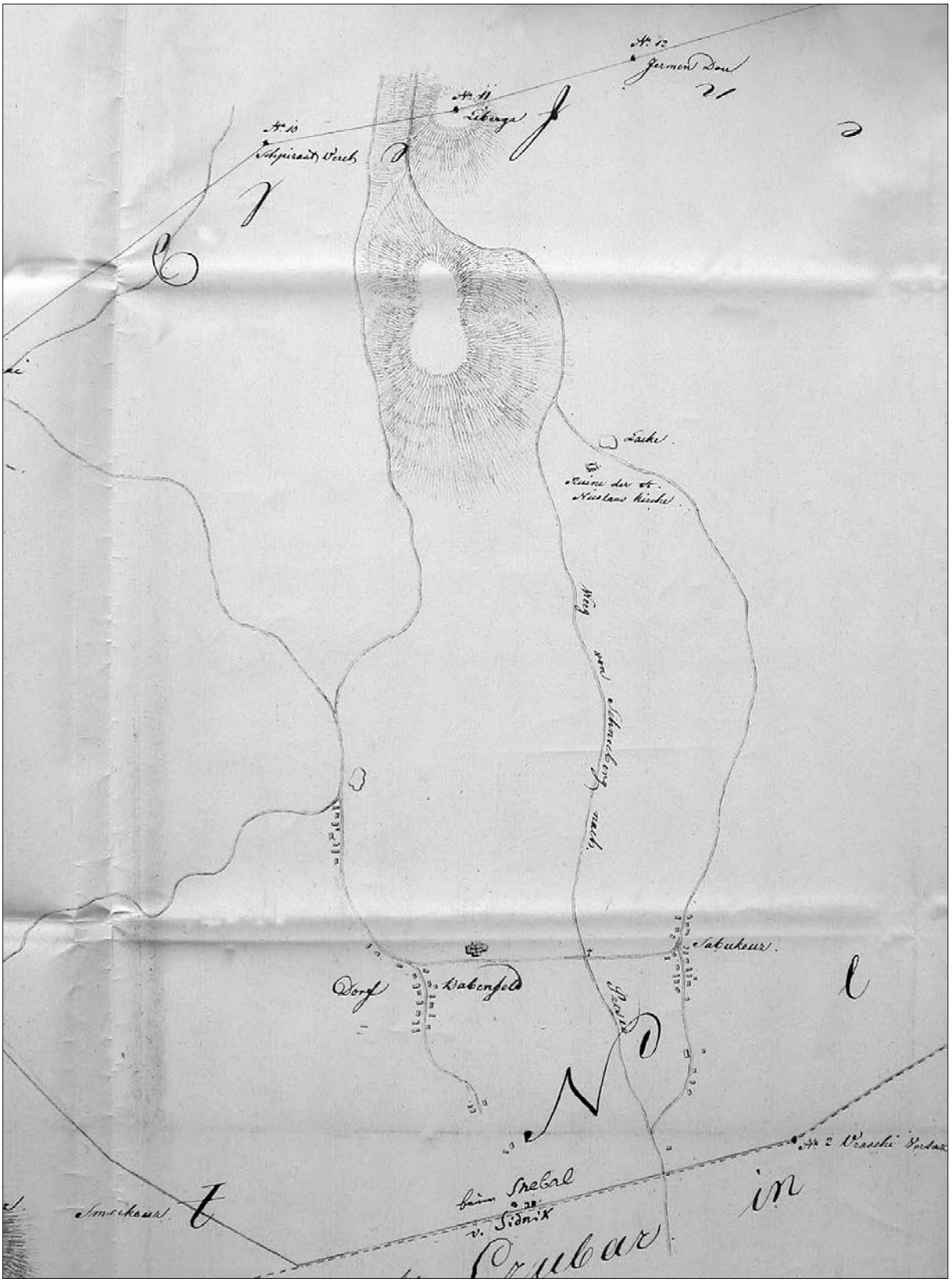
34 Rannegger, *Die Cholera in der Steiermark*, pp. 74–75.

35 *Cameral-Gefällenverwaltung* commenced its operations in 1830 and was renamed *k.k. Vereinigte Cameral-Gefällen-Verwaltung* in 1831. Falling under its authority were, among others, the Offices of Border Customs and Salt Tax or *Provis. Commerzial-Gränz-Zoll und Salz-Aufschlags-Aemter* at Jesenice na Dolenjskem and Metlika, each employing five officials (a tax collector, a controller, a scribe, an apprentice, and a guard). Alois Seitz was the tax collector at Jesenice and Leopold Gapp at Metlika. Auxiliary offices for border customs, salt tax, and the Hungarian thirtieth (*Gränz-Zoll-Salz-Aufschlags und zugleich ungarische Dreyssigst-Subsidialämter*) were administered by tax collectors with the assistance of a local guard and further lined along the border with Hungary or, rather, Croatia in Kostanjevica, Vinica, Osilnica, Radovica, Gabrje, Luža, Pobrežje, Griblje, Poljane ob Kolpi, Trava, Babno Polje, and Kermačina (*Schematismus*, pp. 49–51; Vilfan, *Pravna zgodovina*, pp. 375).

36 Or financial guards, as referred to in Granda, Bosanski roparji, p. 174.

37 In 1831, two military border cordon departments (*k.k. Militär-Gränz-Cordons-Abtheilung*) operated as special military bodies with their seats in Ljubljana and Novo Mesto. *Schematismus*, p. 52.

38 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 35/14, no. 16034.



The section of the cordon sanitaire crossing the seigniory of Snežnik (SI AS 14, Reg. VIII, f. 36 (35/Chol2), no. 609).

It was essential to exert control over the entire stretch of the border between Jesenice na Dolenjskem and Rijeka (the Hungarian Littoral), including its hardly accessible and passable sections. 516 men were envisaged to perform this task, most of whom were, as mentioned, retired soldiers. Yet there was a growing consensus that it was physically impossible to carry out effective control, even for members of the regular army. Keeping constant guard also signified that only half of the crew were actively engaged at a time. Despite these reservations, the activities continued. A deputation of three district commissioners visited Kostanjevica, Metlika, and (Ilirska) Bistrica to start with the implementation of the prescribed measures in collaboration with border customs officials and the local authorities, after inspecting the entire border. The district commissioners were assigned special officials (*Gefällsbeamte*) who possessed an intimate knowledge of the local terrain and conditions and deployed income supervisors. To facilitate control of the border between Jesenice na Dolenjskem and Rijeka, the Cameral Indirect Tax Administration divided it into four sections, which were placed under the responsibility of the district commissioners. The first section, running from Jesenice na Dolenjskem to Luže pri Metliki, was supervised by the consumption tax commissioner (*Verzehrungssteuer*) Donatio from Krško; the second border section between Luže and Kostel was placed under the supervision of the adjunct tobacco inspector[39] Joseph Walmisberg from Novo Mesto; the third section, running from Kostel to Babno Polje, fell under the responsibility of a tollhouse official Fleischmann from Babno Polje; and the fourth section, ending in Rijeka, was placed under the jurisdiction of Pober, an official from the tollhouse at Sv. Matija. This last section, mostly running through the Pazin district, was extended all the way to the coast, as Istria had no customs supervision (*Zollaufsicht*) in place. The tollhouses at Radovica, Kermačina, and Gaberje were closed.[40]

An important stretch of the cordon sanitaire ran through the forested and hilly area of Snežnik, characterized by hardly negotiable terrain, remoteness from transport or passable roads, poor administration by the Snežnik seigniory, and the overall lack of adequate control.[41] This area may be considered to have provided the most 'favorable' cordon section for illegal border crossings. Another indirect indication of boosting surveillance activities in this section is found in a contract on supplying construction and firewood to guardhouses in the Snežnik area, concluded between the District Office Postojna and the Snežnik seigniory.[42] The document ensured free wood supplies from Snežnik's forests for the construction of guardhouses along the cordon and for accommodating the needs of its sixty-three military posts at Babno Polje on the one hand and the use of land on the other. In exchange, after the cordon was dissolved, the seigniory was granted the right to retain the wood, after it had been processed at public expense and used for the construction of guardhouses.[43] The provincial health commission lauded the Snežnik seigniory's gesture as 'patriotic' and published it in the newspaper *Laibacher Zeitung*, calling for more such actions to support the state in the face of 'difficult and costly times' (*Die provinzial-Sanitäts- Commission findet sich verpflichtet, diese patriotische uneigennutzige Handlung mit dem lebhaftesten Wunsche zur öffentlichen Kenntniss zu bringen, dass sie in dem gegenwartigen drangvollen Zeitpunkte, wo die Staatsverwaltung mit unermesslichen Auslagen für die Sanitäts-Anstalten in Anspruch genommen wird, eine reichliche Nachahmung finden möge*).[44] Joseph Rudesch, the owner of the Ribnica seigniory, responded to the appeal by donating wood for the purposes of the cordon sanitaire to construct fifteen guardhouses[45] and the Auersperg seignory of Poljane with its seat in Predgrad contributed materials for the construction of guardhouses in the cordon section passing through the seigniory.[46]

From Carniola, the cordon sanitaire continued westward along the border between the Austrian Littoral and the Hungarian Littoral all the way to Volosko on the eastern Istrian coast. Whereas initially the land was protected against the Kvarner islands, preventive measures were subsequently also introduced there by also setting up a special health commission on the island of Krk under the jurisdiction of the Pazin district office and the central health magistrate in Trieste. About two hundred troops were deployed to the islands. Ships were only allowed to dock at the port of Trieste, which was placed under quarantine. The army was also deployed to Istrian towns, including Piran and Koper. The defense against cholera continued from Volosko toward the sea along the eastern and western Istrian coasts leading up to Trieste, and it was executed with ships circling respective designated areas.[47]

At the behest of the United Court Chancellery and in agreement with the Military Command in Zagreb as well as the provincial commissions in Graz and Trieste, the Illyrian Provincial Health Commission dissolved the Carniolan cordon on September

39 Taback Gefällen Inspectorat Adjunkten.
40 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 35/14, no. 16034.
41 See Kačičnik Gabrič, *O kmečkih dolgovih nekoliko drugače*.
42 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (35/Chol 2), no. 609.
43 Ibid.
44 *Laibacher Zeitung*, August 23rd, 1831, no. 67, p. 265.
45 *Laibacher Zeitung*, October 11th, 1831, no. 81.
46 *Laibacher Zeitung*, September 6th, 1831, no. 71, p. 238.
47 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (35/Chol), no. 421.

26th, 1831. At the same time, the cordons in Styria and the Littoral were also terminated.[48] Thenceforth, Carniola was safeguarded from cholera by the reinforced Croatian cordon sanitaire, which ran along the Drava and the Ilova and thus primarily served to protect Croatia against cholera spreading from Hungary and Slavonia. All restriction on the Carniolan-Croatian border were lifted, and life returned to normal. Traffic was governed by the existing customs and thirtieth laws, the police decrees on border crossing, and health norms that continued to require a health certificate before crossing the border.[49]

Illegal cordon crossings: an example of Jožef Petelin

Of particular concern were smugglers passing the cordon illegally and undermining the effectiveness of anti-cholera defense. The district office of Ljubljana alerted the local authorities to the problem and requested their cooperation in searching and apprehending undocumented foreigners.[50] The Carniolan authorities implemented the rules with a fair degree of consistency and some places in the continental part of the province also established a system of guardhouses verifying foreigners' passports, as is, among other things, also evident from the case of Jožef Petelin. The guards stopped Petelin at Vrhnika on the night of August 15th and 16th, 1831. Because the last entry in his passport was made on October 1st, 1830, for a journey from Idrija to Rijeka, the guards suspected that Petelin had crossed the cordon sanitaire illegally on his return from Rijeka. Because in the meantime, he worked for the stonemason Franc Josta in Ljubljana, the local authorities of Bistra near Vrhnika requested the Ljubljana magistrate to verify Petelin's 'alibi.'[51]

The authorities used the cordon sanitaire to seal the territories of Carniola and Carinthia as much as possible against the spread of the disease from Hungary and determine the border crossing points to ensure the most urgent and strictly supervised movements of people and goods. Cordon crossings were authorized exclusively at officially designated points, constructed for this purpose. Any other attempt at passing the cordon was considered an offence. The emperor expanded to cholera the definition of plague-related offences laid down in the Penal Code. The public was informed about the prohibition of cordon crossings and sanctions against perpetrators by priests from the pulpit.[52]

Violations of measures against contagious diseases and appropriate penalties were stipulated in Emperor Franz I's patent of May 21, 1805.[53] Pursuant to this document, in a district that disregarded an imminent threat of contagious disease, one was found guilty of a serious offence if their actions deliberately or incidentally caused the disease to spread. The most serious offences included unauthorized cordon crossing, quarantine evasion, dereliction of professional duty by employees of defense institutions, and concealment of danger.

An unauthorized cordon crossing was defined as an act committed by a person from a quarantined or cordoned-off area who crossed the cordon by land via unauthorized roads or by sea via unauthorized ports; crossing the cordon without notifying the competent authorities; entering the province illegally from an area suspected of infection and stating a falsified place of origin on continuing the journey; avoiding the main routes with the assistance of guides; and using forged documents or documents issued in another person's name.[54] Another punishable offence was falsifying health or quarantine passes, which served as authentic instruments[55] confirming that a person had come from an uninfected area or completed the quarantine period and therefore did not pose any health risk.

Guards were instructed to shoot at anyone crossing the cordon illegally and ignoring their warnings.[56] Committing an illegal cordon crossing was punishable with five to ten years of rigorous imprisonment, and a willful intent or repetitive infringement warranted the extension of the prison sentence for up to twenty years. The sentence was reduced for a cordon crossing that resulted from negligence and caused no harm.[57]

Violations of quarantine included any failure to undergo the complete quarantine period; establishing contact and socializing with healthy persons prior to the completing the quarantine period and without due supervision; transporting people and goods without the necessary health certificates and passes; giving refuge to people and goods without health certificates or authorization issued by the local authorities in areas near the cordon; hiding or concealing objects that were normally subject to cleaning; and finally, any unconscionable and hence potentially hazardous practices committed by quarantine officials and hired aids.[58]

48 *Laibacher Zeitung*, *Amts-Blatt* October 13th, 1831, no. 123, p. 1047.
49 *Laibacher Zeitung*, September 27th, 1831, no. 77, p. 309.
50 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fol. 270.
51 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fol. 254.
52 *Gesetze und Verordnungen*, court decree of August 27th, 1831, no. 2525.
53 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fol. 147: Franz I's patent of May 21st, 1805. *Laibacher Zeitung*, September 15th, 1831, no. 74, p. 909.
54 Ibid.
55 *Sanitäts- und Contumaz- Pass*—health border pass. The terms *Gesundheitspass, Gesundheitscertificat*, and *Gesundheits-Zeugniss* stand for a health certificate as well. *Gesetze und Verordnungen*, court decree of July 26th, 1831, no. 2522.
56 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fol. 147.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.

Also subject to punishment was any dereliction of professional duty by employees in defense institutions: an official's failure to forward notifications and reports; a physician receiving bribery or accepting gifts for the work already paid; an official, tasked with supervising people and goods, allowing these entrance into the province via unauthorized roads or via authorized roads without undergoing the mandatory quarantine, or releasing people from quarantine before the completion of the period prescribed; any official who issued health certificates disregarding the rules and any official or physician who failed to place himself under quarantine after being exposed to the possibility of infection in performing his work. Offences committed for the sake of seeking profits were punishable by rigorous imprisonment of ten to twenty years and ordinary offences by a prison sentence of five to ten years. Punishment for concealing offences was a prison sentence of one to five years and for especially serious circumstances of bribery rigorous imprisonment of five to ten years.[59]

In case of a major, life-threatening increase in violations of protective measures against a contagious disease, the system of summary judgements, or *Standrecht*, was provisionally enforced as a predecessor of the modern extraordinary criminal law ensuring a more stringent punitive policy. Due to the high likelihood of offences being committed in terms of unauthorized cordon crossing and avoiding quarantine, the punishment under this law was death by execution. The entry into force and the expiry of summary judgements were to be officially announced.[60] Thus, the United Court Chancellery issued a decree officially announcing October 1st, 1831, as the date of expiry of summary judgements in all provinces of the monarchy with cordons in place and as the date of the reintroduction of penal provisions under the applicable criminal law.[61]

The system of *rastels*[62] and quarantines

... All clothes worn, and all goods shall be tidied and cleaned so as not to become sources of infection...[63]

The first two official cordon crossing points—or *rastels*—opened on August 1st, 1831, at Jesenice na Dolenjskem and Metlika.[64] Due to construction delay, the opening date for the third *rastel* at Brod na Kolpi was pushed to August 15th.[65] The selection of Jesenice na Dolenjskem and Metlika seemed reasonable because they were situated on the border, adjacent to the main road connections between Carniola and Croatia or, rather, Hungary. Jesenice na Dolenjskem stood on the trade and post road to Zagreb, which ran from Ljubljana through Zidani Most and Novo Mesto to Bregana. The road winding through Metlika was the main trade and post route, starting in Novo Mesto.[66] An early opening of both *rastels* was of crucial importance, after the border closure with Hungary hindered the traffic on the border with Croatia and the Hungarian Littoral. To mitigate the obstruction of traffic during the construction of the *rastels*, the authorities opened provisional cordon crossing points to enable major shipments of wheat and cattle to enter Carniola.[67]

The essential task of *rastels* was to submit every cross-border exchange of people, goods, and objects to quarantine in the name of protecting the common good (*Sicherheit des öffentlichen Wohls*). Smooth traffic flow at Jesenice na Dolenjskem and Metlika was only ensured for the transport of 'non-toxic' goods, which were exempt from quarantine and could be immediately taken to the other side of the border. The definition of 'toxic' was laid down in Article 24 of Maria Theresa's patent of January 2nd, 1770. The list containing 238 types of goods, ranging from crops, food products, and medicines to raw materials and a variety of handicrafts was also published in *Laibacher Zeitung*.[68] The Joint Court Chancellery in Vienna urged that only the most essential trade take place at the *rastels* and that other business activities be limited to prevent the spread of cholera through them.[69] The predominant trade at both *rastels* was in wheat and salt, both exempt from quarantine, and cattle, which was 'cleaned' by being submerged neck-deep in water. Trade days were carefully specified, and they took place on Mondays and Thursdays at Jesenice and Metlika, and on Mondays and Fridays at Brod na Kolpi. After examination, the *rastel* inspection service ordered that the wheat shipped on the Sava from Croatia to Jesenice na Dolenjskem be transferred to the waiting empty vessels, which then continued the journey upstream into Carniola's interior. Cattlemen were also changed at the border crossing.[70]

Apart from facilitating trade, the *rastels* also had a social function by connecting the population from both sides of the border, which could not cross the cordon at the time. At certain hours (between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. and between 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.), people could converse, but only from a safe

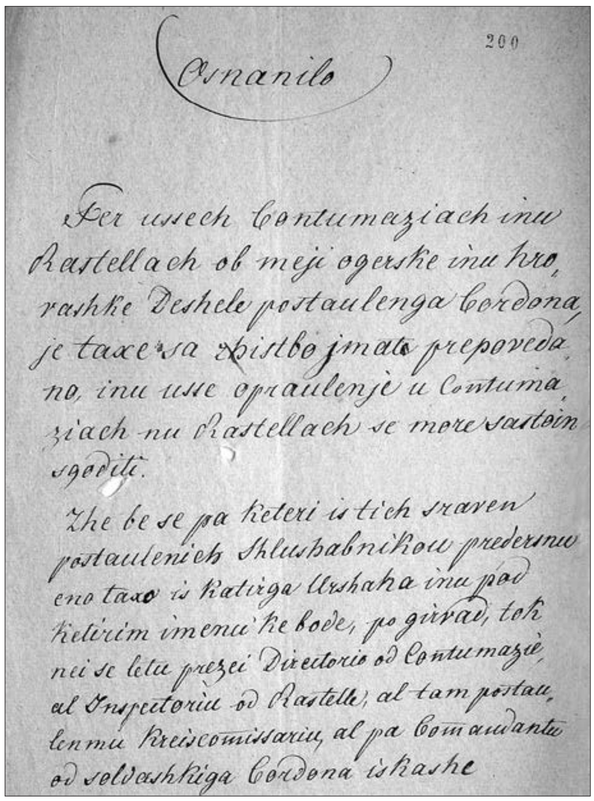
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (35/Chol), no. 2262.
62 Regulated cordon passages where trade was not prohibited.
63 Potočnik, *Potrebno poduzhenje sa kmeta*, in the address.
64 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fol. 122; Kobal, O koleri na Kranjskem, p. 78.
65 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fols. 122, 314.
66 Holz, *Razvoj cestnega omrežja*, p. 26.
67 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fol. 122.
68 *Laibacher Zeitung*, August 4th, 1831, no. 62, pp. 245–246.
69 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (35/Chol), no. 2326.
70 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fols. 122, 312, 314.

distance to prevent contagion. All activities at the *rastels* could only take place in daylight, from sunrise to sunset.[71]

Another type of preventive institutions on the border were quarantine complexes,[72] which were built adjacent to the *rastels*. When a *rastel* conducted traffic control, combined with trade supervision and restriction, the quarantine facilities took in all people and goods whose passage was declined at the *rastel* on suspicion of originating from cholera-infected areas if they failed to present proof to the contrary. Quarantine requirements applied to all persons coming from infected or suspicious areas, as well as those not carrying health certificates. Quarantine was also imposed on 'toxic' goods and miscellaneous objects (*Contumazbehandlung von Personen, Waaren und Effecten)*. 'Toxic' goods, such as feathers, horsehair, bristle, flax, hemp, rawhides, fur, leather, linen, ropes, and cotton,[73] were cleaned in quarantine. A special example was sheep wool which, although not listed as hazardous, had to be aired up to twenty days before being released from quarantine.[74]

At the time of major threat, the mandatory quarantine period lasted forty days and was gradually reduced.[75] On September 26th, 1831, the Illyrian Provincial Health Commission announced the reduction of quarantine on cordons toward Hungary and Galicia from twenty to ten days.[76] On October 10th, the emperor decreed quarantine to be reduced to five days across the entire monarchy, except the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia and the Littoral.[77]

For the lack of suitable premises, the quarantine facilities at Jesenice na Dolenjskem and Metlika had to be built anew. In doing so, the authorities were faced with many problems, especially the tight fourteen-day deadline for constructing the quarantine facilities.[78] The construction of the quarantine facility at Jesenice was a matter of extreme urgency (*Der Bau der Kontumaz-Anstalt von Jessenitz ist von der äussersten Dringlichkeit*), the Ljubljana magistrate informed the district office of Ljubljana.[79] Besides, apart from the shortage of construction wood on site, the authorities also had to tackle the lack of competent craftsmen or workers in the area and had to search for them elsewhere.[80] Carpenters were therefore hired in Ljubljana and its surroundings. As a subcontractor, the master carpenter Košir managed to find thirty carpenters in twenty-four hours, but only half of them ultimately took on work. The reasons most stated for refusing to take part in the construction of quarantine facilities was their illness, the illness of their wife and children, their wife's pregnancy, farm work, shortage of suitable clothing, and work contracts already concluded. Given the high percentage of refusals, this type of work was clearly not popular among craftsmen. The Ljubljana magistrate helped Košir rent boats to ship all the necessary construction wood, tools, and hired workforce—carpenters, joiners, locksmiths, and potters—to Jesenice na Dolenjskem downstream the Sava River.[81] As is evident from the inventory for the quarantine facilities at Jesenice, about forty persons could undergo the forty-day quarantine at a time, provided with the basic sleeping and hygiene necessities. The quar-


200

Osnanilo

Per usech Contumaziach inu
Rastellach ob meji ogerske inu hro,
vashke Deshele postaulenga Cordona,
je taxe sa zhistbo jmata prepoveda,
no, inu usse opraulenje u Contuma,
ziach nu Rastellach se more sastoin
sgoditi.

Zhe be se pa keteri is tich sraven
postaulenich Shlushabnikow predersnu
eno taxo is katirga Urshaka inu pod
ketirim imenu ke bode, pogirvati, toh
nei se letu prezei Directorio od Contumazie,
al Inspectoriu od Rastelle, al tam postau,
lenmu Kreiscomissariu, al pa Comandantu
od soldashkiga Cordona iskashe

Announcement (SI ZAL LJU 489, f. 348, fol. 200).

71 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fols. 122, 312.

72 The term contumacy (*Contumac, Contumazanstallt*) signifies a sanitary measure to prevent the spread of a contagious disease. The word quarantine derives from the Italian term *quaranta*, meaning forty, because it initially lasted forty days. As a protective protocol of separating and restricting the movement of travelers from infected areas, and subjecting them to medical observation, quarantine is part of the system of medical measures to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. Quarantine was first organized in 1375 in Dubrovnik.

73 Kobal, O koleri na Kranjskem.

74 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (35/Chol), nos. 795, 1661, 2177.

75 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (35/Chol), no. 2177.

76 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fol. 599.

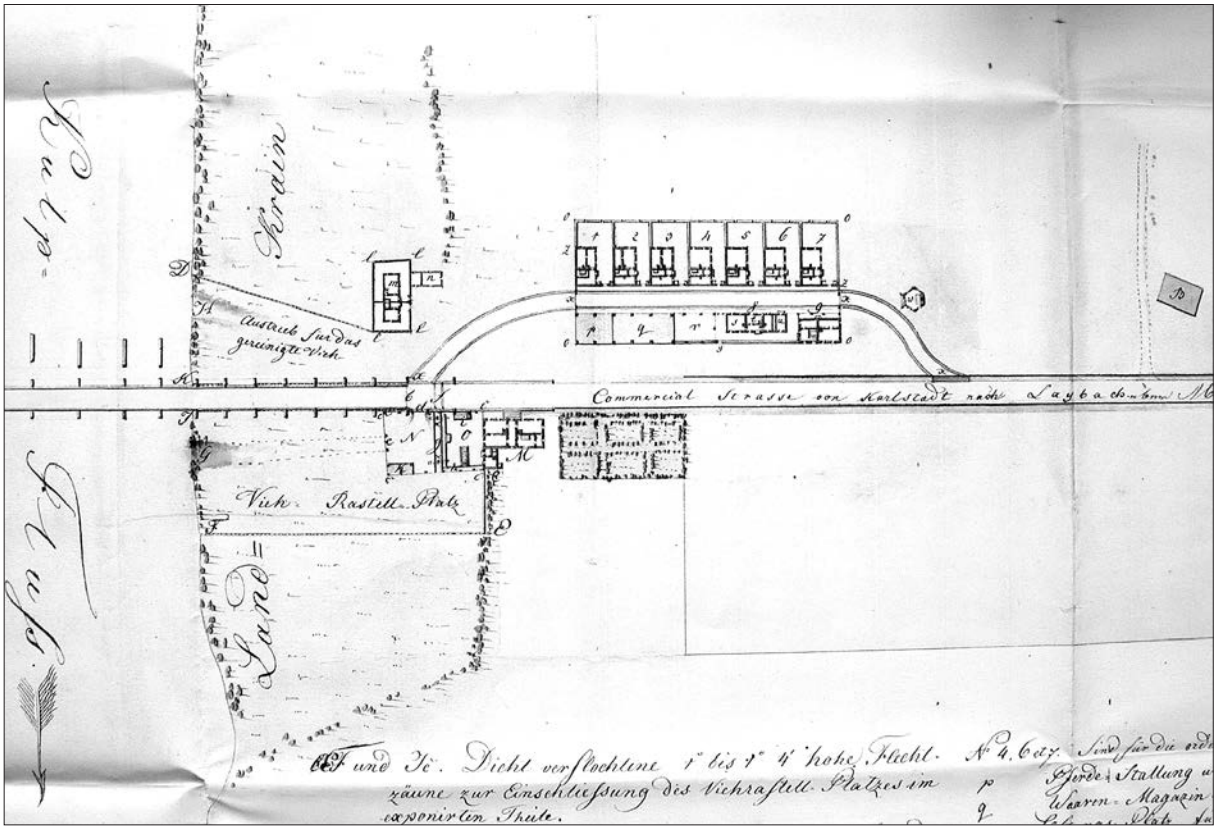
77 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (35/Chol), no. 2413; *Laibacher Zeitung*, October 18th, 1831, no. 83, p. 338.

78 *Laibacher Zeitung*, August 4th, 1831, no. 62, p. 246.

79 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fol. 249.

80 *Laibacher Zeitung*, August 4th, 1831, no. 62, p. 246.

81 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fols. 246, 247, 249.



The rastel and the quarantine facility at Metlika (SI AS 14, Reg. VIII, f. 36 (Chol2), no. 586).

antine facilities were equipped with pallets, tables, stools and benches, clothes hangers, candle holders, as well as spittoons, bedpans, washbasins, water jugs, pallet covers, towels, pillows, and blankets.[82]

The entire procedure of 'cleaning' people and goods at *rastel* and quarantine facilities was free. However, because *rastels*' employees initially charged these services and apparently intended to continue with this practice, the health authorities notified the public via circulars and the press that all activities performed at *rastels* and quarantine facilities were free of charge. They prohibited the collection of fees and demanded that the money already collected be returned. To reach both the employees and the public, the circulars were hung at the entrances to *rastels* and quarantine facilities, in offices, common areas for employees, cabins, and warehouses. For informing the population at large, the circulars were also published in the provincial, Slovenian language.[83]

The *rastel* and the quarantine facility at Metlika

An insight into the organization of cordon crossing points or the entire *rastel* and quarantine complex is offered by a plan that has been preserved for both institutions at Metlika.[84] The *rastel* and the quarantine facility were built on the left bank of the border river Kolpa, adjacent to the bridge. The buildings of both institutions were, for the most part, lined along both sides of the Karlovac trade road, which ran through the center of the complex and was closed at the *rastel* with a double barrier. The quarantine facility employed eight persons: the director Joseph Stergar, the physician Ignaz Lashan, the priest Andreas Tschebashegg, the scribe Alois Pauer, the guardians of goods Martin Lovich and Jochan Horlitschegg, as well as servants tasked with cleaning goods, Wenzl Kottek and Joseph Zollner.[85]

Viewed from the direction of Croatia or, rather, on entering Carniola after crossing the bridge on the Kolpa, the *rastel's* enclosed area stood on the right side. The *rastel* was divided into three parts. Three quarters of its total surface were dominated by an area surrounded by thick willow fencing, which served to house the cattle shipped from Croatia. The remaining area was occupied by two large, en-

82 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fol. 602.
83 SI ZAL LJU 489, fasc. 348, fols. 196, 200; *Laibacher Zeitung*, August 9th, 1831, no. 63, pp. 737–738.
84 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (Chol 2), no. 586: *Situations Plan des Emplacements der Contumac Gebäude an der Kulp-Brücke bey Möttling*.
85 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (Chol 2), no. 586: *Personal – Standes Ausweis von k.k. Contumaz Direction zu Möttling*.

closed spaces of more or less equal size. The first one, with an entrance from the Karlovac Road, housed the Thirtieth Customs Office (*Dreysigstamt*) and on rainy days also provided shelter to sellers and buyers from Croatia. The passage leading from this area to the animal building was intended for those who had already completed their purchase and for driving the cattle down to the Kolpa. There, the animals were herded into the river and walked upstream along the riverbank, and thus 'decontaminated' led out of the river into an enclosure to the left of the Karlovac Road. The *rastel* enclosures were separated by two double barriers reinforced with wood planks standing slightly less than two meters (or a fathom) apart to close the exposed part off from the road. Mounted between the two barriers were two pillared wooden funnels for transferring wheat grains and salt from the exposed part of the *rastel* into its interior. This is where all prohibited 'toxic' goods were removed. Three feet or slightly less than a meter from the internal barrier, there was another barrier in the third, enclosed (unexposed) section of the *rastel*, where a servant cleaned smaller items transported from Croatia. This section housed the seat of the Metlika Customs Office, which was also used for smoking letters. The somewhat elevated platform of the lower part of this section was intended for Carniolan cattle buyers; the animals were showcased here, and transactions were concluded with sellers standing below the platform.[86]

Beyond the *rastel*, on the right side of the Karlovac Road, stood the tollhouse building, rearranged into the offices of the quarantine facility director and the quarantine physician. The former quarantine building on the left side of the Karlovac Road was converted into a guardhouse, with an adjacent wooden barn. Somewhat secluded, to the left of the road, stood the quarantine complex, connected to it by a secondary semi-circular road. The quarantine facilities comprised seven wooden buildings enclosed by a tall wall. The first three were intended for distinguished travelers and divided into several smaller rooms separating men and women, and they also accommodated their servants. Cabin no. 5 was an infirmary. Whenever necessary, one of the remaining three buildings, which ordinarily housed common travelers, was converted into a sanitary unit. In addition to quarantine buildings for people, the authorities constructed stables for horses and carts, and warehouses. A special facility was arranged for airing goods. The last two buildings, which housed employees, their common areas, drying and smoking units, as well as a quarantine tavern, were completely separated from the quarantine cabins to prevent contact between the quarantined travelers and the employees. These also had their own designated entrance. Next to the quarantine complex stood a quarantine chapel and a house with adjacent agricultural buildings owned by Mrs. Schebenig, the post mistress from Metlika.[87]

The impact of establishing the cordon sanitaire

The border closure between Carniola and Croatia manifested primarily in the disruption and slowdown of trade on the one hand and the impeded movement of people on the other. The authorities advised the public to refrain from non-essential trade and other business transactions to avoid spreading cholera through commercial contacts.[88] The cordon sanitaire had a direct economic impact not only on the border area, but also Carniola's interior. Police reports issued by the local authorities under the Postojna district shed light on the public opinion (*Stimmung und der herrschende Geist*) regarding trade, fairs, the movement of food prices, and so on.[89] They reveal that the area under the local authority of Snežnik only held three annual fairs instead of the usual seven. The first two—one envisaged to be held in Šentvid on the first Monday after St. Bartholomew's Day (August 29th) and the other on the Bloke Plateau on Thursday, September 29th—did not take place because the cordon sanitaire was still valid on the date of the former and, in the case of the latter, the three days that transpired since the termination of the cordon left too little time to drive cattle from Croatia.[90] The local authorities of Vipava reported an increase in cattle prices due to the impeded sales from Croatia and Hungary. Clearly terrified of the disease, people talked about the crippling fear of cholera (*die gespannte Furcht von der Brechruhr*). Still, the cordon alone could not have caused a decline in the economy and trade, even though it put a strain on them with partial closure and restrictions (*Eine Abnahme in der Agrikultur, Industrie, im Kommerze erfolgte nicht. Aber der bevorstehende Sanität-Kordon dürfte diesfalls Einflüss äussern. Ohne Nachtheilen kann es nicht abgeben, wenn angränzende Ortschaften, Kreise, Provinzen im frühere freie Verkehre theils erschwert, theils abgespert werden*).[91] The local authorities of Hasberg detected an increase in salt prices, followed by a drop in the prices of wheat and other foodstuffs on the dissolution of the cordon.[92] The local authorities of Senožeče noted an increase in trade

86 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (Chol 2), no. 586.

87 Ibid.

88 SI AS 14, Gubernij v Ljubljani, Reg. VIII, fasc. 36 (35/Chol), no. 2326.

89 SI AS 117, Kresijski urad Postojna, fasc. 13, no. 256.

90 SI AS 117, Kresijski urad Postojna, fasc. 13, no. 256: police report of the local authorities of Snežnik.

91 Ibid., police report of the local authorities of Vipava.

92 Ibid., police report of the local authorities of Hasberg.

after re-establishing free flow of traffic with Croatia.[93] The cordon sanitaire was somewhat injurious to the economy in the area under the local authority of Postojna, and its termination caused a significant drop in prices.[94] As can be gathered from the joint report for the Postojna district, the decline in cattle trade was attributed not only to the general shortage of money but above all to the cordon sanitaire on the border. After the termination of the cordon, the entire district saw a noticeable drop in the prices of wheat and other foodstuffs and a fresh impetus to trade (*Das Komerz schien nach der Aufhebung der gegen Ungarn und Kroatien bestandenen Sanitäts Cordons in etwas aufzuleben*).[95]

Conclusion

The last cordon sanitaire on the Carniolan-Croatian border was set up in 1831. During the ensuing cholera epidemics, five of which also reached Carniola, the authorities took other preventive measures against contagious diseases, because not only did the cordons sanitaires fail to contain the spread of cholera, but they also posed an extremely complex organizational and financial challenge that hardly justified the effort and resources invested. The border closures had an adverse impact on the immediate and wider surroundings by restricting the movement of people and goods, which was particularly injurious to trade flows and consequently caused food prices to soar. Given that during the subsequent epidemics the authorities changed the defense tactics and abandoned the costly system of border shutdowns, the defense against the first cholera epidemic in the monarchy also represents the last example of the classical struggle against the plague, characteristic of the eighteenth century.

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P O V Z E T E K

Kranjski obrambni mehanizem za zaščito pred prvo epidemijo kolere v Evropi

V tridesetih letih 19. stoletja je Evropa doživela prvo epidemijo azijske kolere. Do širitve bolezni iz Azije v Evropo je po vsej verjetnosti prišlo zaradi intenzivnejših trgovskih stikov in povečanega prometa med angleškim imperijem in Indijo oziroma zaradi angleške ekspanzije na vzhod. Ob pojavu kolere v bližini Habsburške monarhije leta 1830 je državna oblast ukrepala s takojšnjo zaporo meje. V ta namen so najprej po vzhodni meji monarhije vzpostavili sistem mejnih zdravstvenih kordonov, kasneje, ko se je bolezen pojavila znotraj monarhije, pa so zdravstvene kordone ustanavljali za zaščito posameznih dežel. Celotni sistem obrambe je temeljil na predpisih in praksi, ki so se v prejšnjih stoletjih izoblikovali v boju proti epidemijam kuge.

Kranjski obrambni sistem proti koleri leta 1831 je bil del širših notranjih državnih obrambnih ukrepov za zaščito avstrijskih dežel pred širitvijo kolere z Ogrske. Izgradnja sistema zdravstvenih kordonov, ki so se začenjali ob moravski meji z Galicijo, se je nadaljevala ob nižjeavstrijski, notranjeavstrijski, kranjski in avstrijsko-primorski meji z Ogrsko. Zdravstveni kordon na kranjsko-hrvaški meji je bil vzpostavljen na podlagi sodelovanja okrožnih in carinskih oblasti z vojaškim poveljstvom. O velikem pomenu same zapore meje pričajo visoke kazni za kršitelje predpisov in veljava sistema naglih sodb. Iz primera rastela in karantene pri Metliki je razvidno, da je stroga organizacija tovrstnih kompleksov po eni strani omogočala zgolj osnovni promet z živili in živino, po drugi strani pa je močno omejevala gibanje ljudi.

Zdravstveni kordon proti nalezljivim boleznim je bil na kranjsko-hrvaški meji leta 1831 vzpostavljen zadnjič. Ob naslednjih epidemijah kolere, kar pet jih je zajelo tudi Kranjsko, habsburška oblast zdravstvenih kordonov ni več vzpostavljala. Poleg tega, da le-ti niso uspeli zadržati širjenja kolere, so za oblasti predstavljali izredno velik organizacijski in gmotni napor, ki pa vložene energije in sredstev ni upravičil. Na bližnjo in daljno okolico je zapora meje delovala slabo zaradi oviranja siceršnjega pretoka ljudi in blaga, kar je zaviralno vplivalo predvsem na trgovske tokove in posledično zviševalo cene živil. Ker so oblasti ob naslednjih epidemijah kolere spremenile taktiko obrambe in opustile drag sistem zapore meja, velja obramba proti prvi epidemiji kolere v Habsburški monarhiji hkrati tudi za zadnjo prakticiranje klasičnega boja proti kugi, značilnega za 18. stoletje.

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Epidemic on school benches

A case of Spanish flu in 1918 central Slovenia

ABSTRACT

The Spanish flu pandemic is considered one of the greatest catastrophes in human history. In the period of 1918–1920, the disease infected an estimated 500 million people worldwide and, according to the most recent data, resulted in the deaths of 50 to 100 million. The second wave of the flu pandemic also reached the population of the Slovenian provinces between September and December 1918. Morbidity rates among pupils and teachers in Ljubljana and the wider central Slovenian area are one of the rare aspects of the epidemic that have to some degree been documented and directly point to the wide prevalence of influenza. The rates of school absenteeism varied between 16% and 75% of all pupils. The only public health measure to be implemented in Carniola during the epidemics was a one-month closure of all schools, first in Ljubljana and then in the most severely affected districts in Lower Carniola.

KEYWORDS
Spanish flu, children, school, pandemics, epidemics, First World War

IZVLEČEK

EPIDEMIJA V ŠOLSKIH KLOPEH:
PRIMER ŠPANSKE GRIPE LETA 1918 V OSREDNJESLOVENSKEM PROSTORU

Pandemija španske gripe velja za eno največjih katastrof v človeški zgodovini. V obdobju 1918–1920 naj bi po vsem svetu zbolelo 500 milijonov ljudi in jih po zadnjih ocenah umrlo med 50 in 100 milijoni. Drugi val pandemije gripe je med septembrom in decembrom 1918 prizadel tudi prebivalstvo v slovenskih deželah. Obolevanje učencev in učiteljev za špansko gripo v Ljubljani in v širšem osrednjeslovenskem prostoru je eno od redkih dogajanj v zvezi z epidemijo, ki je do določene mere dokumentirano in ki neposredno kaže na veliko razširjenost influence. Delež učencev, ki so manjkali pri pouku, je bil v posameznih šolah različen, in sicer v razponu 16–75 % vseh šolarjev. Edini javnozdravstveni ukrep na Kranjskem med epidemijo je bilo enomesečno zaprtje vseh šol najprej v Ljubljani, nato pa še v najbolj prizadetih okrajih na Dolenjskem.

KLJUČNE BESEDE
Španska gripa, otroci, šola, pandemije, epidemije, prva svetovna vojna

The Spanish flu pandemic is considered one of the greatest catastrophes in human history.* In the period 1918–1920, an estimated 500 million people worldwide contracted the disease. According to the most recent data, it claimed from 50 to 100 million lives, i.e. from three to five percent of the population at the time.[1] The flu spread in less than a year in three waves to almost every corner of the world. In the northern hemisphere it was first identified in spring and summer of 1918, followed by the second wave in autumn that year, and the last wave followed in spring of 1919. The death cases in the second wave of the flu, which lasted globally merely six months, were recorded in nearly all spheres of the population.[2] The epidemic claimed an estimated 260,000 civilian lives in Austria-Hungary.[3] The deadliest second wave of the disease started in the monarchy in September 1918, peaked in October and November, and then receded in December.[4] The flu epidemic, which some authors consider as the only true successor of the 14th century plague or "black death" epidemic, surprisingly faded rapidly into the background of the First World War collective memory as one of the last short episodes at its end. Physician Josip Tičar characterised it in his 1922 book entitled "Boj nalezljivim boleznim" (Fighting Infectious Diseases) as a "sinister companion of the Asiatic cholera and plague that threatened the widest populations of nations in their ubiquitous campaigns".[5]

The gravity of influenza's impact on the population in the Slovenian provinces is reflected in mass recordings of deaths in almost all Slovenian parish death registers. The deadly second wave of the flu reached this part of Austria-Hungary in September 1918 and subsided by December of the same year. Various contemporary indirect sources reveal the scale of infections and high mortality. Healthcare statistics on Spanish flu infections and mortality in Carniola, Steiermark, Carinthia and the Austria littoral are not known or have not been found, there are currently no estimates on the rate by which the populations in individual provinces were affected. The only Slovenian source-based study thus far is an undergraduate diploma by Nina Kalčič, who analysed the situation in the city of Ljubljana by researching death registers of Ljubljana's parishes. She established that 403 people died in Carniola's capital from September 1918 to February 1919 (275 deaths were caused by influenza and 128 by pneumonia). Mortality in this region, and most likely also the infection rate, peaked in October 1918 when 63.77% of all Spanish flu caused deaths were recorded in the city. The most relevant conclusions by Nina Kalčič are that (1) the disease mostly affected young adults and children, (2) more women than men died, and that (3) the most noticeable categories were women aged 21 to 30 and children aged under 10.[6]

Proper identification of deaths from death registers is onerous due to the designation of the disease. In Ljubljana's St. Jacob parish, for example, the flu had been designated as Spanish influenza, Spanish disease, Spanish hoarse disease, influenza pneumonia and pneumonia, the latter being frequently the direct cause of death in influenza patients.[7] The Ljubljana Provincial Hospital's death register contains death cause entries like pneumonia as an influenza complication, employing terms such as "Spanish" pneumonia and "Spanish" pneumonia bilateralis.[8]

The official infection and morbidity statistics are unknown since influenza was not classified by the Austro-Hungarian healthcare legislation as one of those infectious diseases that physicians were required to collect and report data on systematically. There is no mention of influenza in Article 1 of the Fight Against Communicable Diseases Act of 14 April 1913 (Zakon o zabrambi in zatiranju prenosnih bolezni), which contained a reporting obligation for seventeen infectious diseases.[9] During the epidemic, the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Public Health (Ministerium für Volksgesundheit) did introduce a reporting obligation for all pneumonia cases as well.[10] It is, however, doubtful whether such data were actually being collected in the provinces, considering the end of the war and the imminent disintegration of the state. In any case, no such data has been found yet.

This is hardly surprising since until 1918, influenza was perceived throughout the world as a harmless infectious disease. There are at least three known epidemics in the 19th century: in the years 1830–1831, 1833 and 1889–1890, the latter being the first to be more accurately recorded. Although the last epidemic claimed at least 250,000 lives in

* The article was summarily presented at the 38th conference of the Association of Slovenian Historical Societies (Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije) – History of Education (Zgodovina izobraževanja), held at Ravne na Koroškem, 30 September 2016. The article in Slovenian language was published in *Kronika* 65, 2017, No. 1, pp. 67–76.

1 Johnson, Mueller, Updating the Accounts, p. 105; Opdycke, *The flu epidemic of 1918*, Introduction.

2 Crosby, Influenza, p. 810.

3 Schmied-Kowarzik, War Losses (Austria-Hungary), p. 8.

4 Ibid.

5 Tičar, *Boj nalezljivim boleznim*, p. 140.

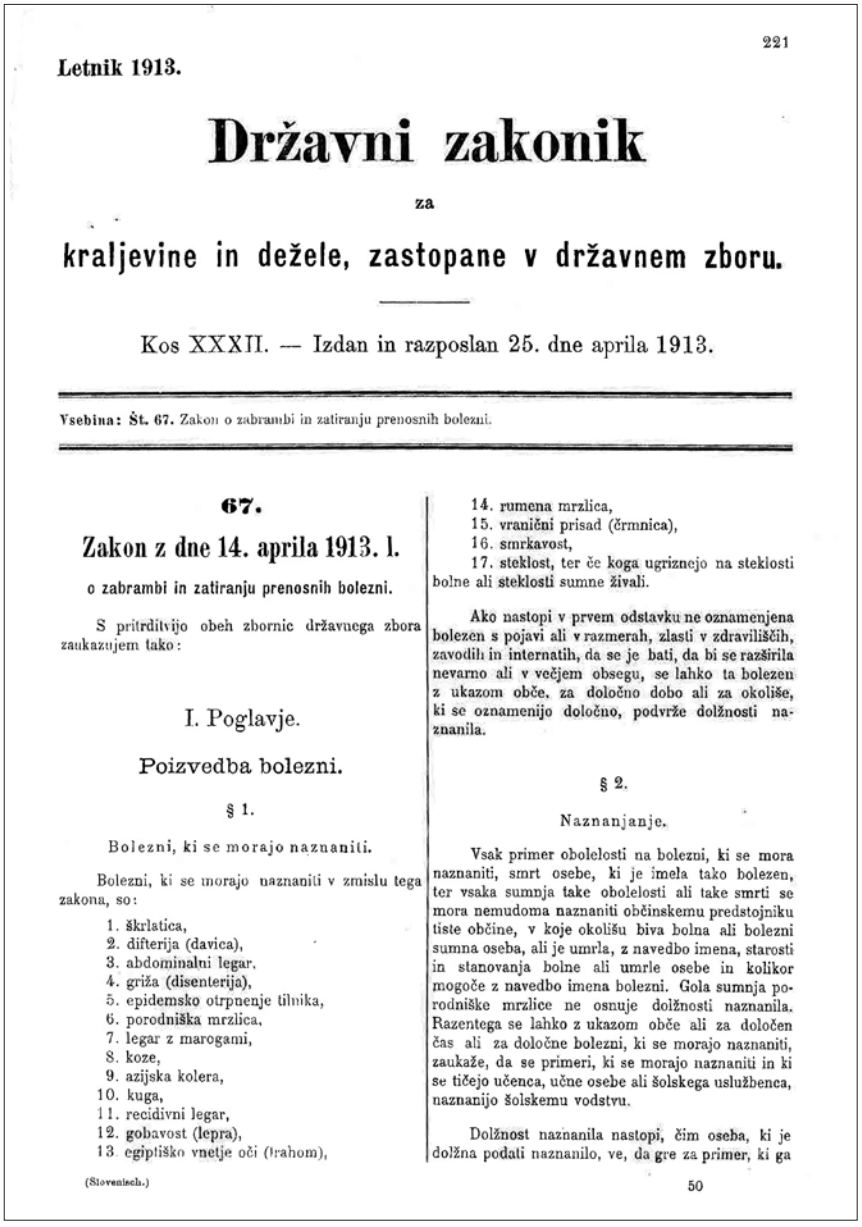
6 Kalčič, *Španska gripa ali »Kadar pride žito v dobro zemljo […]«*, pp. 30–31; Kalčič, Španska gripa, p. 259. According to Miha Likar's estimates, Spanish flu claimed more than 60,000 lives on Yugoslav territories, see Likar, *Usoda nalezljivih bolezni*, p. 126.

7 NŠAL, ŽA Ljubljana – Sv. Jakob, Vital records (matične knjige), M 1891–1920 (transcript).

8 NŠAL, death register duplicate for the Ljubljana provincial medical parish, the parish office of the Ljubljana Provincial Hospital, year 1918. On pneumonia as a death cause of influenza patients see Zupanič Slavec, *Razvoj javnega zdravstva*, p. 227.

9 Code of laws, year 1913, No. 67.

10 SI AS 33, reg. 17/8, fasc. l. 1918, No. 35067.



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Letnik 1913.

Državni zakonik

za

kraljevine in dežele, zastopane v državnem zboru.

Kos XXXII. — Izdan in razposlan 25. dne aprila 1913.

Vsebina: Št. 67. Zakon o zabrambi in zatiranju prenosnih bolezni.

67.

Zakon z dne 14. aprila 1913. l.

o zabrambi in zatiranju prenosnih bolezni.

S pritrditvijo obeh zbornic državnega zbora zaukazujem tako:

I. Poglavje.

Poizvedba bolezni.

§ 1.

Bolezni, ki se morajo naznaniti.

Bolezni, ki se morajo naznaniti v zmislu tega zakona, so:

1. škrlatica,
2. difterija (davica),
3. abdominalni legar,
4. griža (disenterija),
5. epidemsko otrpnenje tilnika,
6. porodniška mrzlica,
7. legar z marogami,
8. koze,
9. azijska kolera,
10. kuga,
11. recidivni legar,
12. gobavost (lepra),
13. egiptiško vnetje oči (trahom),
14. rumena mrzlica,
15. vranični prisad (črmnica),
16. smrkavost,
17. steklost, ter če koga ugriznejo na steklosti bolne ali steklosti sumne živali.

Ako nastopi v prvem odstavku ne oznamenjena bolezen s pojavi ali v razmerah, zlasti v zdraviliščih, zavodih in internatih, da se je bati, da bi se razširila nevarno ali v večjem obsegu, se lahko ta bolezen z ukazom obče, za določno dobo ali za okoliše, ki se oznamenijo določno, podvrže dolžnosti naznanila.

§ 2.

Naznanjanje.

Vsak primer obolelosti na bolezni, ki se mora naznaniti, smrt osebe, ki je imela tako bolezen, ter vsaka sumnja take obolelosti ali take smrti se mora nemudoma naznaniti občinskemu predstojniku tiste občine, v koje okolišu biva bolna ali bolezni sumna oseba, ali je umrla, z navedbo imena, starosti in stanovanja bolne ali umrle osebe in kolikor mogoče z navedbo imena bolezni. Gola sumnja porodniške mrzlice ne osnuje dolžnosti naznanila. Razentega se lahko z ukazom obče ali za določen čas ali za določne bolezni, ki se morajo naznaniti, zaukaže, da se primeri, ki se morajo naznaniti in ki se tičejo učenca, učne osebe ali šolskega uslužbenca, naznanijo šolskemu vodstvu.

Dolžnost naznanila nastopi, čim oseba, ki je dolžna podati naznanilo, ve, da gre za primer, ki ga

(Slovenisch.) 50

Fight Against Communicable Diseases Act of 14 April 1913
(Code of Laws for the kingdoms and provinces, represented in the State Assembly, 1913).

Europe – more than all previous 19th century cholera epidemics combined –, it was mostly harmful to the elderly. Influenza was therefore perceived as a harmless inconvenience.[11]

Studying the 1918 Spanish flu epidemic in Slovenian provinces presents a challenge not only due to incomplete and poorly preserved healthcare documentation, but also due to complex geopolitical circumstances in 1918/1919. The epidemic outbreak coincided with the end of the First World War combined with the disintegration of Austria-Hungary and the establishment, first, the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, and, subsequently, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

"Almost all teachers and students contracted the disease"[12]

The extent to which the Spanish flu was present among students and teachers is one of the few documented developments during the epidemic that provides direct insight into the scale of the disease, at

11 Crosby, Influenza, p. 809.

12 SI ZAL LJU 401, OŠ Zvonka Runka v Ljubljani, Kronika šišenske osem razredne deške ljudske šole v Ljubljani, school year 1918/1919, MF 25.

least in central Slovenian area. As elsewhere in the world, school children were one of the most affected population groups.[13] Various sources confirm mass infections of children in schools across Ljubljana and other Carniolan districts. Apart from the preserved school chronicles for the First World War period, the epidemic data can also be found in individual school publications and preserved school records.[14] Documents evidencing the presence of the flu among school children and youth in Carniola have also been preserved in the Ljubljana Provincial Government archives, mostly in the form of district administration reports.

It follows from the article Healthcare in Ljubljana (Zdravstvo v Ljubljani), which is essentially a report of city physician's office from the end of October 1918, that it was precisely the population of school children where physicians first noticed that the flu is highly infectious: *"[…] The influenza is very contagious, perhaps as much as measles, a disease that almost everyone has contracted in their lives. This infectious property has been demonstrated in the case of the present epidemic, in particular among school children, where one infection created a hot spot among classmates, from which the disease spread to others in such a manner that the surge of infections in every school was perceived in just a few days. Within a few days, numerous primary and secondary school pupils, up to a third or even half of children in almost every class, were absent*".[15] The same article reports several thousand infections in Ljubljana during the last three weeks of October 1918. The following categories dominated the statistics: children aged under 10, youth aged 10–20 and adults under 30. Infections of the elderly were exceptional.[16] The impact of influenza on patients of the same age groups, as demonstrated by death register data collected by Kalčič, transposed into mortality.

Specific data on developments in Ljubljana schools, collected by the local city physician at the beginning of October 1918 also demonstrate a high number of patients among school children.[17] However, since schools did not report to the physician in an uniform manner, it is not possible to establish the number of school children who fell ill. It is, nevertheless, possible to calculate the share of children at Ljubljana primary schools who fell ill on 2 and 3 October 1918, since the report for these schools includes data on the number of all pupils for the school year 1918/1919. Accordingly, in the first few days of October there were 1.252 Ljubljana primary school pupils who fell ill, which represents 29.7% of the total (4.217). The share of pupils absent from schools varied across schools in Ljubljana between 16 and 75%.

Although data[18] for individual schools in Ljubljana were not collected systematically, their publication is relevant since they demonstrate the exceptionally large scale of infections during the epidemic:
- Ist state general upper secondary school: 3 October, 167 students absent, half of the students in some classes, otherwise 16–20%;
- IInd state general upper secondary school: 2 October, 27% students absent, in class II.c over half, II.b one third, in other classes some students;
- German general upper secondary school: 3 October, 75% (of 18 students) of IIIrd grade students absent, 30 students of 142 total students absent;
- Male teachers' lycée: 3 October, 32 students absent, one third in IInd grade, above half in grades III and IV;
- City female teachers' lycée: 1 October, 42% students absent;
- Primary school: 44% pupils absent.

Primary schools on 2 and 3 October 1918:
- Ist city boys' school: 151 of 595 pupils absent (25.4%);
- IInd boys' city school: 119 of 566 pupils and 3 teachers absent (21%);
- IIIrd boys' city school: 86 of 217 pupils and school master ill (39.6%);
- IVth boys' city school: 44 of 226 pupils ill (19.5%);
- German boys' city school: 107 of 237 pupils (45.1%) and 2 teachers ill;
- Slovenian girls' city school: 286 girls of 975 absent (29.3 %) and 8 teachers ill;
- German girls' city school: 302 of 631 children (47.9%) and 5 teachers ill;
- Boys' primary school in Šiška: 63 boys of 354 absent (17.8%);
- Girls' primary school in Šiška: 94 of 416 girls absent (22.6%).

4 October:
- District school of crafts: approx. one third of students ill in both classes;
- Trade course at the girls' city lycée: 15 girls absent;
- Ursulines' schools, internal and external: in certain classes half or third of students absent, in others a large number of girls;
- The Lichtenthurn school: 16 absentees in VIIth grade, in other classes a total of 55 absentees;
- The German school curatorial school: 2 teachers and 66 children ill;
- German private school for boys: 42 od 143 children absent;

13 Phillips, Influenza pandemic, p. 4.
14 Children in other Slovenian provinces contracted the Spanish flu as well. In Carinthia, for example, there were 26 students infected at the Prevalje school, all of whom recuperated. See Doberšek, *Vpliv socialnih razmer*, p. 95.
15 *Slovenski narod*, 31. 10. 1918, No. 256, p. 5.
16 Ibid.
17 SI AS 33, 17/8, 1918, box 944, No. 33040, No. 33268.
18 Ibid.

– The German Schulverein school in Sp. Šiška: 16 of 95 children absent.

Suspension of classes

The only official public healthcare measure in Carniola in relation to Spanish flu mass infections were school closures or class suspensions, first in Ljubljana and subsequently in other schools as well. Although the press reported mass infections of school children in Ljubljana already at the end of September,[19] the local city physician, based on the said inquiry, ordered on 3 October the suspension of classes first in fifteen schools in Ljubljana, and subsequently on 5 October in additional seven schools. Classes were initially suspended until 15 October,[20] and after which, due to the "*widespread presence of influenza and long convalescence of patients*", the Ljubljana city administration in agreement with the imperial-crown Provincial School Council ordered a closure of all secondary as well as public and private primary schools and kindergartens until 3 November 1918.[21] The suspension of classes was reported on by the press, e.g. *Slovenski narod* and *Učiteljski tovariš* (the publication of Yugoslav teachers in Austria): "*All primary and secondary schools in Ljubljana will be closed until 3 November due to the Spanish disease that is spreading very rapidly in Ljubljana*."[22] Also, the start of classes at the schools for advanced crafts was postponed to 10 November due to the "*widespread Spanish flu*".[23]

Classes were not suspended in Ljubljana only but also in schools of other districts in Carniola. On the basis of school data, several districts reported mass infections in individual towns to the Provincial Government in Ljubljana. The Črnomelj district administration reported that in schools in Bojanci[24] and Metlika only one third of pupils attended classes on 4 October. Child infections were particularly numerous there, with some severe cases accompanied by pneumonia. Two teachers and 20 pupils fell ill.[25] The press reported that schools in the surroundings of Črnomelj remained closed on 12 November since "*classes are impossible in the near future […]*".[26] Classes resumed on 21 November in this district.[27] The "Spanish" disease also caused school closures in Krško.[28]

Press articles and numerous reported school closures in the Novo mesto district are a reflection of the high impact of the disease in that district as a whole. Press article authors noticed that in Novo mesto the influenza killed mainly women, while in (Dolenjske) Toplice it spread predominantly among children and younger women. The "Spanish" disease also spread through remote municipalities and villages. They criticized school supervisors that allowed children from infected homes to continue going to school.[29] There were reports from Novo mesto that the flu was ubiquitous, with mass infections in certain families. Senior district physician Ivan Vaupotič reported that the disease had been widespread among primary school children and that there are cases among upper secondary school students as well. Accordingly, he ordered on 7 October that the upper secondary school and primary school be closed immediately.[30] The upper secondary school was closed on 9 October, initially until 23 October, which was subsequently prolonged to 7 November.[31] Classes at the boys' primary school resumed on 11 November.[32] Physician Vaupotič demanded that the school in Sv. Peter by Novo Mesto (Otočec) in this district be closed since 190 of 249 pupils contracted the disease, i.e. 76.3%, as well as both clergymen and the teacher.[33] On 11 October, three schools in Šmihel by Novo mesto were also closed. In this town, 66 (46%) pupils at the boys' primary school, 42 (91%) pupils at the girls' school, and 40 (42%) students at the secondary school fell ill.[34] In the four-level primary school in Trebnje the physician diagnosed 34% infections among a total of 322 pupils. By visiting them individually, he confirmed that they all contracted the flu.[35] On 16 October, the school in Žužemberg was closed, where 79 of 346 children fell ill,[36] as well as the one in Vavta vas, where 66 of 101 Ist grade students fell ill, while classes were suspended in the IInd and IIIrd grade because the senior and junior teacher contracted the disease.[37] On 17 October, the school in Toplice was closed because more than half pupils fell ill.[38] A day later, the school in Gabrje in Brusnice municipality was closed, not only due to the flu, but also scarlet fever and dysentery.[39] In the second half of October, schools in the following villages were closed: Orehovica, Spodnja Nemška vas, Selo, Zagradec, Stopiče,

19 *Slovenski narod*, 30. 9. 1918, No. 223, p. 5.
20 SI AS 33, 17/8, 1918, box 944, No. 33040, No. 33268; *Slovenski narod*, 3. 10. 1918, p. 4.
21 SI AS 33, 17/8, 1918, box 944, No. 34024.
22 *Učiteljski tovariš*, 18. 10. 1918, No. 22, p. 5.
23 *Slovenski narod*, 18. 10. 1918, No. 241, p. 3.
24 SI AS 33, 17/8, l. 1918, box 944, No. 32139.
25 SI AS 33, 17/8, No. 33103.
26 *Slovenski narod*, 12. 11. 1918, No. 267, p. 4.
27 SI AS 33, 17/8, No. 37496.
28 *Slovenski narod*, 31. 10. 1918, No. 256, p. 5.
29 *Slovenski narod*, 7. 10. 1918, No. 229, p. 5; 12. 10. 1918, No. 235, p. 4.
30 SI AS 33, 17/8, No. 33231.
31 *Dolenjske novice*, 10. 10. 1918, No. 41, p. 163; 7. 11. 1918, No. 45, p. 179.
32 *Dolenjske novice*, 7. 11. 1918, No. 45, p. 179.
33 SI AS 33, 17/8, No. 33781.
34 SI AS 33, 17/8, No. 33780.
35 SI AS 33, 17/8, No. 34073.
36 SI AS 33, 17/8, No. 34563.
37 SI AS 33, 17/8, No. 34564.
38 SI AS 33, 17/8, No. 34862.
39 SI AS 33, 17/8, No. 34863.

Ambrus, Dobrniče, Brusnice, Hinje (by Žužemberg), Bela Cerkev, Soteska, Gornja Sušica and Žvirče (by Žužemberg).[40] School closures in the Novo mesto district continued in the beginning of November, for example in Mirna Peč where classes were erratic and poorly attended.[41] The next schools to be closed were the ones in Št. Lovrenc – where the teacher fell ill as well –, in Črmošnjice and Dol. Karteljevo – where 70% of students fell ill–, and in Prečna, where "absenteeism was high and classes almost impossible".[42] School closures continued in November, in Dvor and Podgrad on 9 November. In the latter, only one tenth of pupils attended classes.[43]

All schools except the upper secondary school were closed in the city of Maribor as well. In the beginning of October it was established that the flu had been particularly widespread in schools. Until 5 October 140 students fell ill in the Maribor general upper secondary school, as many as 20 per class in some classes.[44] The Maribor city council decided on October 19 to suspend classes in all primary and secondary schools and kindergartens until at least 27 October.[45]

Press articles reveal that due to the epidemic schools were being closed elsewhere around the Slovenian provinces. In Prague, all German and Czech schools were closed (initially between 7 and 20 October and subsequently until 4 November), while classes at the Prague University were postponed until 21 October.[46] In Budapest, schools were also closed on 4 November "*due to the widespread Spanish disease*".[47] The mayor of Vienna closed all primary and secondary schools on 7 October, the city also closed all theatres and cinemas simultaneously.[48] According to the currently prevailing view with regard to the influenza epidemic, schools in Vienna were closed too late.[49] In certain cities like Seckau in Steiermark schools remained closed until the end of that year.[50] There were mass infections of students and teachers also in Graz where 40% infections were reported for certain schools, and in some schools as many as half of the teachers fell ill. Consequently, schools in that city were closed as of 9 October, initially for three weeks and later until 4 November. According to the official announcement of the Graz city council, classes resumed only after all anti-influenza measures were lifted, i.e. on Monday 11 November. All public and private kindergartens, primary schools, secondary and upper secondary schools, craft schools, religious classes and dancing schools were closed in Graz. Children plays were also prohibited.[51] The press reported on school closures in Linz,[52] Villach[53] and Trieste, in the latter from end of October until at least 15 November.[54] In Klagenfurt, schools were closed at least until 4 November,[55] while both primary schools in Voelkermarkt were closed as well.[56] At least from 11 to 26 October, schools were closed in Istria,[57] they closed in Zagreb on 10 October, and a day later in Osijek and Sarajevo.[58] Of course, classes were erratic due to other reasons as well during the First World War. In Ljubljana it was difficult to organise classes due to the large concentration of troops in the city. It follows from school chronicles of certain schools in Ljubljana that schools organised classes during the war according to adapted curricula either only in parts of schools or in entirely different buildings, or even more buildings simultaneously, because larger school building were occupied by troops and military hospitals.[59] Classes were interrupted due to other infectious diseases, for example in September 1918 due to dysentery and scarlet fever in certain villages in Dolenjska (Biška vas, Zabrdje, Stan and Stara gora).[60] All schools in Vienna were closed between 14 December 1918 and 7 January 1919 due to the heating coal shortage.[61]

Back to school

The world changed dramatically for school children during the one-month forced holiday. While they left classrooms of Austro-Hungarian schools at the beginning of October, they returned to classrooms of the new Yugoslav state. During the suspension of classes due to the Spanish flu epidemic, the First World War ended, Austria-Hungary disintegrated and the new State of SHS emerged. Nevertheless, life continued in those turbulent times despite the epidemic, as evidenced *inter alia* by school chronicles. The chronicle of an eight-grade boys' primary school in Šiška in Ljubljana reports that,

40 SI AS 33, 17/8, Nos. 35446, 35447, 35448, 35527, 35528, 35529, 35668, 35912, 36039, 36040, 36041, 36042, 36043, 36044.
41 SI AS 33, 17/8, No. 36445.
42 SI AS 33, 17/8, Nos. 36446, 36447, 36522, 36523.
43 SI AS 33, Nos. 36906, 36907.
44 *Slovenski narod*, 5. 10. 1918, No. 228, p. 5.
45 *Grazer Tagblatt*, 17. 10. 1918, p. 2; *Marburger Zeitung*, 20. 10. 1918, p. 2.
46 *Grazer Tagblatt*, 6. 10. 1918, p. 2; *Slovenski narod*, 12. 10. 1918, No. 235, p. 4; 19. 10. 1918, No. 243, p. 4.
47 *Slovenski narod*, 20. 9. 1918, No. 215, p. 3; 19. 10. 1918, No. 243, p. 4.
48 *Grazer Tagblatt*, 8. 10. 1918, p. 6.
49 Biwald et al., Spitäler, Lazarette, Hygiene, Wohlfahrt, p. 300.
50 *Grazer Tagblatt*, 12. 12. 1918, p. 2.
51 *Grazer Tagblatt*, 6. 10. 1918, p. 2; 10. 10. 1918, p. 2; 27. 10. 1918, p. 11; 10. 11. 1918, p. 7.
52 *Grazer Tagblatt*, 10. 10. 1918, p. 2.
53 *Grazer Tagblatt*, 17. 10. 1918, p. 2.
54 *Slovenski narod*, 12. 10. 1918, No. 235, p. 4; *Grazer Tagblatt*, 11. 10. 1918, p. 3; 15. 11. 1918, p. 2.
55 *Grazer Tagblatt*, 12. 10. 1918, p. 3; 18. 10. 1918, p. 2.
56 *Grazer Tagblatt*, 20. 10. 1918, p. 3.
57 Delić, Vijesti o španjolskoj gripi, pp. 177–178.
58 Hutinec, Odjeci epidemije "španjolske gripe", p. 231.
59 See Šimac and Keber, *Patriae ac humanitati*; *Učiteljski tovariš*, 15. 11. 1918, No. 26, p. 4.
60 SI AS 33, reg. 17/8, fasc. 1918, No. 30004.
61 *Učiteljski tovariš*, 13. 12. 1918, No. 28, p. 9.

Image of the Spanish influenza as a Spanish woman with a fan (Kurent, 16. 10. 1918, No. 6, enclosed).

although the school was closed on 29 October – a day before the proclamation of the new national government in Ljubljana – due to the Spanish flu epidemic, children and teachers attended the solemn procession through Ljubljana.[62] More than 30,000 people attended a large patriotic manifestation at Ljubljana's Congress square.[63] The event was attended by pupils and teachers of the 1st girls' primary school as well. "*Dressed for the festive occasion, the girls gathered at 8am in school. They all wore Slovenian ribbons, holding small Slovenian flags in their hands.*"[64] Although it has been demonstrated that mass gatherings after the armistice contributed to the spread of the Spanish flu across Europe, that cannot be claimed for the 29 October event in Ljubljana. The Spanish flu and pneumonia mortality rate peaked in Ljubljana already mid-October and then plummeted towards mid-November.[65] Considering diverse forecasts on the resumption of classes in Carniola, it is probable that not all schools resumed classes on the same day, and it seems that, in addition to the epidemic, it was the complex political circumstances at the time that affected substantially the resumption of classes. The department of education and religion published in the 9 November edition of the newspaper *Slovenski narod* that classes will resume at secondary schools and the lycée as soon as possible, while classes at primary schools will "*continue according to local conditions*".[66] Classes probably resumed at most schools in mid-November since the press reported on 14 November that "school classes are to be resumed these days in all schools". Classes resumed at both lycées and the national school for crafts in Ljubljana on 18 November.[67]

The influenza epidemic was exhausting for much of the school population, considering also the spe-

62 SI ZAL LJU 401, OŠ Zvonka Runka, school chronicle of 1918/1919, MF 25.
63 Perovšek, Za Državo Slovencev, Hrvatov in Srbov, p. 207.
64 SI ZAL LJU 372, 1st girls' primary school in Ljubljana, school chronicle of 1918/1919, MF 22.
65 Kalčič, Španska gripa, image 2, p. 260.
66 *Slovenski narod*, 9. 11. 1918, No. 265, p. 4.
67 *Slovenski narod*, 14. 11. 1918, No. 269, p. 5.

cific context at the end of First World War in which most of the population faced prolonged shortages of food and other basic necessities. It appears from the press articles that the Spanish flu epidemic contributed to an enhanced general care for the health of children. Consequently, when schools in Ljubljana resumed classes, there were appeals in the press to introduce morning-only classes due to health reasons in particular. Due to the alternating morning and afternoon classes, children needed to "*walk four times through muddy and snowy streets and soaked their already poor shoes, and freeze four times in poor clothing*", which impacted their health negatively. "*The youth is already suffering much due to poor nutrition, only to be now exposed to unnecessary frost as well.*" In parallel, schools would be heated once daily only and aerated thoroughly in the afternoons.[68]

Death among students and teachers in schools in Ljubljana

School chronicles of certain schools in Ljubljana contain *inter alia* data on the deceased students and teachers. Since influenza-related mortality statistics do not exist neither for Ljubljana nor for individual Slovenian provinces, these individual cases cannot be placed in a wider statistical context. Without statistical data, the comparison of mortality between different population groups is not possible. Nevertheless, the data are valuable since they demonstrate that death was present among students and teachers in many schools. At the Polje school, 6 of the second, fifth and sixth grade died during the epidemic between 5 October and 14 November. The teacher died as well. "*Teachers and pupils followed the teacher to her premature grave where the headmaster gave a farewell speech in the name of teachers and students […]*".[69] At the first girls' primary school there were 300 infected pupils and 8 teachers, but they recovered by the beginning of November.[70] The Prule school chronicle states that health was not particularly good in 1918 since pupils contracted especially the Spanish flu that caused 3 deaths of pupils in the first, third and fourth grade.[71] At the school in Zalog by Ljubljana, 47 pupils and a teacher contracted the disease, and a second grade pupil died.[72] At the current Valentin Vodnik school, one second grade pupil died.[73] At the school in Šentvid, 5/6 of children fell ill and the Spanish disease "claimed some victims among school children".[74]

At the Ledina school, one pupil of the 4th grade died of the flu and two of dysentery. "*Pupils laid flowers on the grave of their prematurely deceased colleagues and followed them together with their teachers with the school flag to their final resting place at Sv. Križ. The 1st city school joins their parents, relatives and friends in mourning.*"[75] It is noted in the minutes of teachers' conference at the 3rd boys' city primary school (Vrtača) that the cruel Spanish disease did not spare this school. "*On 15 October, it took our senior teacher colleague who worked here for 7 years and one month. He was a calm and kind man and our dear colleague […]*".[76] At the Spodnja Šiška school, almost all teachers and pupils fell ill during the epidemic as well.[77]

Among the most affected schools was the Sv. Stanislav school in Šentvid, where almost 200 pupils and many teachers fell ill, of which five students, one teacher, the prefect and the sister of mercy died. The newsletter of this religious school contains a precise report: "*The Spanish disease broke out in the school at the beginning of October and spread extremely rapidly, although initially it did not seem dangerous. But then in the afternoon of 6 October a 4th grade pupil […] suddenly died. On 7 October a 5th grade pupil […] died in the Ljubljana provincial hospital. On 10 October a first grade pupil […] died. On the same day, a 5th grade pupil […] died. On 11 October in the morning God summoned professor […] to eternal rest. On the same day the prefect […] died after 1 pm. On 16 October a 5th grade pupil […] died. The last victim of the mighty Spanish disease was the sister of mercy who died on 8 December.*"[78]

Teacher and student infections during the epidemic were also recorded in *Učiteljski tovariš* that published obituaries of the deceased Slovenian teachers and reports on the deceased family members of individual teachers. Regrettably, certain reports on the death of teachers and their family members during the epidemic do not mention the cause of death. While these cases may well be attributed to the flu, dying of other causes was not uncommon during the war.

68 *Slovenski narod*, 19. 11. 1918, No. 273, p. 4.
69 SI ZAL LJU 391, OŠ Edvarda Kardelja Ljubljana Polje, school chronicle of 1918/1919, MF 24.
70 SI ZAL LJU 372, 1st girls' primary school in Ljubljana (at sv. Jakob), school chronicle of 1918/1919, MF 22.
71 SI ZAL LJU 370, OŠ Prule, school chronicle of 1918/1919, MF 21.
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Conclusion

On the basis of the Ljubljana Provincial Government documents, the available chronicles and materials of schools in Ljubljana, as well as various press reports, it can unequivocally be concluded that the Spanish flu was widely proliferated within the school population in the central Slovenian area. Almost one third of primary school students in Ljubljana fell ill in the first few days of October. The share of students who were absent due to the disease in individual schools in Ljubljana ranged from 16 to 75% of all students. The data on infections in individual schools, despite being fragmented and gathered sporadically, clearly confirm not only the existence of the epidemic among students and teachers in Autumn of 1918, but also across all population layers at that time. School closure was one of the public health measures that existed in Austria-Hungary and the only one that Carniolan authorities implemented. In the same period, schools were closed in most neighbouring Austro-Hungarian regions and cities as well. However, since the influenza had been widespread already in the last week of September, it appears that this measure was implemented too late in Carniola.

The world changed dramatically during the involuntary vacation for school children. While schools were closed due to the Spanish flu epidemic, the First World War ended, Austria-Hungary disintegrated, and the new State of SHS emerged. The awareness of the mass infections and deaths during the epidemic rapidly faded away amidst the condensed developments at the end of the First World War. The epidemic remained forgotten also as part of the collective memory of the First World War.[79]

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P O V Z E T E K

Epidemija v šolskih klopeh: primer španske gripe leta 1918 v osrednjeslovenskem prostoru

Pandemija španske gripe velja za eno največjih katastrof v človeški zgodovini. V obdobju 1918–1920 naj bi po vsem svetu zbolelo 500 milijonov ljudi in jih po zadnjih ocenah umrlo med 50 in 100 milijoni oz. od tri do pet procentov takratne svetovne populacije. Bolezen se je skoraj povsod po svetu v manj kot letu dni razširila v treh valovih. Na severni polobli so jo prvič zaznali spomladi in poleti leta 1918, drugi val bolezni je zajel ves svet jeseni tega leta, zadnji val je sledil spomladi leta 1919. Za Avstro-Ogrsko velja ocena, da je epidemija influence zahtevala okrog 260.000 življenj civilistov. Drugi, smrtonosni val bolezni se je v monarhiji začel septembra leta 1918 in svoj višek dosegel v oktobru in novembru ter upadel decembra istega leta.

Raziskovanje epidemije španske gripe leta 1918 v slovenskem prostoru otežujejo poleg pomanjkljive in slabo ohranjene zdravstvene dokumentacije tudi zapletene geopolitične razmere v letih 1918/1919, saj je epidemija izbruhnila ob samem koncu prve svetovne vojne, ko je hkrati prišlo do razpada Avstro-Ogrske in nastanka najprej Države SHS, nato Kraljevine Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev. Obolevanje učencev in učiteljev za špansko gripo je eno od redkih dogajanj v zvezi z epidemijo, ki je do neke mere dokumentirano in ki neposredno kaže na veliko razširjenost te bolezni v slovenskem prostoru. Na ljubljanskih ljudskih šolah je bilo npr. v prvih dneh oktobra leta 1918 bolnih 1.252 učencev oz. 29,7 % vseh šolarjev. Izpad učencev pri pouku je bil v posameznih šolah različen, in sicer v razponu od 16 %–75 % vseh šolarjev. Edini javno-zdravstveni ukrep na Kranjskem med epidemijo je bilo enomesečno zaprtje vseh šol najprej v Ljubljani, nato še v najbolj prizadetih okrajih na Dolenjskem. Ljubljanski mestni zdravnik je zaradi množičnega obolevanja učencev in dijakov pouk prekinil 3. oktobra 1918, nato je 12. oktobra ljubljanski mestni magistrat skupaj s c. kr. Deželnim šolskim svetom odredil zaprtje vseh srednjih, javnih in zasebnih ljudskih šol in vrtcev do vključno 3. novembra 1918. Večina šol je s poukom spet začela sredi novembra. Za šolajoče se otroke pa se je svet med enomesečnimi prisilnimi počitnicami temeljito spremenil. Če so v začetku oktobra zapustili učilnice avstro-ogrskih šol, so se sredi novembra vrnili v šolske razrede nove jugoslovanske države.

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