

ETHNICITY: BUSINESSMAN – THE CASE OF OSSOINACK FAMILY AND FIUME

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FIUME

- today Rijeka in Croatia
- port city with mixed population: Italian, Croatian, Slovene, Austrian, Hungarian
- political *corpus separatum* within Hungary



THE OSSOINACK FAMILY

- one of the most powerful and influential families in Fiume
- economic success leaving impact on the political scene of the city
- Croats by origin, Italian by language

THE OSSOINACK FAMILY

- Andrija Osojnjak (Andrea Ossoinack) – wine and olive oil trader, lived in Volosko in 1774
- Giuseppe (Josip) Ossoinack – continued his father's business, lost ships, moved to Fiume in the 1820s, had 12 children
- Natalin Gennaro Ossoinack – Giuseppe's youngest son, wine merchant and innkeeper, exporter of timber, had 8 children
- two houses and a tavern in Fiume, family estate in Lopača

NATALIN'S SONS

- Giuseppe Nereo (†), Martino (†), Giovanni - seafarers
- Luigi, Enrico (†) - traders
- Antonio – graduated in chemistry, worked in petroleum industry, disappeared in Baku after the October Revolution

LUIGI OSSOINACK



- born June 26th 1849
- educated in Fiume, Laibach (Ljubljana) and Graz (Superior Academy of Commerce)
- lived in Trieste, Hamburg, Odessa, London and New York, engaged in maritime trade
- came back to Fiume in 1874

LUIGI'S BUSINESSES

- maritime trade – agency for *Cunard* and *Bailey&Leetham*; *Adria*; *Oriente*
- co-creator of Hungarian maritime strategy
- rice hulling plant and starch factory
- barrels and chests factory
- oil refinery

- supporting the cultural scene of Fiume
- *cavaliere d'industria*
- giving his workers a share of the profit
- a deputy in the city council for 25 years
- political ties to Hungarian government > Bánffy's Magyarization > Autonomist Party

FIUMAN IDENTITY

- independent from the countries Fiume was a part of
- city elite, countering Croatian and Hungarian aspirations
- Italian language and culture, but not Italian
- based on economic criteria and privileges coming from the autonomous rights of the city
- split between the moderates (just identity) and radicals (idea of statehood)

ANDREA OSSOINACK



- Luigi's second son
- born February 18th 1876
- studied in Pozsony (Bratislava), Kolozsvár (Cluj) and Munich
- returns to Fiume at the end of 19th century

OSSOINACK'S POLITICAL PATH

- initially joined the Autonomist Association
- not agreeing with the radicals
- economy and welfare more important than political status of Fiume
- candidate of Liberal Party in the 1905 election
- engagement with the Autonomist League
- from 1915 parliamentary deputy

CHANGE OF COURSE

- parliamentary speech on October 18th 1918
- „Fiume has always been and always will be Italian”
- right to self-determination
- *Perché Fiume dev'essere italiana*
- conference in Paris – clash with Wilson
- attacks on the Free State

AFTERMATH

- supporting free trade zone of Fiume
- retirement from politics to business
- after 1945 exiled to Italy, hero of irredentists