

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek

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## **Ribnica v primežu strahu pred roparji – poskus vpada roparske skupine v Ribnico leta 1768**

### IZVLEČEK

Članek obravnava roparske vpade na Kranjsko v drugi polovici 18. stoletja, med njimi tudi poskus roparskega napada na Ribnico leta 1768. Po uradnih poročilih naj bi roparske skupine sestavljalo domnevno pravoslavno prebivalstvo, ki so ga v uradnih virih največkrat označevali kot »Vlaha«, torej krščansko polnomadsko prebivalstvo Osmanskega cesarstva. Verjetno je šlo za skupine, v katerih so bili tudi krajišniki in drugi prebivalci Vojne krajine, saj so v času najintenzivnejših ropanj na tem območju potekale temeljne družbene spremembe. Nastanek roparskih skupin so spodbujale politične, gospodarske, okoljske, geomorfološke, klimatske in splošne družbene razmere ter bližina gospodarsko pomembnih povezovalnih cest. Članek pozornost posveča tudi kolektivnemu strahu in kolektivnemu spominu na roparje.

### KLJUČNE BESEDE

roparske skupine, Vojna krajina, Ribnica, krajišniki, Vlaha, 18. stoletje

### ABSTRACT

#### *RIBNICA IN THE GRIP OF FEAR FROM BRIGANDS – AN ATTEMPTED BRIGAND RAID ON RIBNICA IN 1768*

The article deals with brigand incursions into Carniola in the second half of the eighteenth century, including an attempted raid on Ribnica in 1768. According to official reports, gangs of brigands were composed of Orthodox population, most often labelled in official sources as »Vlachs«, i.e., Christian semi-nomadic peoples of the Ottoman Empire. It is highly likely that these gangs also included soldiers and other inhabitants of the Military Frontier, especially given the fundamental changes that were taking place at the time when brigandage in the area reached its height. Brigand gangs occurred due to political, economic, environmental, geomorphological, climate and general social conditions, as well as the vicinity of economically crucial transport connections. The article also focuses on the collective fear and collective memory of brigands.

### KEY WORDS

gangs of brigands, Military Frontier, Ribnica, soldiers of Military Frontier, Vlachs, eighteenth century

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## S U M M A R Y

### Ribnica in the grip of fear from brigands – an attempted brigand raid on Ribnica in 1768

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the daily life of both market towns and rural areas in the south-westernmost corner of present-day Slovenia (Jablanica), Inner Carniola (Planina, Unec, villages

surrounding Lake Cerknica), Bloška Polica, the foot of Mt. Snežnik, Loški potok, Ribniška dolina, the wider Kočevje area, and Bela krajina (White Carniola) (Črnomelj, the seigniory of Poljane ob Kolpi, and the Lahinja River basin) was marked by summer raids of brigands plundering along the roads Vienna–Trieste and Karolina (Rijeka (Bakar)–Karlovac) and creating collective panic among the local population. They attacked settlements, hamlets, and secluded houses along their incursion route into Carniola. These incursions were presumably made by Bosnian groups of Orthodox brigands, most often designated in official documents »Vlachs«, i.e., Christian seminomadic peoples of the Ottoman Empire. There are some evidences, that they also included Muslim inhabitants of Bosnia. Military deserters as potential brigands are mentioned particularly during the time of intense recruitment before numerous wars waged by the Habsburg Monarchy and in the wake of major military campaigns. Otherwise, the usual culprits were Ottoman subjects. The designation Vlach in reference to these brigands was used primarily in legal-political context and did not necessarily signify members of a certain ethnic group. Brigand gangs were most likely composed of men, subjects of the Ottoman Empire as well as inhabitants of the Military Frontier, who were driven to brigandage by their social and political circumstances (the plight of serfs, tax and military pressure, underdeveloped low-yield agriculture, almost completely natural economy and hence shortage of money, the cultural image of the »Other«, the legal system, the boundary between two sovereigns, religious differences) and opportunities (new transport connections for heavy and slow-moving freight, postal carriages). An additional facilitating factor in the second half of the eighteenth century was highly unfavourable climate conditions, which further undermined the already low agricultural yields. Apart from the general conditions that led to rampant brigandage carried out by sizable gangs, the article also presents an attempted raid on Ribnica (1768) and compares this incident with another collective calamity, i.e., a major fire that hit the market town ten years later (1778). Attention is also given to the collective memory of concrete raiding incursions and the question of how collective fears affected political decisions.