

1.02 Pregledni znanstveni članek

UDK 343.9:398.47(497.434Ribnica)"1700/1701"

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Čarovniški proces v Ribnici 1700–1701 – najbolj znan čarovniški proces na Kranjskem

IZVLEČEK

Ribniški čarovniški proces v letih 1700–1701 je zaradi večkratne objave izvirnega sodnega zapisnika in literarnih upodobitev eden najbolj znanih čarovniških procesov na Slovenskem. Časovno sovpada z daljšim obdobjem vrhunca čarovniških procesov na Kranjskem. Središčna predpostavka v procesu je bil koncept pakta s hudičem. Proces je skoraj zagotovo zahteval vsaj sedem žrtev.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

Ribnica, čarovniški procesi, sabbat, Marina Češarek, Janez Jurij Hočevar

ABSTRACT

RIBNICA WITCH TRIAL (1700–1701) – THE MOST FAMOUS WITCH TRIAL IN CARNIOLA

Thanks to multiple publications of the original court minutes and literary depictions, the Ribnica witch trial (1700–1701) is one of the most famous witch trials in the Slovenian territory. The trial coincided in time with the longer period when witch trials in Carniola reached their climax. Its central assumption was the concept of the pact with the devil. The trial almost certainly claimed the lives of at least seven victims.

KEY WORDS

Ribnica, witch trials, Sabbat, Marina Češarek, Janez Jurij Hočevar

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nica Valley in Carniola; 1864) and echoed in literature. Anton Aškerc devoted a long poem to the trial in 1908, entitled *Ribniška čarovnica* (*A Witch from Ribnica*). Even before that, in 1897, Francišek Kralj wrote the story *Zadnja čarovnica* (*The Last Witch*) under the pseudonym Angelar Zdenčan and published it in the feuilleton of the newspaper *Zora*. The greatest contribution to the popularity of the trial, however, was made by Fran Jaklič's story, entitled *Zadnja na grmadi* (*The Last One at the Stake*) – as a feuilleton in 1924 and as a book in 1925.

According to historical research, the Ribnica witch trial of 1701 was most certainly not the last one of such trials to have taken place in Carniola. Major significance attributed to the trial rests on the fact that it was long believed to be the only witch trial in Carniola for which such detailed court minutes have been preserved, including the questions and the suspects' answers. In every regard a typical witch trial, the Ribnica trial was made of the same elements as most such trials at that time: from how it was handled, the accusations and the forced confessions, to the way in which the victims were selected, i.e., through forced confessions of the convicted. The trial coincided in time with the longer period when witch trials in Carniola reached their climax. Its central assumption was the concept of the pact with the devil. The accused stated that they were introduced to witchcraft by other, previously convicted and burned witches. After rubbing flying ointment on parts of their bodies, they flew to Klek to attend a witches' gathering. In addition, they practiced sorcery, most notably conjuring storms to destroy crops.

The Ribnica trial almost certainly claimed the lives of at least seven victims. These were Marina Košir (died of torture on 2 March 1700 in Ribnica's prison), Jera Šober (imprisoned in 1700, almost certainly burned that same year), Anka Zbačnik, Neža Rus (both burned at the stake in the second half of 1700 or in the early 1701), Marina Češarek – also Sušarek (burned at the stake on 11 May 1701), Lucija Kerznič (died of torture on 5 May 1701 in Ribnica's prison; she was buried, exhumed and burned on 11 May 1701, along with Češarek), Anka Končar (imprisoned in 1701, almost certainly burned).

Another figure that featured prominently in the Ribnica trial, apart from the convicted witches, was the blood judge Janez Jurij (Johann Georg) Hočevar, doctor of secular and canon law. He was a versatile man, far less known for his administration of justice than for his talents in music and astronomy, as well as his membership in both Ljubljana academies: academia »operosorum« and academia »philharmonicorum«. His career as a judge was short but bloody. He assumed the office of the imperial blood judge for Carniola in 1695 and officially performed it until 1705. Hočevar undoubtedly holds an important place among witch persecutors in Carniola.



S U M M A R Y

Ribnica witch trial (1700–1701) – the most famous witch trial in Carniola

Thanks to multiple publications of the original court minutes and literary depictions, the Ribnica witch trial of 1701 is one of the most famous witch trials in the Slovenian territory. The court minutes in Slovenian translation were released by Anton Lesar in the book *Ribniška dolina na Kranjskem* (*The Rib-*