

The History of Hungarian Fiume 1776–1914

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Precedents (1716–1776)

The precedents of the Hungarian merchant navy and all of Hungarian–Adriatic relations (apart from the sea-shore conquests of the kings of Hungary in the Middle Ages) go back to the reign of Charles III (1711–1740), the Hapsburg monarch. He was influenced by mercantilism and so took significant steps to develop the navy of the Empire.

In 1716 he called upon the authority of the then narrow-spread Hapsburg coast to make suggestion for the regulation and improvement of marine navigation. A year later free navigation was allowed by a decree on the whole Adriatic Sea. Then with the peace of Pozsarevác¹, in 1718, this was extended over the Ottoman Empire. Venice, the earlier dominant power of the area, was too weak to protest. Charles III realised that the development of the navigation in itself was always unsuccessful unless the continental roads leading to the ports were built or kept in good condition. In 1719, in a decree, he arranged the safety of the continental roads leading to the coast, and he even had new roads built. The same decree introduced the reform of the commercial law and made it easier for the foreign merchants to settle down in the Empire.

In 1719 he also made sure that the two rivals in this area, Trieste and Fiume², receive the free-port status. Although later Trieste won the rivalry between the towns, it has to be mentioned that these two towns were at the same level and had the same opportunities at the beginning. With this rivalry both towns began to rise.

Under the reign of Charles III started the building of the first quarantine in Fiume, which is essential for becoming an international port.³ Soon a decree ordered the establishment of a free port, but in practise this was not carried out until the end of the nineteenth century. In 1729 the monarch visited the Eastern coastal region of the Adriatic in order to show he was personally committed to the navy. He left a significant and promising inheritance for his daughter.⁴

¹ Today Požarevac (Serbia)

² Today Rijeka (Croatia)

³ This port called Mandracchio is not the same with the quarantine of Marinschizza later.

⁴ The best summary – written in Hungarian – of the naval and marine commercial orders of Charles III is in KRÁL Miklós, *Magyar tengerészeti igazgatás* [Hungarian naval administration], Budapest, 1905, p. 15–17

Under the reign of Maria Teresa (1740–1780) the Adriatic Hapsburg navy went through even more significant developments, which were particularly significant for Hungary. First, in 1745 she united the administrations of all the ports in an order called Oberste Commerz-Intendenza (High Commercial Intendance), which was originally established by her father in 1731. The head of the organisation was the intendant, who oversaw the works of the local vice-intendants (in our case the vice-intendant of Fiume). In 1750 the Flaggen Patent (ship certificate of registry ; only for ocean-liner vessels), and also the use of imperial flag became obligatory. In the following years numerous legal and sanitary orders were introduced. In 1764 it was time to classify the ports. Then Trieste, Fiume, Buccari⁵, Zengg⁶ and Carlopago⁷ were declared main ports, the others having a sanitary office were called by-ports. (Ports not having any sanitary offices are called dead ports.)

The navigation and naval orders, declared by Charles III and Maria Teresa, were published in a separate book titled *Politicum Edictum* on 25th of April 1774. The complete Hungarian translation of this book was published only in 1804 under the following title: “*Politicum Edictum, or Orders for the Public Goods towards the Austrian Commercial Navigation*”, which was simply called *Naval Regulation* later.⁸ This *Naval Regulation*, apart from some minor modifications, remained valid until 1918 all over the Hapsburg Empire. Although it became obsolete and it was severely criticised, it was not revised.⁹ In 1774 the naval school of Trieste, due to the lack of the students, moved to Fiume and was operating there until 1785.¹⁰

In 1776, two years after the publication of the *Politicum Edictum*, the first order was decreed which annexed Fiume to Hungary. The precedents of this was that the Crown Prince, the later Joseph II, took a tour by the sea-shore in 1755 and on returning, he advised his mother to annex Fiume to Hungary.

The first Hungarian period (1776–1809)

The order mentioned above was only a promise and opportunity, but after publishing the order, József Majláth, the Hungarian royal commissar, took over the town from baron Ricci, the representative of the intendance. In practice Fiume became part of Hungary only three years later, on 23rd of April 1779 with a decree “as an independent area

⁵ Today Bakar (Croatia)

⁶ Today Senj (Croatia)

⁷ Today Karlobag (Croatia)

⁸ GONDA Béla, *A magyar tengerészet és a Fiumei kikötő* [The Hungarian Navy and the Port of Fiume], Budapest, 1906, p. 16

⁹ The elaboration of the *Naval Regulation* in Hungary was under construction during the World War I by Dezső Dárday, who was a lawyer of the administrative department of the Hungarian royal Naval Authority, and an expert in the naval law. But his work was not finished.

¹⁰ HORVÁTH József, ‘*The Nautica*’. *A fiumei Tengerészeti Akadémia története* [‘The “Nautica” History of the Royal Hungarian Marine Academy in Fiume], Budapest, 1999, p. 8

annexing to the Hungarian Sacra Corona" (i.e.: not as a part of Croatia which was in royal personal union with Hungary). This act recognised the 'ancient rights' of the Hapsburgs as Hungarian kings towards Fiume, although earlier Fiume had never been a Hungarian town.¹¹ The representatives of Fiume took part in the Hungarian parliament only in 1790 for the first time. Here they claimed the legalisation of the annexation to Hungary straight away, which were later postponed three times by the Hapsburg monarchs in 1790, 1802, and 1805. Finally, in 1807, Fiume became legally a part of Hungary.

The main purposes of the delays were the Napoleonic Wars. In 1797 Fiume was occupied by the French Army, but they marched out after the Peace of Campoformio.¹² Nevertheless the Istrian peninsula, Dalmatia even the whole state of Venice became Hapsburg territory due to the peace treaty on 17th of October 1797. The monarchs until 1918 possessed Dalmatia with reference to the ancient right of the Hungarian kings (the area was occupied by Koloman, the Bookish), but Dalmatia under the reign of the Hapsburg Empire remained under Austrian administration. More Hungarian writers mentioned this contradiction later on the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, mainly Rezső Havass.¹³

In 1807 when Francis I declared the annexation of Fiume to Hungary, the Hungarian State did not have too much time to enjoy this situation. Almost at the same time with the declaration, the troops of Napoleon occupied the town again but this time they stayed there.¹⁴

The First Interregnum: The French, then the Austrian reign (1809–1822)

According to the peace of Schönbrunn and Pozsony¹⁵ in 1809, Fiume was dis-annexed from Hungary and was annexed to the Illirian Province as part of the so-called Civil

¹¹ See the Latin and Hungarian version of both charters: JOÓ Gyula, *A másfél évszázados polémia Fiume birtokáért* [The one and the half centurian polemy to own Fiume], Budapest, 1942, p. 39–51. One of the best writing about the theme is: FEST Aladár, "Fiume Magyarországhoz való kapcsolásának előzményeiről és hatásáról" [About the antecedents and effects of the connection Fiume with Hungary], In : *Századok*, 1916, p. 239-266

¹² FEST Aladár, *Fiume az első napóleoni háború idejében* [Fiume during the First War of Napoleon (1797)], Parts I-III. In : *A Tenger*, 1912, p. 1-18, 81-106, 169-194

¹³ The most important works of HAVASS Rezső are: *Magyar kikötő, magyar hajózás* [Hungarian port, Hungarian navigation], Budapest, 1878 - *Dalmácia* [Dalmatia], Budapest, 1906 - *Magyarország és a Balkán*. [Hungary and the Balkans], Budapest, 1913. Furthermore : MARCZALI Henrik, *Miért nem csatolták 1797-ben Dalmáciát Magyarországhoz?* [Why was not annexed Dalmatia to Hungary in 1797?], In : *A Tenger*, 1920, p. 14–20

¹⁴ The governors of Fiume in the first Hungarian period were József Majláth (1779–1783), Count Pál Almássy (1783–1788), and Count József Szapáry (1788–1791), Sándor Pászthory (1791–1800) and József Klobusitzky (1801–1809).

¹⁵ Today Bratislava (Slovakia)

Croatia.¹⁶ It is said that Napoleon wanted not Trieste but the well-situated Fiume to become main Adriatic port.¹⁷ Under the reign of the French the Politicum Edictum was disestablished and as an alternate the French Code de Commerce was introduced. It became clear for the first time that Fiume, without Hungary as a heartland, could be only an insignificant seaport. Under the Napoleonic Wars the so far low ship-traffic of Fiume, cut from Hungary, decreased into zero, all the more so as since the battle of Lissa in 1811, the British flag had dominated the sea.

The English General Nugent, serving the Austrian Empire, liberated the town from the reign of the "Illirian passing glory"¹⁸ on 26th of August, 1813. (For his services he received the castle above the town called Tersatto¹⁹). However, the liberation touched the town and the mother country on a sore spot: during the attack the embayed ships went up in flames and the town did not get back to Hungary, but it got under direct Austrian authority.

In 1815, according to the Final Act of Congress of Vienna, Fiume was officially annexed to the Austrian Empire, and from then on the naval affairs were to be arranged by the court-chamber whose instructions were carried out by the littoral governorships. This kind of governorship was in Trieste, Venice, Fiume and Zara²⁰. The orders of the Politicum Edictum were introduced again, but some parts of the Code de Commerce introduced by the French were also used as a help.

By the end of the Austrian reign (1823), including the first Hungarian period too (1776–1809), Fiume hardly developed; only minor constructions were done. The number of the inhabitants shows slow increase: in 1777 the number of population was 5312, in 1819 it was 8345.²¹ At the same time, from the 1820's more and more sailing nations' ships visited the town: in 1820 the first Swedish, then in 1821 the first Danish ship appeared. In Hungary as far as it is known – besides the conceptions of Count Maurice de Benyovsky²² – nobody was interested in sea trade.

¹⁶ PÁNDI Eszter (ed.), "Napóleon trianoni dekrétuma az Illír Tartományok megszervezéséről" [Napoleon's decree of Trianon about the establishment of the Illirian Province], *Documenta Historica*, No. 48, Szeged, 2000.

¹⁷ There is no concrete proof for this with the knowledge of the French order.

¹⁸ It is a happy phrase for it from the work: *Adatok Fiume kereskedelmi állapotáról* [Data about the commercial status of Fiume], Fiume, 1880, p. 11–14. It was published by the representative body and the Chambers of Commerce of Fiume, for the purpose of the visit of the Hungarian Economic Association.

¹⁹ Today Trsat in Rijeka.

²⁰ Today Zadar in Croatia.

²¹ FEST Aladár, "Fiume népesedési mozgalmá Magyarországhoz való visszacsatolása óta" [The Demographic Movement of Fiume since the Reannexation to Hungary], In: *Földrajzi Közlemények*, 1912, p. 137–153

²² THALLÓCZY Lajos, "Gróf Benyovszky Móric és a Magyar tengerparti kereskedelem első kezdetei" [The Beginnings of the Hungarian Coastal Trade and Count Maurice Benyovsky], In: *Nemzetgazdasági Szemle*, 1879, p. 192–222. And by the same author: "Gr. Benyovszky Móric hadi-tengerészeti és kereskedelempolitikai tervei" [The navy and commercial-politics plans of Count Maurice Benyovsky], Parts I-II. In: *Gazdaságtörténeti Szemle*, 1901, p. 329–376, 385–409

The second Hungarian period (1822–1848)

Francis I, with the order of 1st June 1822, gave back Fiume to Hungary to which this time a bigger Hungarian coast belonged (Littorale Hungaricum) with the by-ports of Buccari, Portoré²³ and Novi.

After the short governorship of Count György Majláth (1822–1823), József Ürményi was appointed, who was the first significant governor in the life of the town. Between 1823 and 1837, during his governorship, took place the first Hungarian state investments in the port. According to contemporary ideas, they wanted to develop the mouth of River Fiumara²⁴ into a seaport suitable for sea-ships, so the constructions were started there. Between 1825 and 1833 the new quarantine of Martinschizza²⁵ was built. Concerning the actual seaport's investments, those remained only plans. So before starting a bigger construction, they had to study the continental routes and the ports which could come into consideration. It is because at that time the seaport of Fiume was not more developed than the others on the East coast of the Adriatic Sea (apart from the ports of Trieste and Dalmatia, but these were out of question to Hungary.) It was also Ürményi who in the first year of his governorship took orders to put naval studies to the curriculum of the college of Fiume.²⁶ In accordance with this order, The Royal Maritime College was established in 1831 which served the commercial education in Fiume at the end of this period. The first Hungarian student of the school was László Magyar who later, between 1842 and 1844, became a famous explorer in Africa.²⁷

Palatine Joseph²⁸ commissioned Franz Rauchmüller von Ehrenstein, the Hungarian general architectural director, to study the suitable ports and continental routes leading to them and develop plans. Between 1829 and 1831 Rauchmüller published his observations and suggestions in a nine volume book.²⁹ In these books he suggested that Fiume should definitely be built up. He worked out the conception how to build up the seaport of Fiume, which later was carried out. According to this conception not the continuously banked up mouth of the Fiumara should be made suitable for seagoing ships, but the so called 'fisher-dam', widening towards the open-sea, has to be lengthen. This idea gave the base of all the constructions which were later (in the second third of the nineteenth century) carried out. The only explanation why he suggested Fiume and not any other nearby seaport was that Fiume had significant fresh-water supply, which was essential for the ports and for the later established industry of the town. The fair winds and the possibilities of the routes played an important role in making the decision, too. In this latter respect

²³ Today Kraljevica (Croatia)

²⁴ In Croatian : Recina.

²⁵ Today Martinšćica between Rijeka and Bakar.

²⁶ HORVÁTH J : *op. cit.* p. 10

²⁷ *Ibid.* 13

²⁸ The younger brother of Francis I. The *palatine* was the highest rank of the Hungarian nobility.

²⁹ RAUCHMÜLLER Franz von Ehrenstein : *Uebersicht der, dem Ungarisch Adriatischen Meereshandel dienenden Land und Wasserstrassen und der dazu gehörigen Seehafen* Ofen (Buda), 1829-1831, (Volume I–IX.)

first the waterways (Duna–Sava–Kupa) and continental routes came into consideration, but both became obsolescent with the appearance of the railway, the era's new invention.

By this time the merchants and the enterprising public figures of Hungary in the Reform Era were forced to take a step in the more and more lively Adriatic trade. In 1843 the *Echo del Litorale Ungarico* (The Echo of the Hungarian Littoral) was published in Fiume and which encouraged the Hungarians in Italian language to take part in the sea trade. The well-known debates of Kossuth and Széchenyi covered Fiume too, or to be more precise it was about how to build up the railway leading from Central Hungary to Fiume.³⁰ The most significant event of their debate was when they appeared in Fiume at the same time in 1846 to get more and more local citizens for their conceptions. In the same year one of the articles of Kossuth, titled "To the Sea Hungarians! Go to the Sea!" was published in a periodical of the Trade Association. This article later became a common saying³¹ in a modified form (and distorted content) as "On Sea, Hungarians!" Also this year, the Hungarian Navigation Company³² was set up by Lajos Kossuth, Lajos Marczibányi, Count Lajos Batthyány and Pál Szabó etc. But the Company dissolved itself in 1848 (because the money collected to an own ship was peculated). Besides this, other companies are related to Lajos Kossuth and his company, for example the well-going Flour-grinding Export Company.³³ But the critique of Ferenc Császár, the Hungarian patrician of Fiume is rightful:

'It is twenty years since Fiume and the Hungarian coast, as the complementary part of the Sacra Corona has been re-annexed to Hungary, but during such a long time the developing and improving nation, our homeland did not do anything for this treasure... This orphan girl – our Fiume! ...Or is she ours or does she belong to Hungary in order to increase its territory with a patch of soil, and so we could say: We have sea, we have a free-port.'³⁴

However, the Hungarian War of Independence in 1848 and 1849 retarded everything, including the railway-plans and the seaport's constructions in Fiume started in 1847 by palatine Joseph. The Italian-cultured citizens of Fiume favoured on hearing about the Revolution.³⁵ The so called April Laws did not leave the Hungarian coast untouched either: the Act XXVII stated that Fiume and Buccari form one municipal authority whose joint commissioner is the governor of Fiume. According to the Act, Novi was not part of the Hungarian littoral. But on 30th of August 1848 the troops of Jellašić occupied the town, then on 4th of April 1849 in Olmütz the so called 'forced' constitution annexed

³⁰ GERGELY András : *Egy gazdaságpolitikai alternatíva a reformkorban. A fiumei vasút* [An Economic-political alternative in the Age of Reform The Railway of Fiume], Budapest, 1982

³¹ KOSSUTH Lajos : "Tengerhez magyar! El a tengerhez!" [To Sea, Hungarians. Go to the Sea !], In : *Hetilap*, 1846, No. 8

³² It was part of Hungarian Commercial Company, which is also related to Lajos Kossuth.

³³ In this period the Hungarian flour export is significant to the overseas countries.

³⁴ CSÁSZÁR Ferenc, "A fiumei kikötő" [The Port of Fiume], *Pest*, 1842, p. 9–19

³⁵ It has to be mentioned here that the citizens of Fiume titled themselves as 'fiumani' and the Italian and Croatian national self-awareness appeared with a delay only on the second half of the nineteenth century.

Fiume to Croatia, withdrawing its self-government, and all of these prevented any further steps. The independent Hungarian government attempted to establish a Hungarian Navy, which was a failure.³⁶

To sum up the second Hungarian period³⁷ it can be stated that few plans were carried out in naval respect but now the mother country showed more interest in the possibilities of sea trade. The fact itself that well-known experts made executable plans with the help of the Hungarian state is not a negligible result.³⁸ The town itself developed a lot in the first half of the nineteenth century. The number of the inhabitants increased from 8384 (1815) to 10568 (1850). They set up the base of the industry of Fiume (paper and sugar mills). During this period the first Hungarian-speaking inhabitants also appeared, although in tiny numbers.³⁹ Among the five Hungarian patricians was Ferenc Császár who wrote the first Hungarian monograph about the seaport of Fiume.⁴⁰

The second Interregnum: The Austrian-Croatian reign (1849-1867)

After the repression of the Hungarian War of Independence the detached Fiume lost its autonomy and Croatian military regiment occupied its territory. This latter meant the appearance of the Croatian national ambition in the town, which reached its peak with the state of siege in 1861 and with the obligatory education of the Croatian language in 1862.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century Fiume (similar to the Dalmatian ports) was basically a town carrying Italian civilization but proud of its autonomy. The appearance of the Croatian elements generated first of all the appearance of the Italian national identity, which was not so significant until the establishment of the united Italian state (1870). The Italian-Croatian conflict has reached its peak at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, many times with Hungarian intervention. It is understandable that the citizens of the town, who had never been part of Croatia before, welcomed the control of Zagreb in a

³⁶ KRÁMLI Mihály, "Az 'Implacabile' Kísérlet az önálló magyar haditengerészet felállítására 1848-ban" [The 'Implacabile'. An attempt to establish an independent Hungarian Navy in 1848], In: *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények*, 1997, No. 1, p. 84-113. And HORVÁTH Jenő, *A magyar kormány adriai politikája 1848-1849* [The Adriatic politics of the Hungarian government in 1848-1849], Budapest, 1927. The latest work provides a significant documentary of the Hungarian War of Independence in Adriatic respect.

³⁷ See to the period between 1776 and 1848: JÁNOSSY Dénes, "Adatok a fiumei kikötő történetéhez" [Data to the History of the Seaport of Fiume 1776-1848], In: *Századok*, 1923-1924, p. 495-518. To the Age of Reform: SZABÓ László, "Adatok Fiume és a magyar tengerpart történetéhez a reformkorszakban" [Data to the History of Fiume and the Hungarian seashore in the Age of Reform], Parts I-II, In: *A Tenger*, 1928, p. 57-83, 116-131

³⁸ The governors of Fiume in the second Hungarian period were Count György Majláth (1822-1823), Ferenc Ürményi (1823-1837), Pál Nemeskéri Kiss (1837-1848) and Count János Erdődy (1848).

³⁹ Fest: *op. cit.*

⁴⁰ CSÁSZÁR Ferenc *op. cit.*

hostile way. For example, in 1865 the representatives were sent both to the Croatian sabor⁴¹, only in order to protest against the annexation, and to the Hungarian parliament to ask to take steps for the sake of re-annexation. In the beginning of 1867 in the fever of the probable Austrian–Hungarian Compromise more pro-Hungarian demonstrations took place in Fiume. The relationship between Hungary and Fiume in this period could be described with the folk songs which remained for us from the collection of Sándor Kőrösi, who was later a teacher in Fiume:

‘With severe days, withdrawal
 God will not strike us nevermore.
 Our freedom with the Hungarians
 Will come back again.’⁴²

As for the navy, in 1850 the central imperial Seebehörde (Naval Authority – it was the revival of the former Intendenza) was established which controlled the Hapsburg Adriatic territory divided into three parts. The three naval supervisions (in the parentheses there are the centres of the areas) were Dalmatian (Raguza⁴³), Hungarian–Croatian (Fiume) and Venetian (Venice). The port position of Fiume theoretically remained significant but it was controlled from the rival Trieste.

The Austrian Naval Authority taking foreign sample published the *Annuario Marittimo* annual paper in Italian language from 1850 which contained the statistics of all imperial ports, naval officers and the staffs of the ships.⁴⁴

With this act the town was under dual leadership: the administration was controlled by Zagreb, and the naval affairs by Trieste. The leadership of Trieste followed the intents of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce in all cases, which wanted to waste Fiume and not develop it. The railway between Vienna and Trieste was opened in 1857, and this was connected to the Hungarian railway system the next years, so the Hungarian market also got into the sphere of operation of Trieste. The Austrian Lloyd navigation stock company, enjoying monopolistic position, simply avoided Fiume with its services. The chronicler of this period shows clearly the decline of Fiume:

‘Its marvellous seaport which palatine István started building in 1847 and on which the Central Naval Authority spent thousands in the last years is unfortunately vacant. And the citizens of Fiume are impatiently waiting for the moment when the beautiful connection

⁴¹ Sabor: the Croatian parliament.

⁴² KÖRÖSI Sándor, *Adalékok Fiume néprajzához* [Data to the ethnography of Fiume] Kolozsvár, 1892

⁴³ Today Dubrovnik (Croatia)

⁴⁴ These annuals could be important sources for the period until 1890, since 1890 the Hungarian Naval Yearbook had been published also in Hungarian language until 1918.

of Danube with the Adriatic Sea would gain the preornaments – which are not used even by the coastal sailor, who could find a shelter in the advantageously situated channel.⁴⁵

It seems to be a miracle that the town and its port could show development under these circumstances: the number of the population increased by more than seven thousands between 1850 and 1869 (in 1869 the number was 17884). It is all the more a surprise because more contemporaries emphasised that the citizens moved out of the town in flocks because of the impossible conditions. It is the period when Trieste developed so much that Fiume could not catch up. After the prosperity of the second Hungarian period, it became clear that Fiume as a town could only develop if it had the disposal of the Hungarian market. The property of the patricians becoming rich earlier diminished and their claim on the Croatian savor, or on Vienna or Trieste to revise their position was in vain and nobody wanted to deal with this until the Compromise of 1867. The merchant patricians of Fiume tried to prove but useless the followings:

‘As for the trade: considering the industrial products, Trieste is the natural export seaport, but in respect of raw materials, it is Fiume. ... The lowlands of Hungary situated behind Fiume and the forests of Croatia mean the inexhaustible resources of the ground-products and there is nothing similar to it in the countries situated behind Trieste. But the shortest and cheapest way from this pantry to the sea goes through Fiume. But all these advantages will entirely be seen if Fiume is connected with railway with the countries situated behind it.’⁴⁶

The third (last) Hungarian period (1868–1918)

The third Hungarian period was due to the Austrian–Hungarian Compromise of 1867, which gave the town back to Hungary. Paragraph XVI of the Act of Compromise says the naval administration belongs to the Ministry of Transport in both States. With this Act, the Hungarian maritime navigation became independent again from Vienna or Trieste. Elek Jakab, the eminent scholar of Kolozsvár⁴⁷ of the nineteenth century welcomed the returning town with these words:

‘Young queen of the Adriatic Sea, be greeted with these mute lines. It is beautiful now, as a home of a free nation ; it is dignified in the mourning of your former oppression. Thirty-four miles square territory, it means us thousand multiplied by thousand because it is the biggest diamond of our royal crown. Hardly eighteen thousand inhabitants mean more than a million because here, our nation’s heart beats. A little cape means us so much as Dover to England, the Pyres to Greece. You connect us with the distant continents, mediating that change of interest, which – if we can utilise – can be the creative power of the Hungarian active foreign trade. The culture and the hearts of the big nations, the

⁴⁵ “Fiume és környékének tájrajza. Természettudományi, orvosi, statisztikai stb. tekintetben” [The topography of Fiume and its environs. In scientific, medical and statistic, ...etc. point of view], *Pest*, 1869, p. 158–162. The publishing of the volume was financed by the representative body.

⁴⁶ At the same: p. 174–183

⁴⁷ Today Cluj Napoca in Roumania.

civilisation of the world touch us through you and the result of your friendly, hospitable coast is that we regard ourselves as one of the nations of mankind-factor. Welcome you, Fiume. Dear Hungarian shore. Welcome you, dear brothers.

You have belonged to us for hundred years by an order of a great empress, our queen, to whom we gave the throne, and the offering of our life and blood, we kept her. Therefore, Hungary and you are one body and one soul. We are bonded to each other with the bonds of sympathy and interest by the patriotism and the respect of freedom. It did not depend on us that we could not be more useful to each other for a while, but it depended on our fate. When the Hungarian nation talked about you in the parliament, it was the word of love. Where we remembered your name and to which we gave our souls.⁴⁸

However, the story of Fiume became more complicated. The Hapsburg ruler Francis Joseph appointed Ede Cseh, royal commissioner to be the interim head of the town from 6th of April, 1867. His duty was to direct the town until the new legal status was arranged.⁴⁹ In Fiume there were demonstrations both against and for the appointment of Cseh.

The Hungarian–Croatian Compromise of 1868 (Act XXX in the Hungarian legislation) said that Fiume belonged to Hungary and the head of the town became again a Hungarian governor whose whole title was “governor of Fiume and the Hungarian–Croatian Littoral” (previously the word of ‘Croatian’ was missing).⁵⁰ With this, the earlier ‘Hungarian Littoral’ ceased to exist and the Hungarian–Croatian Littoral became well known. However, the Act ordained discussions in the interest of the detailed order where they had to invite the representatives of Fiume, Hungary and Croatia. In November, 1868 Francis Joseph stated that the arrangement of the legal status of Fiume had not happened and the Hungarian parliament stated that they had to arrange the question together with the Croatian sabor. Half a decade later, during the ethnic animosity, the excellent author, Olivér Eöttevényi Nagy severely scolded the contemporary Hungarian leaders:

“1868 meant double defeat in the history of the Hungarian littoral. We gave Fiume, and besides its territory, the whole Hungarian littoral to the Croatian without any compensation. To tell the truth, we could not act in a humbler way even if a winner enemy dictated the stipulations of the peace.”⁵¹

The discussions of the royal committee were held in more sections from May, 1869 between the three delegations, consisting four-four numbers but because of the withdrawal of the Croatian committee in December, 1869 only the committee of Hungary and Fiume could make an arrangement. Francis Joseph approved this only temporarily in an order on

⁴⁸ JAKAB Elek, *A magyar Fiume* [The Hungarian Fiume], Budapest, 1881, p. 22–27

⁴⁹ About this, see: Jóó *op. cit.*, and RADICH Ákos, *Fiume közjogi helyzete* [Legal status of Fiume], Budapest, 1883.

⁵⁰ The governors of Fiume between 1870 and 1918 were Count József Zichy (1870–1872), Count Géza Szapáry (1872–1883), Count Ágost Zichy (1883–1892), Count Lajos Batthyány (1892–1896), Count László Szapáry (1898–1904), Ervin Roszner (1904–1905), Pál Szapáry (1905), Count Sándor Nákó (1906–1910), Count István Wickenburg (1910–1917) and Zoltán Jekelfalussy (1917–1918).

⁵¹ EÖTTEVÉNYI NAGY Olivér, “Fiume és a magyar tengermellék” [Fiume and the Hungarian Seashore], In: *A Tenger*, 1913, p. 1–19

28th of July 1870. Therefore this period is often called the period of the Hungarian provisorium, although it lasted for forty-eight years, namely until the collapse of the Dual Monarchy, and it created an odd situation. Meanwhile the naval affairs became under entirely Hungarian direction, in the town the Austrian law became valid.

After the situation seemed to be stable, on 3rd of October 1870 the Hungarian Ministry of Transport set up the Hungarian royal Naval Authority. The government had the large-scale building-plans of the seaport drawn up by a Hungarian engineer, then Pascal, the world-famous port-architect of France was appointed to review them. Pascal approved one of the plans with small modifications, which became Act XIX in 1871. The expenditure-draft envisaged 13 120 000 crowns for the first building period. The Act XXXVII, in the same year, approved the building of a railway connection between Fiume and Szentpéter⁵² and between Fiume and Karlovac.

Act XXVI in 1872 ratified the state's contract with the Austrian Lloyd Company, which said that the company also had to serve the Hungarian interests towards East (Levante) too. In exchange the Hungarian State undertook 533 800 crowns in a year from the subvention of the Lloyd. This contract seemed to be successful until a self-interested Hungarian navigation company had been set up, which will be mentioned later.

The building of the port happened between 1872 and 1905 in three building-cycles, which result was a huge seaport complex. It is practically the same nowadays and serves the navigation with its piers, quays, wharfs, seaport-equipments and a more than a mile long breakwater dam (earlier bore the name of Maria Teresa), which ensures tranquil water-surface in the port under all kinds of weather condition. The chief architect of the port was Antal Hajnal.⁵³

In 1873 and in 1874 the two railways, mentioned above, were opened for the public. This commercial significance was invaluable, because the transport of the crops of The Great Hungarian Plain (the Alföld), Transylvania and Croatia to the seashore was possible within short time and in great amounts. Unfortunately, the fallback, which was caused by the buildings of the lines towards Trieste, had never been worked off. Therefore the possibility of export and import of Fiume among the Hungarian craftsmen and merchants circles – mainly at the beginning – were not popular and most of them thought they had invested their money in vain. As the contemporary, famous writer, Rezső Havass wrote:

'... they said doubtfully that the idea was condemned to death, because Fiume has no future as a seaport – and the money invested in the construction of the seaport seems to be money thrown into the sea. ... Our pearl brought up from the depth of the Hungarian Sea is shining; and its brightening light makes friends and enemies appreciate that it is a real pearl. Today it is unnecessary to fight over the importance of Fiume – the facts have to convince the doubtful people.'⁵⁴

⁵² Today Pivka previously Sveti Petar na Krašu (Slovenia)

⁵³ HAJNAL Antal, *A fiumei kikötő* [The Seaport of Fiume], Budapest, 1900. And HAJNAL Antal, *Fiume és kikötője* [Fiume and its port], Fiume, 1885

⁵⁴ HAVASS Rezső, *Magyar tengeri hajózás* [Hungarian Navigation], Budapest, 1879, p. 1

Elek Jakab, quoted earlier, said the same by other words:

'Fiume is Hungarian. Fiume is ours. Without it, Hungary does not exist, only a colonial-province; there is no great national future, just a life led day by day ...; there is no independence and political weight, just the miserable state of subordination. If there is no sea and flourishing seaport protected by the nation, there is no huge and flourishing capital and real trade; if it does not exist, there is no intensive economy, well-developed, competitive Hungarian industry, financial growth, national welfare and ensured constitution. ... If any kind of politics manages to close us from the sea, from the golden way of the world-traffic, we will have the same fate as Prometheus, who was chained to the cliff of the Caucasus and his heart was torn out by a vulture because of stealing from the heavenly fire to give life to Jupiter's mud creature: the same will happen with our homeland, Hungary. As more than thousand years ago Hungary brought – as a heavenly treasure – the national independent constitution, the permanent hating-stock of the tyrants and autocrats. Hungary is bound to the cliffs of the Carpathians and isolated because it has no roads leading to the endless sea. Hungary will not utilise the Canaan-wealthy crops of its land because of the international customs duty and the closing of the sea routes. It will drown in its abundance. Our high-flying sons will feel the torments of Tantalus seeing other nations' increasing welfare, and the descendants will curse the people who let the opportunity slip and so gambled away the luck of the nation. What would France be without Lyon and Marseille, Russia without St. Petersburg and Austria without Trieste? Yes, brothers! The case of Fiume is a crucial question for the Hungarian export trade ...'⁵⁵

The Hungarian State did not establish a state-controlled navigation company until 1881. Between 1870 and 1880, besides the mentioned contract with the Austrian Lloyd Company, in 1876 the state gave financial support to the English Glynn Company, which accepted to run a service between Liverpool and Fiume touching Italian seaports once a month. Later another English-interested company was set up in Fiume, which was called the 'Adria' Steamship Company. The state made a contract with them in April 1880 to set up lines towards Western Europe giving 150 000 Crowns per year. The company also committed itself to turn into a Hungarian stock company until the end of 1884 but this was carried out earlier due to operating difficulties. So the Hungarian 'Adria' Navigation Stock Company (later Royal Hungarian 'Adria' Navigation Stock Company) setting up in 1881 was an entirely Hungarian-directed company. The contract (later modified several times and continuously extended) was signed at the beginning of January 1882 made it possible to build a state commercial navigation company having an own mercantile fleet which served the Hungarian commercial interests until World War I. In its heyday the 'Adria' Stock Company, besides the Western Mediterranean⁵⁶ handled traffic into the world's most famous seaports.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Jakab : *op. cit.* p. 33–36

⁵⁶ See later the contract of 1891 with the Austrian Lloyd.

⁵⁷ Besides the Adriatic Stock company two more company got financial support : first of all the Hungarian Levante Steamship Company whose interest was the Danube and the Black Sea (since 1898) and the Hungarian–Croatian Steamship Company supplying the small coast navigation (since 1901). Král, *op. cit.* p. 194–223

In 1882, after the world-wide increase of the use of oil, the Oil Refinery Stock Company was established in Fiume which made it necessary to built up an independent oil-port. This – together with so many other investments – was built up within a year, and the one and the half million Crowns expenditure of the construction got its money back from the duties and taxes within a year.

The heyday of the Hungarian navigation

From 1889 Gábor Baross⁵⁸, one of the best Hungarian politicians of the era, was appointed to the head of the Ministry of Trade, who became the highest leader of the Hungarian merchant navy too. Baross was the greatest figure of not only the Hungarian transport but also the navigation. The building of the Baross-port in Fiume and several other development plans are linked to his name. He was the one who, after the 'Adria' Stock Company's ten-year's existence, dissolved the contract with the Austrian Lloyd or to be more precise cancelled the Hungarian state subvention. Baross realised that the Lloyd could not represent the Hungarian and Austrian interests at the same time with the same efficiency so the money, which previously went to support the Lloyd, had to be expended on the Hungarian navigation. At the same time, the two Ministers of Trade made an arrangement, in which they divided the Mediterranean between each other into two areas in a territorial base. According to this, to the ports of Near East and Egypt Austrian ships, to the quays of the West-Mediterranean Hungarian ships transported products calling at Fiume and Trieste. The prospering South American (the so-called La Plata) lines were taken in turns and the Black-Sea and the other parts of the world were declared "free" markets by the contract.

In connection with all of these, according to the decision of the government (supporting the independent Hungarian naval trade) they limited Fiume's 174 years old free-port status. Some parts of the port were linked to the Austrian-Hungarian customs area and the transport of certain products could happen only through this. The wide-range transport reform became whole with the nationalisation of the Southern Railway. From this time the Hungarian farmers and factory-owners could transport their products to Fiume under favourable tariff-politics. The state continuously took care of the development of the ports and kept them up to date. So, for example, in 1893 the electric lighting was completed, then one year later after a fire causing a big damage, the water-pipes were also done, which was complemented with an electric fire-alarm system in 1896.

It signs the progress of the trade that the Public Store Stock Company of Fiume was set up in 1898, to which the state transferred the administration of all the port and railway stocks. This shows the tendency that Fiume became one of the big world-ports. Earlier there were not enough store-houses, which caused many problems and because of the piling up of the goods the traffic was easily directed towards Trieste. As Károly Keleti

⁵⁸ About Gábor Baross (1848–1892): FRISNYÁK Zsuzsa (ed.), *Gábor Baross*, Budapest, 1997

writes in 1883: "Fiume is still not a seaport, not even a storing place but only a loading station"⁵⁹ Keleti, together with other experts, called the attention on the fact that it is not enough only to spend the money on the seaport of Fiume, on the subvention of the shipping companies but they should also give a national feature to everything: "That trade is a marvellously sensitive plant in which deal it can not count on the patriotism, but because of the world-competence it must utilise the advantageous differences."⁶⁰

In 1889 another author said the same:

"If we want Fiume, as a Hungarian seaport to develop, we have to support its development with our blood and power. ... But nothing shows more drastically how far we are from the solution than the fact that in Hungary the merchants are regarded lower-class people."⁶¹

These extracts show that the significant part of the Hungarian economy were reluctant to the trade with Fiume after twenty years of the reannexation. The writer of the article mentioned above sees the cause of this in the still existing provisional situation: "It is clear that the inland capital will not prosper in Fiume or in the sea-navigation as long as Fiume is not part of Hungary."⁶²

In fact it could arouse antipathy in the Hungarian merchants, craftsmen and farmers that in Fiume the Austrian law remained valid even after 1870, which did not make it impossible for the Hungarians of the mother country to trade but it could arise risk-feeling.

After a while the necessity of setting up a ship-factory in Fiume, owned by the Hungarian State, arose in order not to buy the fleet continuously demanding improvement from abroad. Until 1902 the state gave monopoly to the German Howaldt Stock Company of Kiel to produce ships in Fiume but it did not prove to be successful. The government made a contract with the Hungarian Danubius Ship and Engine Factory of Budapest in 1905, which soon began to produce ships in Fiume itself, including the complementary equipments too. In the same year the sum spent on the seaport of Fiume since 1872 by the Hungarian State was more than seventy million Crowns, but the trade of Fiume was always profitable to Hungary.

As for the navy education, from 1871–1872, after the earlier stumbling attempts, it started again in the newly set up Royal Naval College with the unification of two smaller shipping schools. This institution was transformed into the Royal Hungarian Marine Academy in 1884 and it trained the naval officers of Hungary and other nations of the Monarchy until 1920, whose knowledge and intelligence were acknowledged worldwide.⁶³

⁵⁹ KELETI Károly, *Tengerészetünk és Fiume jövője* [Our Navy and the Future of Fiume], Budapest, 1883

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ ALPHA, *Teendőink Fiumében* [Our tasks in Fiume], In: *Nemzetgazdasági Szemle*, 1889, p. 530–539

⁶² *Ibid.* – At the end of the article the author recommended surprisingly that the Hungarian feature of Fiume could be enforced with the settling of pensioners to there.

⁶³ HORVÁTH J.: *op. cit.* p.36

In the history of Fiume, Hungary and the Hungarian navigation, the emigration to the United States played an important role. It is remarkable that in 1904 the Hungarian State – by the ‘Adria’ Company – made a contract with the English Cunard Line Company, which under advantageous conditions undertook the transport of the emigrants from Fiume to New York. It meant that Fiume became a main starting point besides Brema and Hamburg. This gave an important income to the Hungarian state (income from railway, ship tickets etc.) which was unpopular among many Hungarian intellectuals. We are quoting from the periodical called *Nyugat* (‘The West’):

‘The peak of action for the limitation of the emigration was that the emigrants shipped to America through Fiume and not Brema and the beloved home gave them the opportunity to sing the Szózat [a Hungarian anthem] on the Cunard ships and talk to the staff in Hungarian. As a medicine it meant a little.’⁶⁴

However, the leaders of the state did not want to lose the income coming from the emigration through Fiume so the Emigrants House was built near the port giving sad evidence that the emigration was a lasting business.⁶⁵

The sums spent on the port of Fiume from 1872 were cleared by 1903 and the profit coming from the traffic continuously increased until the outbreak of the World War I. In 1872 the whole traffic of the port was “only” 23 million Crowns while in the last peace year (1913) it was more than twenty times of it, 478 million Crowns. The last building period of the port was finished in the first years of the turn of the century, and then there were only small constructions made. In 1908 another new, large-scale plan was prepared which would have made Fiume the most modern port of the Mediterranean, according to the available documents.⁶⁶ Although, from these latest plans nothing was carried out, at the outbreak of the World War I Fiume was the fifth most important port of the Mediterranean (besides Marseilles, Geneva, Naples and Trieste).

The representation of the detailed statistics could go beyond the bounds of our article, therefore we just mention some significant data from 1910. The Hungarian Naval Yearbook from this year lists 32 significant factories in Fiume, which covered all the areas of the industry. 21 foreign states had consulates in Fiume and among them there were six from overseas. 11 shipping companies operated with 61 ocean-going steamships. Together with the ships not registered in Fiume, Hungary had 105 steamships over 100 tons.

⁶⁴ RADÓ Sámuel, “A kivándorlás” [The Emigration], In: *Nyugat*, 1911, No. 24, p. 1114-1116

⁶⁵ FEST Aladár, “Kivándorlás Fiumén át – bevándorlás Fiuméba” [Emigration through Fiume – immigration to Fiume], In: *Földrajzi Közlemények*, 1905, p. 135–138

⁶⁶ Državni Arhiv u Rijeci (Public Records of Fiume) JU-9 pres. 1908, Box IV. 168/Eln/1908: the development plan of the seaport of Fiume.

*The town between 1870 and 1914*⁶⁷

Not only the port, but also the town itself was developing between 1870 and 1914. It was during this time, mostly thank to Hungarian architects, when the townscape of the present times was created. The most significant buildings of this era, such as the 'Adria' palace, the once Government Palace, the National Theatre, the market halls etc., are still existing, and most of them function as originally.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, the intellectual improvement of the town also involved the 'fate': hidden or not existent national animosities were emerged automatically by the vivid social life. Italian–Croatian national movements, mainly set up against each other, weren't handled wittily by the Hungarian leaders and generally speaking the Slavonic aspirations were ignored (with reference to the 'higher' Italian civilisation and to the 'centuries old' Hungarian–Italian friendship), they always supported the Italian part. This tendency can be seen sometimes even in spite of the exaggerated Hungarian nationalism, for example in the case of the Jewish community of Fiume. When this community, consisted of mainly Hungarians, decided that they would arrange their affairs in Hungarian. A local Hungarian magazine, the 'Review of Fiume' responded the following:

"We, Hungarians, living in Fiume, are mainly devoted to protect the real Hungarian values, the territorial and loyal rights, but we are also obligated to protect and respect the national and language rights of this town. It is our duty since, according to the Hungarian laws too, the Italian language is the official language not only of the executive government but of the state and governmental authorities and also of the jurisdiction. In Fiume all the Hungarians have to support the Italian language and feature in all areas and every time, even if the Hungarian chauvinism reaches the top of Monte-Maggiore.⁶⁹ Italians need this support because of the Croatian's spread and influences in Fiume, particularly in the trades, factories, navigation which increasingly threatens their ancient basic element. Hungarians have to protect the Italians from this. Great Hungary is not in need of the advertisement of the Hungarian language with the help of violent magyarization by religious communities. Those who have an interest, they will kindly learn our beautiful language. We respect the others' rights. Suum cuique!"⁷⁰

The same journal wasn't hesitant when the "real Hungarian" interest had to be protected. It often mentioned that the town had no real Hungarian character ; besides the names of the streets, nothing proves that this is a 'Hungarian' town. Once, it also mocked

⁶⁷ To this period (mainly in cultural respect) there is an excellent Hungarian monography: FRIED Ilona : *Emlékek városra Fiume* [The Town of Memories, Fiume], Budapest, 2001

⁶⁸ The 'Adria' palace is still the capital building of the 'Jadrolinija' Croatian Shipping Company. The National Theatre is used as originally, but belongs to a different nation. The three big market halls still exist. In the contemporary palace of the governor is the Historical Museum of the Croatian Littoral and Navigation today.

⁶⁹ Monte Maggiore is the highest point of the Istrian peninsula facing Fiume. Its Croatian name is Učka.

⁷⁰ *Suum cuique*... In: *Fiumei Szemle*, 14th of May 1905 – Suum cuique: For everybody what he deserves. (Cicero)

the arms of Fiume featuring the Hapsburg two-headed eagle with the engraving 'Indeficienter' (meaning 'unwearably'):

'The Hungarian nation doesn't like the two-headed eagle at all. It is a monster. It is unnatural. The monstrous is considered a misfortune of God. We do not put it to the window and do not even paint it on a flag, but we put it into preservative – in order to examine the miracles of the nature and for the sake of those who want to learn.'⁷¹

As I have already mentioned, governments of that era couldn't always tackle the nationality question and the town's Hungarian nature rightly. In my opinion this wasn't their fault, because the specific state of the town (geographical and juridical) carried so many contradictions, which made good solutions almost impossible. Both compliance and strictness (especially in the period of the Bánffy-government from 1895 to 1899) could have caused the same nationality problems and caused indeed.⁷² Fiume was only economically a part of Hungary, though it is really important in itself.⁷³

This is proved by the statistics of the inhabitants of Fiume just before the World War I. (According to the national census of 1910). At that time there were 49 806 inhabitants altogether. The distribution of the mother language was: 48.6 % Italian, 26.8 % Croatian and Serbian, 13% Hungarian, 4.7% Slovenian, 4.6% German. The statistics are analysed by Aladár Fest, the famous contemporary specialist of Fiume:

'The number of the Hungarian elements increased from the few beginnings, from the last place it raised to the third with 7500 people... The younger generation of the Croatian-originated inhabitants of the sub-villages, who came from the Italian town-schools, declares themselves Italian today.'⁷⁴

As for citizens who have the political rights, from a Hungarian point of view the rates were better, because besides the 42.23 % Italian and the 30.6% Croatian-Serbian voters, there were 21.3 % Hungarians ; in another words, like the third minority, the rates of

⁷¹ *Sast nemzenek a sasok* [Eagles sire eagles], In: *Fiumei Szemle*, 16th of April 1905 – About the shield of Fiume : HOLUB József : "Fiume címere" [The Arms of Fiume], In: *Turul*, 1917, p. 48–50

⁷² For further information: BAKA András, *Eötvös Józseftől Jászi Oszkárig : a magyar nemzetiségi politikai gondolkodás változásai* [From József Eötvös to Oszkár Jászi : the changes of the Hungarian nationality political thinking], Budapest, 1990, and from the contemporary bibliography the work of the jurispudent of the Hungarian Naval Authority: DÁRDAY Dezső, *Fiume és a magyar-horvát tengerparti politika* [Fiume and the Hungarian-Croatian politics], Fiume, 1906

⁷³ *It is worth mentioning that in 1910 in Budapest the Hungarian Adriatic Society was set up, which periodicals, called 'The Sea' [A Tenger] popularised Fiume and the Adriatic in the public until 1944. In 1913 and 1914 two Adriatic expeditions were organised with only Hungarian experts. Leidenforst, Gyula : Az első magyar Adria-expedició. [The First Hungarian Adriatic-expedition] In: A Tenger, 1914, p. 3–4. And A második magyar Adria-expedició. [The Second Hungarian Expedition] In: A Tenger, 1924, p. 13–21. And SZÜCS Andor, "A magyar Adria-kutatás és tudományos eredményei" [The Hungarian Adriatic-research and scientific results], In: *Természettudományi Közlöny*, November of 1918 (No. 709 and 710)*

⁷⁴ FEST Aladár, "Fiume népesedési mozgalma Magyarországhoz való visszacsatolása óta" [The Demographic Movement of Fiume since the Annexation to Hungary], In: *Földrajzi Közlemények*, 1912, p. 137–153

Hungarian voters could mainly influence the results of the elections, as for the first time, in the case of the elections of 1915.

According to the prognosis of Fest, the number of Hungarian inhabitants could have reached the number of Croatian–Serbian inhabitants (roughly 19%) in a few years. What is more interesting is the second part of the statistics which shows us the usage of the second language (language beside someone’s mother tongue): 21.5% of the inhabitants can speak Hungarian too. The writer informs us about the rise of the non-native inhabitants (those citizens who weren’t born in Fiume or in Hungary), which was 39.4% in 1910 considering all the population. Among the nationalities this number was 69.17 % among the Croatians and Serbians, and 52.64% among the Italians! From these data the author drew the fatal conclusion: “Significant parts of the inhabitants of Fiume are not Hungarian patriots, as for their emotion they are strangers and unreliable to our nation.”⁷⁵

It is not useless to give the changing of the inhabitants of Fiume in this period from 1888 with the percentage rate of the Hungarian and the Hungarian speaking and inhabitants:

Years	The whole population of Fiume	The percentage rate of the Hungarian speaking inhabitants (as the mother tongue)	The percentage rate of the (also) Hungarian speaking inhabitants (as second language)
1777	5312		
1794	6764		
1800	7038		
1810	8958		
1815	8384		
1847	11865		
1850	10568		
1857	13074		
1869	17884		
1880	20981	1,8 %	2,3 %
1890	29494	3,6 %	5,9 %
1900	38057	7,4 %	11,9 %
1910	49804	13,0 %	21,5

The data of the chart show not only the development of the town but also that under the non-Hungarian reign the increase of the inhabitants slowed down or decreased. We believe that behind the excessive nationalists stood the peaceful but voiceless crowd, whom the World War I might have brought closer (the inhabitants of Fiume often starved after 1915.). The majority of the citizens of Fiume did not regard the Hungarians as enemies and it seemed that the Italian aristocracy of the town did not want to get rid of Hungary. The last mayor of the town, Antonio Vio, said the followings in 1915, during the Hungarian reign:

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

“The town later will become completely Hungarian by itself.... But it has to happen by itself on its natural way. The people of Fiume will realize that they cannot thrive without the knowledge of the Hungarian language. ... In Fiume there are no Italians, there are only Hungarian-speaking Italian citizens.”⁷⁶

Conclusion

The Hungarian merchant navy starting from almost zero in 1870 became a real naval power at the beginning of the World War I, because of the financial support of the state and the mental and physical work of the experts and enthusiastic supporters. The steamships wearing Hungarian flags reached all the ports of the world connecting the Hungarian economy into the circulation of the world market. Due to the lively ship traffic of Fiume and the work of the industrial companies situated in the town, Fiume was only one of the small seaports of the Adriatic in 1776 but in 1914 it became the second most important town after Trieste. It was carried out by Hungarian state money and Hungarian mental capital.

The Hungarian commercial navigation practically had an end on 18th of August, 1914 when the Ministry of War prohibited the mercantile shipping on the waters of the Monarchy because of the mine risk. Our ships were confiscated or were sunk during the war and the few remained ones were confiscated as war indemnity. In 1920 the peace treaty of Trianon dis-annexed Fiume and its small coast from Hungary, and the fruits of the self-sacrificing work were taken by others. However, after 1918 until nowadays the economic compulsion of the geopolitics remained valid. Fiume whether belonging to any state, always remained and remains the natural port of the Carpathian-basin and all of its nations.

⁷⁶ BRAJGER Lajos, “Fiume és a világháború. Levél a tengerpartról” [Fiume and the World War. Letter from the Seaside], In: *Magyar Figyelő*, 1916, p. 427-443