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The Rapallo Border between Italy and Yugoslavia after the First World War

Matija Zorn, Peter Mikša

Résumé

La frontière de Rapallo entre Italie et Yougoslavie après la Première Guerre mondiale

Le 12 novembre 1920, à la suite de la Première Guerre mondiale, l'accord de Rapallo définit les frontières nationales entre le royaume des Serbes, Croates, Slovènes (royaume SHS) et celui d'Italie, l'Italie obtenant un tiers du territoire ethnique slovène. Après la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, la frontière entre Italie et Yougoslavie est une nouvelle fois déplacée vers l'ouest. La frontière de Rapallo, pourtant éphémère, a laissé d'importantes traces matérielles (près d'un quart des bornes limites survivent à ce jour), mais a eu surtout des retombées importantes sur le sentiment d'appartenance régional slovène.

Introduction

“Today the hour is approaching when we need to discuss our country’s borders. We ourselves have never spoken of this throughout this war, but now we need to finally say a few words. Our people have been fighting for their freedom and independence, for a better and happier future, but also for the liberation of those of our brothers who languished under a foreign yoke for decades. Our brothers in Istria, the Littoral (Sln. Primorska), and Carinthia must be liberated through this war, and they also will be liberated and will live freely in their homeland together with their brothers.”¹

These words were spoken by Josip Broz Tito on September 12th, 1944, when

the Allies had already recognized the Partisan movement as the only legitimate military force in Yugoslavia during the Second World War.² They indicated that the Yugoslav–Italian border would change after the war ended. In the second half of 1944, the Yugoslav borders were becoming an increasingly important European political issue.³ This was the first statement by the Yugoslav liberation movement concerning its territorial demands intended for an international audience, which Tito further underscored with the slogan “We don’t want anyone else’s land, but we won’t give ours up.”⁴ The public and secret talks between Tito, the British, the Americans, the Russians, and others mostly revolved around Trieste and the new border that was expected to run significantly more to the west than it had before the war. The basis of an agreement had been reached, that the prewar Rapallo Border, which by then had separated the Slovenian ethnic population for approximately a quarter of a century, would become a thing of the past.⁵ The article is a brief review of the creation, existence, end, and legacy of the Rapallo Border.

The Rapallo Border was the result of a 1920 treaty signed in Santa Margherita Ligure near Rapallo on the Ligurian coast by the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes and the Kingdom of Italy, setting the border between the two countries after the First World War.⁶ From the Slovenian perspective, Italy received a third of Slovenian ethnic territory in addition to parts of Croatia (Istria and part of Dalmatia). In return, Italy recognized the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.⁷ The Italians referred to the Julian March, the annexed territory of what is now western Slovenia and Istria, as *Venezia Giulia*, whereas the Slovenians and Croats called it *Julijska krajina*.

The new border ran roughly along the watershed between the Black Sea and the Adriatic Sea. Looking deeper into history, this divide had been used as a border between provinces as far back as in the Roman Empire, and after the collapse of the *Danubian Limes* the divide corresponded to the border between the Italian and other parts of the empire.⁸ This is where defense lines were built to prevent other peoples from invading northern Italy from the east.⁹ Later, this divide was the border between the first Slavic states and the Patriarchate of Aquileia, and the coastal towns, the border with the Kingdom of the Franks and the Kingdom of Italy, the border between the Dominions of Tolmin and Škofja Loka (controlled by Freising)¹⁰ until the early 19th century, and also the border between the Inner Austrian crown lands of Carniola and Gorizia (later the Austrian Littoral).

Before the border was created

The “prequel” to the Rapallo Border can be traced back to the second half of the 19th century and the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy, which considered itself the successor of the Roman Empire and used the Roman ruins outside its territory to argue for that border. “In this sense one should also understand the studies of the Roman fortification lines on the eastern Italian border that Italian researchers conducted from 1920 onwards¹¹ [...] which, however, already gained political importance through prewar irredentist propaganda.”¹² People that had been members of the Italian upper middle class in Austria-Hungary began to view the new state as their motherland, which they wanted to join. Gradually, the idea of Italian imperialism evolved, and Italy sought to carry it out in the eastern Adriatic and beyond.¹³ Dante’s idea that the borders of Italy extend to the Kvarner Gulf certainly came in handy in this regard.¹⁴

Even though Italy joined the Triple Alliance (forged between Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Italy) in 1882¹⁵, the Italian Supreme Military Command devised a plan for war against Austria-Hungary. In addition to defense, it also planned to occupy Austria-Hungary’s territory to obtain “redeemed land” (Ital. *terre redente*)¹⁶ or help “unredeemed” compatriots (Ital. *Italia irredenta*).¹⁷ General Enrico Cosenz (1820–1898) thus planned to take over Tyrol and engage in battle along the Isonzo/Soča River, from where Italian forces would occupy the Ljubljana Basin via the Karst region as well as Klagenfurt via Pontebba and the Predil/Predel Pass.¹⁸

When the First World War broke out, Italy declared neutrality and began negotiating with both the Triple Entente and the Central Powers. In return for entering the war, it sought to obtain as much territory as possible. As early as August 1914, the Triple Entente offered it individual areas in the Trentino region, Badia Valley with Ampezzo, as well as Trieste and Valona (Vlore, Albania), but Italy wanted more. It made territorial demands on Austria-Hungary (Fig. 1, p. 169), but Austria-Hungary did not agree to them and ended the negotiations in March 1915. After that, Italy presented new conditions to the Triple Entente for entering the war. It successfully negotiated the annexation of territories in southern Dalmatia. This laid the foundations for signing the secret¹⁹ Treaty of London on April 26th, 1915, in which Italy was promised the Trentino region and South Tyrol, the County of Gorizia and Gradisca with the town of Gorizia, Trieste, parts of Inner Carniola, Istria, and the islands of Cres and Lošinj with the surrounding smaller islands.²⁰ Even though this separated nearly half a mil-

lion Slovenians and Croatians from their fellow ethnics, the treaty stipulated no obligations on the part of Italy toward its ethnic minorities.²¹

Italy's objectives were manifold – it wanted to complete the process of national unification by gaining stated territories; it wished to establish a strategic border to the north and east; it aspired to obtain a hegemonic position on the Adriatic, and it aimed to consolidate its position as a great power.²²

After Austria-Hungary's defeat and collapse, Italy occupied the territory of the “sacred eastern border” (Ital. *sacro confine orientale*) as early as November 1918. Gradually, and in accordance with the provisions of the truce signed on November 3rd,²³ the Italians pushed forward through the retreating troops of the defeated Austro-Hungarian army, taking over the territory in the direction of the future eastern state border specified in the Treaty of London. The entire demarcation line was taken over by November 15th, that is within the prescribed fifteen days after the end of hostilities.²⁴ However, Italy occupied more territory than agreed (Fig. 1) and even wanted to advance as far as Ljubljana, but Slovenian and Serbian forces prevented that.²⁵ Hence, the occupation line was even more disadvantageous to Slovenians than the line specified in the Treaty of London²⁶, whereas for Italians it was “even more perfect than under the Roman Empire”, as one of the Italian negotiators from Rapallo, Carlo Sforza (1872–1952), commented.²⁷ “From the Italian perspective, this provided Italy a natural border and protection of Italian culture, customs, and economics.”²⁸

Signing the treaty and the content of the treaty

An agreement on the border was sought at the Paris Peace Conference, which began on January 12th, 1919.²⁹ At this conference, which lasted until January 1920, the “Yugoslav delegates had different views on the priority demands [...]. Those who came from the former provinces of the Habsburg Monarchy above all endeavored for a favorable determination of the borders with Republic German Austria and Kingdom of Italy. On the other hand, the delegates from Serbia proper were willing to reach compromises in the Adriatic in exchange for concessions on the eastern borders of the new state. Their inconsistent position naturally led to tensions within the delegation”³⁰, which was headed by the most influential Serbian politician Nikola Pašić (1845–1926). No agreement was reached, and so bilateral negotiations between the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes and the Kingdom of Italy were held from February to



Fig. 1: The border between Italy and Austria-Hungary, and the 1915 Italian territorial demands toward Austria-Hungary; the border envisaged in the Treaty of London, the border of the 1918 Italian occupation (until 1920), and the Rapallo Border (1920–1947).

June 1920.³¹ Both sides rejected the proposal presented by American President Woodrow Wilson, who did not recognize the Treaty of London, but at the same time denied the Slovenian part of the new kingdom access to the sea.³² On November 8th, 1920 a new round of bilateral negotiations began, in which Italy insisted on the border specified in the Treaty of London; it had absolute political dominance, having emerged from the war as a great power.³³ The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes had only just been constituted and therefore had unresolved border disputes with six neighbors, as well as internal disputes between the Serbs and Croats.³⁴ In addition, it was also being pressured by the other two signatories to the Treaty of London: the United Kingdom and France. Under those circumstances, the political authorities of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes finally agreed to Italy's terms.³⁵

The Treaty of Rapallo³⁶ was signed on November 12th, 1920.³⁷ The demarcation line ran roughly along the watershed between the Black Sea and the Adriatic, along the Julian Alps in the north, along the sub-Alpine hills in the center, and along the Dinaric Mountains in the south (Fig. 1, p. 169). In the Julian Alps, the border followed the divide closely, whereas in the sub-Alpine hills the Italians forced a border that ran (up to several kilometers) beyond the divide.³⁸ In this way, they interfered with the previous cadastral, parish, and school districts, even though the Treaty of London established that previous local districts were not allowed to be divided.³⁹ Further south, in the Dinaric Mountains, the karst character of the area or the absence of surface water made it impossible to define the divide between the two watersheds easily along the surface because it runs below the surface. In addition, the border did not adapt to the karst relief, but it largely ran in straight lines between individual peaks.⁴⁰

Italy expedited the ratification of the treaty and the government approved it on December 17th (in the Chamber of Deputies) and December 27th (in the Senate), 1920.⁴¹ Because of public indignation, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes did not submit the treaty to the assembly and simply published it in the official gazette on December 8th, 1920.⁴² It was not until June 27th, 1921⁴³ that the treaty was declared a temporary law, which was to enter into force permanently when approved by the National Assembly of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. This happened in 1922, when the Rapallo Treaty was incorporated into Article 130 of the St. Vitus Day Constitution (Sln. *Vidovdanska ustava*).⁴⁴

Demarcating the border

By signing the treaty, both kingdoms agreed to establish a mixed demarcation committee that would precisely define the border, measure it, and erect boundary stones. The committee⁴⁵ began its work in February 1921 and concluded it at the end of 1926.⁴⁶ According to the committee's measurements, the entire border in present-day Slovenia and down to Fiume (present-day Rijeka in Croatia) was 244,5 km long and, after the Free State of Fiume was annexed to Italy, it was extended to nearly 264 km.⁴⁷

For demarcation purposes, cartographic measurements were carried out between 1920 and 1925 by members of the Italian Military Geographical Institute (Ital. *Istituto Geografico Militare*) in Florence. Eighty-four 1: 5000 maps⁴⁸ were created for the area from the Austrian–Italian–Slovenian tripoint (Sln. *Tromeja* or *Peč*, Germ. *Dreiländereck* or *Ofen*, Ital. *Monte Forno*) to Rijeka. In addition to the border itself, these maps also contain all of the boundary stones (Fig. 2, p. 172); and their elevation, the distance to the previous and the next boundary stone, and the cumulative distance from the boundary stone at the tripoint are provided in a separate table for each boundary stone.

Once the border was defined and drawn on paper, it began to be marked with boundary stones on the ground. Both delegations decided to use concrete boundary stones (Ital. *termini di confine* or *cippi*) in the form of prisms made of reinforced concrete resting on a stone foundation.⁴⁹ They agreed to use four types of boundary stones that had different shapes, depending on their purpose⁵⁰ (Fig. 3, p. 173):

- The main boundary stones (Ital. *termini principali* or *cippi principali*): these were placed at important border points and in elevated, clearly visible places. They marked the beginning of a sector, were one meter tall, and numbered with consecutive Arabic numerals;
- Secondary or intermediate boundary stones (Ital. *termini secondari*): these were placed between the main boundary stones and used to demarcate the border in greater detail. They were 60 cm tall and were marked with the consecutive number of the sector and a consecutive Roman numeral within the sector;
- Special boundary stones (Ital. *termini speciali*): these were placed in areas where the border crossed major routes or where there was a border crossing. They were marked in the same way as the secondary boundary stones, but were taller (1.5 m);



Fig. 2: Section of a 1: 5000 map showing the Rapallo Border at Breznica pri Žireh. The border is marked red (on original maps); the Kingdom of Italy lies to the left, or west of the border, and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes to the right, or east. A square with red edges (red on original map) represents main boundary stone no. 39 (top), two solid red circles mark (red on original map) the special boundary stones along the road from Žiri to Spodnja Idrija and the Osojnica border crossing, and the hollow red circles (red on original map) represent other types of boundary stones numbered with Roman numerals.

- The tripoint boundary stone (Ital. *termine triconfinale*) stood at the top of Mount Peč (Sln. *Tromeja*, Ger. *Dreiländereck* or *Ofen*, Ital. *Monte Forno*); it marked the tripoint between Austria, Italy, and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.⁵¹

The border was divided into seventy sectors, which were separated from one another by the main boundary stones numbered 1 to 70 in Arabic numerals (boundary stone 70 marked the border with the Free State of Fiume; there

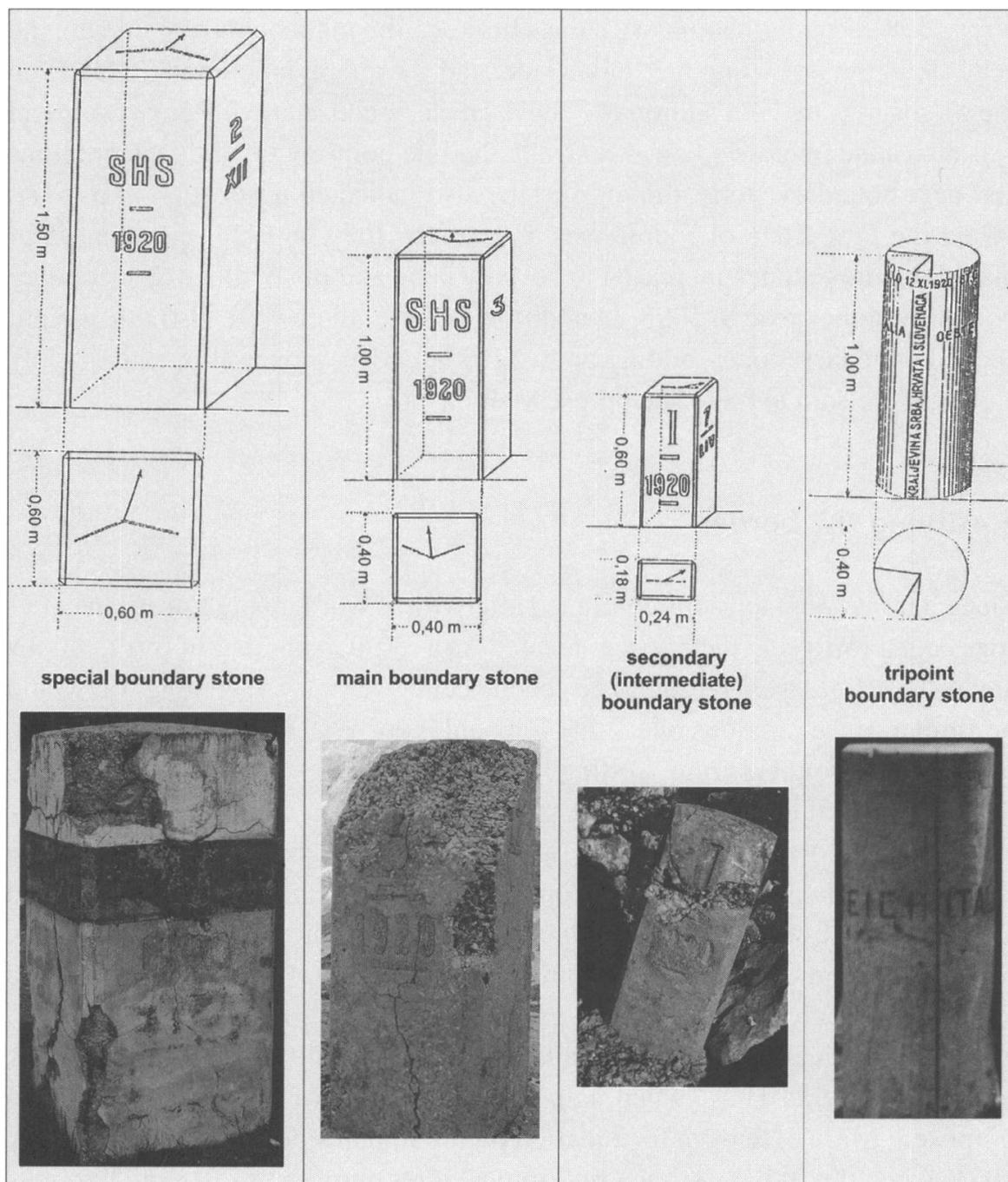


Fig. 3: The dimensions of individual boundary stones with labels (top). On the front and back were featured letters referring to one of the two countries and the year the Treaty of Rapallo was signed. The Arabic numeral on the side denoted the sector's number and the Roman numeral indicated the sequence within the sector. The two lines on the top pointed towards the previous and next boundary stone, and the arrow indicated north. The three photos at the bottom (from left; taken by Matija Zorn) show three types of preserved boundary stones; the original tripoint marker shown in the rightmost photo is no longer preserved (the photo was taken in 1939; courtesy of Nani Poljanec).

were 4508 secondary boundary stones between the main boundary stones), the year 1920, the letter *I* on the Italian side, and the abbreviation *SHS* (later *J*) on the Yugoslav side.⁵² In addition to these labels, a consecutive Roman numeral was also added below a line. Alongside the line pointing towards the previous and next boundary stone, the top surface also indicated north (Fig. 3, p. 173). When the Free State of Fiume was annexed to Italy in 1924, the number of main boundary stones increased to seventy-nine and the number of secondary boundary stones rose to 5098; in addition to these, there were also thirty-eight special boundary stones, adding up to 5215 boundary stones altogether.⁵³ Only a quarter are said to have been preserved.⁵⁴

Fortifying the border

Since international tensions continued after World War I, many European countries began fortifying their border areas.⁵⁵ As a result, a number of fortifications and defense lines were created. The general belief was that the coming war would be similar to the previous one – that it would involve static warfare. In order to prevent their soldiers from “rotting” in muddy trenches and being exposed to deadly fire from guns and artillery, nearly all European countries began building extensive fortification systems, among them the Czech fortifications in the Sudetes, the Maginot Line and the opposite Siegfried Line between France and Germany, the Swiss National Redoubt, the Mannerheim Line in Finland, the Metaxas Line in Greece, and the Italian Alpine Wall (Ital. *Vallo Alpino*), whose east wing also crossed Slovenian territory.⁵⁶

The first fortifications on the Rapallo Border were built by the Italians. Work began as early as 1927, when a special committee was established for this purpose.⁵⁷ More extensive fortification on the Italian side started after January 1931, when the Italians started building a larger number of forts and barracks above and below ground, connected into the Alpine Wall.⁵⁸ The Alpine Wall was composed of two main fortification lines. The first one ran right along the border and the other a few kilometers behind it, whereby the distance between the two often depended on the terrain.⁵⁹ Construction of the defensive system officially began on January 6th, 1931, when the high command issued circular no. 200, titled “Guidelines for Organizing Permanent Defense in the Mountains” (Ital. *Direttive per la organizzazione difensiva permanente nelle montagne*). Circular no. 800 of March 5th, 1931, titled “Guidelines for Organ-

izing the Defense in the Wooded Areas on the Eastern Border” (Ital. *Direttive per la organizzazione difensiva nell’interno di zone boschive sulla frontiera orientale*), shows that the Italian military knew that the territory now in Slovenia had special relief (karst features) and vegetation (extensive woods) compared to other areas where the Alpine Wall was being built. Other circulars were more general and covered the entire Italian Alpine region, whereas this particular one set the guidelines for building fortifications exclusively along the eastern border.⁶⁰

That was when the Yugoslav side also started thinking about fortifying its borders. Up until 1938 and the German annexation of Austria (the so-called *Anschluss*), Yugoslavia had only one potentially dangerous and powerful neighbor: Italy. According to the peace treaties concluded after the First World War, other neighbors (Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Albania) had to follow armament and military restrictions, and the remaining two neighbors (Romania and Greece) were Yugoslav allies. Consequently, all of Yugoslavia’s war plans against Italy were defensive.⁶¹

The first initiative to fortify the border was launched as early as in 1926, but actual work did not start until 1935. The fortified area on the border between Italy was called the Western Front, better known as the Rupnik Line in Slovenia today.⁶² The project finally got under way only after the death of King Alexander I of Yugoslavia, when Prince Regent Paul of Yugoslavia came into power.⁶³ In order to start building the fortifications, it was first necessary to build a network of military (gravel) roads, which was carried out from 1936 to 1938.⁶⁴ According to the original plan, work was expected to be completed by 1947. Following the French and Czech models, the plan envisaged two fortification lines. The first was composed of bunkers from which the line would be defended by machineguns, and the second was made up of larger fortifications, which can be divided into ridge and valley (or barrier) fortifications. The number of workers involved testifies to the large scale of the project: the construction teams included 15’000 men in 1935, 40’000 men in 1939, and as many as 60’000 only a year later. They built a total of twelve heavily fortified positions and 4000 smaller concrete bunkers.⁶⁵

In 1939, the plans changed. After the German annexation of Austria, Yugoslavia allocated more funds to fortifying its northern border.⁶⁶

The Rapallo Border during the Second World War

The defense line never served its purpose because it still had not been completed when Italy attacked Yugoslavia as part of the German-led invasion of the country in April 1941, and it was immediately abandoned.⁶⁷

After the invasion of Yugoslavia by the German, Italian and Hungarian forces and its quick capitulation in April 1941, the Rapallo Border from the tripoint to the village of Spodnji Vrsnik in the Idrija region or Brekovice (south of Žiri) remained in place, becoming the state border between Italy and Germany or the German-annexed territory in Upper Carniola.⁶⁸ From there a new border branched off between the German-annexed territory and the Italian-annexed Province of Ljubljana (Ital. *Provincia di Lubiana*). Hence, the Rapallo border lost its international significance in its southern and partly also central section, but it was still used as the internal Italian provincial border. The new German-Italian demarcation agreement was officially signed on July 8th, 1941 in Berlin.⁶⁹ After the Italians annexed the Province of Ljubljana through a royal decree on May 3rd, 1941 and later also through a special law, the southern and part of the central section of the Rapallo Border *de jure* ceased to exist.⁷⁰

The Germans protected their borders with minefields, barbed-wire barriers, guard towers, machinegun emplacements, and so on. In the border zone, they razed all the buildings and cleared all the forest in an approximately 50m-wide band, allowing better control of both sides of the border. In the most open places, they erected a two-meter-high chain-link fence with three rows of barbed wire on top. Behind it, they placed concertina wire on the ground in a two- to three-meter-wide swath, and land mines in a strip several meters wide after that. A guard tower, approximately thirty meters tall, often stood along the border, next to which they also built a bunker with a telephone connection installed. The Germans began to fortify the entire border (in Styria and Upper Carniola) by the fall of 1941.⁷¹

After Italy's capitulation, the Germans also took over the western part of Slovenian ethnic territory and merged Venezia Giulia and the Province of Ljubljana into the Operational Zone of the Adriatic Littoral (Germ. *Operationszone Adriatisches Küstenland*). Thus, the northern part of the Rapallo Border continued to be used as an administrative border between this operational zone and the German-annexed part of Carniola.⁷²

The Rapallo Border after the Second World War

After the Second World War, the border between Italy and Yugoslavia shifted to the west (Fig. 1, p. 169) and significantly closer to the western Slovenian ethnic border. Between 1945 and 1947, it served as the border between Yugoslavia and Zone B of Venezia Giulia.⁷³

The Rapallo Border finally became defunct on February 10th, 1947, when the peace treaty with Italy was signed; the treaty entered into force on September 15th, 1947.⁷⁴

It was not until three decades after the end of World War II that the final border with Italy was agreed, through the 1975 Treaty of Osimo.⁷⁵ In terms of the Rapallo Border's "legacy", three aspects can be highlighted: the Rapallo Border as tourism potential, the Rapallo Border as a generator of regional identity, and the reflection of the Rapallo Border under various administrative divisions. The Rapallo Border's material heritage includes the numerous fortifications on the Alpine Wall and the Rupnik Line. The boundary stones are also important artifacts.

"Until 2000, the Rupnik Line was a completely forgotten historical chapter among the Slovenian public [...]. We knew about the fortifications, but no one spoke let alone wrote about them [...] what the locals living alongside the line knew about these things was primarily that they existed, but we knew less or absolutely nothing about why, how, and under what circumstances they were built."⁷⁶ The majority of fortifications have been preserved until today, even though the German military began destroying them toward the end of the Second World War, as they feared that the Allies would land in Istria. After the war, the locals used parts of them, especially metal, in construction.⁷⁷ Guided tours of several fortifications on the Rupnik Line are available today and several thematic trails have been set up in the area.⁷⁸

"The unjust border also created [...] awareness of a special identity [...] among the people that had to live with it."⁷⁹ Slovenians tend to define their regional identity based on the Inner Austrian provinces from before the First World War or, in the case of Carniola, based on its internal division into Upper (Sln. *Gorenjska*), Lower (Sln. *Dolenjska*), and Inner Carniola (Sln. *Notranjska*).⁸⁰ Thus, for example, the Rapallo Border in Inner Carniola "turned" the former Inner Carniolans in the Idrija region, the Vipava Valley, the Postojna Basin and Pivka, and the Ilirska Bistrica area into *Primorci* 'people from the Littoral'. This means that "their identity originates in the former Italian-held territory"⁸¹

The legacy of the Rapallo Border is also evident in various administrative divisions. Its northernmost part between the Upper Sava (Sln. *Zgornjsavska dolina*) and the Canale (Ital. *Val Canale*) valleys is still used as the border between Italy and Slovenia. The border also continues to be used as the border between the Ljubljana and Koper dioceses (especially to the north of Žiri), as the border between the northern Littoral (Sln. *Severna Primorska*) and Upper Carniolan municipalities, and more to the south some of its sections continue to be used as the border between the municipalities of Logatec and Postojna, Cerknica and Postojna, Cerknica and Pivka, and Pivka and Loška Dolina. In addition, between 1945 and 1947 the Rapallo Border served as the demarcation line between Yugoslavia and Zone B of Venezia Giulia, and in the 1950s as the border between the districts of Nova Gorica and Kranj.⁸² It is still used as the border between the Gorizia (Sln. *goriška statistična regija*) and Upper Carniola (Sln. *gorenjska statistična regija*) statistical regions, and in Slovenia's extreme south (southwest of Babno Polje) several kilometers are used as today's border between Slovenia and Croatia.⁸³

Notes

- 1 M. Mikuž, "Boji Komunistične partije Jugoslavije za zahodne meje (od 1941 do 1945)", *Zgodovinski časopis*, 12–13, 1958–1958, p. 11.
- 2 B. Repe, *S puško in knjigo. Narodnoosvobodilni boj slovenskega naroda 1941–1945*, Ljubljana 2015, p. 359.
- 3 B. Godeša, "Boj za meje", in: *Slovenska novejša zgodovina: od programa Zedinjena Slovenija do mednarodnega priznanja Republike Slovenije: 1848–1992*, Ljubljana 2005, Vol. 1, pp. 758–761 (759).
- 4 E. Kardelj, *Pot nove Jugoslavije: članki in govori iz narodnoosvobodilne borbe 1941–1945*, Ljubljana 1946, p. 220.
- 5 D. Nečak, B. Repe, *Oris sodobne občine in slovenske zgodovine*, Ljubljana 2003, pp. 261–262.
- 6 J. Prunk, "Dva koncepta ureditve povojnega sveta", in: *Svetovna zgodovina: od začetkov do danes*, Ljubljana 1976, pp. 536–547.
- 7 Through the annexation of this territory and together with Rijeka, which was annexed in 1924, Italy received 908,834 ha of land with a population of 901,364. Cf. M. Kacin Wohinz, J. Pirjevec, *Zgodovina Slovencev v Italiji 1866–2000*, Ljubljana 2000, p. 27. According to the 1910 census, this included 421'444 or 43 percentage Italian-speaking people and 479'730 people of Slavic descent, of whom 327'230 or 33 percentage of the total were Slovenian. Cf. P. Ziller, "La Venezia Giulia dalla dissoluzione dell'Austria-Ungheria al Regno d'Italia", in: *Friuli e Venezia Giulia storia del 900*, Udine 1997, pp. 161–182.
- 8 R. Bitelli, *Claustra Alpinum Iuliarum, il confine di Rapallo e il fascismo: archeologia come esempio di continuità*, Koper 1999.
- 9 This defense system is called *Claustra Alpinum Iuliarum* and was built by the Romans at the end of the 3rd century and in the 4th century. It ran from Trsat in the Kvarner Gulf in the south (Croatia) across Slovenian ethnic territory to the Gail Valley in the north (Carinthia, Austria). Bitelli (see note 8).

- 10 G. Žorž, *Varovanje rapalske meje in vojaška navzočnost na območju XI. Armadnega zbora*, M. A. Thesis, Ljubljana 2016, p. 18.
- 11 Bitelli (see note 8), p. 27. During the Paris Peace Conference, an order was issued to determine the precise locations of the Roman defense lines, the existence of which was also used as a counter-argument against Woodrow Wilson's position.
- 12 Bitelli (see note 8), p. 39.
- 13 Kacin Wohinz/Pirjevec (see note 7), pp. 17–18.
- 14 T. Pavšič, "Rapalska meja", in: *O rapalski meji – Zbornik mednarodnega simpozija ob 90. obletnici podpisa rapalske pogodbe*, Logatec 2010, p. 31.
- 15 J. Bleicken et al., *Svetovna zgodovina: od začetkov do danes*, Ljubljana 1976, p. 516.
- 16 This included Venezia Giulia, Zadar, and Venezia Tridentina, which included South Tyrol, referred to as Alto Adige. Cf. M. Kacin Wohinz, "Italijanska zasedba zahodne Slovenije", in: *Slovenska novejša zgodovina: od programa Zedinjena Slovenija do mednarodnega priznanja Republike Slovenije: 1848–1992*, Ljubljana 2005, Vol. 1, p. 515.
- 17 K.-G. Faber, "Evropski vidiki svetovne politike", in: *Svetovna zgodovina: od začetkov do danes*, Ljubljana 1976, p. 524.
- 18 P. Svoljšak, "Od strateških načrtov do raznarodovalne politike italijanskega okupanta na zasedenih slovenskih ozemljih med prvo svetovno vojno", *Annales, Series historia et sociologia*, 9, 2, 1999, p. 394.
- 19 This treaty only became known after the Russian Revolution, when the Bolsheviks published the secret agreements. *Rapallo 12. XI. 1920*, Ljubljana 1921, p. 7.
- 20 The territorial gains promised to Italy are defined in Articles 4 and 5 of the treaty (there are sixteen articles altogether); Article 4 further sets the border that split ethnic Slovenian territory. *Agreement between France, Russia, Great Britain and Italy*, London 1915.
- 21 F. Čulinović, *Riječka država. Od Londonskog pakta i Danuncijade do Rapalla i aneksije Italiji*, Zagreb 1953, p. 184.
- 22 M. Cattaruzza, *Italy and Its Eastern Border, 1866–2016*, New York 2017, p. 2.
- 23 The Armistice of Villa Giusti was signed on November 3rd at 3 pm at Villa Giusti in Padua, which the document is named after. Its content was agreed upon by all of the Triple Entente members, including Serbia, on October 31st, 1918 in Paris. Cf. G. Žorž, "Italijanska zasedba slovenskih krajev v novembru 1918", *Zgodovinski časopis*, 70, 3–4, 2016, p. 367.
- 24 This was the final deadline for Austria-Hungary's troops to retreat behind the demarcation line. Cf. Žorž (see note 23), p. 371.
- 25 Kacin Wohinz (see note 16), p. 515.
- 26 In the north, the border was shifted east of that specified in the Treaty of London, which left a greater number of Slovenians outside the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, whereas in the Adriatic it lay further west, thus incorporating more Croats into the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.
- 27 E. Pelikan, *Tajno delovanje primorske duhovščine pod fašizmom*, Ljubljana 2002, p. 45. Count Sforza was the Italian foreign minister at that time, and he continued to hold this position in as many as four government cabinets after the Second World War, when the issue of the Italian eastern border was being resolved again.
- 28 Bitelli (see note 8), p. 22.
- 29 N. Troha, "Mirovna konferenca in oblikovanje mej", in: *Slovenska novejša zgodovina: od programa Zedinjena Slovenija do mednarodnega priznanja Republike Slovenije: 1848–1992*, Ljubljana 2005, Vol. 1, p. 218.
- 30 A. Rahten, "The Paris Peace Conference and the Slovenes", in: *The Slovenes in the Eyes of the Empire: Handbooks of the British Diplomats Attending the Paris Peace Conference 1919*, Mengeš 2007, p. 288.
- 31 T. Ferenc, M. Kacin Wohinz, T. Zorn, *Slovenci v zamejstvu: pregled zgodovine 1918–1945*, Ljubljana 1974, p. 25.

- 32 Kacin Wohinz/Pirjevec (see note 7), p. 33.
- 33 Žorž (see note 10), p. 28. “When Italy entered World War I, and during the negotiations leading to the Treaty of Rapallo, the country was a major player in Europe; so much that its aim was to acquire the status of the great power one and for all ...”. Cf. Cattaruzza (see note 22), p. 3.
- 34 Bitelli (see note 8), p. 19.
- 35 Milenko Vesnić, Ante Trumbić, and Kosta Stojanović signed the treaty on behalf of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and Giovanni Giolitti, Carlo Sforza, and Ivanoe Bonomi signed it on behalf of Italy. Cf. M. Kacin Wohinz, *Primorski Slovenci pod italijansko zasedbo 1918–1921*, Maribor 1972, p. 374.
- 36 The original was drafted in Italian because both sides agreed on Italian being the common language used in the treaty, which was later also translated into Serbian.
- 37 *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, 1921, No. 141a. *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, 1923, No. 42.
- 38 Žorž (see note 10), pp. 14–15. Cf. R. Jarc, *Rapalska meja: primer reliktna meje in njeni vplivi na družbeno prostorsko strukturo Zahodne Slovenije*, B. A. Thesis, Ljubljana 2002, p. 64.
- 39 M. Naglič, *Dediščina rapalske meje – Rupnikova linija in Alpski zid, življenje ob rapalski meji v letih 1918–43(47): poskus utemeljitve nove muzejske zbirke*, Žiri 2005, pp. 15–16.
- 40 Žorž (see note 10), p. 16.
- 41 Čulinović (see note 21), p. 185.
- 42 *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, 1920, 273 No.
- 43 *Ibid.*, 1921, 141a.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 1922, 224.
- 45 It was called *Commissione italo – s. h. s. per la delimitazione dei confini fra il Regno d’Italia e il Regno S. H. S.* (the Italian–Serb, Croat, and Slovene Committee for the Demarcation of the Border between the Kingdom of Italy and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) and was established on February 23rd, 1921 in Ljubljana, where it also convened for the first time. Cf. *Decisioni della commissione mista stabilita dalle convenzioni Nettuno e di Belgrado*, Roma 1929.
- 46 Žorž (see note 10), pp. 33–34.
- 47 *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- 48 *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 34.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 34.
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 35.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 35.
- 52 Until 1929, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was marked with the abbreviation *SHS*, referring to the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. After constitutional changes, when the kingdom was renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the previous abbreviation *SHS* on the boundary stones was replaced by a carved letter *J* (for *Jugoslavija*).
- 53 Žorž (see note 10), p. 36.
- 54 V. Pečelin, *Življenje na Žirovskem v času rapalske meje: Žiri kot pomemben obmejni kraj*, B. A. Thesis, Ljubljana 2003.
- 55 J. E. Kaufmann, R. M. Jurga, *Fortress Europe: European Fortifications of World War II*, Cambridge (MA) 1999.
- 56 M. Habrnál, *Rupnikova črta in druge jugoslovanske utrdbe iz obdobja 1926–1941*, Dvůr Králové nad Labem 2005, p. 13.
- 57 M. Bizjak, *Italijanski obrambni načrti proti Kraljevini SHS/Kraljevini Jugoslaviji in gradnja utrjenega obrambnega pasu na italijanski vzhodni meji (Rateče-Reka), 1927–1941*, Ph. D. Thesis, Koper 2016, p. 393.
- 58 The wall ran along the entire Italian land border: from the Gulf of Genoa along the ridges of the Alps, and along the French, Swiss, Austrian, and Yugoslav borders to Rijeka Bay; it was 1850 km long. Naglič (see note 39), p. 54.

- 59 A. Jankovič Potočnik, *Rupnikova linija – odkrivanje utrd ob rapalski meji*, Logatec 2009, pp. 167–169.
- 60 Žorž (see note 10), p. 105.
- 61 Z. Marković, *Vojska Kraljevine Jugoslavije in utrjevanje zahodne meje na Slovenskem 1937–1941*, B. A. Thesis, Ljubljana 1995, p. 46.
- 62 It was named after the Yugoslav general of Slovenian descent, Leon Rupnik, mostly known today for being a founder of the Home Guard movement under German annexation during the Second World War. In 1937, Rupnik took charge of the fortification work. Jankovič Potočnik (see note 59), p. 45.
- 63 Marković (see note 61), p. 109.
- 64 Jankovič Potočnik (see note 59), p. 109; D. Nečak, “Rupnik’s defence line – a fortified Slovenian west border”, in: Id. (eds.), *Borders in Southeastern Europe: culture and politics between the 18th and 21st century*, Ljubljana 2004, p. 69.
- 65 Jankovič Potočnik (see note 59), p. 41.
- 66 *Ibid*, pp. 56–58.
- 67 A. Jankovič Potočnik, *Rupnikova linija in Alpski zid: utrjevanje Rapalske meje med letoma 1932 in 1941*, Vrhnika 2004, p. 129.
- 68 M. Naglič, “Kako svetovna zgodovina vpliva na lokalno? Primer Žirov”, in: *O rapalski meji – Zbornik mednarodnega simpozija ob 90. obletnici podpisa rapalske pogodbe*, Logatec 2010, p. 71. The Rapallo Border remained the state border up to main boundary stone no. 40. Cf. F. Sancimino, M. Di Bartolomeo, “Gorizia – Regia Guardia di Finanza and the contraband at the Rapallo border”, in: *Smuggling Anthologies Reader*, Rijeka 2015, p. 133.
- 69 *Karawanken Bote*, 1941, p. 3.
- 70 Kacin Wohinz/Pirjevec (see note 7), p. 85.
- 71 P. Mikša, M. Zorn, “Rapalska meja: četrto stoletje obstoja in stoletje dediščine”, in: *Nečakov zbornik*, Ljubljana 2018, pp. 624, 626.
- 72 A. Gabrič, “Operacijska cona na Slovenskem”, in: *Slovenski zgodovinski atlas*, Ljubljana 2011, p. 185; Žorž (see note 10), p. 81.
- 73 Naglič (see note 39), p. 88.
- 74 M. Mikuž, “Vprašanje Julijske krajine in Trsta 1947–1954”, *Zgodovinski časopis*, 29, 1–2, 1975, pp. 3–44.
- 75 Nečak/Repe (see note 5), pp. 197–198.
- 76 Naglič (see note 39), pp. 64–65.
- 77 Nečak (see note 64); G. Žorž, “Italijanska zasedba slovenskih krajev v novembru 1918”, *Zgodovinski časopis*, 70, 3–4, 2016, p. 66.
- 78 R. Klemenčič, “Turistična dejavnost v povezavi z rapalsko mejo in utrdami ob njej”, in: *O rapalski meji – Zbornik mednarodnega simpozija ob 90. obletnici podpisa rapalske pogodbe*, Logatec 2010, pp. 78–79; D. Nečak, “The Rupnik defence line as a tourist destination”, in: *Dark tourism: post-WWI destinations of human tragedies and opportunities for tourism development*, Koper 2015, p. 72.
- 79 Pavšič (see note 14), p. 36.
- 80 M. Geršič, *Slovenska pokrajinska imena kot dejavniki identitete*, Ph. D. Thesis, Ljubljana 2016, p. 213.
- 81 Žorž (see note 10), p. 23; D. Ogrin, “Primorska v Sloveniji”, in: *Zbornik Primorske – 50 let*, Koper 1997, p. 8.
- 82 Naglič (see note 68), p. 69.
- 83 R. Jarc, *Rapalska meja: primer reliktnih meja in njihovi vplivi na družbeno prostorsko strukturo Zahodne Slovenije*, B. A. Thesis, Ljubljana 2002 pp. 62, 67–68.

