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Influenza in Greenland 1914 - 1921

Untold Stories and Diverging Patterns

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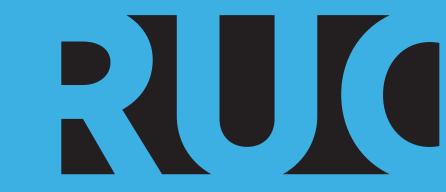
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Influenza in Greenland 1914 - 1921 Untold Stories and Diverging Patterns

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The 1918 - 1921 influenza pandemic was particularly devastating in Arctic and other remote populations. In most other places in the world the pandemic came in 2-4 waves during 1918 to 1921.

We studied spatial and temporal patterns of influenza-related deaths in Greenland for 1914-1921.

• The outbreak in 1916 was local to the Cape region and overall deadli-

Pandemic influenza was delayed by ~one year and started in June

1919, when the ice cracked and ships arrived in Greenland again.

Documented arrival of influenza by ship confirms that it was influenza.

• Contrary to well-known pandemic signature patterns, all age-groups

• In total 1.6% of the population died of influenza related deaths in

er than the 1919 pandemic.

1919, similar to 1916 (1.4%).

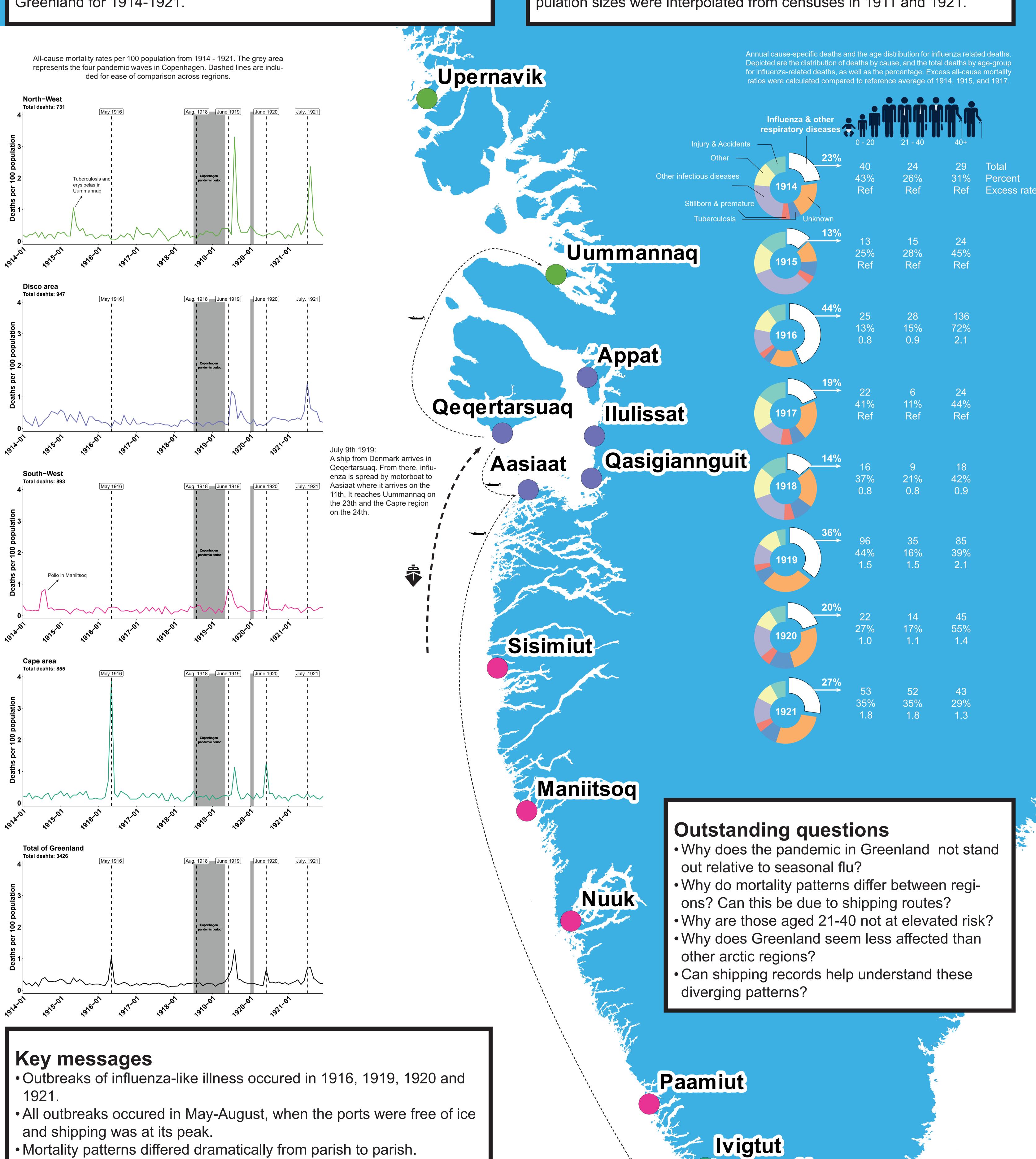
were equally affected.

We obtained and digitalized 3426 deaths from 14 parish registers representing 4 geographical regions. We retained date and cause of death, age, gender, and settlement. We defined influenza related deaths as: influenza, cold, cold-fever, pneumonia, bronchitis, and "sting". Population sizes were interpolated from censuses in 1911 and 1921.

Narsaq

Alluitsoq

Nanortalik



April 1916:

A ship from Denmark arrives in

Ivigtut. Among the passengers are

miners for the local cryolite mines,

some of whom are infected with in-

fluenza. The virus is transported by

post sled to Qaqotoq. On April 16th

a postmen is admitted to Julianehåb

hospital. From there influenza spread

to the rest of the area.