

Category:  
People

Geographical:  
Germany (Bavaria)

Country of origin of study:  
Italy/Australia/Poland

Responsible institutions:  
FAPAB Research Center, Avola Italy  
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Header:

## Kaspar Hauser had been vaccinated.

[A detailed medical observation debunks the legend of captivity without any contact with humans.](#)

### Main text

Kaspar Hauser (1812? - 1833), the most mysterious figure of the 19th century, was vaccinated against smallpox at some point in his youth, according to the famous Binder Decree (1828). According to the regulations in Bavaria, Kaspar Hauser therefore had to have been presented to a vaccinator at some point in his youth. This seriously calls into question the legendary tale that he never encountered people until his appearance in Nuremberg on 26 May 1828. While the story of his imprisonment has been called into question not only from the point of view of psychology and has been definitively refuted with the inoculation scar, his origins remain mysterious; a descent from the noble house of Baden cannot be ruled out.

### Extended

On 26 May 1828, a child appeared in Nuremberg (Bavaria) who at the time both shocked and thrilled the world. Unable to speak normally, it delivered letters to a cavalry captain, Friedrich von Wessenig. In these letters, a foundling was reported who had allegedly been born in 1812. On 7 July 1828, in a decree issued by the mayor, Jakob Friedrich Binder, the story that had been established up to that point was made public. According to this, Kaspar Hauser had been incarcerated all his life without contact with humans. This inhumane treatment triggered national interest and gave rise to the legend of the neglected child (still known today as the "Kaspar Hauser syndrome").

So far, however, hardly noticed are two important details, quotation from the Binder decree: „...zu bemerken ist, daß er die bayerische Mundart spricht, wie man sie in der Gegend von

„Regensburg, Straubing, Landshut. etc. etc., vielleicht auch Altötting, Burghausen hört, und daß er am rechten Arm geimpft ist“. [“...it should be noted that he speaks the Bavarian dialect as heard in the area of Regensburg, Straubing, Landshut. etc. etc., perhaps also Altötting, Burghausen, and that he is vaccinated on the right arm.”]

Kaspar Hauser seems to have spent his youth in Bavaria and was also vaccinated against smallpox in Bavaria (at that time the first known vaccination and only compulsory by the state in the Kingdom of Bavaria and the Canton of Thurgau). Nevertheless, the legend soon spread that Kaspar Hauser was a prince from the House of Baden who had been deprived of his birthright in order to bring a side line to rule. The punchline, however, is that smallpox vaccination was not practised in Baden-Württemberg at the time. Modern psychology has also questioned the story about the captivity and exposes the vaccination scar as an invention.

### Who was Kaspar Hauser?

The identity of Kaspar Hauser remains unclear to this day. In 1996, Der Spiegel attempted to expose Kaspar Hauser as an impostor in a media-rich campaign. However, the blood traces had apparently been refreshed over the centuries with new blood from other people, as people simply did not know about the DNA in the past and simply wanted a visible bloodstain for the museum exhibition.

In 2001, a new genetic profile was created from the hat that had demonstrably belonged to Kaspar Hauser and from hair samples that were kept at the time. It is a different profile than the one from the blood sample. Except for a discrepancy in one allele value, the new sample allegedly matches a descendant of Stéphanie de Beauharnais (1789-1860), the Duchess of Baden. Therefore, the princely theory has not been disproved to date, as the discrepancy is likely to be an allele jump, as often occurs in directly related persons after a few generations. Based on current facts, Kaspar Hauser's descent from the House of Baden can therefore not be ruled out.

### The vaccinated hereditary prince?

Regardless of his origins, be he abandoned as a foundling by poor people or the mistaken hereditary prince of Baden: Kaspar Hauser, according to his Bavarian language and his inoculation scar, spent part of his childhood in Bavaria and was at some point presented to a doctor for inoculation. He therefore certainly did not remain permanently without human contact until his appearance in Nuremberg.

### Title of the scientific study

Kaspar Hauser, the Child of Europe: are smallpox vaccination scars the clue to a two-century-old mystery?

Clinics in Dermatology

Michael E. Habicht PhD, Elena Varotto PhD, Mauro Vaccarezza MD, PhD, Andrea Cossarizza MD, PhD, Francesco M. Galassi MD, PhD

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<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0738081X23000500#abs0001>

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Picture of Kaspar Hauser as he shall have appeared in Nuremberg (Bavaria) in 1828  
Johann Georg Laminit (1775–1848) in: Johannes Mayer, Peter Tradowsky: Kaspar Hauser,  
Stuttgart 1984, p. 306. Image in the public domain from Wikimedia Commons

(Vornahme der Schutzpockenimpfung betreffend.)

Im Namen Seiner Majestät des Königs.

Wurde unter Heutigem dem hiesigen k. Stadtmagistrat der Auftrag ertheilt, zur Vornahme der wöchentlichen gesetzlichen Schutzpockenimpfung den Sitzungssaal und dessen Vorzimmer auf dem Rathhause zu überlassen.

Der k. Impfarzt Siel hat sich dieserwegen zur Auswahl eines bestimmten Wochentages mit dem k. Magistrate dahier in das geeignete Benehmen zu setzen, und sodann regelmäßig von 8 zu 8 Tagen nach den Bestimmungen des allerhöchsten Rescripts vom 19. November v. J. die gesetzliche Schutzpockenimpfung zu beginnen, und ununterbrochen fortzusetzen.

München, den 10. Januar 1809.

K. General-Kommissariat des Isarkreises.

Frhr. v. Weichs, Präsident.

Mainprechter, Sekr.

State decree on smallpox vaccination in Bavaria (1809). The persons had to be presented to the doctors in a vaccination room in order to carry out the oculation. The fact that Kaspar Hauser had a vaccination scar proves that he must have been in contact with people before 1828. (Literally: „zur Vornahmen der wochentlichen gesetzlichen Schutzpockenimpfung den Sitzungssaal und dessen Vorzimmer auf dem Rathhause zu überlassen“).





Stéphanie de Beauharnais is regarded in the prince theory as the mother of Kaspar Hauser. Painting from 1806/7, a few years before the birth of the prince, who supposedly died 17 days after the birth. Creative Commons:

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/60/Gro%C3%9Fherzogin\\_Stephanie\\_von\\_Baden.jpg?uselang=de](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/60/Gro%C3%9Fherzogin_Stephanie_von_Baden.jpg?uselang=de)