

# Peeping under the Rijeka Patch – Problems of Inter-ethnic Relations and the Establishment of Hungarian National Identity in Rijeka at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

*Using the material collected from Rijeka's periodicals in Hungarian, primarily from the period 1903–1906, the article displays the problems of establishing a unique national identity in a city whose history has been strongly marked by ethnic diversity. Since the observed material belongs to a discourse that is politically and ideologically dominant but demographically inferior on the field, it is interesting to observe the methods used to reduce its unfavorable position, while at the same time trying to maintain credibility and to not turn into an open ideological propaganda – with varying success and the final outcome.*

**Key words:** national identity, ethnic diversity, multilingualism, Austria-Hungary, Fiume, Rijeka

## Introduction and context

Similar to many other European free ports, the ethnic and linguistic environment of the city of Rijeka had during the greater part of the city's history been in contrast with the one of its immediate surroundings. Although the first inhabitants of the settlement at the mouth of the river Rječina, at the time known as Reka Svetog Vida, were, as well as in its surroundings, Čakavian Croats, after the settlement attained the status of a free port in the 18<sup>th</sup> century it became a target place for the immigration of population from the wider region, either as a state administration staff or as those who had found their jobs in maritime trade, navigation or shipbuilding. Although among them there were Slovenians, Austrians and Jews, the majority of the incoming population came from the area of today's Italy, Venetian Dalmatia and Istria, and their language, a kind of *lingua franca* on the shores of the Adriatic Sea at the time, became the dominant language of Rijeka's population, regardless of their ethnic origin (moreover, we would later often encounter Rijeka's italoophone families with surnames of Slavic origin, such as Ossoinack or Francovich). Taken into consideration that this process started up to a century and a half before

the Risorgimento, when the idea of a national state has not yet become an ideal anywhere in Europe, speaking Italian did not automatically entail the sense of 'feeling' Italian – that will occur in Rijeka only with irredentism at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and even then it will initially be of limited scope in comparison to Rijeka's autonomism.

The Imperial Charter of Maria Theresa from February 14, 1776 reformed the then-Austrian Littoral, attaching its eastern part, precisely the area of Rijeka, Bakar and Kraljevica, to the newly established Severin County within the Kingdom of Croatia. Several other imperial decisions followed, defining particular details, until the decision from August 11, 1779 by which the city of Rijeka was finally declared a free port of Hungary, although still within the Kingdom of Croatia. Thus began a nearly 140-year long relationship between Rijeka and Hungarians, during certain periods marked by the efforts of Hungarians to define their role in Rijeka as much larger and more relevant than a mere formal authority, as well as their turbulent interactions with the population of the city and

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its surroundings. In 1787 the Emperor Joseph II singled out Rijeka, Bakar and Vinodol districts into a separate administrative unit, the Hungarian Littoral, where, however, as in the entire state, the official language became German. The period of the Napoleonic conquest followed, along with the establishment of the Illyrian Provinces in 1809. After they were abolished, the city of Rijeka was an imperial provisorium for 10 years, until 1822, when the Hungarian Littoral was re-established. By that time, however, the ethnic feelings have already changed and a nationalist thought started to strengthen in Croatia, along with the ideas of joining the Hungarian Littoral to the other areas under ban's authority. The italophone population of Rijeka, fearing assimilation, saw the Hungarian government as its patron, enthusiastically supporting the idea of the Hungarian Littoral as a defense against Croatian pretensions. That was the time when many italophone citizens of Rijeka started to identify themselves as Hungarians in order to strengthen their loyalty to the Crown of St. Stephen (while still remaining speakers of Italian). Half a century later, by the redefinition of Hungarian identity in post-Compromise Hungary, it will cause new difficulties in reshuffling the ethno-linguistic identity paradigm of Rijeka and its inhabitants. In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, the Hungarian authority in Rijeka was strong enough to save the distinguished identity of the city from Croatian aspirations, while at the same time distant and weak enough to be unable to carry out Hungarian assimilation. The situation changed in 1848 with the breakout of the Hungarian revolution. The awakened ethnic fervor of Hungarians found its aspirations towards Rijeka in Kossúth's cry »To the sea, Hungarians!«, clearly indicating that the vision of a future independent Hungarian nation state must include Rijeka as well. At that time Kossúth, aware of the diversity of Hungary's ethnic picture, defined the concept of »political Hungarianness«, that is, the idea by which the entire Hungary was a home of only one nation, the Hungarian one, which, although multilingual, still could not allow language differences to be the basis or reason for separate national identities. In other words, Kossúth's concept of national identity was similar to the one existing today in France. After the imperial government had crushed the Hungarian revolution, the Croatian ban's troops marched into Rijeka and declared the abolition of the Hungarian Littoral and its unification with the motherland. Although Rijeka remained under Croatian occupation until 1867, the Croatian influence on the city's identity did not last long – when Bach's absolutism was introduced, a powerful wave of Germanization took over again.

In 1867 the Habsburg Monarchy was reformed and Rijeka was awarded to the Hungarian part. The next year the Croatian-Hungarian Settlement created an autonomous Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia within Kingdom of Hungary. At that time Rijeka was economically much stronger than the rest of Croatia – the industrial production of the city alone equaled the half of the entire Croatian production. For this reason – as well as due to the

aforementioned resistance to Croatian occupation of 1848 – the aspirations of the majority of the city's population were to exclude Rijeka from Croatia and affiliate it directly with Hungary, which had the reputation of the protector of the city's autonomous rights yet from the period of the Hungarian Littoral. The authorities in Vienna left the Rijeka question to be arranged by a mutual agreement of Croatia and Hungary. Since the agreement was not reached, the Rijeka question was defined by a temporary solution according to which the area of the city (more specifically, a strip of land between Kantrida and the mouth of Rječina) would be exempted from *ban's* authority for ten years and will be governed directly from Pest. The provisorium would be renewed every 10 years and would have survived until the dissolution of Austria-Hungary, although after the 1883 negotiations between the Hungarian parliamentary delegation, the delegation of Croatia and the representatives of Rijeka, the Hungarian rule over the city was undisputed, the only thing left was to define certain internal issues.<sup>1</sup>

The period of some thirty years from the establishment of Rijeka's provisorium until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is the period of Rijeka's urban and economic rise. Hungary bountifully showered its only port with investments: in 1873 the city was reached by two railways, one from Sveti Peter na Krasu (today's Pivka) and one from Karlovac, the existing port facilities were expanded and modernized, a new timber exporting port was built, electric street lighting introduced, a modern shipyard opened, by the end of the century the city will get its first trams... For the most of that time the mayor was Giovanni de Ciotta, an opportunistic Hungarophile, but above all a great local patriot. When once asked about the relationship with Croats, Ciotta stated he personally had nothing against Croats and wanted peaceful coexistence with them, but one should be aware that had Rijeka remained under Croatian rule, it would probably still have had only half a pier and the city would not have attained such commercial importance as it had under Hungarian governance. Although Hungarians never allowed the questioning of Rijeka's status as Hungarian port and the citizens of Rijeka as (political) Hungarians (until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was no wider opposition to that opinion among the italophone citizens of Rijeka either), the relationship between the two language communities was at that time mostly harmonious, partly because the number of ethnic Hungarians in Rijeka at the time was insignificant – only in 1910 it surpassed 10% of the population. Rijeka's Hungarians were mostly civil servants and railway workers with their families – in fact, the latter formed such a significant proportion of Rijeka's Hungarians that during the pre-election campaign in 1905 A Tengerpart newspaper stressed the importance of their vote for electing the pro-Hungarian candidate as the city representative in the Hungarian parliament.

Things started to change for the worse at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Firstly, by the decision of the State Railways in 1887 for a cargo track to be laid along Rijeka's water-

front, next to the recently built theatre building, in order to facilitate transportation of timber from a depot on Delta to the port. Despite the citizens' protest against such a decision that uglified the city, the track was still built, clearly demonstrating that the Hungarian authorities, notwithstanding the prosperity brought to Rijeka, if and when their interest was directly at odds with citizens' wishes, would give priority to their own interest. The citizens on the other hand expressed their protest by refusing to send delegation to the unveiling of the monument to Ferenc Deák in Budapest in the autumn the same year.<sup>2</sup> Further deterioration occurred in 1895, when Dezső Bánffy became Hungarian prime minister. Bánffy was a hardline nationalist, who was not satisfied merely by the idea of political Hungarianness, but considered that in Hungary there can be a place only for those who speak Hungarian (he earned the nickname »the most chauvinist Hungarian«). Rijeka in particular, as Hungarian access to the sea, had to be presented in the »nation-building« light, but the fact that the city's previous autonomous rights guaranteed the official usage of the Italian language was quite incompatible with Bánffy's idea. Therefore Magyarization was intensified in Rijeka, introducing mandatory bilingual signs, sparking massive protests during the Rijeka's tram opening ceremony on November 7, 1899. In response to such government policy, a group of Rijeka's citizens gathered around the mayor Ciotta decided in 1896 to establish the Autonomist Association, whose goal was to defend the autonomy of Rijeka as a part of Hungary, and refer to the earlier autonomous rights of the city, guaranteed by the Habsburgs since early 18<sup>th</sup> century. The key financier of the party was Luigi Ossoinack, a prominent Rijeka businessman, the founder of »Adria« shipping company. The first president of the party was Michele Maylender, who was shortly thereafter elected mayor. Maylender started the weekly newspaper »La Difesa«, the first modern political newspaper in Rijeka (although published in Sušak), in which he presented the principles and objectives of the Autonomist Association. According to the autonomists, Rijeka is one of the countries of the Crown of St. Stephen, equal in rights to Hungary or Croatia, and responsible only to Habsburg Monarchy (precisely, to its Hungarian part). Although the Hungarian rule brought prosperity to Rijeka, Hungary, as well as Croatia, has no right of sovereignty over Rijeka, because it is not an independent state. The Hungarian rule over the city is a current provisional result of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise. The autonomists refer to a similar status of free Hanseatic cities, which retained their freedom and international trade relations after the unification of Germany. The autonomists also argue the existence of a special national identity of Rijeka, composed of several ethnic components (Italian, Austrian, Croatian, Hungarian), but independent from the state ruling over Rijeka at a particular moment in time (because otherwise at least 7 different identities would have been changed since 1509). Those are the circumstances in which we find Rijeka at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the period in focus of our research.

## Material

The scope of our research was Rijeka's Hungarian-language press from the period of Hungarian rule. Unfortunately, not much of it is preserved in Rijeka's libraries, whereas in Zagreb or Budapest there is none whatsoever. What we managed to find during our research is mostly limited to the period from 1903 to 1906, along with some material from the time of WWI (1916–1918).

The most intensely covered period is the one of Dualism crisis around 1905. At that time six daily newspapers were published in Rijeka: three in Italian, two in Hungarian, one in Croatian; together with one Hungarian-Italian weekly newspaper. The three Italian dailies were »Popolo«, »La Voce del Popolo« and »Bilancia«. The first two were fairly widespread among the Italians in Rijeka (but not outside the city), La Voce del Popolo being profiled as the representative of the Autonomist Association's stances, often expressing political opinions. The Bilancia, although the oldest of the three, dealt primarily with economic issues, making it less attractive to readership than the previous two. The only Croatian daily was »Novi list«, started by Frano Supilo, gladly read outside Rijeka as well, in the areas of Croatia, Istria and Dalmatia.

Since our main interest are the newspapers in Hungarian, we shall now focus on them. As a general note we shall state that, although only one of those papers is officially a political magazine, none of them shies from politicizing when commenting daily events. Also, in regard to the number of copies, they are much smaller than the Italian papers or Novi list. Their publishers are also aware of that, stressing the need (for instance, in »Fiumei Szemle« of November 26, 1905) for launching a bilingual Hungarian-Italian political journal to spread the idea of political Hungarianness among readership.

The daily newspapers in Hungarian are »Magyar Tengerpart« (Hungarian Littoral) and »A Tengerpart« (The Littoral). Magyar Tengerpart (MT) started out in 1893 and ended in 1907. In its header it presents itself as a »journal dealing with immigration, economic and naval matters«, and among the three observed papers it is the most moderate in its political analyses and attacks on the autonomists. Its founder was linguist Sándor Kőrösi in collaboration with historian Aladár Fest. The only copies of MT available to our study were the ones from the period of winter of 1904/05. A Tengerpart (Tp.) was published from 1904 to 1918. It defines itself as a »political journal«, and is much fiercer in its anti-autonomist attitudes, particularly during the elections for the city representative in the Hungarian parliament in 1905, when it leads a harsh campaign against Riccardo Zanella. Our corpus comprises two publication periods, the winter of 1905 (during the aforementioned elections), and the period of the WWI, when the discourse further escalates and becomes openly anti-Italian, which is somewhat understandable, given the war circumstances. The weekly »Fiumei Szemle« (Rijeka Review, FSz), also known as the »Rivista di Fiume«, launched on October 4, 1903 and was published until July 29, 1906. It was bilingual, in Hungar-

ian and Italian, although Hungarian was the dominant language. The motto of the paper was »Our mother tongue may vary, but we are nonetheless all Hungarians.«, and its political stance the one of political Hungarianness, according to which all the inhabitants of Hungary belong to the Hungarian nation, regardless of the language they speak, and there are no ethnic minorities. Therefore, Rijeka's citizens who speak Italian are Hungarians as well, having their usage of Italian guaranteed by the autonomous rights of Rijeka. Those rights must be respected, since their suppression could lead to Rijeka's italophone citizens turning against Hungary or resorting to autonomism, even irredentism. During our research we had the opportunity to review all the copies of FSz issued during three and a half years of its publishing.

FSz's founder was Viktor Garády, who himself experienced the path he advocated through the policy of his newspaper. Born as Vittorio de Gauss in Rijeka's patrician family that at the time resided in Nagyvárád (today's Oradea), but later returned to Rijeka, in his youth he wanted to become an Italian writer and went to the then-mayor Ciotta to apply for a city scholarship to study in Florence. Ciotta admitted him and stated he was willing to give him a scholarship provided he continued his studies in Budapest instead. Ciotta thoroughly explained the benefits of adopting the Hungarian language, and finally persuaded Gauss. Gauss went to Budapest, completed his studies there, became a Hungarian writer and a high school teacher, and changed his name to Viktor Garády. He translated from Hungarian into Italian, wrote works about maritime and littoral topics, as well as scientific articles on the fauna of the Quarnero.<sup>3</sup> In the autumn of 1903, just a month before Ciotta's death, he launched FSz in order to show the other Rijeka's italophone citizens the way he thought they should take, rejecting autonomism (although Ciotta himself was one of the founders of the Autonomist Association) and accepting political (Greater)-Hungarianness.

In 1907 Garády will also launch a Hungarian-Italian daily political newspaper named Fiumei Napló (Journal of Rijeka), which will try to oppose Italian daily newspapers, in particular La Voce del Popolo, by bringing closer the Greater-Hungarian propaganda to the Italians in their own language. Unfortunately, that paper was not available to our research. The material collected during our research can be divided into several topics, and we shall explain it accordingly.

### **The role and position of Rijeka for Hungarians**

For Hungarians, Rijeka is, despite never fully resolved legal status during the time of Hungarian rule, an undoubted Hungarian access to the sea. That fact is often confirmed in newspaper articles by quoting various imperial decisions and charters by which Rijeka was throughout its history repeatedly affiliated with Hungary. Although there is an awareness of the specific ethnic image of the city and of inability for a long-term success of Magyarization (e.g. the establishment of the Autonomist As-

sociation as a resistance to Bánffy's government), in Hungarian press there is no say of any political position of Rijeka different from the one stating it is an integral part of Hungary, only territorially separated from the motherland. The stance of Rijeka's autonomists that Rijeka, due to its specific historical status as a *corpus separatum*, should hold a separate position within Kingdom of Hungary as one of the countries of the Crown of St. Stephen, equal to Hungary and Croatia, in Hungarian media qualifies as an open hostility towards Hungary and lobbying for Italian interests. The Hungarian rejection of the autonomist position will finally indeed lead to that scenario, since a part of the autonomists will eventually join the irredentists. The idea of an existence of Rijeka's nation is also vigorously rejected – Rijeka's citizens, regardless of the language they speak, according to the ruling ideology can only be members of the Hungarian nation.

The stance that Rijeka undoubtedly belongs to Hungary can be seen in the attributes often honoring Rijeka in those media, such as »the Adriatic pearl of Hungary«, »the pearl of the Hungarian crown«, »our glorious port« and so on. That enthusiasm is especially evident in preparations for the transfer of Ferenc Rákóczi's remains from Turkey (where he died and was buried) to the homeland, stressing that by the very arrival to Rijeka Rákóczi will for the first time step onto the sacred ground of the homeland for whose freedom he so fiercely fought.

The stance of Hungarians is that Hungary is the great mother of Rijeka, which necessarily does what is best for the city, i.e. it is not possible that by doing something good for its own interests could at the same time harm the interests of Rijeka – which is exactly the argument used by autonomists (the already quoted example with the railroad along the waterfront) and rejected by Hungarian media with faked naiveté backed by the dogmatism of the aforementioned stance. It sometimes goes so far that Rijeka and the aspirations of its autonomists are referred to with disparaging expressions and exaggerated metaphors – for example, FSz claims that every mother would forcefully discipline her child if it is too dirty or defecating all over itself, yet the child would despite that kiss her hand gratefully. It is clear – Rijeka is a helpless child getting all the instructions on the proper conduct from mother Hungary, and in contrast to the good and grateful child Rijeka still dares to be ungrateful and demand some additional rights apart from those already given by Hungary (for which the media never fail to mention that have been given). On another occasion the editorial of the same newspaper, referring to the autonomist and irredentist demands, mockingly states that those who cry for mother Italy to embrace thirsty infants to its breast should not be taken seriously, for they are indeed infants.

The attitude of Rijeka's Hungarianness remains unaccepted not only by Italians and Croats in Rijeka, it is also differently perceived in neighboring Austria. On February 18, 1905 MT brings a report on a lawsuit against famous Italian actor Novelli. Novelli performed a play in Trieste, for which the exclusive right of performance on Austrian stages was held by one theatrical association from Berlin.

Novelli in his defense stated that, since he himself was granted right to perform the play in Italy, he saw no obstacle to perform it in Trieste as well, provided it was performed in Italian. The court in Trieste agreed and dismissed the claim, citing that »according to the theatrical traditions, the Austrian cities of Trieste and Rijeka are considered Italian.«

### Relations between Hungarians and Italians

The majority of the examined texts deals with the topic of Hungarian-Italian relations in Rijeka. For Italians (or rather Fiumani, because, as we said, the fact that they speak Italian does not necessarily mean they consider themselves the integral part of the Italian ethnicity – partly because not all of them are native Italians by origin) Hungarians are immigrants, intruders, who keep coming to the city and modifying its character, mostly not respecting its former traditions and customs. Such attitude is not limited to Hungarians – at that time in Rijeka there is a saying »He who does not have a box in the theater and a tomb in the cemetery, is no gentleman«,<sup>4</sup> which defines not only genealogy, but also assets as a criterion for being Rijeka's citizen, while recently arrived Hungarian officials, railway workers and businesspeople fail to meet at least one of those criteria. For Hungarians, the aversion of Italians is unclear, since they are blinded by the economic progress achieved by Rijeka under their rule and they do not understand how is that not enough for Italians to be more prone to them, especially considering the historical affinity of Rijeka towards Hungarian rule. Moreover, after the open Magyarization waned with the departure of Bánffy's government and the city's autonomous rights were restored, the Hungarians expected the animosity of Italians to subside as well. When that failed to happen, the responsibility for such outcome was put on selfish interests of the autonomist politicians and ever stronger criticism of autonomism as a policy began, describing it as actually being hostile to Rijeka and its progress, since it used the fight for Rijeka's autonomous rights to gain political points. The Hungarian pursuit to prove how much they did for Rijeka subsequently resulted in a new, more subtle wave of Magyarization, using a rhetoric that also heavily pointed out the preservation of Rijeka's autonomous rights. There were also attempts of »divide and rule« policy in Hungarian media, where the autonomist stance was constantly portrayed as merely an opinion of a few enemies of Hungary, without broader support among the people. If the facts however showed otherwise, it meant it was clearly a dangerous idea that had seduced naive voters and it was deemed necessary to defame it in the media as much as possible in order to achieve »sobriety«.

In 1901 elections were held for Rijeka's representative in the Hungarian parliament, a position then held by Tivadar Batthyány. The autonomists decided to send their candidate, young Riccardo Zanella, after Michele Maylender refused candidacy. Two years earlier, Zanella distinguished himself as the leader of demonstrations against

bilingual Italian-Hungarian signs on Rijeka's trams. Although Zanella lost the election, it was another big step forward for the Autonomist Association, which already firmly dominated the city's politics. Shortly thereafter, Maylender, due to factional differences, retired from politics and from the position of party's president, which was taken over by another moderate autonomist, Francesco Vio. Vio will soon succeed Maylender as mayor as well. But while Ciotta, Maylender, Vio and Ossoinack were ideologically close to the ruling Hungarian Liberal Party, and did not insist on the concept of Rijeka's nation, being satisfied by the restoring of the city's autonomy, Zanella was closer to the radical ideas of the kossúthists. He adopted the rhetoric of Lajos Kossúth from 1848, replacing Austrians with Hungarians and Hungarians with Rijeka's citizens. In his speeches he would rely on Italian nationalism, even irredentism, thus raising suspicion among Hungarians, who until then did not consider the issue of separate identity of Rijeka problematic, since it was not a central point of the Autonomist Association's program – but Zanella's insisting on it became a warning sign. Zanella protests against equalizing Rijeka's italophone citizens with the Italians, claiming that they are primarily Fiumani and that, since both Hungarians and Croats have their own countries within the Crown of St. Stephen, so Fiumani as well deserve their own, i.e. autonomous Rijeka. As already stated, such position is completely unacceptable to the Hungarian government and Hungarian media.

Hungarians are trying to respond to the growing popularity of Zanella's faction, so on March 1, 1904 in the editorial of FSz we find a proclamation calling for the founding of Rijeka Patriotic Party. It should be a loyalist party, seeking to bring together those citizens of Rijeka (primarily aimed at Italians) who consider Hungary their only homeland and who reject the autonomist idea of Rijeka as a homeland and the existence of Rijeka's nation. But the name of the party is confusing, as we can see five days later, when the author of the editorial in the same newspaper is obliged to respond to certain comments and to explain (criticizing those who are not able to look beyond the boundaries of local patriotism) that the party's name by no means aims at those who have patriotic feelings for Rijeka (because those are the autonomists), but on the contrary, at those citizens of Rijeka who are patriots towards Hungary. Although no specific names are mentioned, it seems that the initiator of the idea of such party is Viktor Garády, the founder of FSz, who probably wants to demonstrate by his own example what direction should be taken by Rijeka patriots. The main argument used in defending the pro-Hungarian attitude is the already mentioned fact that under Hungarian rule Rijeka achieved an economic progress greater than ever before, thus proving that Rijeka has no future outside Hungary.

As there is no other information on the abovementioned party in the rest of the reviewed material, it seems that it was only an outcry which did not cause a wider response, what is also indicative.

Hungarian media in their reviews often sharply attack articles published in the leading Rijeka's autonomist news-

paper *La Voce del Popolo*, accusing it of wrong and false, i.e. malicious presenting of Hungarian interests in Rijeka as contrary to the interests of Rijeka's Italian community (which, according to them, are best protected if Rijeka remains firmly within Hungary). Such attacks sometimes end up in court with charges of defamation. On the other hand, from the autonomist perspective, it is the Hungarian press in Rijeka that is the first to blame for creating obstacles to the peaceful coexistence of Hungarians and Italians.

An example of such controversy involving more actors is the case from September 1904, when first *La Voce del Popolo* published an anecdote about a certain Ivan Mandekić, a captain of Croatian ship »Starčević«, coming into a tobacconist shop in order to buy matches. The saleswoman, a certain Mrs. Wissler, handed him a box of matches called »Autonomia«, whose production was started by the Autonomist Association, with a goal that a part of the profit from its sales goes to a fund for the education of poor children. The matchboxes had green-white-red stripes on them – the colours of the Italian flag. Mandekić, taking the box, tossed it angrily, saying he did not need such matches. The tobacconist scolded him and asked how dared he to humiliate the colours of her homeland in such way. Mandekić turned pale and humbly apologized, stating that he thought those were Hungarian colours. The tobacconist then said »Well, some captain you are, not spotting the differences between flags. Go and learn!«, to which the captain walked away. *La Voce del Popolo* concludes that there is nothing to add to this anecdote, the tobacconist said it all.

A reader will write a letter (published on September 13, 1904) about this anecdote to the newspaper »Az Újság« (The News), stating that the text in »*La Voce del Popolo*« has a clear message that humiliating Rijeka's (Italian) national colours is unacceptable, but that it can, indeed should, be done with (the almost identical) Hungarian national colours. He furthermore considers that Rijeka's Italians themselves should destroy this »poison nest« (namely, *La Voce del Popolo*), which works against their interests, and that if the mutual dissent between Italians and Hungarians continues, Rijeka's Italians will soon fall prey of Greater-Croatian propaganda. As a response to the publishing of the said letter, *La Voce del Popolo* will in its next day's edition attack *Az Újság*, expressing suspicion of who may be the author of the letter, and, based on that premonition, striking on him, while simultaneously stating that the views presented in the comment of the anecdote do not imply any contempt of the Hungarian nation or the Hungarian flag, even less about working for the Croatian interests. Since in that justification Géza Kenedi, a famous Hungarian journalist and lawyer, an associate of both *Az Újság* and FSz, was also called on, four days later he presented his view of the entire controversy in the FSz's editorial. First of all, he believes that attacks without justifiable evidence against anyone are unacceptable. Furthermore, nowhere in the contested letter is *La Voce del Popolo* accused of supporting Croatian interests, it is merely stated that such actions will only facilitate the pen-

etration of Greater-Croatian ideas, to which Rijeka's Italian community, without protection from Hungarians, could not resist appropriately. Regarding the statement that *La Voce del Popolo* never disparaged Hungarianness, he absolutely disagrees with that, citing examples such as calling Hungarians strangers, newcomers, »the ones pushing themselves where they do not belong«, fighting against Hungarian language even where its usage is justified, ridiculing everything Hungarian, attacking the mayor who displayed the Hungarian flag on the City Hall building, constant desire to join the Italians in Austria... To declare after all that there is no disparage of Hungarianness Kenedi calls nothing short of hypocrisy. He also says it is hypocritical to hide a message behind the tobacconist, instead of loudly and clearly proclaiming that in Rijeka one must not humiliate Rijeka's colours, but can do it with the Hungarian ones. After all, it is not known what the tobacconist's real opinion on the Hungarian colours is, because the conclusion brought by *La Voce del Popolo* is logically flawed. Kenedi then explains why he agrees with the reader's opinion that the hardline autonomism behind the *La Voce del Popolo* is harmful to Rijeka's Italians. The hostility towards Hungarians leads to some wealthy Italians boycotting Hungarian companies in Rijeka, thus damaging both Rijeka's economy and those companies, which then in turn often become prone to an investment of capital from Croatia. He writes how last summer he visited former Italian parts of Quarnero, and saw Italian element losing its place before Croatian one, since it is not able to defend itself. It could happen in Rijeka as well, if Rijeka's Italians do not realize that it is the Hungarian rule that protects them from Slavic assimilation.

In November 1904 a scandal with voter lists happened, omitting some of Rijeka's Hungarians from them, with the city council calling on certain articles of the city statute. FSz comments that it practically means denying citizenship right to those people, no matter how long they lived in Rijeka, i.e. leaving them foreigners without voting rights. At the same time, according to the provisions of the city statute, the foreigners are not obliged to pay taxes in Rijeka. FSz here refers to the fact that all the deleted ones regularly pay taxes, while among those left on the list there are some who due to various reasons are not taxpayers. The inconsistency of the autonomists is pointed out, since they obviously do not mind the tax money collected from Hungarians, but want to deny them the right to vote. On the other hand, the autonomists argue that among the deleted ones are only those who, despite paying taxes in Rijeka, have their residence elsewhere.

On January 1, 1905 FSz comments on the statement of Stanislao dall'Asta, a representative in the city council, who claims that »if a loyal citizen of Rijeka should be a good Hungarian, then he should at the same time be a good autonomist; if the Hungarians looked suspiciously at Rijeka's citizens and vice versa, it is a result of certain exaggerations and excessive enthusiasm«. According to the author of the article, there are no suspicious views on the Hungarian side, the local rights and autonomies are respected, and the Italian language is defended and cared

for. On the other hand, the Italians are the ones rebelling against the Hungarian language, against conducting the Hungarian national anthem, the ones trying to take away the voting rights from Hungarians, the ones calling them strangers... As for the first part of the statement, there is no »if«. Citizens of Rijeka should be good Hungarians. No »ifs«. Only those citizens of Rijeka who are good Hungarians can in fact be considered Rijeka's citizens. And of course, any such citizen should defend the city's autonomy. But how will they defend it, if some of them are denied the right to vote? If the idea of »good autonomism« is in representing solely the interests of those born in the city, then no, the author does not think that he is one of the »good autonomists«. But he believes that every Hungarian interest is also an interest of Rijeka, and that there are no interests of Rijeka which would be contrary to the Hungarian ones and separate from them. Since Dall'Asta also advocates the moves that stripped certain Hungarians of their right to vote and tries to justify them, FSz points to a contradiction in his own views – Dall'Asta politically belongs to the liberals, advocating the extension of voting rights at the national level, while at the same time fighting in his own city against allowing the voting rights to the Hungarians living in it, arguing that they do not have nor can have direct interests in the city's affairs. FSz states it does not understand what Dall'Asta is saying. Material interests – profit – are just as important to the city's Hungarians as to Dall'Asta. Moral interests – development of Rijeka – are also as important to them as to Dall'Asta. Therefore, who has more interest in the city's affairs than Hungarians? Maybe there are some more immediate interests that Dall'Asta is talking about, but the author of the article cannot (or will not? – it is sometimes difficult to distinguish whether it is a mock bigotry or indeed such a unanimous opinion) imagine what they would be.

On January 29, 1905 new elections for Rijeka's representative in the Hungarian parliament were held. The candidates were Riccardo Zanella from the Autonomist Association and Andrea Ossoinack (Luigi's son) from the Liberal Party. On the first pre-election gathering of the Autonomist Association's supporters, on January 17, 1905, one of the speakers clearly stated Rijeka had no future without Hungary, and exclaimed »Long live Rijeka, long live Hungary!«, which was approved by the crowd – what led to a conclusion that the autonomists were not against Rijeka remaining in the Monarchy, nor against the relations with Hungary, but they were for the separate political status of the city.

On the other hand, Ossoinack was loyal to the Hungarian authorities and their perception of Rijeka, and therefore more acceptable to the Hungarian ethnic community in Rijeka (what is particularly interesting considering that his father had financially supported the establishment of the Autonomist Association and publishing of the autonomist newspaper *La Voce del Popolo* which was an eyesore to the Hungarians; moreover, it was him who had suggested Zanella as a candidate four years earlier; in fact, to make matters more absurd, the Autonomist Association had also initially considered nominating Andrea Ossoin-

ack as their candidate). Ossoinack therefore gained support of the then-governor of Rijeka, Baron Ervin Roszner, and his election was strongly favoured by the Hungarian media in Rijeka (especially Tp.), which at the same time tried to present Zanella as a secessionist and anti-Hungarian whose election to the parliament would be harmful not only for the Hungarian interests in Rijeka, but also for the inter-ethnic relations in the city. Zanella instead presented himself as a citizens' candidate and claimed in his speeches (e.g. Tp. January 26, 1905) that as a deputy he would work to provide something beneficial primarily for Rijeka's citizens, and not merely for the interests the Hungarian authorities have in the port city – in other words, that Rijeka deserved much more than port and industrial infrastructure, which had hitherto largely been the focus of Hungarians. Zanella was committed to progressive taxation, settlement of social issues, universal suffrage and freedom of assembly. He also pointed out that he considered himself a Hungarian patriot and rejected accusations of anti-Hungarianness. Moreover, he conducted his campaign speeches in Hungarian. That was however still not enough for Hungarians, who held against Zanella his association with *La Voce del Popolo* and participating in the anti-Hungarian demonstrations few years earlier, although Zanella stressed it had been a rebellion against the measures of the then-Hungarian government and not against Hungarians. FSz wonders »What exactly does show Zanella's patriotism? Is it the fact that, according to him, the only source of Rijeka's development and well-being should be seen in loyalty towards Hungary? No, we do not need such patriotism, because it is a sincerity of a merchant, who sells his emotions as a commodity.« What kind of patriotism would then suit the author of the article? Well, the one giving something in return, not just taking, and which will reward good deeds by responding to Hungarians with brotherly conduct, and to Hungary with the love of a child. The wording used by the author is interesting – he says that it is »required« from a good patriotic party. Here we thus again have the already mentioned dogmatism in understanding how patriotism towards Hungary should be demonstrated.

The campaign of demonizing the autonomists during the several pre-election days reminds that the people who are today shouting »long live Hungary« are the very same ones who few years ago protested against the Hungarian inscriptions in Rijeka's trams, threw the Hungarian flag to the ground, called Hungarians strangers and publicly spit on those who considered themselves Hungarians. In short, the autonomists are the same as irredentists, because any attitude about Rijeka not fully compliant with the absolute submission of the city to Hungary is unacceptable. In the autonomist criticism of some members of the governorship Hungarian media see the plan for a complete takeover of the city, and they hope the citizens will not fall for such cheap tricks and will nevertheless send the suitable candidate to the parliament. From the Hungarian position the autonomists work not only against the interests of the homeland – they also work against the interests of the city itself, destroying peace among the

ethnic communities in the city. The facts actually work in favour of those accusations – on January 27 Zanella's supporters demolished the arch raised by Ossoinack's supporters on Kozala, taking off, trampling on and burning the Hungarian flags that served as a decoration on the arch. The act was finally interrupted by the owner of Rijeka's Fenice theatre, an Italian named Ricotti, who warned the perpetrators that the Hungarian flag should not be desecrated even when it is a symbol of the opposition.

As Zanella was one of those responsible for compiling the controversial voter lists the previous autumn, Hungarian media were trying to present it as an additional argument that the autonomists would stop at nothing in order to push through their candidate to victory.

Ossoinack is portrayed by Hungarian media as a successful businessman, a successor of a prominent family that has greatly contributed to the prosperity of Rijeka, highlighting the endeavours of his father for Andrea to obtain the Hungarian education, thus earning a high school degree in Pozsony and graduating in Kolozsvár, before going to specialization in Germany and the UK. The autonomist past of his father is wisely omitted, as well as the role he played in nominating Zanella four years earlier, pointing out that Andrea himself, although relatively young (he was only 28 – however, his opponent Zanella was just a year older), is the right man and a Hungarian patriot, who will represent the interests of the city and defend the autonomous rights of Rijeka in the Hungarian parliament. Ossoinack's program is based on reestablishing the parliamentary order and ensuring the regular functioning of the parliament, as the current state of affairs damages the commercial and economic situation (there was a parliamentary crisis going on in Hungary at the time), preserving Rijeka's autonomy, fostering harmonious relations between the government and Rijeka, and amicable and peaceful coexistence of Rijeka's autochthonous population and Hungarian settlers. Although both Zanella and Ossoinack in their programs stressed the importance of preserving Rijeka's autonomy, for Zanella it is the interests of Rijeka that are in the first place, while the interests of Hungary follow only if they are compatible with those of Rijeka; for Ossoinack, however, there are no interests of Rijeka separated from the interests of Hungary, as he considers Rijeka too weak to be an independent actor.

The strong Hungarian support for Ossoinack proved to be insufficient, perhaps even counterproductive, since Zanella won by gaining 860 votes against Ossoinack's 673. It is particularly interesting that, despite the ruthless campaign led against Zanella especially by Tp., he had received votes of some of Rijeka's Hungarians as well, and the political grouping even led to duels (naval officer Jenő Pázmány and Dávid Hajnal, a professor at the Higher Trade School, both undoubtedly Hungarians, but the former supporting Zanella and the latter Ossoinack, crossed swords in a duel initiated by Hajnal in order to defend his honor insulted by Pázmány during a political debate).

In his post-election speech, Zanella particularly thanked for the support of Hungarians who voted for him, pointing out his patriotic feelings towards Hungary. Zanella's election caused a reluctant and cautiously conciliatory tone of Tp., with a hope that Zanella will in his deputy work indeed advocate the interests of all Rijeka's citizens, regardless of their ethnicity. The paper fiercely distances itself from the allegations Zanella brought up in his speech the day before the election, according to which Hungarian media are a major source of hostilities between Rijeka's Hungarians and Italians. To see how much Zanella was right, it suffices to look at the articles about the elections during the previous few days. We can see similar distancing in FSz, which hopes Zanella will use his political influence and work on establishing peace between Rijeka's Italians and Hungarians, mainly by controlling individuals in the Autonomist Association, and adds that FSz was not directly against Zanella, but rather against the moves undertaken and advocated by his supporters. FSz praises the fact that Zanella conducted his campaign speeches in Hungarian, what had so far never been done, not even by candidates who were ethnic Hungarians. It further states that the masses gathered below Zanella's balcony, when »Kossúth's Song« was performed after his speech, took off their hats out of respect, despite strong wind – indeed, even the Italians warned the Hungarians that this »holly and patriotic tune« should be listened with uncovered head.

After Zanella's victory, there is a détente in the relations between the city's Italians and Hungarians (and in Hungarian media as well), so already on February 3 a masquerade with Hungarian traditional dances (not held for several years until then) is held in Rijeka's theatre, attended by some prominent Rijeka's autonomists, such as Antonio Walluschnig. A few days later, in the city council's debate on transferring Rákóczi's remains to the homeland, the autonomists strongly supported such ceremony, noting that in this way, despite the accusations on their account, they wanted to show they were good and loyal Hungarians.

FSz cites numerous cases of people who have hitherto been known as staunch autonomists and who after the election have started to show friendly feelings towards local Hungarians, of fraternizings in the city's inns, and the like. Even *La Voce del Popolo*, according to the Hungarian newspapers, began praising Hungarians and Hungarianness. But only two weeks after the election FSz again points out the »breaches of the truce«, noting that the very same *La Voce del Popolo* referred to Zanella in one of its articles as to »the Italian representative of Rijeka«. FSz again wonders – how is it possible for a representative of a Hungarian city in the Hungarian parliament to be Italian? But it says it does not want to debate on this any further, given that irredentist efforts – as well as other mental disorders – have no place on the pages of that newspaper. Further in the same article, the author explains that Rijeka's Italianness is doubtless, and that the spirit of its people, its ancient traditions, institutions and trade are Italian, not Hungarian. The same applies



for the language. Just as Austrians failed to Germanize Trieste, so Rijeka should not be afraid of being Magyarized. Hungary does not want to Magyarize neither the city nor naval affairs. The interests of the Hungarian state and the local Italian community are in no collision, because they mostly do not even overlap. As for the language, however, the interest of the Hungarian state is that all those who in their business activities or personal interests come into contact with the institutions of the state, the services or the market, should know the official language of Hungary. Just as the state does not adjust its official language at the regional level to Slovaks, Romanians, Transylvanian Germans, Croats (outside Croatian territory) and Serbs, it cannot be done for the sake of Rijeka's Italians either. After all, it is natural for a child to learn the language of its mother, not the other way around. The author hopes that those who have so far failed in seeing it, will soon realize that no danger is threatening Rijeka's Italians from Hungarians, and points out that if there is any danger to the Italians at all, one should in fact look much closer – at the Croats. For if one takes a walk along the streets of Rijeka, one will find that 9 out of 10 of Rijeka's stores are owned by Croats, Croats are in possession of some of Rijeka's factories, the savings banks are dominated by Croatian capital counting in millions... A look into the land registry would show that 3/4 of buildings in Rijeka are Croatian property. Not to mention the naval affairs – with the exception of the ships owned by Adria, all the other steamers and sailboats belong to Croats. All those horrified by the »Hungarian violence« should address these facts. While Italians merely talk about the need to protect and strengthen the Italian identity and culture, Croats do act. Although the author does not state it at the end of the article, the message is clear – in order for Rijeka's Italians to survive, they should put themselves under the firmer protection of Hungary, since the autonomy would only make them more vulnerable to Croatian strivings.

The autonomists however persist in their program, continuing to disturb Hungarians. Thus FSz in the editorial of July 9, 1905 brings new contributions to the idea of Rijeka's nation and the perception of Hungarians as strangers: in the necrologue on the death of Archduke Joseph Charles Habsburg, who was commander in chief of the Royal Hungarian Honvédség, *La Voce del Popolo* calls the deceased »a dear guest of Rijeka«, although he has lived in Rijeka for many years, and explains what the Archduke was to »them, the Hungarians« (i.e. not »us«!); during the celebration of St. Vitus, the city's patron saint, he is called »the patron of our homeland«; on the same occasion *Inno a Fiume* is conducted as the city's anthem, a song in which there is an allusion about Hungarians as an enemy nation. In addition, Hungarians are increasingly being referred to as *magiari*, instead of the usual *ungheresi*, what is considered derogatory. But the main problematic event took place on June 2, when the leaders of the Autonomist Association at one ceremony started talking about the peace between the Italians and *magiari*, and about the »Hungarian nationality« in Rijeka (different

from the Italian one), defending themselves from the accusations of insult by the fact that, after all, Hungarians themselves have hitherto referred to Rijeka's italophone population as »Italians« and not »Fiumani« The author of the text in FSz at this point of the article falls into a trap of illogicality, because in further text he tries to deny the existence of the Italian nationality in Rijeka, supporting it by the fact that there are many Slavs living there as well, in this way actually acknowledging the autonomist postulate that Rijeka's population is ethnically diverse and that it would have more sense to call those people Fiumani rather than Italians. Of course, the author believes they should be called exclusively Hungarians of different mother tongues, since he is then referring to the provisions of the constitution that state there are no nationalities in Hungary, but a unique Hungarian nation, composed of members of different ethnic groups. Anyone who wants to claim the rights and exceptions for a certain nationality is committing an offense of rebellion against nation. The author wonders why is the Autonomist Association still hiding behind declarative Hungarian patriotism, when it is doing everything to undermine Hungary's unity and its interests. He is however convinced that the majority of Rijeka's citizens does not agree with such policy, but remains silent because it is afraid of autonomist terrorists, who, although being a minority, know how to silence the opponents.

The victory in the elections for the parliamentary deputy encouraged the Autonomist Association in appointing the officials in the city services according to their party membership. On January 21, 1906 FSz comments on a recently completed concourse for a physician at the department of dermatology in the city hospital, to which two candidates applied. The first of them had already worked for two years as a temporary employee at the said department, was the only person in Rijeka having specialty in dermatology, and was (which will prove to be important below) of short stature. His rival had not worked in the city hospital, was not a specialist, however he was of tall stature, and was – which is actually of ultimate importance here – a staunch autonomist. It was of course the latter who was chosen for the job. The author of the editorial cynically comments that a malicious person might think it happened because the specialist was not a fanatical advocate of autonomism, but it is of course a misconception, since the city fathers work solely for the public good. He supports his argument with the statement of the head of the city public health office – by pure coincidence one of the key members of the Autonomist Association as well – who in the debate over the appointment pulled out a crucial argument: »In one such department, visited in large numbers by members of the fairer sex, you need a man of strong stature.«

On January 28, 1906 FSz, referring to a year passed since the elections for the city representative, indicates the autonomists' rhetorical love towards Hungarians, of which, however, not much can be found in practice – in fact, four of the Hungarian deputies in the city council were not appointed members of any committee, thus mak-

ing all power in the city concentrated in the hands of the autonomists. By emphasizing that Zanella was elected to his position by the votes of the city's Hungarians as well (or by their abstain from voting), for what this rhetorical inclination towards Hungarians is clearly an expression of gratitude, the author of the editorial wonders what would the autonomist attitude towards Hungarians be had Zanella by any chance not been elected and had the Hungarians played a crucial role in his non-election? In other words, if these are cordial relations, what would then hostile relations look like? The conclusion is that Zanella, despite announcing that he will fight for the interests of Rijeka and its citizens, in his work omits the interests of Rijeka's Hungarians and deals only with the interests of Italians.

Two weeks later, the same paper will even more directly attack the Autonomist Association, whose »main objective is the monopoly of absolute power in the city's administration«, which considers to be the only one deciding on the city's fate, and which does not want to allow Hungarians to obtain the status of Rijeka's citizens, considering them strangers, guests, nomads, less worthy. FSz accuses the autonomists of using Rijeka's Hungarians for cheap politicking, claiming that by such actions the Autonomist Association is actually the biggest enemy of Rijeka's Italians, in whose absolute interest of survival is to strive to remain loyal to Hungary. This is again the case of the familiar propaganda which would like to persuade the majority of the local population (in the paper already read by those inclined to loyalism) that what is actually the interest of the government is in fact the interest of the population.

On April 22, 1906 FSz published an article about how one night at the time of pre-election skirmishes a group of school children was shouting out »Abasso l'Ungheria!« (»Down with Hungary!«), referring to »the Hungarian pigs«, while the entire incident was tacitly being watched by one professor to whom it did not at any time occur that he was living in Hungary, moreover, that he received salary from the state, which, obviously according to him as well, was made of pigs. According to the author of the article, it is not so much the children's fault, because they are immature, but the school's. Nowhere in the country are children as rude as in Rijeka, and the expressions such as »Down with Hungary« and »Hungarian pigs«, as the author has learned, were also heard from the mouth of the son of a prominent Rijeka's Hungarian family after coming back from school. The author wonders what are the children then taught at schools and what values are represented by the people in charge of education. As a conclusion he says that if some Italian from Venice hates Hungarians, it is his own business. But if it does a person of a German name, born and educated in Hungary, out of their imaginary Italianness, then it is arrogance.

On April 25, 1906, the new governor of Rijeka, Count Sándor Nákó, took office. FSz welcomed him and briefly summarized its views with regard to the pressing problem in Rijeka, the inter-ethnic strife. The author stated that the struggle with a national prefix is not entitled to exist

anywhere in Hungary, although special interests may exist – but Rijeka's Italians have no special interests. Rijeka's italophone citizens have always been prone to Hungarians, because they were well aware they can preserve their culture and self only if they are closely and inextricably connected with Hungarians, otherwise they would disappear without a trace, as did their Istrian and Dalmatian brothers. In the opinion of FSz, this is still believed by the majority of italophone citizens of Rijeka, and the strained relations are the result of an illusion of few people who for their own interest want to create the idea of Rijeka's national rights, national interests and national uniqueness. There is only one interest and one goal Rijeka can have, and that is the progress as a Hungarian port city. This country and this city are a home of one nation only – the Hungarian one, and even if its members speak in different languages, in their breasts only one national spirit may reside, again the Hungarian one. The Hungarian nation does not take away anyone's rights, but it would be suicidal to let the assigned rights turn against it. Therefore, the enemy is whoever exercises the right of Rijeka's autonomy in order to oppose Hungary, and the one who tries to do that should feel the tremendous power of the state-building nation. Hungarians give everyone their rights, but everyone should as well be aware that the source of these rights is the will of the Hungarian nation.

### **Relations between Hungarians and Croats in Rijeka**

The Hungarian-Croatian relations in Rijeka itself are not as pronounced, as Croats mostly live in Rijeka's surroundings and in Sušak, and their relations with the city of Rijeka are primarily of commercial and naval nature. From Hungarian perspective, Croats are much greater danger for Italians than Hungarians are, since they are located in the immediate geographical neighborhood of Rijeka (Italy is only westwards from Isonzo, so it can play no role in potential protection of Rijeka's Italians, since it is separated by Austria which keeps its Italians under control), and the examples from Dalmatia have already shown how successful they may be in the assimilation and repression of the Italian element. Therefore, instead of mutual Italian-Hungarian conflicts, their joint cooperation is required in order to prevent Croatian overtake of Rijeka, already attempted in the period between 1848 and 1867.

There are several prominent Croatian politicians working in Rijeka, such as Erazmo Barčić, an outstanding lawyer who was initially a member of Croatian Party of Rights and later accepted the Yugoslav identity, and Frano Supilo, born in Cavtat, who had similar political path (first a member of Croatian Party of Rights, then supporter of the Yugoslav identity), the founder of Novi list and one of the initiators of the Rijeka Resolution. But the representation of topics dealing with the Hungarian-Croatian relations in Rijeka is much lower in Hungarian media and is in fact also somewhat related to the Hungarian-Italian relations.

On April 8, 1905 Josip Juraj Strossmayer died. On the day of his burial, April 14, Croats displayed black flags of mourning all over Rijeka. FSz comments on this event by referring to the warning directed to Rijeka's Italians about a month ago, when it pointed out the abundance of Croats in Rijeka and what direction would a real threat to Italians come from. In the article the author recalls Strossmayer's dispute with Kossúth, who stated that Rijeka was a Hungarian city and that Hungarians would never hand it over to Croats, and points out that on April 14 the city was a realization of Strossmayer's dream, because the Hungarian port, due to the number of black flags, practically turned into Croatian capital. On the other hand, while Italians were bothered by the bilingual Italian-Hungarian inscriptions in Rijeka's trams five and a half years ago, no one has complained against this mass mourning.

On August 6, 1905 we can read in FSz about the issue of Slavic priests in Croatia and Dalmatia, who instead of doing spiritual work often engage in political topics, thereby spreading the South Slavic propaganda. A similar danger exists in Rijeka as well, since Rijeka by mistake remained within the Diocese of Senj, so priests (of course, mostly Croats) are being sent to Rijeka from there, thus spreading their dangerous ideas among the congregation. Moreover, some Italians have under this influence already slavized their surnames, for instance Grandi, Biondi and Rossi became Grandić, Biondić and Rosić (on the other hand, had by any chance those surnames been changed to Nagy, Szóke or Vörös, it is questionable whether FSz would have protested against it). The author of the article is hoping that this mistake will soon be corrected and that Rijeka will be attached to some Hungarian diocese as soon as possible.

When in April 1906 the city's new governor Nákó took office, during his inauguration ceremony he took his guests to a sailing trip around Quarnero on a rented ship. At the time of boarding there was a Rijeka city flag flying from the mast, and after setting sail a Croatian flag was raised on the same mast. FSz asks the obvious question – how is it possible that in such an official occasion the only flag that can officially be used – the national flag – is not featured onboard? And since neither Croatia nor Rijeka are nations, it is clear what flag is in question. An explanation follows, quoting numerous historical documents, trying to demonstrate that the territory of Rijeka is as much Hungarian as e.g. Budapest, Kolozsvár or Brassó, and that there, just as in the mentioned cities, one must display exclusively the Hungarian flag on official occasions. The author finally reminds that Hungarians in their homeland (Rijeka being an inseparable part of it) are not merely »cotenants«, but its masters.

### Language issues

The issue of the official language in Rijeka, and particularly the relation between Hungarian and Italian, became over the years of the Hungarian rule an ever bigger stumbling block. Hungarians were aware that for the

idea of a homogenous nation it was necessary to require the population having a good command of Hungarian as the only official language of the state, and were actively working on increasing the number of Rijeka's citizens able to speak Hungarian. They were at the same time aware that the autonomous rights of Rijeka guaranteed the use of Italian as the first official language and that any stronger Magyarization or diminishing the role and share of Italian (like the one at the time of Bánffy's government) would be counterproductive and could further raise tensions between the italophone population and Hungarians. The Hungarian authorities and their advocates therefore, through the press as well, tried to gather arguments to justify the ever larger presence of Hungarian language in Rijeka's public and school life.

According to Rijeka's city statute the official language of the city is Italian, and the use of Hungarian as the official language of the state is allowed in the state institutions along with Italian. Hungarian is of course the only official language of the railways.<sup>6</sup> Hungarian grammars were published in Rijeka across a period of 15 years, and they were all designed for the italophone population, in order to adopt the official language of the state in the easiest and fastest way possible. Those grammars are: *Grammatica metodica della lingua ungherese* by Miksa Gresits, *Elementi di grammatica ungherese* and *Grammatica metodica della lingua ungherese con esercizi pratici* by Leo György Györök, *Corso teorico-pratico di lingua ungherese ad uso scolastico e privato* by János Lengyel, *Grammatica teorico-pratica della lingua ungherese scritta ad uso delle scuole e dello studio privato* by Sándor Kőrösi and *Grammatica ungherese e libro di lettura* by Imre Donáth.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, Hungarian was initially introduced to all Rijeka's schools as a subject, slowly becoming the teaching language in a growing number of schools, including those for Italian and Croatian children as well, despite the protests of parents. In 1882 the Higher Hungarian State Grammar School was established, so that Hungarian children could go through the entire educational process in Rijeka without coming into contact with Italian (provided that they continued their studies somewhere in Hungary). This will later be complemented with the Higher State Trade School, the Naval Academy, three public civil schools and three public elementary schools.<sup>6</sup>

Those measures gave result in spite of resistance, as we can see in the article of Aladár Fest, published in FSz of April 10, 1904, where the author analyzes the data from the census of 1900, comparing them with censuses of 1880 and 1890. In 1900 Rijeka had 38 057 inhabitants. Italian was spoken by 17,305 (45.47%), Croatian by 13,224 (34.75%), Hungarian by 2,812 (7.40%), Slovene by 2,245 (5.90%) and German by 1,886 (4.95%). Comparing those results with the two previous censuses, it turns out that the proportion of speakers of Hungarian was constantly growing, doubling from census to census (1.8% : 3.6% : 7.40%). The author further brings up another interesting statistics – what was the share of the population whose mother tongue was not Hungarian, that on these three censuses claimed the command of Hungarian. In the cen-

sus of 1880 their share was 0.48%, in 1890 2.4% and in 1900 already 5.2%. From the aspect of their mother tongues, among the italophones the percentage growth was almost identical to the general share (0.47% : 2.4% : 5.1%), among croatophones it also grew, although more slowly (0.16% : 1.0% : 2.9%), among slovenophones it stagnated (0.18% : 0.5% : 0.5%), while the largest increase was among germanophones (4.0% : 12.9% : 21.6%). The overall share of the city's population in command of Hungarian through the last three censuses was therefore 2.3% : 5.9% : 11.9%.

Despite the results of the increase in Hungarian language competence in Rijeka, the strengthening of political resistance forced the Hungarian authorities to more subtle methods. One of them was using Magyarized forms of personal names of those citizens who were not ethnic Hungarians, when they were published in Hungarian texts. In accordance with Hungarian anthroponomastics, the names were quoted according to Hungarian order (family name at the beginning, personal name at the end). Thus, Francesco Vio became Vio Ferenc, Andrea Ossoinack Ossoinack András (or Endre), and Erazmo Barčić Barcsics Erazmus.

Crawling Magyarization usually happened under the pretext of facilitating communication by abolishing language barriers that separated Rijeka from the rest of the country, and Rijeka's italophone citizens from the ones not speaking Italian. On September 4, 1904 FSz published an article on a decision of the central election committee that all the documents in Rijeka related to the state elections, apart from in Italian, must be published in Hungarian as well. Further in text FSz refers to rumours that such move would lead to endangering Rijeka's autonomous rights, arguing that it is not true since it does not prescribe Hungarian replacing Italian, just their parallel use, and this only in the context of the state elections, while for city affairs one may continue using exclusively Italian. But the city authorities, led by the autonomists, were not satisfied with that solution, so the decision to call elections for the city representative in the state parliament, brought in January 1905, was again written only in Italian. This move will be very harshly reprimanded by Tp., addressing »dwarves« and »Lilliputian tyrants« who dare to belittle and bypass the official language of the state in spite of the strict instructions from the Minister of the Interior, who has banned the omission of Hungarian language from official proclamations.

Also, on February 4, 1905 both dailies (MT and Tp.) convey the notice of the Ministry of Trade that postal money orders must be written in the official language (= Hungarian), because only in that case it is possible to verify whether the amount written in numbers corresponds to the one written in words.

When it comes to less subtle Magyarization, FSz in its issue of December 17, 1905 briefly recounts the content of Dr. Dávid Hajnal's study, titled »Learning Hungarian language in Rijeka's High Trade School«. Dr. Hajnal (one of the participants of the aforementioned duel after the elections for the city representative in parliament) claims that

trade school is maybe closer to real life experience than any other school, and that the knowledge of Hungarian – particularly in Rijeka, the city where you can never know enough languages – can thus be vital. It is essential, according to Hajnal, that students themselves become aware of that fact, and in developing that awareness the school's effort itself is not enough, it is also necessary that the city's institutions, banks, companies, etc. make clear that the knowledge of Hungarian is an essential prerequisite for employment and do not deviate from that attitude (a rather tautological logic, whose only purpose is Magyarization). A teacher should also not miss a single opportunity to emphasize the need of knowing Hungarian and its role in the future life progress of students. In that way students will leave school aware of the irreplaceable role of the Hungarian language in their lives, and will continue striving to improve their knowledge of it. But there are certain preconditions necessary for that – above all, quality textbooks. Dr. Hajnal is also aware of the fact that learning Hungarian is a demanding process that puts additional pressure on students, already overloaded with homework. He therefore considers that it would be a good solution to establish boarding schools where the students would constantly be surrounded by the Hungarian language, would be taught the Hungarian culture as well, and would thus overcome their mutual cultural and linguistic differences in the spirit of the Hungarian unity. Instead of the present two scholarships annually, more free places should be provided in such boarding schools for gifted students, preferably of Hungarian ethnicity, who would then in return assist their non-Hungarian colleagues in teaching and spreading the Hungarian spirit, what would be beneficial for everyone – for non-Hungarians because they would learn Hungarian, and for Hungarians because together with their colleagues they would contribute to the national mission. He also names the additional opportunities that would coax young speakers of other languages to take up learning Hungarian: theatrical performances, summer Hungarian language courses and the like. The author of the article in FSz agrees with Dr. Hajnal in his conclusion that such efforts would greatly contribute to the spread of knowledge of Hungarian, what is, at least in principle, against the editorial policy advocated by the newspaper all along – namely, the one that Hungarians respect the autonomy of the Italian language in Rijeka and have no desire to impose the Hungarian language to those who do not want it. Hajnal's formulation that it is necessary that the city's political and economic subjects stress that the knowledge of Hungarian is the *conditio sine qua non*, represents a gross violation of Rijeka's autonomous rights. The absence of any editorial remark is in this respect very indicating.

On April 15, 1906 FSz brings an article in which it despairs over the fact that in Rijeka, judging from public inscriptions, it is very difficult to conclude that it is a Hungarian city. First, if one even finds Hungarian language on billboards, it is full of errors and reveals general negligence in addressing the official language, and second, one can often find no Hungarian language at all. It is

particularly outrageous that one can frequently see Croatian name Riecka (sic!) on signs, which is of course fiction, since as there is no longer Ofen-Pesth or Pressburg, there can also neither be Rijeka nor Zagreb, only Fiume and Záhgráb. Indeed, one can use the name »Rijeka«, just as one can steal. But the law is clear in both matters. Besides, numerous merchants from Rijeka display the inscription: »XY, Fiume (Riecka), Österreich« on their stationery intended to be used abroad. But what upset the author the most was a text in a French language tourist guide, which could be found on some of the ships owned by the Hungarian-Croatian shipping company (connecting cities and towns around Quarnero and Dalmatia). The controversial parts quoted in the article are e.g. the following: »Austria: Transleithanian possessions: Hungary. Administration seat: Pesth and Alt-Ofen. It has 400,000 inhabitants, who are mostly Jewish. Among the city's schools one can single out the agricultural school...« The author wonders how can we possibly seek foreign understanding for our endeavours, when we ourselves serve them such nonsense on our ships? He concludes that the only way to fight it is that Rijeka's Hungarians boycott those merchants who have no Hungarian inscriptions on their shops and who employ people who cannot speak Hungarian, while as far as the Hungarian-Croatian shipping company and its anti-Hungarian attitude are concerned, it is to hope that the new government will take appropriate steps in that regard.

In some Hungarian circles, however, one can find a different view of the linguistic situation in Rijeka and its implications for relations in the city and beyond. Namely, Hungarians often after their arrival to Rijeka feel that, because Rijeka belongs to Hungary, they are not obliged to learn Italian. On that matter, an appeal of Dr. Géza Kenedi appeared on the cover of FSz's issue from December 13, 1903, in which he believes that this phenomenon unnecessarily widens the gap between Rijeka's Italians and Hungarians, not contributing to the peaceful coexistence of the two communities. Not knowing the local language leads to ignorance of the local culture, and so to the inability of acquainting with the city, and as long as this situation persists the local population will perceive Hungarians as strangers and intruders in their city. Kenedi cites other advantages of knowing Italian as well: the strengthening of cultural ties between Hungary and Italy, a connection with the centuries-long culture...in fact, he even sees the opening towards the Italian language as means of fighting the long-term Germanization of the Hungarian language.

To this appeal is attached the abovementioned proclamation on the establishment of the Rijeka Patriotic Party, in which it is stated that one of the important points of this party's program is not only to preserve the position of the Italian language in the city, but also to spread and promote it across Hungary itself, pointing to the benefits of such measures for the entire country.

The dominant position of the Italian language in Rijeka left its mark in Hungarian – in the speech of Rijeka's Hungarians (even in the newspaper discourse, one can only assume how it was in everyday colloquial language)

one can find a larger number of Italian loanwords than in standard Hungarian, especially for certain local cultural and social phenomena, such as Italian names for the city's political subjects, e.g. raprezentánca (city council) and podszta (mayor).

One of the manifestations of the linguistic and ethnic relations in the city are the names of the streets and other public areas. The streets mostly bear the names of prominent city figures and some meritorious characters from the Hungarian (mainly political) history (eg. Andrassy, Kossúth, Deák, Baross...but also Munkácsy and Petőfi). The terms defining public areas (ie. »street«, »square«, »embankment«...), although officially bilingual (eg. Ciotta utcza/Via Ciotta), are often quoted in their Italian forms even in Hungarian newspapers.

The following anecdote from the session of the city council, published in Tp.'s issue from January 11, 1905, demonstrates how the Italians in Rijeka perceived the role of the Hungarian language. Riccardo Zanella read a letter from the Minister of the Interior before the election organizing committee, by directly translating it from Hungarian into Italian. At one point he paused, to what one of the members of the committee (named Stupičić, originally a loyalist who will soon join the autonomists) asked if the translation was unclear. The chairman of the committee, mayor Francesco Vio, pointed out to the member of the committee that Zanella was translating directly from Hungarian, asking him, after Stupičić had expressed his surprise with that information, if he wanted the text to be read in Hungarian as well. Stupičić refused, to what the committee erupted in laughter. Although the author of the article does not make any specific comment, one can read between the lines that the members of the committee believed that reading in Hungarian would be an unnecessary formality, since they all understood Italian anyway, and Stupičić's initial reaction indicated that it was quite understandable for memos of the central government directed to Rijeka's authorities to be translated into Italian.

The multilingualism issue has become especially tricky during WWI, when the inter-ethnic tensions in Rijeka intensified even more, and Italian, besides being the language of Rijeka, became the official language of one of the countries with which the Austria-Hungary was at war, so its position in Rijeka was under even greater scrutiny. On January 1, 1918 Tp. brings a comment of Hugo Farkasházy from Világ (World) newspaper, describing problems the Hungarian lawyers authorized to represent clients during judicial proceedings in Rijeka face due to them not knowing Italian, since Rijeka's courts in such cases do not want to recede from the government's decision of 1871, according to which the official language of Rijeka's royal courts is Italian, thus leading to procedural difficulties (the courts refuse submissions written in Hungarian, decisions are brought exclusively in Italian, etc.). Farkasházy believes that this practice should be changed, at least for disputes involving parties from other parts of Hungary, claiming that the government is not doing enough in this regard, out of fear of complaints from the Croatian side, which in turn, according to Farkasházy, has no basis for

this whatsoever, since Rijeka is Hungarian territory. Although he advocates a decree that the official language of Rijeka's courts becomes Hungarian, he would agree to a compromise solution that would allow the members of each linguistic community to communicate in their own language. The trouble is that such measure would require for the judges to be able to speak Italian, Hungarian and Croatian equally good, and such judges are few. It is however still possible, since according to current needs no more than five judges of such profile would be required. But the government approaches those issues as a hornet's nest, and thus a situation persists whereby in Rijeka's courts, although already more than a third of the population is hungarophone (Farkasházy's data, not supported by statistical facts), Hungarian still has no right of representation. Tp.'s comment to the article is that the language issue will inevitably be dealt with once the war is over, together with the final solution to the problem of Rijeka's provisorium, but the commentator believes that the idea of three languages is hard to imagine, since even the bilingualism creates enough insurmountable difficulties. He therefore thinks the only official language should be Hungarian, and that Italian could be allowed in submissions and discussions, while the records, the verdicts and publications must be exclusively in Hungarian. As for Croatian, it can keep the current status of language in use for litigations in maritime law.

### Everyday life

Since the studied material was mainly limited in distribution to Rijeka area, it is possible to find numerous short news dedicated to regular phenomena of city life – from public events to crime news, to price trends, to ship timetables, to readers' letters... Although most of them are irrelevant for the issues of our research (except that the announcements for cultural events – usually ethnically colored – can provide information on their frequency and places where the members of a particular community gathered), we still managed to find some interesting motives.

As for the sports life of Hungarians in Rijeka, in MT in early February 1905 we find a notice on the establishment of athletics and fencing association, in addition to the already existing rowing club. The author expresses fear that these sports associations, due to a lack of funding, a loss of members' interest or other personal reasons, will cease to exist in a year or two, and wonders whether such number of purely Hungarian sports associations is too huge for Rijeka's Hungarian population, at that time numbering a few thousand – so he suggests that in order to sustain these associations a possibility of admitting members of Italian ethnicity should be considered.

In employment advertisements published on the back pages of the newspapers one can stumble upon the ones addressing preferred ethnicity of candidates, even if the reason is actually only the knowledge of a certain language – e.g. »Hungarian youngster wanted for office intern; those knowing German can also apply« (why could

not an Austrian knowing Hungarian apply, or Italian and Croat knowing both required languages?). Such criteria are especially common in advertisements for governesses. Today we would consider such advertisements discriminatory, but at the time they were a legitimate way for compatriot networks in a multi-ethnic city to function.

### Conclusions

Although the source material was limited in the aspect of time, thus largely preventing gaining the integral direct image of Rijeka's city life throughout the period of the Hungarian rule, the material from the period of the Dualism crisis is in many ways crucial for the city, because a rift between the Hungarian authorities and the autonomists started at that time, by which the economical romance between Rijeka and Hungarians will slowly die out. It gives a good insight into all the complexity of relations between the authorities of the city and the state, as well as between the three main ethnic (or even national) groups that claimed their right on Rijeka. In fact, one might even say that this turbulent period summarizes all the problems of Rijeka's identity relevant for our research, since a period preceding it is marked by economic boom and idyllic relations, while the period that followed is the time of the general collapse of the Monarchy, when centrifugal tendencies, which might not have received a necessary momentum in times of peace, began to intensify. Therefore the period around 1905, the one in which the first cracks in the golden coating of Hungarian Rijeka appear, is the most indicating for understanding the complexity of identity issues that have plagued the residents of the city at the mouth of Rječina, whose only leitmotiv through much of the city's history seemed to be escaping from direct pretenders to rule over Rijeka, by opportunistically stressing the counter-identity – highlighting Hungarianness to resist Croats, the autonomism to resist Hungarians, Italianness to resist Yugoslavians, the autonomism again to resist D'Annunzio and later Fascist Italy...until reluctance or inability to resist Tito's Yugoslavia brought to a large exodus of Italians and optants during the decade after WWII, by which the centuries long identity of Fiumani would disappear. It is an identity similar to the one in many European multiethnic, especially port, cities – intractable, irreducible to uniform patterns of any nation that is not the one belonging to the city itself. The episode of Hungarian rule over the city, although undeniably responsible for positioning the city on the economic map of Europe, in all other efforts – and as one can see, they tried both the easy and the hard way – remained just another futile attempt to find a firm foothold on the mountainous coast of Rijeka and to run over what has been built there for centuries. Even if the outcome of the WWI had been different, the Hungarian episode would probably have ended – in the final days of the war desperate steps have been undertaken to introduce Trialism and establish a South Slavic administrative unit in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which would probably have incorporated Rijeka as well, and by which thus the catastrophic forecasts of

those Hungarians who warned Italians that the Hungarian rule is actually their protection from assimilation would have come true. But that is already beyond the scope of our research and goes over to the field of alternative history. On the other hand, as an example of the fluidity and opportunism of Fiumani identity, we can conclude this article with a political anecdote which shows that Hungarians never had a person among Rijeka's citizens who they could rely on completely:

Andrea Ossoinack, who, despite strong support from Hungarian newspapers, suffered a defeat from Zanella on the election for Rijeka's representative in the Hungarian parliament in 1905, finally managed to become a parliamentary deputy by a decree in 1916. It was exactly his speech in the Hungarian parliament, held on October 10, 1918, that would raise controversies in Hungarian media. Ossoinack, speaking of the Croatian and South Slavic pretensions to Rijeka at the time, stated to be strongly opposed to them and that he believed the citizens of Rijeka, in accordance with all the other citizens of the Monarchy, had the right to self-determination. Although the newspaper initially expressed hope that the absence of a remark that self-determination must understand Rijeka remaining part of the countries of the Crown of St. Stephen was probably a failure in the transmission of Ossoinack's statement, it would later be established that Ossoinack indeed did not say anything more than what was quoted, so even the then-Prime Minister Sándor Weckerle had a need to complement Ossoinack's statement exactly by the remark that Rijeka must by all means remain part of Hungary. The editorial of *Tp.*, dated October 20, expresses surprise by Ossoinack's incomplete statement, which suggests hesitation and waiting for the outcome of the situation. After all, if he clearly emphasized to be against the Yugoslav pretensions and the irredentism is an illusion that has no significant support in Rijeka anyway, what else is left but Rijeka to remain a part of Hungary? How is it then possible that in such crucial moments the city's represen-

tative in the Hungarian parliament fails to confirm his loyalty to the struggle for preserving the ties between the city and its motherland, an idea supported by the most of Rijeka's citizens anyway? The author of the comment also wonders on the absence of any reaction from Rijeka's governor Zoltán Jekelfalussy, who did not bother that Ossoinack should take an unambiguous stance in his statement.

Merely nine days after that article Jekelfalussy will hand over the city to the South Slavic military units and abandon it, *Tp.* will stop being published, and Andrea Ossoinack, thanks to the aforementioned statement, will be invited to the Paris Peace Conference in which he will represent the interests of Rijeka's population, refusing Rijeka's joining the new State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, considering that the city of Rijeka and its port would be marginalized in it and thus prolong the economical agony of the city already seriously struck by the four-year war. Although Ossoinack personally did not agree with this proposal, it is exactly his idea of self-determination that will finally persuade Woodrow Wilson to consider establishing the Free State of Rijeka, whose only president during its four years' existence will become Ossoinack's former rival Riccardo Zanella. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

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## **VIRENJE POD RIJEČKU KRPICU – PROBLEMATIKA MEĐUETNIČKIH ODNOSA I IZGRADNJE MAĐARSKOG NACIONALNOG IDENTITETA U RIJECI POČETKOM 20. STOLJEĆA**

### **SAŽETAK**

U članku se kroz građu prikupljenu iz riječke periodike na mađarskom jeziku, primarno iz razdoblja 1903–1906., prikazuje problematika izgradnje jedinstvenog nacionalnog identiteta u gradu koji je veći dio svoje povijesti bio obilježen etničkom šarolikošću. Budući da promatrana građa pripada diskursu koji ima dominantnu političku i ideološku poziciju, ali je demografski inferioran na terenu, zanimljivo je promatrati načine kojima se pokušava umanjiti nepovoljni položaj, istovremeno pokušavajući zadržati vjerodostojnost i ne prijeći u otvorenu ideološku propagandu – uz promjenjiv uspjeh i konačni ishod.