

Ervin Dubrović

***From
Central Europe
to America
1880 – 1914***



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City Museum of Rijeka



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Ervin Dubrović

Rijeka - New York, 2012



CITY MUSEUM OF RIJEKA
/MUZEJ GRADA RIJEKE/

FROM CENTRAL EUROPE TO AMERICA 1880 - 1914

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MERIKA

Emigration from Central Europe to America 1880 – 1914

City Museum of Rijeka

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Statue of Liberty National Monument, National Park Service, New York

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A VIEW FROM THE OTHER SIDE





The study of the massive migration to America has for a long period been a key topic of interest to many specialized institutions in Europe, and museums dedicated to overseas emigration have been established in numerous former emigrant ports.

Rijeka, better known in earlier times as Fiume, became at the beginning of the twentieth century one of the more significant emigration ports. As a result, in 2008 the City Museum of Rijeka mounted an exhibition entitled *Merika, Emigration from Central Europe to America 1880-1914*. The Museum published a bilingual monograph (in English and Croatian) related to the show, which dealt generally with emigration from Austria-Hungary to the United States.

The Museum further published in 2012 a larger volume in Croatian, *Veliki val, iseljavanje iz srednje Europe u Ameriku 1880-1914* [The Big Wave, Emigration from Central Europe to America 1880-1914], which included works by thirty contributors from throughout Europe and the United States.

This work, *From Central Europe to United States*, has been written with the American reader in mind and has been published to coincide with the exhibition *Merika* at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum.

While I cannot here specifically acknowledge all of the institutions, contributors and researchers who through their labors have assisted in completing this project, I wish to give special thanks to those who have worked on this task from the start and who played a key role in preparing the exhibition at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum and this book.

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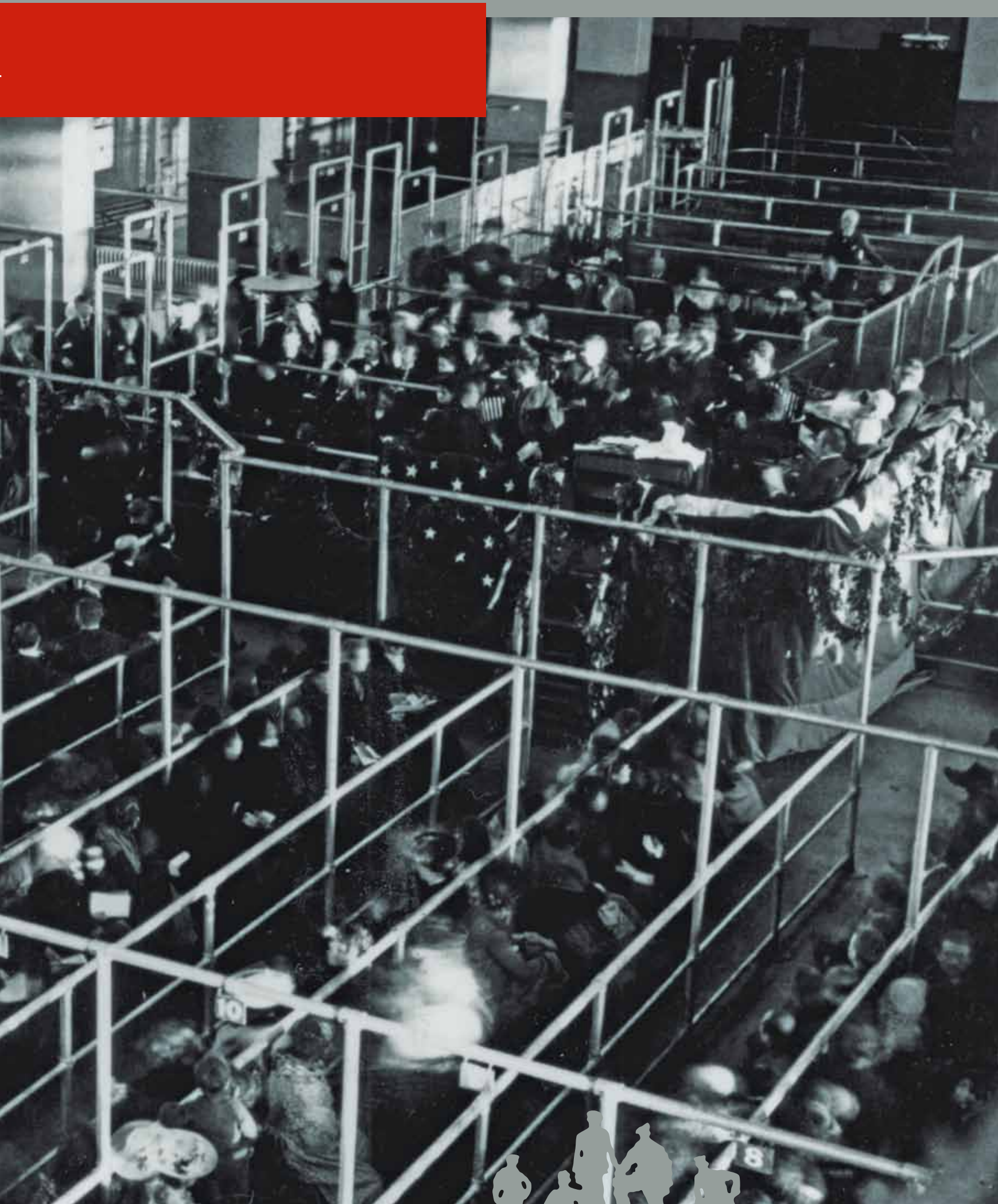
Ervin Dubrović
Director of the City Museum of Rijeka

FROM CENTRAL EUROPE TO AMERICA

1



The Great Hall of the Immigration Station at Ellis Island. Although one could arrive in the United States through seventy entry points on sea and land, the great majority of immigrants arriving between the 1890s and 1920 came through here, from where they journeyed to destinations throughout the country.
(National Park Service, Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, New York)





The first steps on a ship and on a journey across the wide open ocean remained an event which passengers recalled all their lives.
(The Progress of German Shipbuilding, Berlin 1909)

FROM CENTRAL EUROPE TO AMERICA

The history of America from the time of Columbus cannot be discussed without reference to its European sources. When speaking of the history of the United States at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, it is just as important to remember the great immigration wave which in the span of only a half century (between 1871 and 1920) brought 26,277,000 new immigrants to the United States, a number three times larger than the total number of people who had settled in the country during the prior two and one-half centuries.¹

This crucial period of the greatest migration to the United States proved to be an important factor which transformed the nation. Until 1890, 85% of all European immigrants came from Western and Northern Europe (England, Ireland, Germany and Scandinavia). During the 1890s, however, the ethnic composition of immigrants changed and the number of immigrants from Central, Eastern and Southern Europe (Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia) began to significantly overshadow the previously leading ethnic groups.²

The most recent great wave, the immigration of Latin Americans, which hit the United States at the end of the twentieth century, has resulted in three times as many immigrants coming to the United States than arrived in the period preceding the First World War. But this last wave has not significantly changed the ratio of newly-arrived to native-born Americans. During the period of immigration from Central Europe prior to the First World War, the United States had less than one hundred million people. It currently has over three hundred million. Although the world today has generally attained a better standard of living than a century ago, America remains the "Promised Land" for millions of new immigrants.

The migration which characterized the nineteenth century and reached its peak at the start of the twentieth century, however, continues to remain one of the most important events in American as well as European history. Forty million European immigrants came in the United States in the approximately one hundred years between the Napoleonic Wars and the outbreak of the Great Depression in 1929. This migration was the largest in history and a phenomenon which significantly made a mark in modern times. Within the span of a few decades, over four million immigrants came from Austria-Hungary, with 2,145,266 arriving during one decade alone (1901-1910). This represented more than a quarter of all immigrants who came to the United States in that period and greater than any other country.

Europeans who migrated to the United States spoke of the poverty and oppression in which millions of their ethnic kin lived at a time when America had been a symbol of freedom. Researchers point to the poor economic conditions during that period and the loss of population which had been significant for some countries. At the same time, however, they must recognize that America became for many families their only hope. Furthermore, returnees and money sent home by immigrants stimulated the development of the economy in their homelands.

The social, economic and technological development of the United States reflected its supremacy at the turn of the twentieth century. The New World may have taken over the lead from the Old World, but the Old World also conquered the New with culture, art and sciences. Scientists such as Nikola Tesla won over America, while numerous movie

1 Henry Bamford Parkes, *Istorija Sjedinjenih Američkih Država*, Izdavačka radna organizacija Rad, Belgrade, 2nd ed., 1986, p. 482.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 482.



Transoceanic ships carried up to over two thousand passengers at a time, of which barely a hundred would be in first and second classes. All others spent their journey below deck in common rooms. During nice weather, the most comfortable spot would be on deck.
(Claudio Ernè, Trieste)



Children and women found the weeks-long voyage by ship difficult, especially during stormy weather and in tumultuous seas. When the sea became calm, immigrants for the most part spent their time on deck. (Claudio Ernè, Trieste)

After the steamship reached Manhattan, third class passengers would be taken by a smaller ship to Ellis Island, where they had to pass examinations to show their suitability to enter America. Authorities examined their documents, physical health and mental condition and the immigrants had to state that they were neither anarchists nor polygamists. (National Park Service, Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, New York)



directors, actors, architects and artists refreshed America. Many of them achieved their initial success in the United States, while others arrived as accomplished individuals and contributed to their new country in an amount at least as they received in return. People such as Joseph Pulitzer, one of the “most American of Europeans,” came from Central Europe and in the best manner connected European culture and education with American pragmatism, its “can-do” spirit and its ease in communication.³

Arrival on Ellis Island. Thousands of people arrived on the small island on a daily basis, while annually millions of immigrants, most of whom remained permanently in America, passed through here.

(National Park Service, Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, New York)

Even a brief overview of the center of old Europe shows a world which fell apart as a result of its loss of cohesion, the inability to hold peoples of many different nations and faiths together. The peoples who built their own national states on the ruins of the Habsburg Monarchy put the old Empire into the recesses of their minds. Its history would be written with much more enthusiasm by British and American scholars.⁴

Numerous Central European historians have written histories focusing on their own nations, ignoring the once unified Habsburg Monarchy. This requires a discussion of the specific appearance of Central European immigration to America, whose scope and breadth cannot be properly understood if viewed from a narrow, ethnically-oriented approach focusing on specific Central European countries.

Despite the difficulties in which a united Europe now finds itself, it pays to remember the “little Europe” which existed up to modern times.

³ E. Wilder Spaulding, *The Quiet Invaders, The Story of the Austrian Impact upon America*, Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, Vienna, 1968.

⁴ See A. P. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809-1918. A History of the Austrian Empire and Austria-Hungary*, 1948; and William M. Johnston, *The Austrian Mind. An Intellectual and Social History 1848-1938*, University of California Press, 1972.

2



Sellers of brass utensils. Salesmen carried various goods on their backs and heads. Those shown came from Istria, from the southern portion of the Monarchy.
(Historical and Maritime Museum of Istria, Pula)

THE BRILLIANCE AND MISERY OF THE HABSBURG MONARCHY





A Styrian peasant family sitting at a table. The German population from present-day Austria (Lower and Upper Austria, Styria, Carinthia, Tyrol, Salzburg and Vorarlberg) lived significantly better compared to most peasants from the eastern and southern portions of Austria-Hungary. (Universalmuseum Joanneum, Graz)

THE BRILLIANCE AND MISERY OF THE HABSBURG MONARCHY

A great construction boom marked the start of Vienna's modernization in the mid-nineteenth century and reflected the desire to hasten the modernization of the Empire as a whole.¹

An old defensive system continued to surround Imperial Vienna up to the mid-nineteenth century, clearly dividing it from its suburbs. Thus, the late date at which these walls were pulled down represented a symbolic end to the Middle Ages. The construction of a modern boulevard, known as the Ring, proved of even more importance to the city, becoming the main thoroughfare and the new administrative, educational and cultural center of the city. Along the Ring could be found old symbols of the Empire and modern political and other institutions, important to the capital and the Monarchy. There one could see the Imperial Palace as well as numerous neo-Gothic and classical palaces surrounded by parks. An impressive display of glory, strength and culture dominated the Ring, including within its precincts the University, the Dramatic Theatre (Burgtheater), the City Council, the Parliament, the Natural and Historical-Art Museums and the Opera.

The Ring became the main center of construction in Vienna from the end of the 1850s to the beginning of the 1890s, and a cultural movement which developed at the end of the century even adopted the title of the "Culture of the Ring." During this time, Vienna took on the appearance of a large city and on the eve of the First World War had over two million inhabitants.

The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 had been an important force which propelled the modernization of the city. The Compromise, which remained in place during the Empire's remaining half-century, divided the administration of the state between its two largest nationalities, the Germans and the Magyars (ethnic Hungarians). In lieu of the decrepit absolutist means of government which previously characterized the Empire, a stronger role came to be played by the Parliament and liberal policies, which, as had been expected, encouraged economic development and modernization.

What the Ring represented with respect to internal developments, the World Exposition in Vienna represented on the international plane. The Exposition had been planned to return to the Empire its shattered reputation and proclaim the rehabilitation of what still remained one of Europe's great powers. After expositions had already been held twice in London and Paris, the Exposition in Vienna took place in 1873, in the midst of the most intense construction work in Vienna. It also represented a final end to European cultural and economic dominance as the next great exposition took place in the New World - in Philadelphia in 1876. That date should be considered one of the important watersheds in the decline of European primacy and in the beginning of America's lead in global economics and international affairs.

Over 50,000 exhibitors participated at the Exposition in Vienna, which over seven million people visited. It would have been a complete success had it not been overshadowed by the crash of the Viennese stock exchange and the great financial crisis which continued during the Exposition. A cholera epidemic also broke out at the time, causing many potential visitors to stay away.

The fact that the Exposition had been held in the Prater, an area known for its well-known dance halls and bars, in which Strauss' and other orchestras had entertained the Viennese with waltzes and polkas, did not lessen the harshness of the crisis.

Neither the on-going construction of Vienna nor the systematic modernization of the state could halt the crash of the stock market.

But despite all of these stresses, this represented a period of stability and peace



¹ A.J.P. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918, A History of the Austrian Empire and Austria-Hungary*, University of Chicago Press, 1976; and Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture*, Vintage Books, New York, 1981.



which Austria had not seen since the Napoleonic Wars. Renewal in the first instance took place in the economic, educational and cultural fields.

Emperor Franz Joseph, dressed in a colorful Imperial uniform with great white locks of hair connected with strange whiskers, and the popular Empress Elisabeth remained ingrained symbols of the time. But, many also noted the unusual cultural and artistic developments, perhaps the greatest ever, which Vienna lived through on the brink of the fall of the Empire, during the last two decades prior to the First World War. Numerous writers of Austrian history and Viennese culture of the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries have reflected on the great cultural importance of Vienna during this period.² It has become an almost universally recognized observation that “1898 to 1918 were probably the most creative years in Austrian history, and one of the most active periods of artistic and imaginative production anywhere.”³

But this social and artistic renaissance remained a paradox in a country where the great majority lived under the burden of everyday life, living in misery, which encouraged many to emigrate.

Austrian Germans, like the Czechs, were generally more literate and markedly more educated compared with the majority of other inhabitants of the Monarchy. Most Austrian Germans who went to America came from distant mountainous regions to the west (Vorarlberg) and from eastern parts (Burgenland) on the border with Hungary.
(Universalmuseum Joanneum, Graz)

² William M. Johnston, *The Austrian Mind, An Intellectual and Social History, 1848-1938*, University of California Press, 1983.

³ Nicolas Powell, *The Sacred Spring*, London and New York 1974., cited in Wilder Spaulding, *The Past and the Future*, in *Biblos, Österreichische Zeitschrift für Buch- und Bibliothekswesen, Dokumentation, Bibliographie und Bibliophilie*, 1976, no. 4. p. 5. See also Allan Janik and Stephen Toulman, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, New York, 1973.





Scholars who have examined the economic conditions underlying emigration and the lives of emigrants have noted that "Austria had indeed produced much that was decadent: an ineffective Monarchy with an old man in [the Imperial Palace]. . . who had tragically failed to bring his Slavs and Germans and Hungarians together . . ."⁴

The rise and brilliance of Vienna would not be the exclusive privilege of only the capital city. Along with Vienna, other great cities also saw growth, especially administrative, economic and cultural centers of various provinces and regions. Budapest in many ways developed similarly to Vienna, holding, instead of a world exposition, its own Millennium Exposition in 1896. Prague also developed, an old capital which saw great industrial growth, as did many smaller cities, such as Zagreb, Ljubljana, Cracow, Lvov, Timisoara and the two main Imperial ports, Trieste and Rijeka.

Economic progress also took in wider regions, such as Czechia and the provinces populated by Austrian Germans, as evidenced by their early industrialization and confirmed by their significant level of education and the almost complete eradication of illiteracy, which significantly differentiated these areas from the majority of the country. The remaining parts of the country saw poor agricultural areas become even poorer, especially in the eastern part of the country where even at the end of the nineteenth century underdevelopment and poverty ruled, and where most of the population remained illiterate and lived off of poor harvests from primitively farmed parcels which had been for the most part burdened by debts and obligations owed to former feudal lords.

Obligatory free public education had been introduced in Austria and Czechia by 1880, and 95% to 99% of school-aged children actually attended school. In Hungary, the rate had been somewhat smaller, 82% of children attended school, but in Dalmatia the number who attended school had been even less, 67%. But Bukovina with 36% and Bosnia and Herzegovina, with 15%, proved especially catastrophic in this regard.⁵

Even within areas nearest to large cities, patriarchal families lived in miserable huts, crowded into one small room, which also served as the kitchen and bed room. Livestock would be held in a second room along with all important implements and tools. The descriptive reports of contemporaries speak even more dramatically of the contrasts between developed and undeveloped areas, but especially noted the scale of the problems facing villages as one of the greatest burdens of the large majority of the population.

Hungry years followed one after the other during the second half of the nineteenth century, often accompanied by fires as most peasant houses in the interior had been miserable, built of wood and covered with straw or branches. Poverty led to numerous crimes, the theft of cattle, horses and pigs as well as county treasuries, while bandits terrorized the roads. Certain portions of more important roads, such as those connecting the center of Hungary with Rijeka, remained under the watch of entire army companies in the mid-nineteenth century which had as their sole mission to ensure unimpeded traffic on the road. Even military courts, which summarily hung the guilty, operated in certain areas.⁶

Actions taken by feudal lords toward their subjects include examples which seem completely unbelievable given that they took place on the threshold of modern times. Though the Viennese Court frowned on corporal punishment and beatings of former serfs, nevertheless, in Croatia, for example, Ban (Viceroy) Jelačić issued a proclamation on July 11, 1853 placing servants under the control of their lords, giving the latter the right to punish their servants "in a non-harmful manner." Recalcitrant servants could also be fined and imprisoned. The Ban's proclamation allowed for women and young men to be whipped and grown men to be beaten. The proclamation allowed up to fifteen strikes, though only with a physician's determination that the beating would not harm



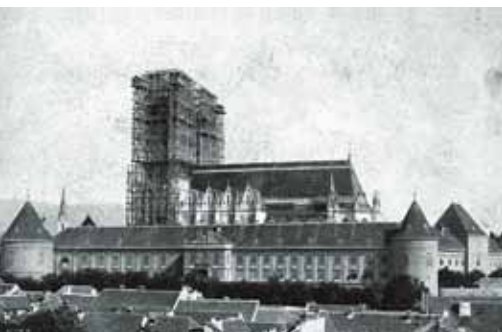
A kitchen in a poor quarter of Vienna, taken by Hermann Drawe on New Year's Day 1908. Unlike those who sought shelter in poorhouses, this family lived in its own apartment. (Christian Brandstätter Verlag, Vienna)

4 Spaulding, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

5 Mirjana Gross, *Počeci moderne Hrvatske, Neoapsolutizam u civilnoj Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji 1850-1860*, Globus, Centar za povijesne znanosti Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Odjel za hrvatsku povijest, Zagreb 1985, p. 85.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 203.

Viennese photographer Hermann Drawe took photos of Viennese streets and its underground, taking images of the poor who hid behind various corners and sewage tunnels. He took this image in Flossgasse in Vienna. (Christian Brandstätter Verlag, Vienna)



The Cathedral in Zagreb surrounded by scaffolding. Economic improvements and the expansion of cities at the end of the nineteenth century allowed some poor peasants to settle in towns. The remainder had to go abroad.
(Ministry of Culture, Photo Archive, Zagreb)

the health of the indigee. At first, the proclamation only applied to villages, but as a result of its obvious effectiveness, its reach expanded in 1857 to apply to cities as well.⁷

An Imperial edict of 1853 confirmed the principles according to which new owners of land, former serfs, could become full owners of “their own” land. They could only do so by purchasing the feudal dues that had been imposed on their land. The state eliminated certain obligations, such as the tithe, but allowed others to remain in force. The same means to pay off the debt that the peasants owed to their former feudal lords applied to the entire Empire. First, the amount of “damages” to be paid to the lords needed to be determined, and afterwards monies would be deposited into a special fund for “de-encumbering the land,” the proceeds from which would be used to pay off the lords. It had been predicted that the debt would be paid off over a forty-year period, but the payment schedule fell far behind the plan. Peasants fell further and further into debt, which had been increased even more as a result of new local economic forces, such as loan sharks and credit provided by various merchants.⁸

Newspapers dedicated to improving the plight of common people presented the most truthful view of the state of affairs, especially of the status of peasants. A rancorous priest and tribune of the common people, Matko Mandić, an Istrian delegate to the Parliament in Vienna, published for decades in Trieste a Croatian-language newspaper, *Naša sloga* (Our Unity). While in Parliament he battled for improvements in the status of peasants in a spirited and truthful manner, his alarming texts clearly showed the difficulties of everyday life and warned of the dramatic lack of development in the villages, writing of poor crops, unproductive harvests and the general poverty of the people: “... land is sold for nothing due to state and private demands. One of the results is that unresolved tax obligations continue to accrue...”

“The dramatic economic condition of Istria can be clearly pictured by the fact that the tax for the past year has been paid through the seizure of crops, taken immediately after the harvest, so that the remaining creditors do not get to them before the state!”

“The difficult debts imposed on the populace have become such that one can only save one’s life, and sometimes not even that!”⁹

The combative priest relentlessly repeated the reasons for the economic collapse of peasant households and their impoverishment: “Taxes for the state, the province and the county as well as the remaining amounts owed to purchase one’s land or the tithe ... debt upon debt, until a private creditor or the state throw the debtor out on the street.”

“During poor harvest years or when bad weather strikes, even the most conscientious owner can barely maintain himself. But if a person falls among the leeches who suck him dry, then it is difficult to help him. They won’t let him go until they drink his last drop of blood.”¹⁰

Mandić, along with many others, placed the blame on poor decisions taken by the Imperial government. For instance, Mandić noted that vineyard owners had been hurt not only by diseases (especially a fungus known as *peronospora*), but also by the preferable tariffs provided to Italian vinters pursuant to an agreement between Austria-Hungary and Italy. A ban imposed on the import of French wine by Austria-Hungary in 1891 led to a dramatic increase in imports of Italian wines. By 1898, the amount of wine imported from Italy rose from 1,500 to an incredible one million hectoliters. The price of domestically produced wine, on the other hand, fell by half.¹¹

The diseases which hit the vineyards not only hurt many Istrian and Dalmatian vinters, but also numerous peasants in the interior of Croatia as well as Hungary.

In short, the living conditions of the great majority of inhabitants of the Empire remained miserable. In one 1897 report made by a physician to the Hungarian Medical



7 Ibid., pp. 207-208.

8 Mirjana Gross and Agneza Szabo, *Prema hrvatskome građanskom društvu, Društveni razvoj u civilnoj Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji šezdesetih i sedamdesetih godina 19. Stoljeća*, Globus, Zagreb, 1992, pp. 92-94.

9 *Naša sloga*, no. 22, Nov. 17, 1880, in Josip Percan, *Obzori istarskog narodnjaštva*, Antologijski izbor tekstova iz „Naše sloge” 1870-1915, Gospodarska pitanja, Pula-Rijeka, 1989, vol. 3, p. 19.

10 *Naša sloga*, no. 31, Aug. 4, 1887, in Percan, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

11 Percan, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-90



Society, he noted that “the elementary conditions of the lives of the working people in many parts of the country are below the biological minimum necessary for survival.”¹²

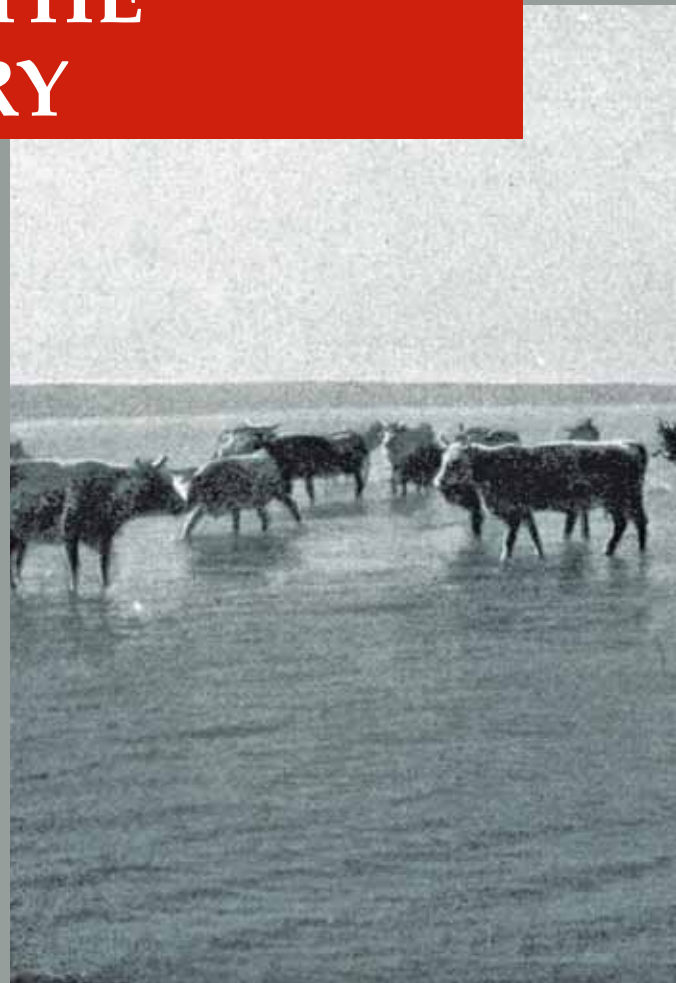
The American Emily Balch, a direct observer of the conditions in the Hungarian half of the Monarchy, claimed that even at the beginning of the twentieth century peasants continued to be treated as serfs in certain parts of Hungary, remaining tied to their land even after over a half century had passed since serfdom had been abolished. She also confirmed that former feudal lords continued to have absolute authority over their former subjects as the mortgages on the lands of the latter could not be paid off. As a result, peasants could not leave their land and look elsewhere for their fortune. She left Austria-Hungary with the greatest feelings of bitterness and memories of the horrible poverty which she witnessed in one such village.

Crowds on a square in Poszony (Pressburg), now Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia. In prior times, it have been a royal and coronation city of Hungary and the seat of its Parliament. (Historical Museum, Bratislava)

¹² John P. Kraljic, *Emigracija iz Austro-Ugarske 1880.-1914*, in *Veliki val, iseljavanje iz srednje Europe u Ameriku 1880.-1914.*, Muzej grada Rijeke, 2012, p. 39.

EMIGRATION FROM THE EUROPEAN PERIPHERY

3





The Pannonian Plain made up a large portion of the Hungarian half of the Empire. Most of the population engaged in agriculture and cattle raising and lived off the land. But, many peasants carried a burden of unmanageable debt owed to former feudal lords. (Ungarn, Budapest, 1909)



Peasants from the Pelješac Peninsula in Dalmatia. Meat for the most part would only be eaten on holidays, with pigs usually slaughtered prior to Christmas. For many, such events took on the air of family celebrations. (Boris Cvjetanović, Zagreb)



A peasant from Bukovina, from the area of present-day Ukraine, dressed in a leather coat and fur hat, wearing heavy shoes which remind one of the hard winters and traditional herding economy of that area. (Mein Österreich, Mein Heimatland, vol. II, Vienna 1914)

EMIGRATION FROM THE EUROPEAN PERIPHERY

Of the 43.6 million Europeans who migrated between 1800 and the beginning of the First World War, 48% consisted of Britons and Germans, while 44% came from Southern and Eastern Europe, of which 29% from Southern Europe and 10% from Austria-Hungary.¹

It has been calculated that between 1820 and 1930, 4,132,351 immigrants came to America from the territory of Austria-Hungary.² The numbers are somewhat higher when one includes those who came to South America and Canada.

Researchers who for the most part base their studies on comparisons between the leading industrial nations and the European periphery (consisting of those areas which came late to industrialization, especially Eastern, Central and Southern Europe) have determined that emigration from the latter rose as early as 1880 in comparison to the former.

During the period between 1851 and 1880, 82% of the approximately 8.1 million emigrants came from Britain and Germany, with only 6% from Scandinavia, 4% from the Iberian Peninsula, 2.5% from Italy and 2.5% from the Habsburg Monarchy.

However, from 1880 forward, the flow of emigrants from the periphery in comparison to the leading industrialized nations rose without stopping. During the 1880s, 45% of all European emigrants came from the periphery, which rose to 72% in the 1890s. By the beginning of the twentieth century, 80% of all emigrants leaving Europe came from underdeveloped countries.³

The statistics concerning those emigrating to the United States during the initial decade of the twentieth century show a radical change which could not even be hinted at earlier. More than a quarter of all immigrants to America came from Austria-Hungary, which ranked first on the list of countries with the largest number of emigrants, beating even Italy and Russia. The most dramatic year occurred in 1907 when 338,452 immigrants came from the Monarchy, almost a third of those who came to the United States in that year. This number at the same time represents the largest flow of persons from one country to another in a one year time frame.

The numbers are indeed dramatic. From a country which at the turn of the century had approximately forty million people (around 10% of the entire population of Europe), over 4 million emigrants left during a period over little more than three decades, of whom 83% went to the United States.

From 1881 to 1890, 353,719 immigrants came to the United States from Austria-Hungary. The number rose to 592,702 in the following decade, while during the period between 1901 to 1910 the number increased to an incredible 2,145,266 people. 24.39% of all immigrants to the United States during that decade came from Austria-Hungary.

More than half of all emigrants from the territory of Austria-Hungary who had emigrated during the century between the Napoleonic Wars and the First World War to the United States arrived in America during that single decade.⁴

The statistics bring to mind the detailed examinations undertaken by American governmental representatives in centers of European emigration and its largest ports, published on the eve of the First World War. They found that the least capable and the poorest did not go to America – to the contrary, those who left for America for the most part consisted of those who had a vision of a better life, who had confidence in their own abilities and a belief that they could secure for themselves and their families a better life.

1 Iván T. Berend and György Ránki, *Europska periferija i industrijalizacija 1780-1914*, Naprijed, Zagreb, p. 76.

2 E. Wilder Spaulding, *The Quiet Invaders, The Story of the Austrian Impact upon America*, Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, Vienna, 1968, p. 70.

3 Berend and Ránki, *op. cit.*, p. 75

4 Roger Daniels, *Coming to America, A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, Harper and Perennial, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, 2002, 2nd ed., p. 188. Emigrants from Italy (2,045,877 or 25.4%) and Russia (1,597,306 or 19.8%) come in second a third place. Those from Britain (525,590 or 6.5%) as well as others were far behind.



Despite the height of the Alps, by 1857 Vienna had a rail connection with its port, Trieste. The Hungarian port of Rijeka would have such a connection with Vienna and Budapest by 1873. Before the end of the century, railways would connect the most far-away villages with emigrant ports.
(Ministry of Culture, Photo Archive, Zagreb)



A peasant wedding in the mountains of the Czech Forest (known in Czech as the Český les, and also known by its German name of Böhmerwald), now in the border area between the Czech Republic, Germany and Austria. Austrian ethnologists attempted to encourage patriotism through scenes showing the ethnic diversity and the beauty of their great homeland. This photo appeared in a book entitled *My Austria – My Home*. (*Mein Österreich, Mein Heimatland*, vol. I, Vienna 1914)



This fact explains why initial emigrants came from Western Europe and more developed lands, such as Ireland, England and Germany, and why they stopped leaving around the same time as emigrants started to leave in large numbers from Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia.

Thus, the Great Hunger in Ireland caused those most capable, who knew how to escape from the worst misery, to get to Liverpool, scrimp together the money for a ticket and embark on a ship for America.

The ethnic and regional composition of emigrants from Austria-Hungary showed similar tendencies as general European emigration. While one could expect to find Magyars (ethnic Hungarians) and Austro-Germans to be at the bottom of the numbers of emigrants, the numbers show that the members of these two most populous and powerful ethnic groups in the Monarchy made up a rather large number of emigrants.

But one must emphasize that in counting members of ethnic groups a great amount of confusion arose from the failure to distinguish one's citizenship from one's ethnicity. Even emigrants themselves, such as the Slavs, sometimes would declare themselves to be Austrians or Magyars in their travel documents. As a result, the statistics put together by Austro-Hungarian diplomats are generally seen to be more credible than those published by American officials, for whom such differences had been less important.

Thus, the statistics of Austrian Vice-Consul Schwegel which he compiled for 1902-03 is of special interest as he took note of the ethnic composition of Austro-Hungarian immigrants to the United States: Austro-Germans – 23,597, Poles – 37,499, Slovaks – 34,499, Croats and Slovenes – 32,892, Magyars – 27,113, Jews – 18,759, Rusyns – 9,819, Czechs – 9,577, Bulgars, Serbs, and Montenegrins – 4,227, Romanians – 4,173, Italians – 2,170, and Dalmatians, Bosnians and Herzegovinians – 1,723.⁵

Nevertheless, one must note that the relatively large number of Germans did not emigrate from "inner" Austria but from the far western areas, the mountainous Vorarlberg region, and the easternmost and poorest areas such as Burgenland and far-off Bukovina. Similarly, a large number of Germans also left from Hungary, such as the eastern region of the Banat. A comparison between the emigration of Magyars and other nationalities of the Hungarian-half of the Empire (who collectively overshadowed the number of Magyars) shows that most emigration occurred from non-Magyar areas, such as those predominately populated by Slovaks. The tie between emigration and development, as seen by comparing the underdeveloped Slovak and industrially developed Czech areas (the most developed in the entire Monarchy) is clear. The statistics from 1902/03 show that approximately four times as many Slovaks emigrated as did Czechs. These differences become even more dramatic when one compares the total number of members of one ethnic group to another.

A special case concerns the Poles who, prior to the First World War, had been divided between Austria-Hungary, Germany and Russia. Most Poles who came to the United States came from these three countries. According to the 1910 census, close to one million Poles born abroad lived in the United States, of whom 418,370 came from Russia, 329,418 came from Austria and 190,096 came from Germany.⁶

It remains a fact that massive emigration across the Atlantic only became possible for Europeans in the nineteenth century, and the peak of emigration from Central Europe only occurred during the first decade of the twentieth century. Prior to modern times, no system existed which in a relatively short period could carry tens of millions of people across the ocean. Miserable living conditions did not represent a sufficient reason to encourage a great trans-oceanic migration. The need to emigrate had to be accompanied by an organizational apparatus and a degree of social development which would allow even members of the poorest classes to pay for their fares to the New World.⁷



An unusual image of a woman from the Croatian Littoral in a boat in a rough sea. Many men became employed as seamen or otherwise emigrated to America and rarely returned home. (Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb)



Many peasants from Dalmatia in Croatia lived among the very sparse conditions of the rocky areas along the coast. The sea became for many the sole source of income and provided them with the means to become one of the first to arrive in America from the Monarchy. (Boris Cvjetanović, Zagreb)



Peasants from Kopanica in Moravia, an area on the borderlands between the present-day Czech Republic and Slovakia, near the city of Uherský Brod. Picturesque costumes and high boots reflect that a celebration of some kind is in progress. (Mein Österreich – Mein Heimatland, vol. I, Vienna 1914)

⁵ Spaulding, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁶ Daniels, *op. cit.*, p. 216

⁷ Ervin Dubrović, *Merika, iseljavanje iz srednje Europe u Ameriku 1880.-1914. / Emigration from Central Europe to America 1880-1914*, Muzej grada Rijeke, Rijeka 2008., pp. 35-67



The great migration began at a time when industrialization began to be intensified which encouraged people to expect that they would benefit from relatively quick prosperity. In the mid-nineteenth century wide swathes of the British and German population left for America, while by the end of the century the great majority of people in these countries began to live better and no longer had the desire to take the risk to venture into the unknown.

The rate of development of Central, Southern and Eastern Europe, the so-called European periphery, took fifty years to reach the level that Western and Northern Europe had in the middle of the nineteenth century. Those who tended to emigrate consisted mostly of peasants who had been most economically exposed to hardships. They headed for America from the periphery at the same time as the rest of Europe had already satisfied its thirst for emigrating to the New World.



A corner of a picturesque Rusyn village in Galicia, an area today divided between Poland and the Ukraine. Those who left from this region had been among the poorest and least educated of all emigrants from the Monarchy. Along with Poles, emigrants from this area for the most part consisted of Rusyns and Jews. (Mein Österreich, Mein Heimatland, vol. II, Vienna 1914)



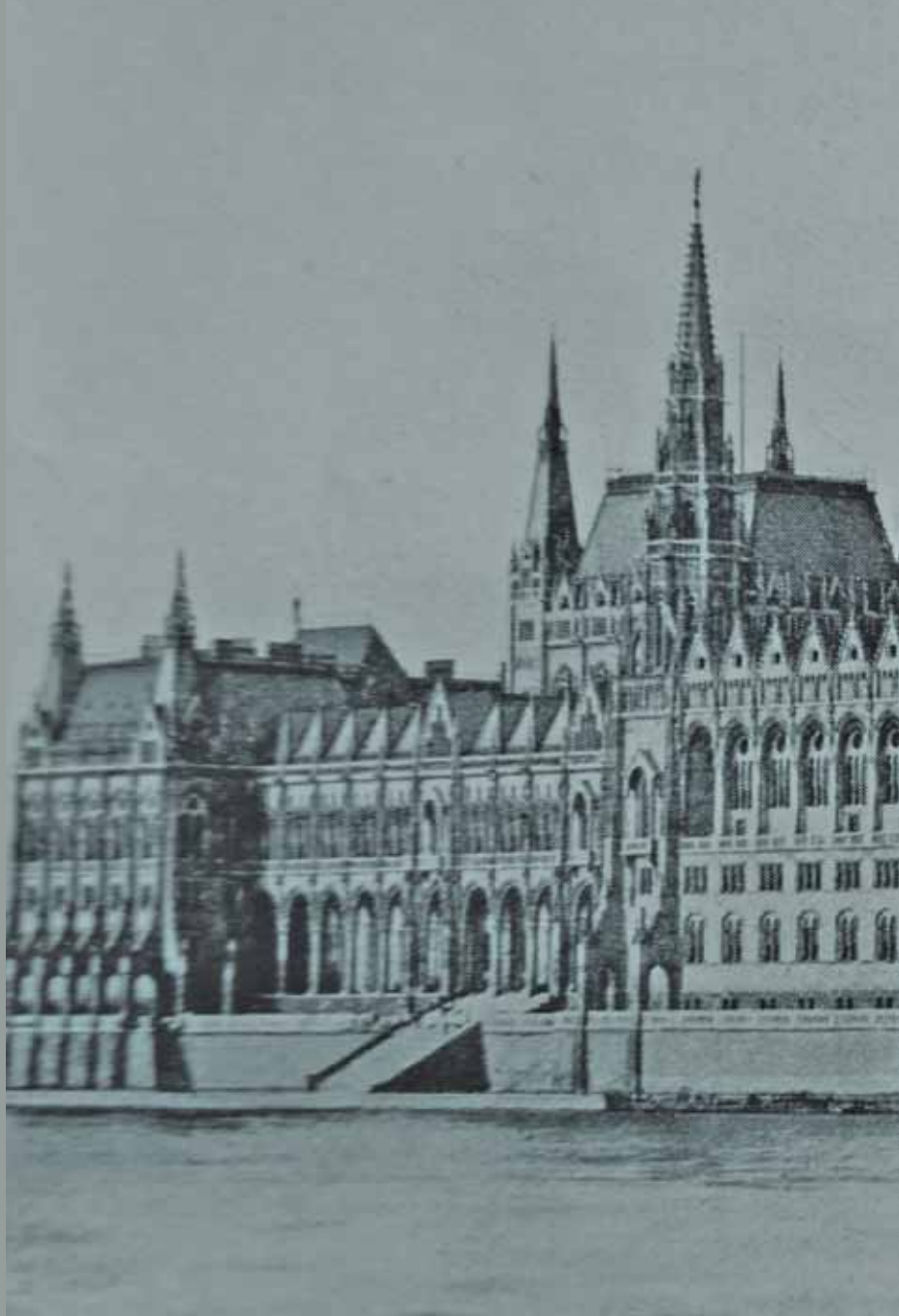
Young shepherds from the area of Southern Hungary (today for the most part divided between Vojvodina in Serbia and the Banat in Romania). Most of the emigrants from this area consisted of Germans, Romanians and Rusyns who had settled in this ethnically diverse area after the withdrawal of the Turks in the late 17th century.
(Museum of Vojvodina, Novi Sad)



Workers in a cooper shop in Rijeka. Some of the inhabitants around the city found work in the port and the local paper factory, shipyard, foundry, refinery, chocolate factory and tobacco plant. Nevertheless, numerous peasants had to go out into the world.
(Ivica Nemec, Kastav)

THE STATE AND CRITICS OF EMIGRATION

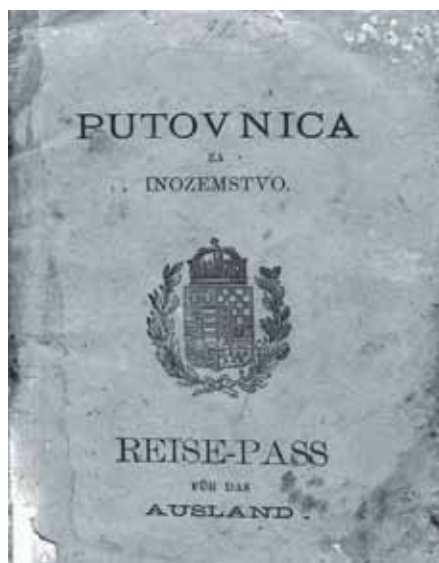
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The Hungarian Parliament for the most part had been completed by the Millennium Exhibition (1896) which the Magyars sponsored in commemoration of the one thousand anniversary of their settlement in their “new” homeland of Hungary. In contrast to the Austrian Parliament, which never succeeded in passing emigrant laws, the Hungarian Parliament adopted a law on emigration in 1903.
(Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb)



The division of the Monarchy into an Austrian and a Hungarian half brought with it two different citizenships, Austrian and Hungarian. Despite this, Croatia, a separate kingdom within the "Hungarian Crown," issued its own passports in the Croatian and German languages, but imprinted with a Hungarian coat of arms and the Crown of St. Stephen.
(Emil Crnković, Rijeka)

THE STATE AND CRITICS OF EMIGRATION

The American emigration question caused controversy and a number of pieces on the issue appeared in print. A writer from Hamburg, Friedrich Gerstaecker, who in his youth had been inspired by the *Last of the Mohicans* and had been deemed to be a disciple of James Fennimore Cooper, first travelled to America in 1837 where he spent a memorable six years. After his return, he published several books on America (among them, one concerning pirates on the Mississippi River), which became bestsellers and had influence in Austria. Especially curious is his work entitled *To America*, which he published in Leipzig in 1855 in six volumes.¹ The phrase, "to America," spread throughout Europe and the desire to emigrate to America had, according to Gerstaecker, expanded to include the peasants, struggling on lands which were too small, craftsmen threatened by competition, artists yearning for freedom and merchants pressured by bills.

Initial discussions concerning the causes of emigration pointed to overpopulation, a high birth rate, poor crop yields, unemployment, poor wages, high taxes, wars, religious persecution and political instability. Others also mentioned the desire for adventure. Still others noted that the increased knowledge of foreign lands and cultures made going abroad less frightening to emigrants.²

The position taken on emigration by the government, military officers and certain state officials differed from those taken by the opposition and intellectuals. Certain government representatives also disagreed on the issue, depending on whether they saw a benefit or disadvantage in the departure of hundreds of thousands of people. A benefit was seen in the departure of "undesirables" as well as in the spending of emigrants. For instance, the railways made substantial sums on emigrants headed to embarkation ports for America. On the other hand, a disadvantage was the loss of labor and conscripts for the Austro-Hungarian Army. Of course, opposition politicians saw in emigration a possibility to criticize the government, which they tried to blame for the departure of "sons of the homeland." Intellectuals also used emigration as a reason to express their concern and to call on the public to protest.

In prior times, emigration had been banned, but the 1867 Austrian Constitution proclaimed the right to freely emigrate. This entitlement represented a logical outcome of democratization and just one in a laundry list of newly secured political and civil rights.³ Yet, despite such a proclamation, the emigration of the populace continued to be seen as weakening the state. Consequently, the Austrian authorities made it illegal to encourage citizens to emigrate and allowed only a small number of emigrant agents to operate. Nevertheless, emigration continued to increase on an almost daily basis as more and more people became engaged in organizing the voyage for emigrants – mostly through the sale of steamship tickets for America.

Discussions concerning emigration and the possibility of limiting it continued until World War I. In the initial stages of massive emigration, some began to publicly acknowledge what had become clear: "The current emigration to overseas countries almost exclusively concerns parts of the population whose departure is not seen as a great loss. We are talking for the most part of Jewish craftsmen and small-time merchants and Rusyn peasants" (Eduard Suess, April 12, 1894)⁴

The Croatian politician and advocate for the peasantry, Stjepan Radić, studied "comparative colonization" in Paris and published his findings in his book about "Modern Colonization and the Slavs" (*Moderna kolonizacija i Slaveni*, Zagreb, 1904). He especially noted the worrying scale of emigration of the largest and most threatened inhabitants of the Monarchy, poor Slavic peasants.⁵

1 Hans Chmelar, *Exportgut Mensch, Höhepunkte der Österreichischen Auswanderung bis 1914.*, in *Nach Amerika*, Burgenländische Landes-ausstellung, Burg Gussing, Eisenstadt, 1992, pp. 73-74.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

3 Stefan Malfer, *Austrija i emigracija*, in *Veliki val*, p. 31.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

5 Dubrović, *op.cit.*, pp. 28-29.



In the midst of the most intensive emigration from the country, Radić forecast that the number of emigrants would rise even further. "Emigration will certainly continue for some period of time since, on the one hand, North and South America are rapidly growing in material wealth, while, on the other hand, the entire Danubian Basin is concurrently going through a great economic crisis." He saw the reasons for the crisis in the actions of the state apparatus, which sought taxes from its citizens "using the most modern methods," while workers and peasants remained at the same level of development as they had been fifty or even one hundred years previously. Radić shows no interest in discussing the harm or benefit of emigration. As he notes, "we Slavs during the most recent times are not moving into the world but are fleeing from our homes as best as we know and are able."

On the eve of the First World War, one could still come across pleas to ban emigration, which came to be seen as being almost unbearable. "In no other country in the world has emigration developed into such a vast scale as in Austria-Hungary. Soon, there will not be enough conscripts for the Army, and even fewer agricultural workers" (Alexander Fischel, 1914).⁶

Despite the state's inability to decisively influence the flow of emigration, it nevertheless punished at least some who brazenly engaged in fraud. One example is the criminal proceedings brought in Wadovice during 1889 and 1890 when a number of emigrant agents had been charged with claiming that their offices actually were official government offices. A few years later, in 1895, the Austrian Parliament asked the government to propose an emigration law; but, while the government hinted that a proposal would be forthcoming, a law would only be proposed in 1904. That proposal came under such intense criticism that it would be brought to a vote. A new law proposed in 1913 was viewed as being overly restrictive, but it too would never be voted on.

In contrast to the Austrian-half of the Monarchy, the Hungarian-half proved to be much more efficient in adopting regulations concerning emigration, even though its 1881 law merely reaffirmed older statutes which, among other things, required a would-be emigrant to show that he had no debts or work or military obligations prior to receiving permission to emigrate. The great majority of would-be emigrants could not prove these requirements and as a result, they usually ended up leaving illegally.⁷

Not until March 1903 did the Hungarian Parliament pass a law which regulated emigration, placed controls over emigration agents and banned all advertising and solicitation to emigrate. This law allowed the state to impose better oversight on the emigrants, agents and carriers. The first had to have all required papers, the second had to restrict their activities and the third had to provide minimally acceptable facilities for sleeping and traveling across the Atlantic. The government also chose which shipping lines could carry Hungarian citizens. Because of its inability to secure the passage of emigrants through a Hungarian company, the government entered into an agreement at the end of 1903 with the British company *Cunard* to operate the *Hungarian-American Line* between Rijeka and New York. At the same time, the law banned emigration to Brazil, where some had previously gone via the Hungarian carrier *Adria's* merchant line which connected Rijeka with Brazilian ports. In all senses, the law proved to be more advantageous to the state and carriers than to the emigrants. As a result, many continued to escape to foreign ports, avoiding state oversight.

The Croatian Parliament (*Sabor*) passed its own emigration laws and regulations, in an effort to show its independence from the Hungarian legal regime.⁸ In 1881, it adopted a regulation to restrict emigration, which for the most part concerned conscripts. In April 1901, the "Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian government" issued regulations "concerning the transport of members of the working and peasant classes to transoceanic countries," which dealt with emigration agents. The beginning of the



In the name of the Emperor and King Francis Joseph I, the government of the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia-Dalmatia issued passports for citizens of Croatia. (Emil Crnković, Rijeka)

⁶ Malfer, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

⁷ William Klinger, *Ugarska, riječka luka i Hungarian-American Line*, in *Veliki val*, pp. 370-371.

⁸ Jelena Dunato, *Hrvatske prilike, iseljenički zakoni i Cunard Line*, in *Veliki val*, pp. 200-202.



The center of Vienna, in the area of the newly constructed urban Ring, built on the site of the former medieval walls which had encircled the old town. The Neo-Gothic Votive Church became one of the symbols of the Viennese Ring. (Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb)

century also saw the requirement for passengers going overseas to have passports – the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian government issued its own, even though Croats and other inhabitants of the eastern portion of the Monarchy had Hungarian citizenship.

Thus, the Austrian-half of the Empire, in contrast to the Hungarian half, failed to legally regulate the massive emigration of people to America. The legislative inability of the Viennese Parliament clearly shows that the issue of emigration fell into a gap between two opposite viewpoints of the matter. On the one hand, stood those who saw emigration as hurtful, often basing their views on completely selfish reasons, such as fear of losing a cheap pool of labor. On the other hand, stood those who did not wish to restrict emigration in one way or another. The latter supported those who lived off the emigration “trade,” such as shipping and railroad companies. For many, emigration “became acceptable for society and, additionally, a recognized instrument to solve problems.”⁹



⁹ Malfer, *op. cit.*, p. 33.



THE ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

A map showing Austria-Hungary with its peoples.

The map divides the western, Austrian half of the Empire from the eastern Hungarian half by a white line and reflects the complicated ethnic situation of the Monarchy.

The picture would be even more complicated in cities which, for the most part, contained peoples of many different nationalities, as well as in many provinces where so-called "Swabian Germans" lived (in black on the map).

The map gives the modern names for certain groups (e.g., Czechs rather than Bohemians), though it does distinguish the Moravians, who would later generally be deemed to be Czechs.

The national composition in certain areas is extremely mixed, such as in Southern Hungary, today known as Vojvodina, where, along with Serbs, one found Hungarians, Germans, Croats, Rusyns and Slovaks. The map shows the status as of 1910, by which time Bosnia and Herzegovina had become a new "Imperial Land" (1908) which belonged to neither Austria nor Hungary. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, one found Serbs, Croats and Muslims (now generally known as Bošnjaks).

(City Museum of Rijeka)



Along with the monumental urban Ring which encircled old Vienna, old and new symbols of the government and culture could be seen. This photo shows the Imperial Palace with a large square and gardens (the Hofburg), the Parliament, the Museum of the History of Art and the Natural History Museum. (Mein Österreich – Mein Heimatland, vol. I, Vienna, 1914)

THE HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN LINE AND THE AUSTRO-AMERICANA

5





The Martha Washington, one of the best known steamships of the Triestine Austro-Americana, regularly sailed on the Trieste-New York route. It continued to sail after World War I after the shipping company became known as Fratelli Cosulich. (Claudio Ernè, Trieste)



One of the Cunard Line's postcard advertisements showing the steamship Aurania traveling at full steam.
(Mario Cicogna, Trieste)



An emigrant agent representing the Cunard Line offers transport from Zagreb to New York.
(Strossmayerov koledar, Zagreb, 1907)



Directions and instructions for emigrants to America traveling on the Hungarian-American Line, published by the Line's representative, Adria, the Royal Hungarian Steamship Company, which, in lieu of carrying passengers, engaged in ancillary work and the sale of steamship tickets.
(City Museum of Rijeka)

The British Cunard Line operated the Hungarian-American Line's route between Rijeka and New York. Three steamships, traveling every two weeks, regularly serviced the route. But, along with the Pannonia, Slavonia and Ultonia, other ships were also used.
(Transport Museum, Budapest)

THE HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN LINE AND THE AUSTRO-AMERICANA

Massive and systematically organized emigration through the port of Rijeka began with the British *Cunard Line*, which received a monopoly on the Rijeka-New York route. Rijeka's position with respect to *Cunard's* route contrasted sharply with that of Trieste where *Cunard* was placed in a much more disadvantageous position as a result of the domestic carrier *Austro-Americana* (which in reality came under the control of the great German shipping companies).

The attempts of the central Hungarian government in Budapest to encourage a domestic carrier in Rijeka to undertake the emigrant trade failed miserably. To some extent, this failure had been covered-over by the cooperation between *Adria* and *Cunard*, and it appeared that the role of Rijeka's carrier would be much greater. However, the domestic steamship company showed itself to be incapable, so that the Hungarian Government had to entrust the emigrant lines to foreigners. "The President of the Government approved the grant of a temporary license to the *Cunard Steamship Company*, represented in Hungary by the *Adria Company*, to embark emigrants on its steamships which will connect Rijeka and New York."¹

At first, there were discussions of establishing a *Cunard-Adria* company. Several years later, Hungarian authorities even considered other means to carry emigrants from Rijeka to New York. In early 1906, meetings took place in Berlin between representatives of the *Adria*, *Cunard*, *North German Lloyd* and *Hamburg-America Line*, later joined by representatives of *Holland America Line*. The shippers planned to form an association among them and to establish a new steamship company having capital of 10 to 12 million crowns.²

But nothing could challenge *Cunard's* role in running the *Hungarian-American Line*. The steamship *Aurania*, with 349 passengers, left on October 20, 1903 for the first trip from New York to Trieste and Rijeka. On its return trip, it sailed from Trieste on November 10 and arrived in Rijeka on the same date, from where it left with only 53 passengers. Almost immediately, some blamed domestic agents who exerted no efforts to place their customers on the newly established Rijeka line.³

The *Cunard Steamship Company* regularly dedicated three ships to the *Hungarian-American Line*. A ship left Rijeka every other Friday, and the trip generally took 18 days, but sometimes took much longer. Though the ship left from Trieste, it would for the most part be filled-up in Rijeka. Often, the ship could not take all the waiting ticketed passengers, so *Cunard* had to transfer them to some Western European ports, usually to Antwerp. According to regulations, such transfers could not cost more than the ticket from Rijeka to New York. The special emigrant trains which left Rijeka for Western European ports sometimes included around 1,000 overbooked passengers!

With the establishment of the new route, the government also adopted new legal regulations which came into force on April 20, 1904. Some of these regulations, in addition to dealing with such technical issues as the size of the ships and the safety of the passengers, concerned the lodging of emigrants, who had to be provided with free room and board for two days in Rijeka. Other regulations concerned the prohibition against emigration to Brazil, which protected the interests of both the government and *Cunard* from the possibility of losing some emigrants to *Adria's* commercial route with the Brazilian ports. The law even fixed the costs of tickets: 200 Crowns for fast ships and 150 for slower ones. *Cunard* had to charge the same prices for those who embarked at Trieste. The question of prices was a contentious one. The shipper defended itself from those who complained that the cost of a ticket from Rijeka was more than twice

¹ *Il movimento di emigrazione tra Fiume e New York*, La Bilancia (December 12, 1903).

² Dubrović, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-99.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.





The Austro-Americana had an impressive fleet of 33 transoceanic ships on the eve of World War I. The company ran routes to North and South America as well as Mediterranean cruises. After World War I, it continued to operate under its previous name - Fratelli Cosulich. (Mario Cicogna, Trieste)



what emigrants paid in Northern and Atlantic ports. Since all Hungarian emigrants had to leave for America via Rijeka, prices could be high. Nevertheless, they proved to actually be too high, so the Company unilaterally lowered them to 120 Crowns. But this remained 50 Crowns more than the price for a ticket from a German carrier. *Cunard* argued that the difference arose because of costs it had to pay - 20 Crowns per ticket had to go to the agency which sold the ticket while *Adria* had to receive another 20 Crowns, and an additional 10 Crowns per passenger needed to be paid to the state for the Emigration Fund.⁴

The government's initiative to build in Rijeka a large Emigrant House, the so-called "Emigrant Hotel," reflected the joint interests which existed between the carrier and the Hungarian Government. In other ports, carriers supported such hostels, such as *Austro-Americana* in Trieste, *HAPAG* in Hamburg and *Holland America Line* in Rotterdam. The role of the authorities elsewhere for the most part had been limited to overseeing hygienic conditions and preventing epidemics, matters which necessarily had to be dealt with prior to the embarkation of close to two thousand emigrants. Rijeka's "hotel" only had five hundred beds, but it still held almost all of those awaiting embarkation, all of whom had to find some space to sleep.⁵

Although Rijeka was a much smaller port than Trieste, and *Cunard's* tickets had been more expensive than those for *Austro-Americana* (whose ships took most of those who embarked at Trieste), 332,986 emigrants boarded at Rijeka in the pre-World War I era, much more than at its "competitor" Trieste.

The ethnic composition of the emigrants proves to be surprising. More than half of those embarking in Austrian Trieste had been foreigners (foreigners here including those from the Hungarian part of the Monarchy as well as "true" foreigners, such as Russians and Russian Jews).

Emigrants boarding in Rijeka consisted exclusively of Hungarian citizens, half of whom had been of ethnic Hungarians, a quarter Slovaks, a seventh Germans and a tenth Rusyns and Romanians. Emigrants came from distant regions, for the most part from Slovakian areas in northern Hungary, as well as the most easterly parts, such as Bačka, Banat and Transylvania, where *Cunard's* agent, *Adria*, had its emigrant agencies - in Novi Sad, Pančevo and Gombos (Bogojevo).

While *Cunard* had a monopoly in Rijeka, the passengers there could only be Hungarian and Croatian emigrants. On the other hand, while the concession provided to *Cunard* in Trieste allowed it to take on passengers from all areas, it had to compete with other shipping lines. The Dual Monarchy had two governments which made independent decisions concerning their respective internal affairs. What was good for Austria was not necessarily acceptable to Hungary. In this regard, the Austrians provided concessions to the Germans, specifically to the great shipping companies in Bremen and Hamburg, who looked on Austria as their own market and did not view kindly the entrance of British competition in Trieste. The Hungarian authorities, on the other hand, wanted to squeeze the Germans and when they saw that they could not establish their own shipping line, decided to pick the English *Cunard Line*.

Local Triestine carriers quickly reacted to the appearance of *Cunard*.

In 1904, the *Unione Austriaca di Navigazione*, earlier known as the *Austro-Americana* and *Fratelli Cosulich* (*Vereinigte Österreichische Schiffarts-Actien-Gesellschaft vormals Austro Americana & Fratelli Cosulich*) was established in Trieste. The company resulted from the merger of two firms, the *Austro-Americana*, established in 1894 in Trieste with capital from Vienna and Liverpool, and the *Fratelli Cosulich*, owned by the "shipping dynasty" which originated in Lošinj (now in Croatia) and which moved to Trieste in 1889. The *Unione Austriaca di Navigazione* had an initial capitalization of 2 million crowns, which rose to



The first class salon on the Austro-Americana's Martha Washington. Though many emigrants spoke about the poor sleeping conditions and even worse food on ships, by the eve of the First World War travel conditions on board for even the poorest passengers became tolerable. (Mario Cicogna, Trieste)



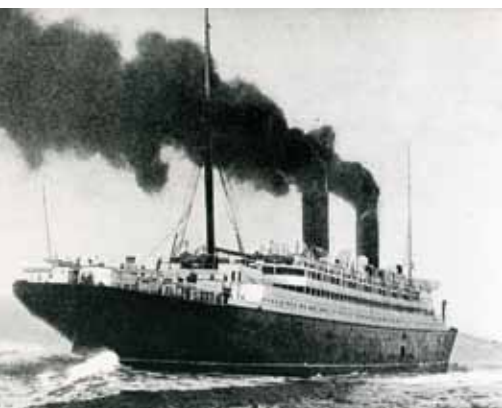
The deck of the Martha Washington, an illustration from various postcard advertisements which showed the comforts of one of the most beautiful ships of the Austro-Americana. (Mario Cicogna, Trieste)



The Kaiser Franz Josef I, the pride of the Austro-Americana and the entire domestic fleet, built in its own Cosulich Shipyard and the Cantieri Navali Triestini in Monfalcone. (Mario Cicogna, Trieste)

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103.

⁵ Jasna Rotim Malvić, *Hotel za emigrante*, in *Veliki val*, pp. 155-163.



The Cunard's Carmania, one of the trans-Atlantic steamships serving the Hungarian-American Line.
(Mario Cicogna, Trieste)



The interior of a first class cabin on the steamship Martha Washington of the Austro-Americana. While the company profited from the transport of poor passengers who slept in common and uncomfortable rooms, it boasted of the comfort of its ships.
(Mario Cicogna, Trieste)

4 million in March and 16 million in July 1904.⁶ Such a large increase in capital resulted from the entry of Austrian banks into the Company, but even more from the investments of *North German Lloyd* and *HAPAG* which, according to one source, purchased 5 million crowns worth of stock,⁷ assuring them control over the Company and a right of first refusal to purchase more shares should any further stock be issued.

When it began to carry emigrants, the *Austro-Americana*, as it remained commonly known, had a flotilla of 19 ships. The steamship *Gerty* began the Trieste-New York route in June 1904 with stops at Messina, Naples and Palermo, followed in the next month by the steamships *Giulia* and *Freda*, in July of the same year. Emigrants taking the *Austro-Americana* had to undergo medical and political examinations in the eastern portion of Hanger No. 17 in the basement of the General Warehouse (*Magazzini Generali*) as well as in the Lazarett of St. Bartholomew.

In its earliest phases, the *Austro-Americana* did not seem choosy in picking its passengers: in August 1904, the steamship *Gerty* took thirty emigrants who had been previously rejected as unfit by the ship physician of the *Slavonia* of the *Cunard Line*. That officials of *Austro-Americana* continued in this manner can be seen by the number of emigrants rejected by American officials upon their arrival. Thus, in April 1906, 197 Greek emigrants carried by the Triestine carrier had been rejected in New York: 20 due to trachoma, 103 due to a lack of funds, and 74 due to other irregularities.⁸

In contrast to Rijeka, where *Cunard* had an unassailable position, *Austro-Americana* quickly took over the lion share of emigrant traffic. At the time of its formation, the *Austro-Americana* already had a large fleet, which grew to thirty-three ships by the eve of World War I. It ran routes to North and South America and even carried passengers from Greece, Italy and Spain. On the very eve of the War, a third shipping company appeared in Trieste, the *Canadian Pacific Railway*, which owned a portion of the Austrian railways and exhibited ambitions to take over part of the transoceanic Austrian emigrant traffic. But these ambitions ended with the outbreak of the First World War.

By far, the *Austro Americana* carried the greatest number of the 220,312 passengers who traveled from Trieste to America between the end of 1903 to mid-1914 (83%), with a substantially smaller percentage carried by the *Cunard Line* (14.7%) and a very tiny amount by the *Canadian Pacific Railway* (2.3%). Emigrants from Trieste could go to Canada and South America, as well as the United States. The large majority went to the United States (73.5%), with smaller numbers headed to South America (22.1%), and the smallest percentage to Canada (4.4%).⁹

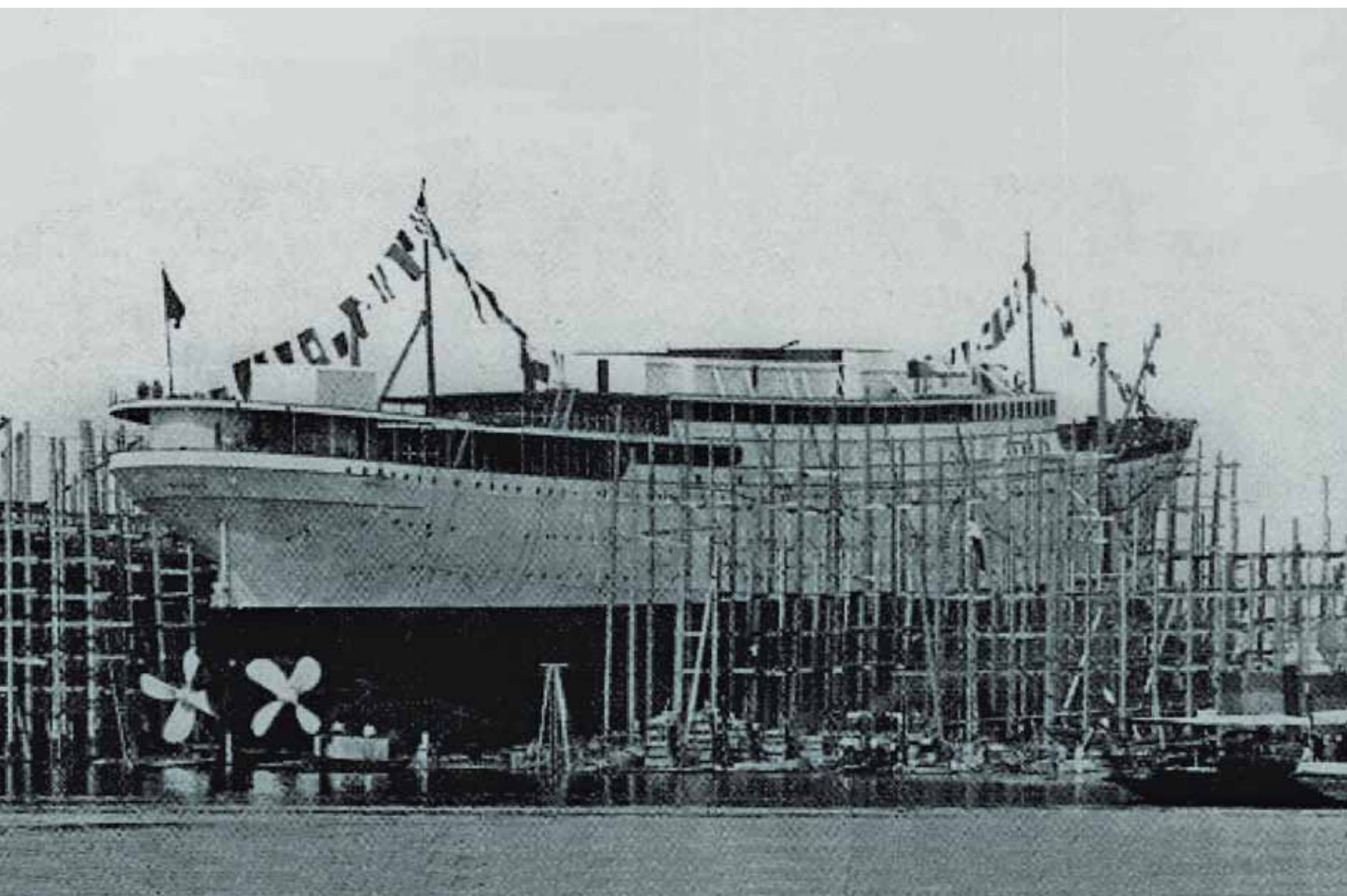


6 Statute of the *Unione Austriaca di Navigazione*, earlier known as the *Austro – Americana & Fratelli Cosulich, Società anonima in Trieste*, 1991, State Archives in Trieste, Mercantile Chamber, no. 250.

7 E. Gellner, N. Castelli, G. Spazzapan and P. Valenti, *I Cosulich e l'Austro – Americana*, Quaderno dell'Associazione Marinara "Aldebaran" di Trieste, no. 113/03, Trieste, 2003.

8 From the unpublished manuscript of Francesco Fait, Trieste, *Trieste, il Litorale Austriaco e l'emigrazione transoceanica 1880-1914*.

9 Dubrović, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-129, based on information provided by Francesco Fait of the Civici Musei di Storia ed Arte, Trieste.

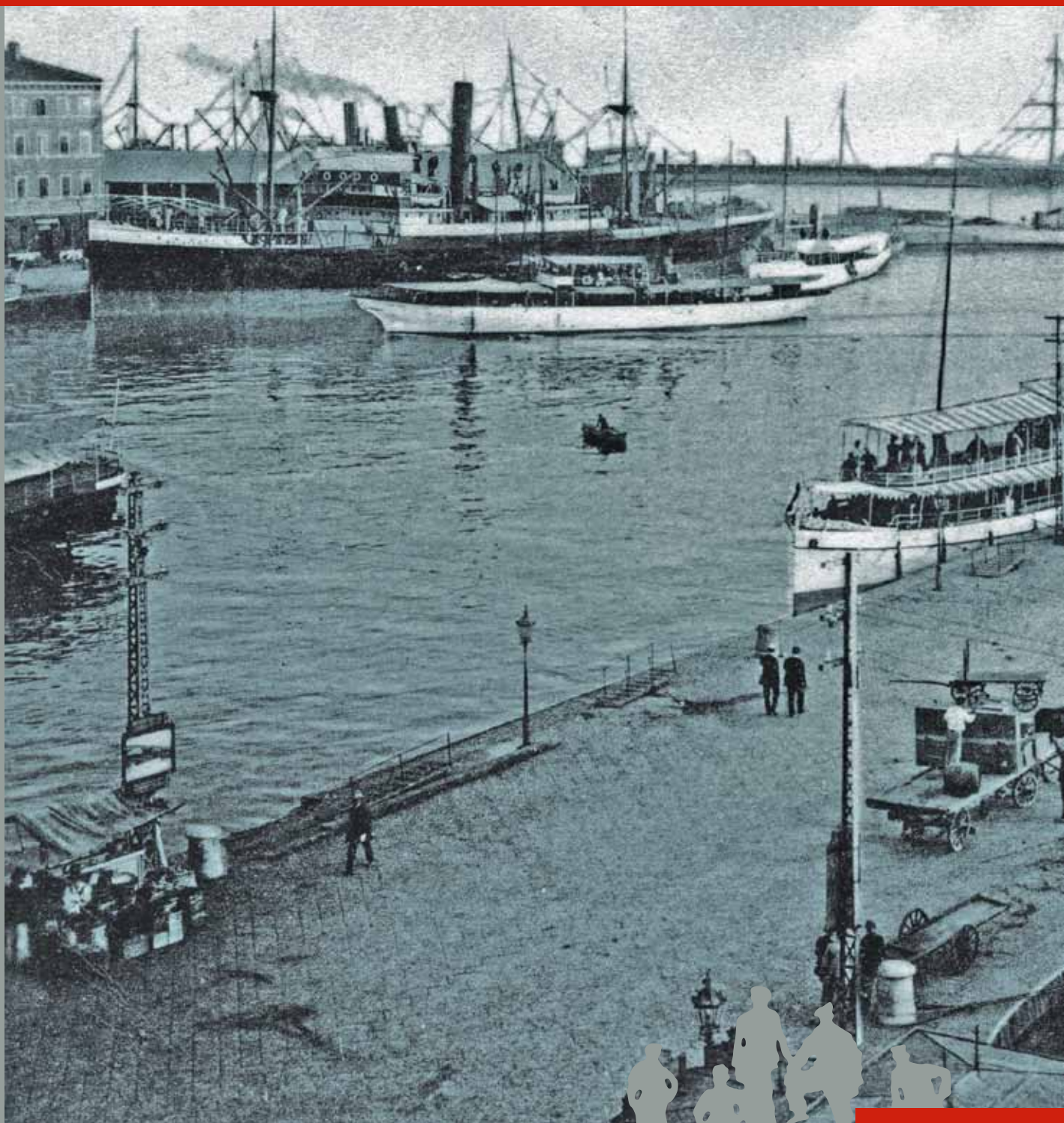


One of the first domestic great trans-Atlantic ships at the Monfalcone shipyard near Trieste. British shipbuilders had been the first to build large trans-oceanic ships and the newly established Cosulich Triestine shipyard hired English technicians and workers. (Associazione Marinara Aldebaran, Trieste)



British technicians in the Triestine shipyard in Monfalcone in which the Austro-Americana built the first domestic transoceanic steamships. (Claudio Ernè, Trieste)

THE PORT OF RIJEKA





The main basin of the port of Rijeka with passenger ships, small ships of the Ungaro-Croata, which sailed along the Adriatic Coast, sailed from here. Emigrant trans-Atlantic ships sailed from the docks which had been initially built for merchant vessels.
(City Museum of Rijeka)



THE PORT OF RIJEKA

Though the ports of Rijeka and Trieste have similar histories, the port and city of Trieste always developed more quickly and faster than that of Rijeka. Both cities had been proclaimed as free ports in 1719 and both ports had the same purpose: to act as centers of commerce through which domestic products from various parts of the Monarchy would be exported (those products included wheat, salted meat and tobacco) which came from as far as Banat (Vojvodina, today part of Serbia). But, by the turn of the nineteenth century, Trieste had 30,000 inhabitants, while Rijeka barely had 8,000. By the middle of the century, the difference became even greater, with Trieste having reached 80,000, and Rijeka having not much more than 12,500. On the eve of the First World War, the area of Trieste had 250,000 people while Rijeka had around 60,000.¹

In addition to revolutions and wars, Rijeka's development had been hindered by unfavorable administrative circumstances. While Vienna had initially intended only for Rijeka to become a free port, the Imperial Edict concerning the proclamation of free ports included Trieste, which thereafter successfully overtook Rijeka. Austria's needs could be satisfied with only one port, so Rijeka completely stagnated following Trieste's quick development. As a result, Joseph II, in consultation with his mother, Maria Theresa, determined to separate Rijeka from the Austrian portion of the Monarchy and awarded it to the Hungarian portion (1776) in an attempt to promote its commerce and trade. This resulted in the establishment of a separate local administrative unit (known as a *gubernia*) which supported Rijeka's economic development. But the Napoleonic Wars soon thereafter ended this phase, followed by decades of economic stagnation, revolutionary upheavals and uneven development. After the French, the city again came under the rule of the Austrians, then the Hungarians, from whom the Croats seized it during the revolutionary events of 1848. They did not enjoy sovereignty over the city for long as soon afterwards Viennese centralism and neo-absolutism took over the entire country, so neither the Hungarians nor the Croats had any influence on the development of the city or its port.

The Hungarian-Croatian Agreement (1868), entered into after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise (1867), regulated the relations between the Hungarians and Croats but the issue of control over Rijeka remained a point of contention over which both sides vehemently disagreed. The Hungarians ultimately won the battle, though only by gluing on to the original Agreement a new provision granting the city to Hungary to the Agreement (known as the Riječka krpica or the Rijeka Cloth (Insertion)). Nevertheless, the fact remains that Rijeka's leading merchants and industrialists desired Hungarian control. Indeed, the following half century of Hungarian administration marked Rijeka's most spectacular period of economic prosperity and fortune.²

As with Trieste, Rijeka's development depended on the joint interests of the city and the state. Through the end of the century, a so-called "idyllic period" existed between the local city administration and the Hungarian government. Conflicts did occur during the 1880s and 1890s, but only with respect to questions concerning education and culture. The Hungarians built Hungarian language schools, the Italians built Italian-language ones, while the city administration forced the only Croatian-language gymnasium (high school) to move to the territory of the Kingdom of Croatia, to the suburb of Sušak, separated from Rijeka-proper by a tiny creek. Only after 1900 did nationalist unrest and incidents in the street break out. But until the start of the First World War, these events did not have any great effect on economic or social life.

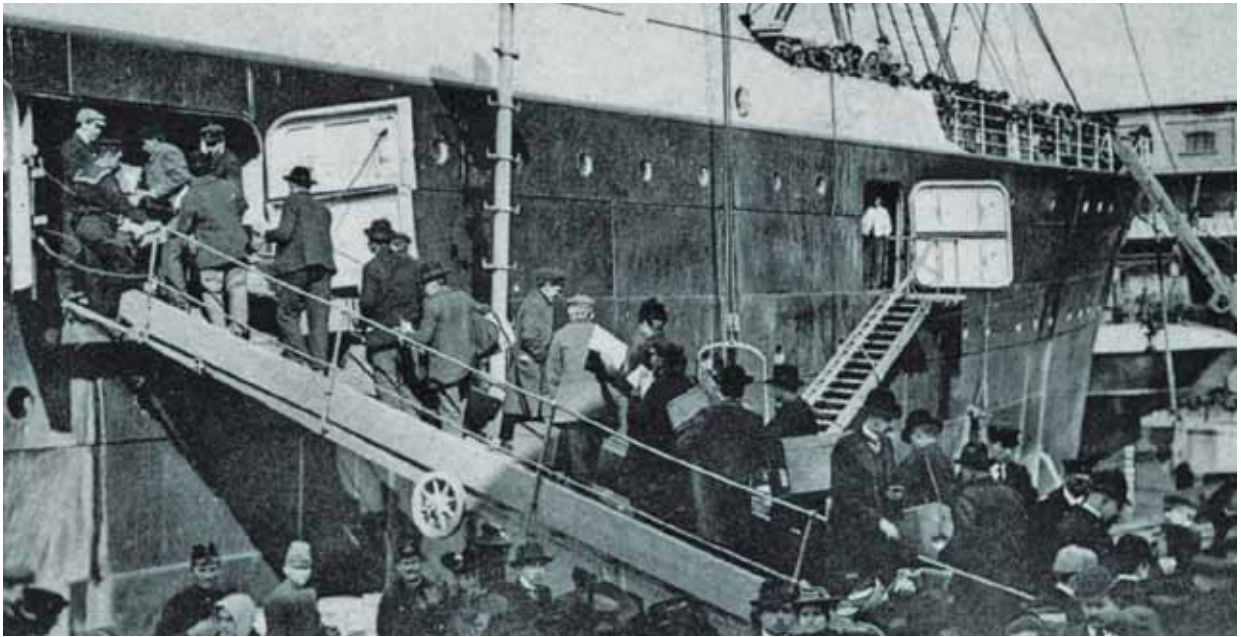
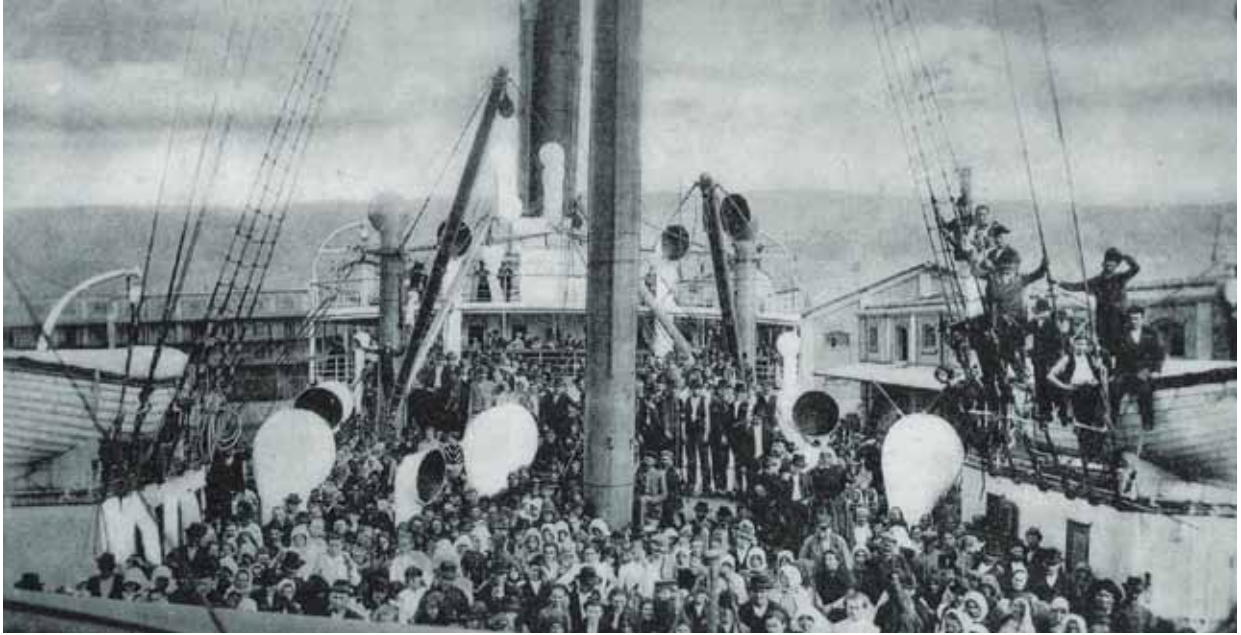


A picturesque view of Rijeka's Riva, the main street along the harbor, where the city and the port met. Immediately behind the wooden merchant and fishing ships one sees a passing cargo train.
(Ungarn, Budapest, 1909)

1 According to statistics from 1910, Trieste specifically had 230,000 and Rijeka had 50,000 inhabitants. Fran Barbačić, *Pitanje narodnosti u Rijeci*, in *Rijeka, zbornik*, Matica Hrvatska, Zagreb, 1953, pp. 15-34, and Renate Basch-Ritter, *Österreich Ungarn in Wort und Bild, Menschen und Länder, Styria*, Graz-Wien-Köln, 1989, p. 11. The ethnic composition at the time was generally similar in both cities, though somewhat more complex in Rijeka. In Trieste, Italians consisted of 60% of the population, Slovenes 30% and Austrian Germans 5%, while in Rijeka Italians made up slightly less than half the population (47%), Croats made up 32%, Hungarians 7%, Germans 5% and Slovenes 5%.

2 A. J. P. Taylor, *Habsburška monarhija, 1809-1918*, Nakladni zavod znanje, Zagreb, 1990, p. 170.





An unusual commotion on board of a trans-Atlantic vessel prior to departing Rijeka for New York. An interesting aspect of this image is that all passengers are looking at the photographer.
(City Museum of Rijeka)

Many emigrants waited for days to embark on the steamship, and numerous spectators came to watch when the time finally came to board (a process which lasted for hours).
(Riječka luka: povijest, izgradnja, promet, Muzej grada Rijeke, 2001)



The period during which the Austro-Hungarian Compromise remained in effect would be marked by the massive upgrading of the port and the building of modern factories, such as the Whitehead torpedo factory, the tobacco factory, the Smith & Meynier paper factory, the Ganz-Danubius shipyard and the refinery. The foodstuffs industry also prospered with rice, coffee and cocoa and chocolate factories.³

Directly under the rule of far-away Hungary and at the edge of the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia, which bordered on the city itself, Rijeka remained small in population, but it became a great Hungarian port and the largest industrial city in the area of Croatia.

The construction of a modern port in the city had already been started by the beginning of the 1840s but had been cut short by the revolutionary events of 1848. As a result, its construction began again only in 1872.⁴

That same decade saw the complete transformation of the port and the city's maritime trade. During this time, in 1873, the first rail lines connected the city with Vienna and Budapest. More and more steamships began to arrive in Rijeka and 1881 saw the establishment of the large and ambitious *Royal Hungarian Sea Navigation Company Adria Limited*. Thanks to an 1878 agreement between Austria and Hungary, rivalry between the two leading ports would be avoided through the division between them of "zones of interest." Thus, the Triestine shipper *Lloyd Austriaco* would control routes to the East, while the shippers of Rijeka received control over the Western and American ones. Rijeka's *Adria* immediately began to sail to Western European and British ports (London, Liverpool and Glasgow) and a regular line to the Brazilian ports of Pernambuco, Bahia, Rio de Janeiro and Santos began.

The establishment of a new large maritime company, *Ungaro-Croato*, in 1891 did not threaten but complemented the lines of the older carrier. While *Adria* sailed across the Atlantic, the *Ungaro-Croato* engaged in domestic passenger traffic along the Adriatic Coast.

Until the beginning of the twentieth century, passenger traffic in Rijeka had not been a priority. For the most part, merchant ships and cargo trains transported coal, wheat and wood products to and from the city. But by the end of the 1890s, passenger traffic via the railways increased and more and more emigrants used Rijeka as a transit stop on the way toward Trieste and Ljubljana. Some went on to board ship in Genoa and others went in the direction of Basel, an emigrant junction in Switzerland from which routes branched out to the ports of the North Sea and Atlantic - Rotterdam, Antwerp, Southampton, Le Havre and Cherbourg.

The traffic of emigrants became greater on a daily basis, and became especially noticeable in March 1903: "Yesterday, it was especially lively in front of agencies for transoceanic travel. Masses of people pushed through the doors. Yesterday and this morning, several hundred people left for America, most of them from our coastal regions and their nearby hinterland."⁵ Rijeka's newspapers, especially the Croatian language *Novi list*, warned of the alarming problem of emigration of Croatian peasants, looking for the reasons for this in political circumstances: "Last night, 199 emigrants left for America, mostly from southern Croatia. In no year before this one has there been such a movement of Croats, which has to be blamed primarily on the unfortunate inferior financial situation in which Croatia finds itself."⁶

The city's Italian-language press, on the other hand, which had been close to the city's business circles, found it sufficient to mention the phenomena of emigration, writing generally about emigrants from Hungary. Rather than explaining emigration as being primarily caused by political causes and national suppression, the Italian-language press generally wrote about the business advantages which would accrue to Rijeka from

3 Mladen Grgurić, *Tvornica papira u Muzeju grada Rijeke*, 11. listopada – 8. prosinca 2007; Ervin Dubrović, Milica Trkulja, Nada Sabljčić, *Reklama u Rijeci*, Muzej grada Rijeke 11. rujna – 25. listopada 2008; and Dinko Zorović, Ervin Dubrović, Goran Pernjek, *Riječki torpedo-provi na svijetu*, Muzej grada Rijeke, 2010.

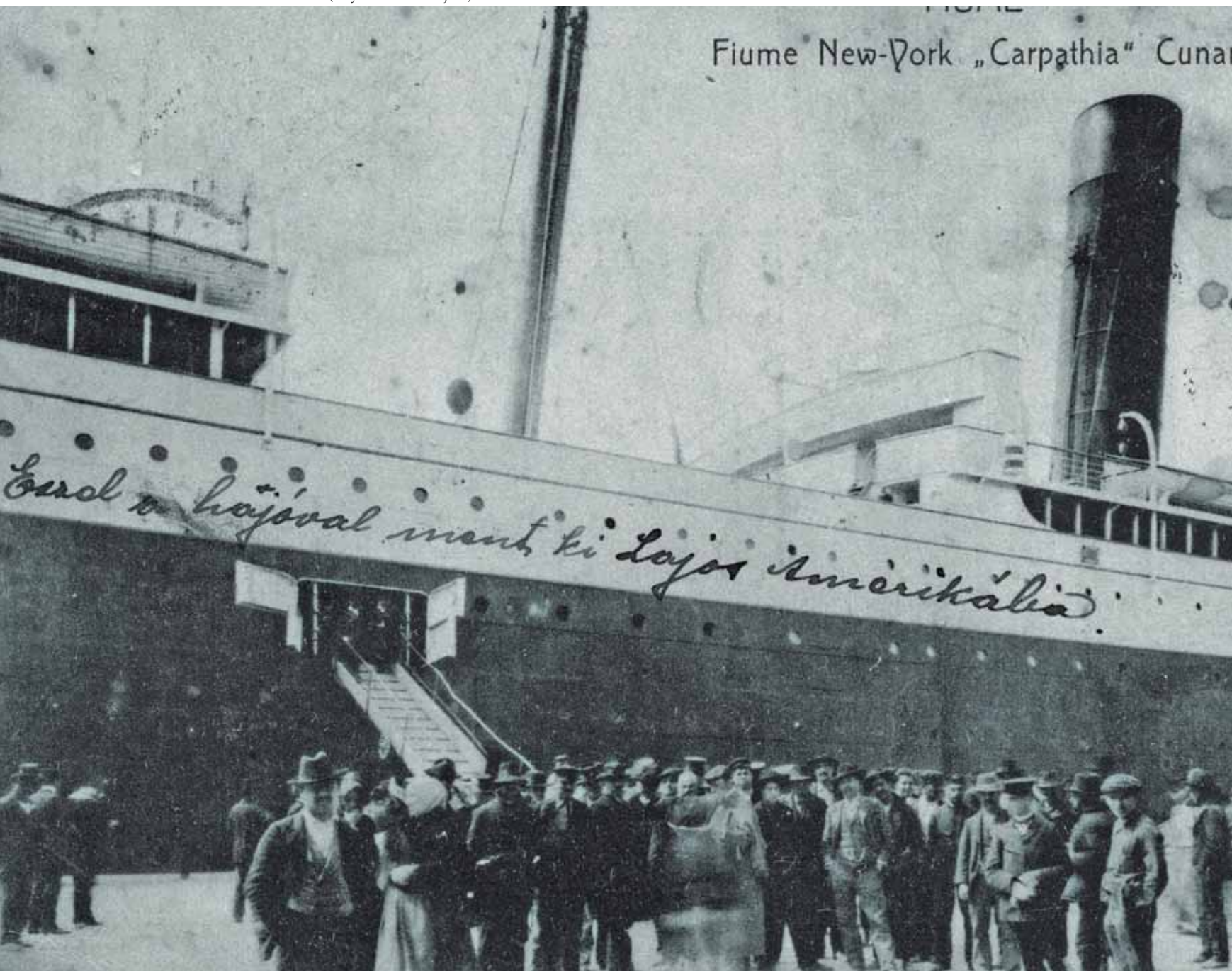
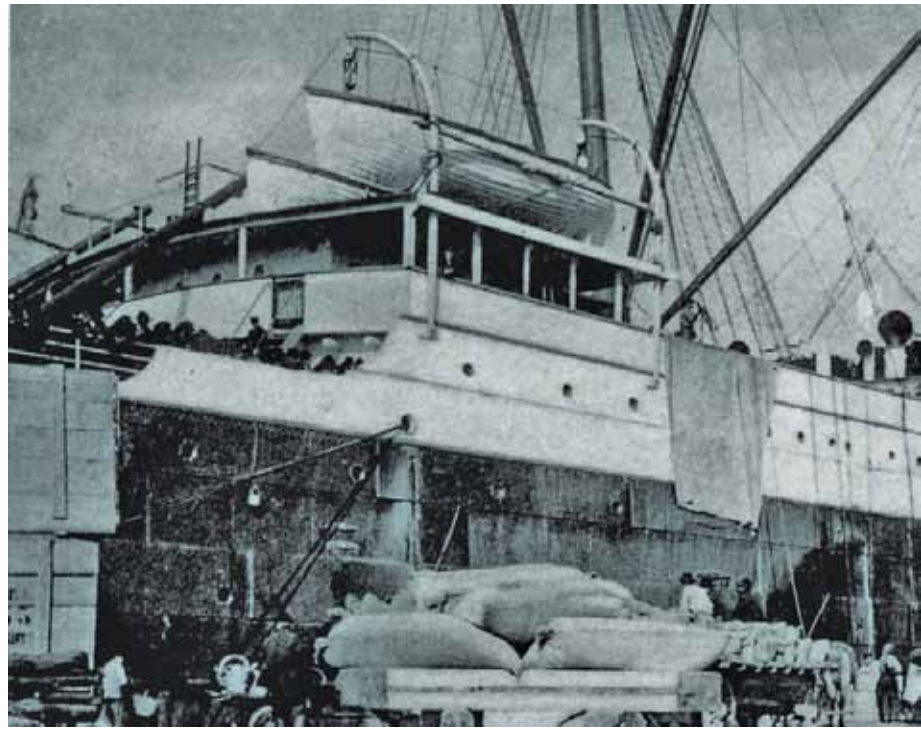
4 József Berkes, *Izgradnja riječke luke od 1868. do 1918. godine*, in *Riječka luka: povijest, izgradnja, promet*, Muzej grada Rijeke, 2001, pp. 133-164.

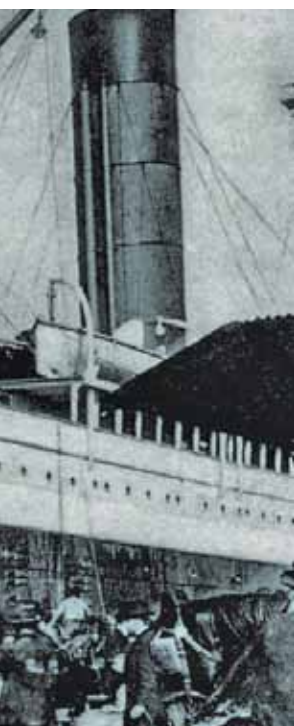
5 *U Ameriku*, *Novi list*, 4 (March, 4, 1903), p. 4.

6 *Bježe u Ameriku*, *Novi list*, 4 (April 7, 1903) p. 4.



The Carpathia, one of a number of the Cunard ships which sailed between Rijeka and New York, became the best known as a result of picking up the survivors of the Titanic in 1912. One member of its crew brought a life jacket from the Titanic with him back to Rijeka which he had received from one of the stricken ship's passengers. One of Cunard's advertisements noted that in seventy years it had never had a shipwreck.
(City Museum of Rijeka)





The Emigrant Hotel, actually an uncomfortable space for overnight lodging, built in 1908. It had only five hundred beds in large common bedrooms, though close to two thousand emigrants who arrived in Rijeka over the course of a number of days from various parts of the Monarchy had to board ship. The Hotel was located next to a rail line and close to the pier where emigrants would embark. Around 100,000 emigrants had spent time in the Hotel by the outbreak of World War I.
(City Museum of Rijeka)



Booker T. Washington, the son of a black slave and white plantation owner, born in slavery in the American South, worked for a time in salt mines but later became an educator. The writer of the famed autobiography *Up from Slavery* (1901) came to Rijeka in 1912 and convinced himself of the lower status of emigrants in comparison to African-Americans. He also became amazed by the state's participation in the profitable export of people, which encouraged its citizens to leave instead of attempting to keep them at home.

The Cunard's *Laconia* on a postcard which shows the ship as a colossus as it approaches a small city, Rijeka, which is to some extent even further obscured by a canopy of trees. Diminutive sailing boats surrounding the ship emphasize the power of the great trans-Atlantic ship.
(Mario Cicogna, Trieste)



passenger traffic and emigration.⁷

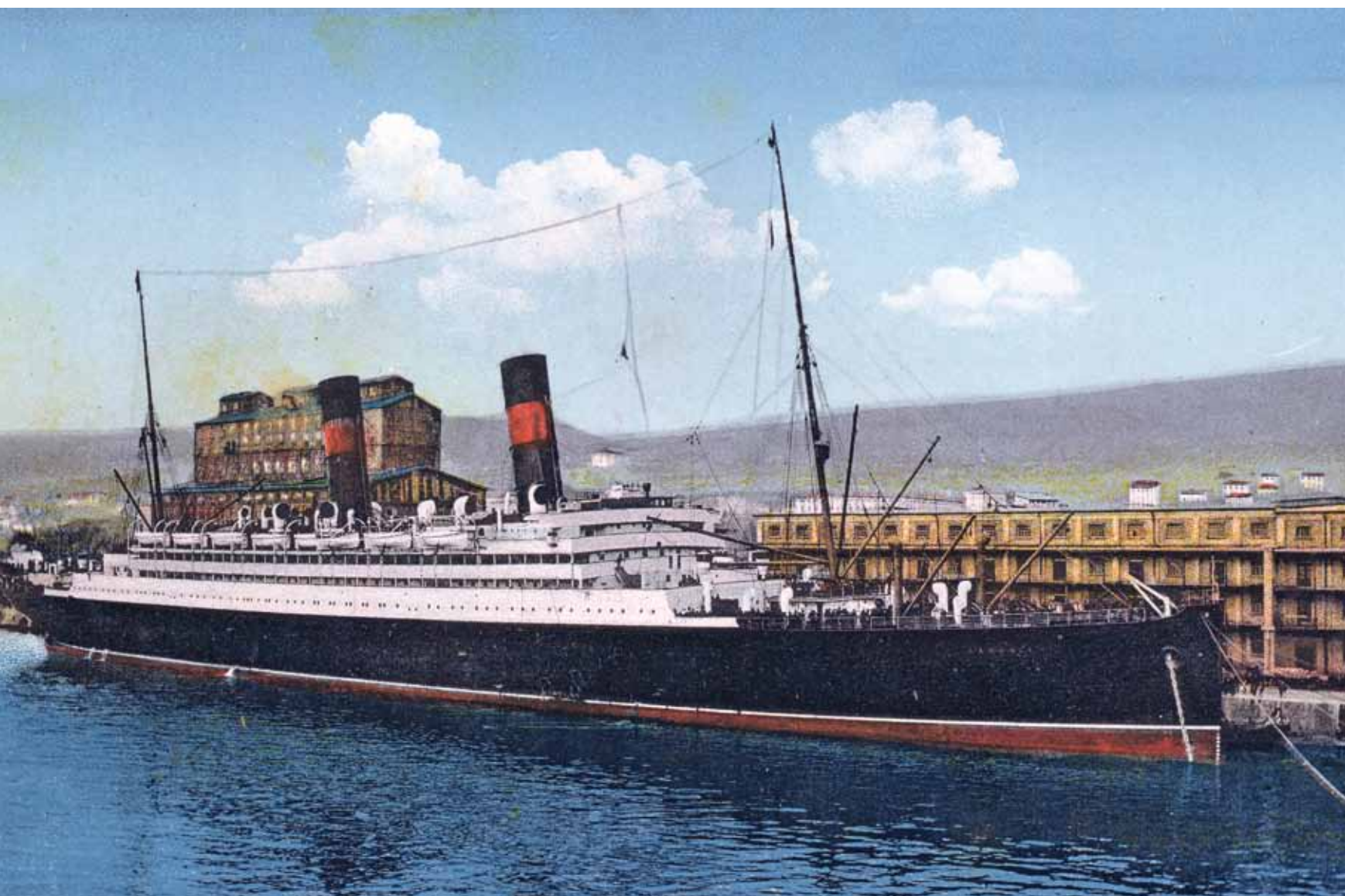
At the turn of the century, a number of emigration agencies appeared in Rijeka, but they all worked outside the reach of the Hungarian authorities, in Rijeka's suburbs under Austrian (Kantrida) and Croatian (Sušak) control. The agents were always accused of being unscrupulous and threatening national interests and encouraging emigration. They came under special suspicion after the commencement of the *Cunard Line's* route to New York as they continued to seek to direct emigrants toward less expensive shippers and more advantageous foreign ports. Both Hungarian authorities as well as merchants of Rijeka, who expected to prosper from the traffic in emigrants, saw danger to both state and municipal interests in the transport to and embarkation of emigrants at foreign ports.

The Hungarian government attempted to regulate emigration, so it looked to limit the work of emigrant agencies. At the same time, it provided Rijeka's *Adria* maritime company with the exclusive right to act as agent for the newly established route to America.

It remains a fact that even prior to the establishment of a special emigrant line for America, some emigrants embarked on ships for the Americas in Rijeka. *Adria's* trans-Atlantic ships sailed for Brazil - emigrants from the area around Rijeka at first formed the bulk of those who used this route. They worked there on farms, sheared sheep and prospected for gold. Still, the number of such emigrants proved to be insignificant.⁸

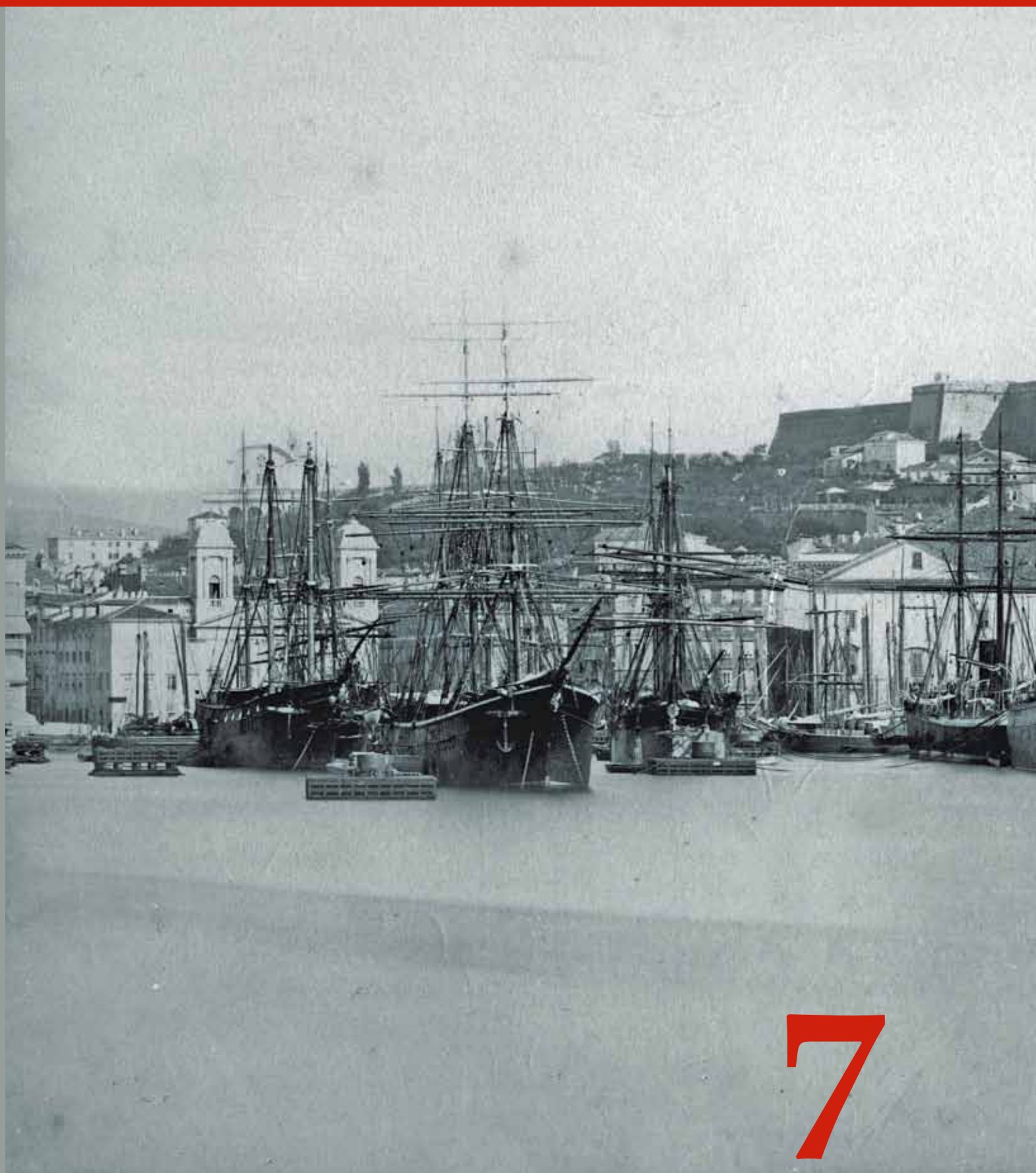
⁷ *L'emigrazione ungherese per l' America diretta via Fiume*, *La Bilancia* (July, 23, 1903).

⁸ Dubrović, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-95.



The beautiful passenger ship Caronia docked in Rijeka's port, at the Rodolfo Pier (today the Orlando Pier) from which over 330,000 emigrants left for America in the ten year period between 1904 and 1914. That represented a quarter of all Hungarian citizens who left for the New World during that period.
(City Museum of Rijeka)

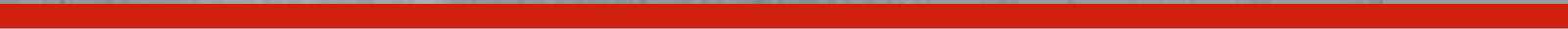
THE PORT OF TRIESTE



7



A view of the center of the port of Trieste, above which stood a fortress with the Cathedral of San Giusto. Trieste's merchant port was much larger than Rijeka's but it had many less emigrants traveling through it than Rijeka. (Civico Museo del Mare, Trieste)





THE PORT OF TRIESTE



A map of the Austrian Littoral (which took up the County of Gradisca, the Municipality of Trieste and the Margrave of Istria). It extended to the suburbs of Rijeka which belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary. (Josip Žgaljić, Rijeka)

Only at the beginning of the eighteenth century, after the conclusion of the Turkish Wars and during the time of Venice's decline, did the Habsburg Monarchy recognize the Adriatic as being its own sea and Rijeka and Trieste as its most important ports. The ebbing of what had until then been two major powers, the Ottoman Empire and Venice, allowed for a change in Imperial policies. Instead of engaging in war, the Viennese court turned to trade, especially to exporting to the Levant and the Mediterranean.¹

Emperor Charles VI, who continued to hold the title of Holy Roman Emperor, and his daughter Maria Theresa, the rulers of the "hereditary Austrian lands" as well as Hungary, provided the impetus for the speedy development of Trieste's port. Emperor Charles proclaimed Rijeka and Trieste as free ports in 1719 while the reign of Maria Theresa, in the middle part of the century, saw Trieste experience vigorous growth.²

A new port began to be built in the then small town, seamen and merchants arrived from various areas and soon the population increased substantially. The great work around the building and modernization of the port and the town took place in the context of the city being named the capital of a commercial district and a *gubernia* or province, which, under the oversight of Vienna, gave Trieste an especially cosmopolitan feel, with a large amount of trade and industrialization. This would characterize Trieste's history during the following two centuries.

In only the thirty year period between 1750 and 1780, Trieste's commercial business tripled and more than a fourth of all of the trade of the hereditary Austrian lands (which did not include the Hungarian portion of the Empire) and more than a fifth of their exports went through Trieste.³

By the end of the eighteenth century, large private palaces began to appear in Trieste, erected by newly enriched merchants who came to the city from many regions, both east and west. Large public buildings also appeared, including administrative and commercial ones, as did a large theatre, the *Teatro civico*. By the start of 19th century, the first stock exchanges, banks and insurance organizations appeared (e.g., the *Assicurazioni Generali*, established in 1831).

In the mid-nineteenth century, the population reached 80,000 and the city took on the physiognomy of a large and modern port, a center of maritime, commercial and industrial activities. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Trieste and its surroundings numbered 230,000 inhabitants, becoming one of the largest cities in Austria-Hungary. While much smaller than the capital cities of Vienna and Budapest, which each had a population of over one million, the importance and economic strength of Trieste overshadowed its smaller number of people.

This leading port and one of the most important commercial and industrial centers of the Monarchy owed its rise and success to the joint interests of both the city and the Imperial government. As early as the eighteenth century, the Viennese court already had great transoceanic ambitions, so that along with the declaration of Trieste and Rijeka as free ports, it established the Oriental Company in 1719 (headquartered in Vienna with a branch in Trieste). During the next two centuries, the Habsburg Monarchy retained its focus more on the east than the west. The Monarchy, which had no overseas colonies and which began to develop its merchant and naval forces relatively late, saw its opportunities in the Near and Far East.

While the Oriental Company did not have much success, the Indian Company, headquartered in Ostend in the Austrian Netherlands (present day Belgium), fared even worse and quickly folded. Subsequently, in 1775, the Asian Company (*Compagnia Imperiale Asiatica*) was established in Trieste, but it too went out of business within ten years of its founding.⁴

Workers in the cotton warehouse of Trieste. Cotton came to the city from the United States as well as from Egypt and India. (Civico Museo del Mare, Trieste)

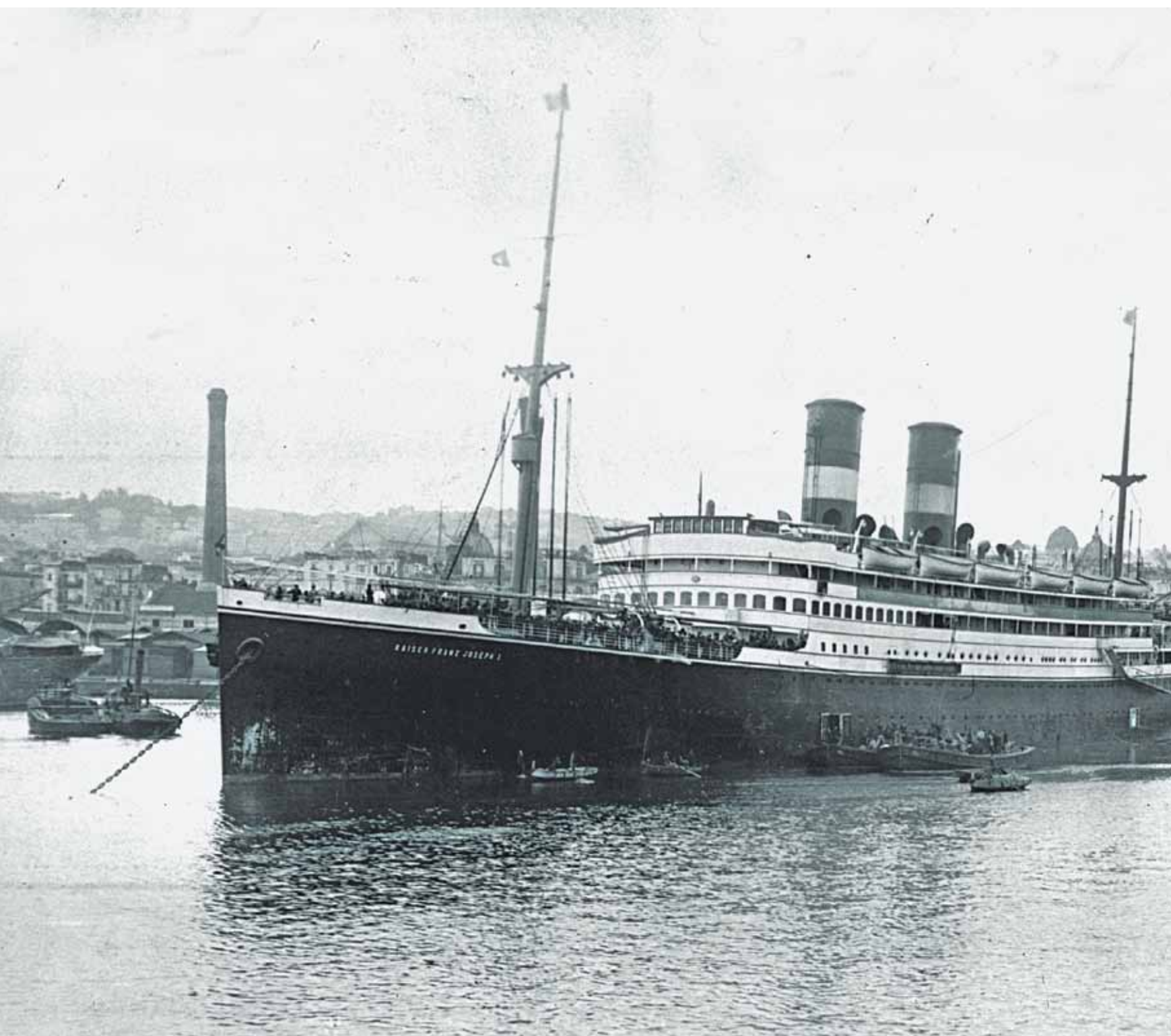
1 *I porti dell' alto Adriatico: Trieste, Capodistria e Fiume / North Adriatic Ports: Trieste, Koper and Rijeka*, Università degli studi di Trieste-I.S.T.I.E.E., Università di Lubiana – Facoltà di studi marittimi e trasporti, Università di Fiume – Facoltà di studi marittimi e Facoltà di economia, Lint, Trieste 1996.

2 *Maria Teresa, Trieste e il porto*, Comune di Trieste, Istituto per l' enciclopedia del Friuli Venezia Giulia, Trieste 1981.

3 Guido Botteri, *A European History of Free Trading and Shipping, The Free Port of Trieste*, n.d., p. 146.

4 Giorgio Gilbert, "Il mercante, il banchiere e l' imperatrice. L' avventura coloniale della Compagnia Asiatica di Trieste," in *Storia economica e sociale di Trieste*, vol. II, *La città dei traffici 1719-1918*, ed. Roberto Finzi, Loredana Panariti, Giovanni Panjek, Lint, Trieste 2003. p. 3.







The city had two hundred fifty thousand inhabitants making it one of the largest cities in the Monarchy.
(Civico Museo del Mare, Trieste)

The Kaiser Franz Josef I, called the admiralty ship of the Austrian merchant-passenger fleet and the prize of the Austro-Americana, which it built in 1912 in its own shipyard (Cosulich) in Monfalcone, near Trieste. The image shows the ship, tied up in its home port of Trieste, together with a view of the great city and its surroundings.
(Claudio Ernè, Trieste)



The great commotion in the merchant port shows the large amount of traffic for the trans-Atlantic lines. Though by the start of the nineteenth century Trieste engaged in a noticeable amount of trade with the United States, after the opening of the Suez Canal its trade became primarily directed toward the Far East. Only at the beginning of the twentieth century did its trade intensify with North and later with South America.
(Civico Museo del Mare, Trieste)

Crates with pelinkovac, a bitter liquor from Dalmatia (Croatia) being loaded for South America.
(Civico Museo del Mare, Trieste)

Karl Marx nevertheless commented on the importance of Trieste to Austria's exports and its drive to the east. In 1857 in the *New York Tribune*, he wrote a two-part article (entitled "Austrian Maritime Trade") concerning Trieste and Rijeka in which he reminded his readers that, after the opening of the Suez Canal, the fate of Trieste would become even more dependent on trade with the east. He emphasized that the Triestine Chamber of Commerce had been involved in the building of the Canal and that merchants from Trieste had already begun to visit the shores of the Indian Ocean in order to promote future trade.⁵

Indeed, leading Triestine businessmen, such as Pasqual Revoltella, had been involved in the Canal's construction (which opened in 1869) and the subsequent development of Triestine trade tied the city even more strongly with Asia, completely overshadowing the city's trade with America.⁶

An example can be seen in the cotton trade, at the time one of America's largest exports. Statistics show that cotton imported in 1871 for the most part came from India, followed by Egypt and Turkey. Smaller amounts came from England, while imports from the United States proved to be minimal.⁷

This stubborn emphasis toward the east may be the main reason why the Austrians and Triestinos did not commence emigrant shipping lines to America until later, allowing a good portion of their own "cargo," Austro-Hungarian emigrants, to use German, Dutch, Belgian, English, French and Italian ports. By the start of the twentieth century, Triestinos could see that thousands of emigrants passed through their city by rail to other, distant ports - even as far as Hamburg - to embark there on ships for America.⁸

Of course, from the end of the eighteenth century, trade did take place between the Adriatic ports and America. During the next several decades, especially in the 1830s and 1840s, large ships regularly sailed from Trieste's port for Baltimore and New York. During this time, even Maraschino, a liquor from the area of Zadar in Dalmatia and one of the few export items from that area, found its way to New York via the port of Trieste. Nevertheless, no emigrant lines existed in Trieste at the start of the twentieth century.⁹

In 1836, the then leading Triestine steamship company, the Lloyd Austriaco, had begun steamship services to the Dalmatian coast. But an 1881 agreement with *Adria*, the newly formed Hungarian shipping company headquartered in Rijeka, barred the company (now known as Lloyd Triestino) from engaging in passenger traffic in the Atlantic. The agreement divided the areas of interest between the two companies, with Lloyd Triestino being awarded the Asian routes, while Rijeka's *Adria* received the Atlantic routes. This agreement had been reached as emigration from Austria-Hungary took on larger proportions.

By the end of the 1890s, emigrants began to journey through Trieste on the way to the large ports of Western Europe and Italy. Trieste became one of the great emigrant railway junctions linking the eastern areas of the Monarchy and other countries to the ports of embarkation, especially the Atlantic ports of Le Havre and Southampton and the Italian port of Genoa. At the end of the 1880s, two Triestinos, the Morpurgo brothers,

- 5 Botteri, *op. cit.*, p. 154. "The privileged position that Venice lost will probably be regained now by Trieste with the construction of the Suez Canal. The Trieste Chamber of Commerce has not only joined with the French Suez Canal Company, but has also sent agents to survey the Red Sea and the costs of the Indian Ocean to promote commerce. Once the Isthmus has been broached, Trieste will naturally supply all of eastern Europe with Indian Wares." Marx's article in this work contains an English translation of a German version published in the Viennese magazine *Kampf*, October 1, 1911.
- 6 Anna Millo, *Pasquale Revoltella, una biografia tra Trieste e oltre*, in *Pasquale Revoltella, 1795-1869, Sogno e consapevolezza del cosmopolitismo Triestino*, a cura di Maria Massau Dan, pp. 29-51.
- 7 Guido Botteri, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
- 8 Dubrović, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
- 9 John Peter Kraljić, *Pomorske veze istočnog Jadrana i dviju Amerika*, in *Doba modernizacije, 1780.- 1830., More, Rijeka, Srednja Europa*, Muzej grada Rijeke 2006, pp. 179-183.









established a passenger line to Brazil, but their attempt soon failed.¹⁰

The *Cunard Line* began the first successful emigrant shipping line from Trieste, with its first ship sailing from the city on November 10, 1903. During the next few years, this line became stable and continued regular sailings until 1914. After leaving Trieste, *Cunard's* ships would stop at Rijeka and other ports. Later, the route would drop these other ports (other than Rijeka) only calling at Palermo to refuel and to pick up supplies, as it did not receive permission to allow third-class, mostly emigrant, passengers to board at Palermo.

Another surprising fact jumps out when comparing the emigrant traffic through Trieste with that through Rijeka. Despite the fact that only some seventy kilometers separate the two cities, the passengers embarking at the only two Austro-Hungarian emigrant ports had very different ethnic compositions. To some extent, this reflected the fact that Trieste served as the port for the Austrian half of the Monarchy, while Rijeka belonged to the Hungarian half. But while the emigrants in Rijeka consisted mostly of citizens of the Hungarian portion of the Empire, Austrian citizens made up only 40% of the passengers boarding at Trieste. Among the latter, the most numerous consisted of emigrants from far-off Galicia (Poles and Jews), followed by Dalmatians (mostly Croats with some Italians) and "domestic" emigrants from the Austrian Littoral (Italians, Slovenes and Croats). A significant number of Hungarian citizens, consisting of ethnic Hungarians and Croats, also traveled through Trieste. A third of all emigrants embarking at Trieste consisted of foreigners, mostly Russian Jews as well as Rusyns from the Ukraine and Poles, and Turks, Greeks, Italians from the Kingdom of Italy and Romanians from Romania.

The years prior to World War I saw Trieste receiving an unusually large number of returning emigrants, especially during 1908, when more people returned via Trieste than left. This reflected the great financial crisis which ravaged America in 1907.

After the First World War, links with both North and South America were resurrected. Though Trieste in the inter-War years had especially large passenger traffic, only a small number of those passengers emigrated to America. Most of the latter traveled through other Italian ports. During the 1930s, an average of two million disembarkations and embarkations took place on an annual basis at Trieste, a number much larger than the other Italian ports (Naples - 1,000,000, Genoa - 200,000, Venice - 100,000), but only about 100,000 of those represented emigrants, a large proportion of whom continued to go to America. Still, twice as many emigrants traveled through Naples and Genoa.¹¹

The reasons for emigrating and the ethnic composition of those who left also changed substantially in comparison to the pre-War period. From 1926 to 1938, the largest contingent of emigrants consisted of Jews from Central Europe fleeing the rising Nazi menace - a total of 200,000. Though many travelled to Haifa in Palestine (modern day Israel), a large portion of them went to the United States.¹²

„CUNARD LINE“
Prima compagnia rotte dirette
TRIESTE – NUOVA-YORK

Linea Triestina e Adriatica. Indirizzamento la più rapida e la più comoda via dall'Europa per l'America. Servizi impeccabili, confort, buona, semplice visita di viaggio e soprattutto delle migliori tariffe spaziali offerte da questa grande compagnia.

LISTINO PARTENZE:

Nome del servizio	Partenze da Trieste
Stretto	11 Maggio 1914
Passaggio	19 Maggio
Corpienza	26 Maggio
Stretto	2 Giugno
Corpienza	9 Giugno
Stretto	16 Giugno
Passaggio	23 Giugno
Corpienza	30 Giugno
Stretto	7 Luglio
Passaggio	14 Luglio
Corpienza	21 Luglio
Stretto	28 Luglio
Passaggio	4 Agosto
Corpienza	11 Agosto
Stretto	18 Agosto
Passaggio	25 Agosto
Corpienza	1 Settembre
Stretto	8 Settembre
Passaggio	15 Settembre
Corpienza	22 Settembre
Stretto	29 Settembre
Passaggio	6 Ottobre
Corpienza	13 Ottobre

Prezzi della traversata:
da TRIESTE per la NUOVA-YORK, via:

per ogni persona oltre 12 anni di età (per bambini sotto 12 anni, metà del prezzo)
1. posti nel Salotto (servizi compresi) in prima classe, dal 100 lire
2. posti nel Salotto (servizi compresi) in seconda classe, dal 75 lire
3. posti nel Salotto (servizi compresi) in terza classe, dal 50 lire
In ogni caso, oltre a queste tariffe, vengono applicati i diritti di imbarco e di sbarco.
Ritornamenti e biglietti di passaggio.

nell'Ufficio Passeggeri della Cunard Line
Via Venezia, 10 - Trieste
Telefonata N. 1111
distanza da Trieste (stazione) metri 1000
"1111" e "1111" e "1111"

Viaggiate con la Cunard Line, la più grande compagnia di navigazione del mondo.

Schedule of departures of Cunard steamships from Trieste to New York. Cunard competed with difficulty against the domestic Austro-Americana and its ships left Trieste almost empty before being filled-up in Rijeka. (Claudio Ernè, Trieste)

Traffic at the San Andrea Pier in Trieste from where the ships of the *Austro-Americana* sailed for New York. The image shows embarkation on the steamship *Oceania*. In contrast to Rijeka, where the Cunard Line had a monopoly, Trieste has no privileged carriers. Along with domestic shippers, for the most part controlled by German shipping houses, the Cunard Line sailed from here, as did, on the eve of the First World War, the Canadian Pacific Railway, though, as a result of the outbreak of the War, the latter did not have much of an impact. (Civico Museo del Mare, Trieste)

10 Dubrović, *op. cit.*, according to the information provided by Francesco Fait of the *Civico Museo di Storia ed Arte*, Trieste, p. 123.

11 Botteri, *op. cit.*, pp. 186-187.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 188.

FIORELLO LA GUARDIA

AMERICAN CONSULAR AGENT IN RIJEK

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Young Fiorello La Guardia, with his hands in his pockets, the American Consular Agent (1904-1906), on an emigrant steamship in Rijeka harbor.
(La Guardia & Wagner Archives, New York)



Achille La Guardia, Fiorello's father, in the uniform of an American military bandmaster. He completed the conservatory in Naples, married a woman from Trieste and emigrated to America. After suffering from food poisoning, he went to his wife's family in Trieste and for a short period lived in Rijeka. He had been offered the post of American Consular Agent but declined it in favor of his son. (La Guardia & Wagner Archives, New York)



The calling card of Fiorello La Guardia, the American Consular Agent in Rijeka. (La Guardia & Wagner Archives, New York)

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Fiorello Henry La Guardia (New York 1882 - New York 1947), a member of Congress and Mayor of the City of New York, was the son of an Italian musician from Apulia who had emigrated to America and became an American military band conductor. His mother had been a Jew from Trieste, from the Coen family, which had originated from Split in Dalmatia. Fiorello had been born in the US and he only got to know Trieste as an adolescent when he went to his mother's family after his father had been forced to retire due to food poisoning. His father's illness soon cost him his life (1901), but he succeeded in having his son obtain a position with the American General Consulate in Budapest prior to his death.¹

Fiorello learned German while in Budapest and Croatian during a four month stay in Croatia. His knowledge of languages later allowed him to get a job as an immigrant interpreter at Ellis Island.²

Young Fiorello became spell bound with the Hungarian capital, where, during that time (1902-03), he later wrote, one could hear better music than in Vienna, and many American dancers and entertainers, such as Isadora Duncan, performed.³

La Guardia came to Rijeka at the end of 1903, soon after the establishment of the emigrant shipping line from that city to New York. He was officially named as American Consular Agent in February 1904, where he had the task of overseeing the implementation of consular services related to the embarkation of emigrants.⁴

The American Consular offices in Rijeka at the time were very modest. The young man who had just entered his early twenties acted as both the Consular Agent and secretary. In his own words, in Rijeka he came across an empty office for the Agency on the Korzo, Rijeka's main street, which also served as his apartment. He acted as boss, clerk and messenger.⁵

Because he knew nothing concerning either emigrants or emigration, as an energetic and methodical man, he immediately studied the applicable laws. Independently of the carrier and local officials, he contracted a local physician to check on the health of the emigrants in the name of the Consulate, allowing La Guardia to keep control over the process in his own hands. Representatives of *Cunard* and the British Consul vigorously objected to the policies introduced by the young consular representative, protesting that La Guardia and his physician had no right to inspect the passengers. But in the end they had to retreat and live with his demands.

He wrote about this a half-century later in his autobiography:

"The day of the sailing of an emigrant ship arrived soon after I became Acting Consular Agent. About eighty emigrants were to embark, and I was invited to 'tea' on board ship. I cannot describe the surprise and consternation of the *Cunard* officials when I arrived with my doctor and inquired about the health

1 Fiorello H. La Guardia, *The Making of an Insurgent, An Autobiography: 1882-1919*, Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1948, p. 34.

2 *Ibid.*

3 "Budapest was at the height of its glory in those ten years before the first world war smashed the Austro-Hungarian Empire forever. One could hear more good music in Budapest in 1902 and 1903 than in Vienna. The town was considered the gayest in Europe" *Ibid.*, p. 36.

4 Irvin Lukežić, *La Guardia, američki konzularni predstavnik u Rijeci*, in *Veliki val*, pp. 147-153.

5 La Guardia, *op. cit.*, p. 38.



Young La Guardia came to Rijeka by the end of 1903 after an initial posting with the American General Consulate in Budapest, which he joined as a nineteen year old and where he spent the greater part of his time learning languages, among them Croatian. Afterwards, he proudly noted that he spoke Croatian and Serbian. The young consular representative, who received his official appointment in February 1903, knew nothing of his responsibilities nor of emigration to America when he arrived in Rijeka, but he quickly learned and soon introduced strict physical examinations of emigrants in the port, which substantially lowered the possibility of rejection upon arrival at Ellis Island. (La Guardia & Wagner Archives, New York)



A cartoon concerning La Guardia which appeared in support of his candidacy for Mayor of New York. (La Guardia & Wagner Archives, New York)



In his autobiography, La Guardia described his very active social life in Rijeka. In addition to attending masquerade balls in the Governor's Palace and barely avoiding a duel, he participated in sports, playing soccer. (La Guardia & Wagner Archives, New York)

of the passengers. To say that the representatives of the steamship company were horrified is putting it mildly. The local Hungarian authorities were just confused. They, like myself, had no previous experience in these matters.”⁶

He examined the passengers with the physician on deck, while the *Cunard* representative and British Consul wrote official protests against his actions. La Guardia worked to have the representatives of the carrier pay, in addition to official fees, the costs of the Consulate's physician, a demand which caused the carrier special consternation.

Later he would relate with delight that he had been the one who introduced medical examinations prior to the embarkation of emigrants and that Rijeka became the sole port at which emigrants would be subject to same. Thanks to this, very few emigrants traveling through Rijeka would be turned back from America. During La Guardia's three years in Rijeka, from 1904 to 1906, he oversaw the examination of around 90,000 emigrants - Slavs, Hungarians, Germans, Jews and Italians.⁷

During his time in Rijeka, La Guardia also got to know well the domestic situation and the weakness of the Empire in its sunset years. He became especially active socially, engaging in sports and participating in soccer clubs. He also went to masquerade balls, and had some exciting experiences, as he described in his memoirs. He became especially interested in relations among Rijeka's numerous ethnic communities, which mirrored those of the dying Monarchy. He noted that in the city his Croat acquaintances hated the Hungarian government, while Habsburg politicians encouraged mutual animosities.⁸

“Any sensible person could see the devastating effect of this unchristian, inhuman

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁷ Lukežić, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

⁸ “The Croats with whom I came into contact at this time hated the Hungarian government passionately.” La Guardia, *op. cit.*, p. 43.



system of teaching people to hate one another . . . ,” while they all would be incited to hate their neighbors, the Italians.⁹

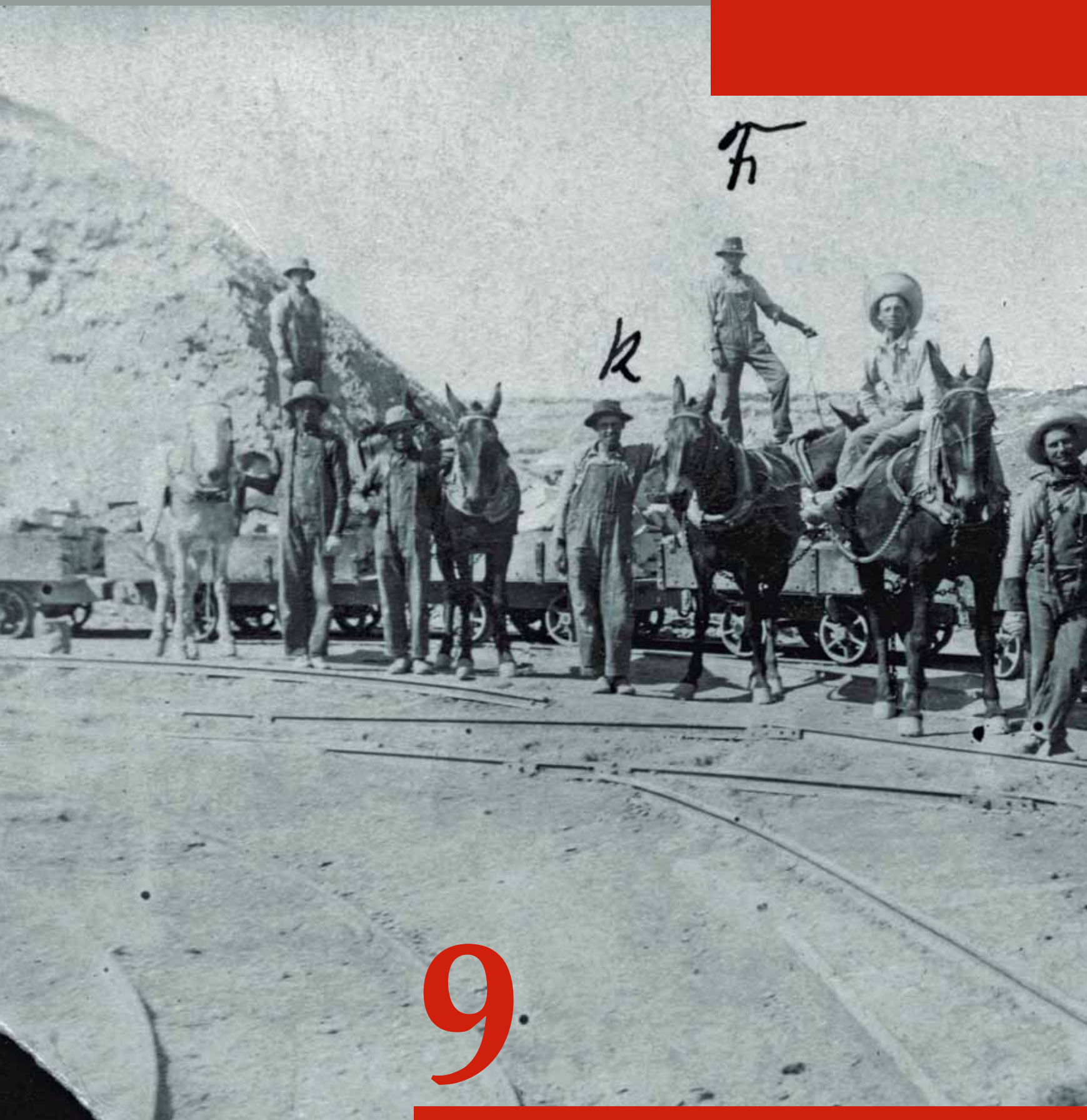
He became convinced that no reason existed for rivalry between Italians and Croats. “Both peoples are romantic, love music, base their society on the institutions of the family; both are God-loving, religious people.”¹⁰

La Guardia worked to have his office raised to the status of a consulate. He also sought higher pay and a promotion to Belgrade. Washington remained deaf to his requests, and he became convinced that without having the necessary education he would be unable to improve his rank. As a result, he left Rijeka, and returned, via a *Cunard* steamship, to New York where he obtained a position on Ellis Island as an interpreter and studied law.

Thanks to his knowledge of numerous languages, after his return to America in 1906 La Guardia became a translator for immigrants on Ellis Island, but he soon thereafter enrolled in law school, became an attorney and a successful politician, serving in the United States Congress, as the long-time Mayor of New York as well as Director General of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). (La Guardia & Wagner Archives, New York)

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

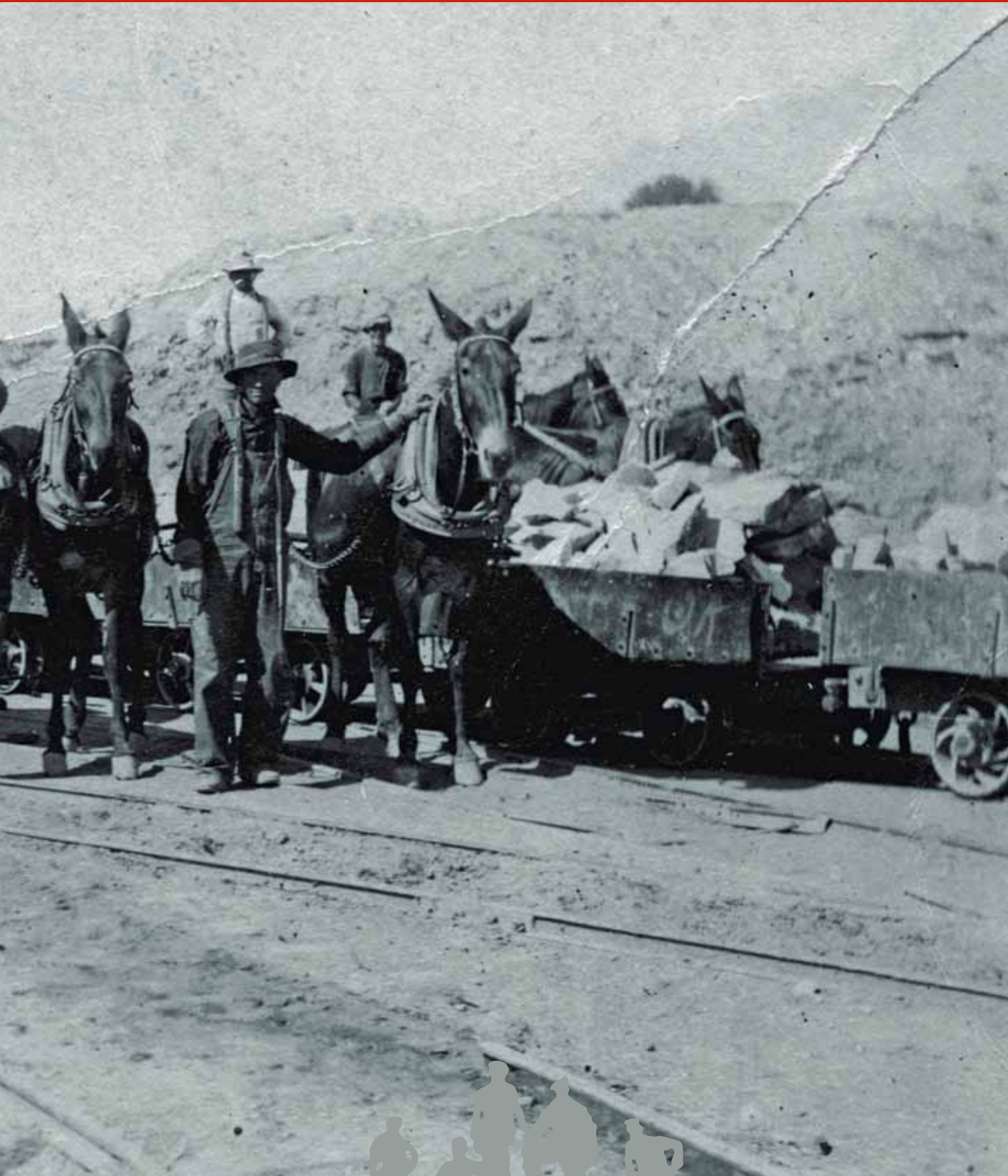


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LIFE IN AMERICA



Workers from the area of Kastav, near Rijeka, in a quarry in Colorado Springs. Immigrants had the toughest jobs in mines, forests, construction sites and factories. For the most part, those who arrived before the newest immigrants avoided these kind of jobs.
(Novosel and Pizzul families, Rijeka)



Rusyn miners from Bačka (Serbia) in a ceramic pipe factory in Barberton, Ohio. Rusyns from Bačka began to emigrate in larger numbers at the start of the twentieth century. (Museum of Vojvodina, Novi Sad)



A number of emigrants, for the most part those of an adventurous spirit, traveled as far as Alaska, which nevertheless did not become a common destination of emigrants from Austria-Hungary. (City Museum of Rijeka)

LIFE IN AMERICA

The inhabitants of the Habsburg Monarchy's northern provinces and its extreme southern regions numbered among the first to emigrate. Czech emigrants followed the trend of emigration from Western and Northern Europe, so their routes and traditions somewhat differed from those who emigrated from the Monarchy later. They began to leave in larger numbers by the end of the 1850s. For the most part, at that time entire families would leave as they generally did not count on the possibility of returning. As a result, around two-thirds of all Czech emigrants consisted of women and children. In contrast to other ethnic groups from the Monarchy who left in greater numbers later, many Czechs settled in the Midwest, establishing their own settlements and, like many settlers of the "Initial Wave," they obtained their own lands, mostly in Nebraska, Iowa and Minnesota.¹

In contrast to other Slavs, the Czechs were much more educated and almost all of them were literate and had some sort of skills. They worked as butchers, carpenters, tailors or blacksmiths. Because the Czechs usually left as families and did not have any illusions of returning, they generally did not show much emotion over leaving their birthplace. Like Austrian Germans, for the most part they adapted more easily to American society in contrast to the uneducated members of other ethnic groups from the Monarchy. Only 11% of them ended up returning, a much lower percentage than other Slavs from Austria-Hungary.²

Among the earliest emigrants from southern portions of the Monarchy, Dalmatians and others from the coast began to leave in larger numbers by the middle of the nineteenth century, settling in areas which generally did not see many emigrants from the Habsburg Monarchy.³

Not taking into account the earliest missionaries and priests, immigrants from central Dalmatia and the area of Dubrovnik arrived early and settled in the Mississippi Delta. By around 1835, they lived in measurable numbers around New Orleans, which by then had entered into a phase of spectacular growth to become one of the most important ports of the United States. Croats established their communities there and engaged in the cultivation of oysters and fishing. During the mid-nineteenth century, Dalmatians and others from the coastal region joined many other immigrants in California during the Gold Rush. When not prospecting for gold, they engaged in the maritime trade and fishing, and later in ship building and the cultivation of vines and grapes. Evidence of their earliest settlement can also be seen in the first Croatian societies established in America, the Slavonic Illyrian Mutual and Benevolent Society, established in 1857 in San Francisco, and the United Slavic Benevolent Society (*Sjedinjeno slovinsko društvo od dobročinstva*), established in 1874 in New Orleans.⁴

An interesting example of early immigrants concerns lumberjacks from village of Rukavac near Rijeka, who began to emigrate around 1860 and continued doing so up until after the First World War. At least three hundred of them went to Northern California, in the hinterland of Humboldt Bay, in Eureka and Arcata, where they worked in the nearby sequoia forests.⁵

But these examples of early immigrants and special groups do not provide a true picture of life in America for those who came from Central Europe during the height of the Great Wave. At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, new immigrants generally no longer became owners of their own land, but worked either as laborers on farms or, more commonly, as workers in mines, quarries, forests, construction sites and factories. Those who settled in the large cities on the East

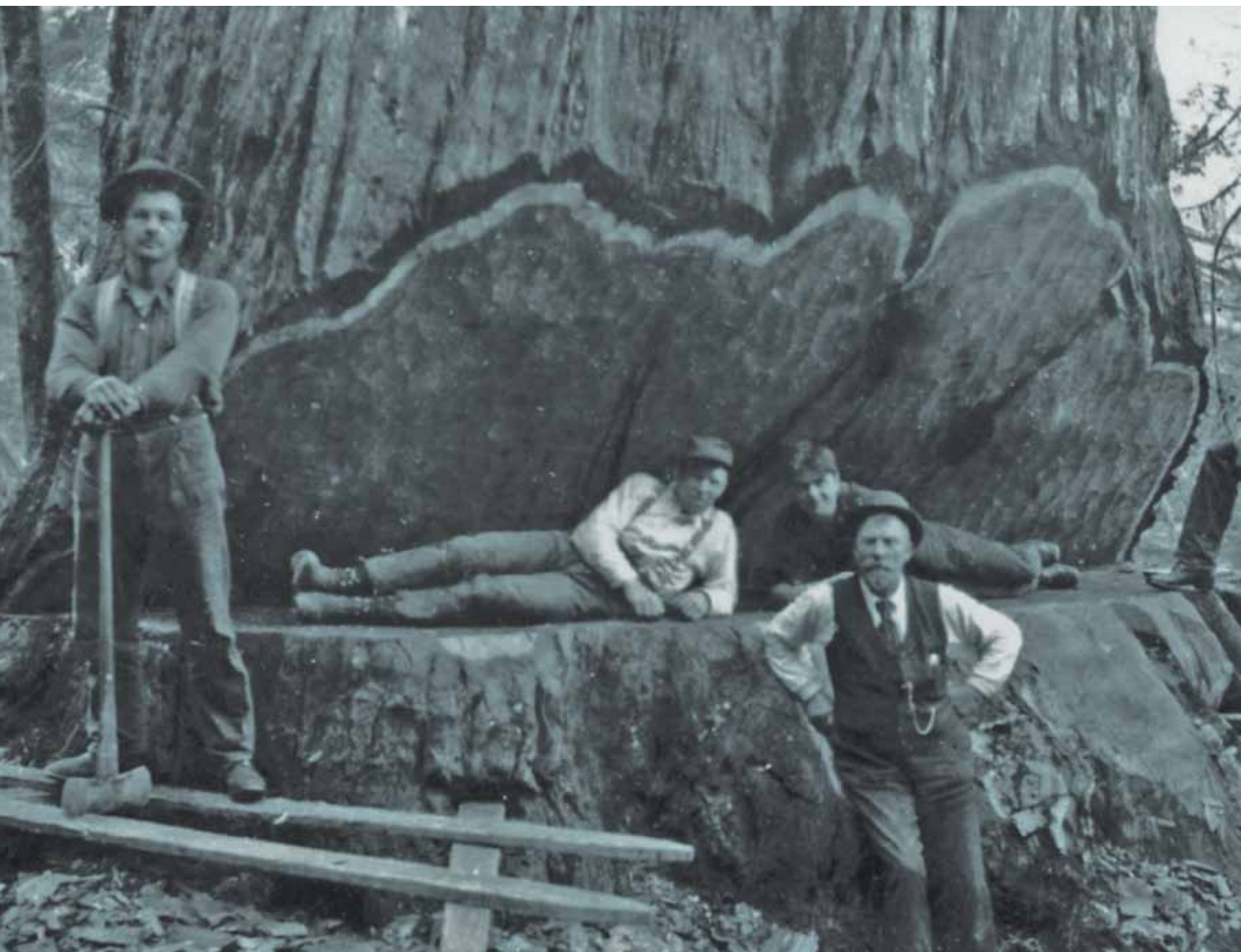
1 June Granatir Alexander, *Daily Life in Immigrant America 1870-1920, How the Second Great Wave of Immigrants Made Their Way in America*, Ivan R. Dee, Chicago 2009, p. 21.

2 Stephanie Sakson-Ford, *The Czech Americans*, Chelsea House Publishers, New York & Philadelphia 1989.

3 Georg J. Prpic, *The Croatian Immigrants in America*, Philosophical Library, New York 1980, pp. 141-143.

4 Adam Eterovich, *Slavonic Illyrians of San Francisco, 1848-1880*, Matica iseljenički kalendar (Zagreb), 1976.

5 Dubrović, *op.cit.*, pp. 114-117



Emigrants from Central Europe rarely headed to the West Coast. Some nevertheless reached the sequoia forests of Northern California, like these lumberjacks from the Austrian Littoral (the village of Rukavac in the hinterland of Rijeka). (Luksetić Family, Opatija)



A worker in an electrical factory in Chicago had a more privileged position than lumberjacks and workers in mines and quarries. Many emigrants from Central Europe arrived in the Midwest where they worked in factories and plants.
(Ružica Marohnić, Zlobin)



Coast had the most typical experiences.

One of the greatest questions which faced a peasant who left his birthplace was whether to emigrate to America or go to one of the larger cities in his homeland. The quick expansion of cities provided opportunities for employment to a large number of peasants. Still, many of them would be fated to live in urban poverty, unless, perhaps, they went further in seeking their fortune.⁶

Emigrant zones in Europe received reports concerning unsettled areas in America and of "public lands" suitable for the cultivation of certain crops, such as cotton and sugar cane in the southern United States, and corn and the raising of pigs in the north as well as wheat, sugar beets and raising cattle. They especially took note of the large tracts of fertile lands in the interior portions of the Eastern states, such as along the Atlantic Coast, in Virginia and North and South Carolina. These areas were seen as especially desirable given their good rail connections with Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York and Boston.⁷

However, despite tempting offers, cultivable land in reality no longer could be provided to poor emigrants from Central and Eastern Europe. The great majority of uneducated peasants from these areas remained in larger cities in the eastern and northern parts of the United States, or would work in relatively nearby mines, quarries and forests. Reports which concern where members of specific ethnic groups from Austria-Hungary settled confirm that they generally went to the same areas. Poles, Slovaks, Croats and others for the most part took the same routes to the New World and became closer neighbors there than they had been in their homelands. The most numerous of them, the Poles, for the most part headed for Chicago and elsewhere in Illinois, New York, Pittsburgh and surrounding areas of Pennsylvania, Buffalo, Milwaukee, Detroit and Cleveland.⁸

By 1890, Chicago already had 40,000 Poles. They increased to 210,000 in 1910 and surpassed 400,000 by 1930. Differences among the Poles existed, unlike other peoples from the Habsburg Monarchy, caused by the fact that those who came from Polish areas in the German Empire had had early exposure to industrialization and hence generally had better education and skills than those from Austria-Hungary and Russia.⁹

Those from Germany usually worked as skilled workers while other Polish immigrants, just like the majority of other immigrants, generally had been unskilled peasants who worked at the most difficult jobs.

Almost three-quarters of all Croats went to Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Chicago and New York, while at the beginning of the twentieth century only one percent of them headed to California.¹⁰

Despite obtaining jobs which they could not obtain at home and the much larger pay they received in contrast to those employed in their homelands, the conditions of work sometimes proved to be unbearable, in spite of the compensation.

In the period between 1860 and 1900, the number of workers, which included most of the immigrants from Europe, quadrupled. During the period of greatest growth, from the end of the century to 1914, ten million immigrants came from Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, most of whom obtained jobs in industrial areas. As a result, the workforce in the coal mines and steel mills of Pennsylvania consisted of an unusual group of Italians, Czechs, Croats, Slovenes, Poles, Ukrainians and Russians. During the same period, the number of employed women also rose, while two million children younger than 16 years of age worked in 1900.¹¹



Few peasants from Austria-Hungary went to farms in the Midwest. Though newspapers carried stories of the continued availability of free land which the American government offered to immigrants, new immigrants no longer became farm owners but wage laborers. Czechs who came with earlier generations of immigrants were the exception and some owned their own farm lands.

(Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb)



Dalmatians settled in the Mississippi Delta and in California by the mid-nineteenth century. In the area of New Orleans they raised mussels and engaged in fishing.

(Lectures pour Tous, Revue Universelle et Populaire Illustrée, Paris, 1902)

6 Dudley Baines, *Emigration From Europe 1815-1930*, Macmillan Education Ltd, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and London 1991, p. 53.

7 *Dove possono andare i nostri emigranti*, in *La bilancia* (Rijeka), August 1, 1910, pp. 1-2. This article contained reports of the possibilities of obtaining land in various areas of the United States.

8 Roger Daniels, *Coming to America, A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, Harper-Perennial, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, 2nd ed., 2002, p. 220.

9 Adam Walaszek, *Poljaci i Židovi iz Galicije i poljskih krajeva*, in *Veliki val, Iseljavanje iz srednje Europe u Ameriku 1880.-1914.*, Muzej grada Rijeke 2012, p. 343.

10 Dubrović, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

11 Henry B. Parkes, *Istorija Sjedinjenih Američkih Država*, Izdavačka radna organizacija Rad, Belgrade, 2nd ed., 1986, p.p. 429.-431.



Members of the Tarabocchia family as well as other immigrants (Martinolich, Pizzinich) from the Lošinj (Lussino) archipelago off the Croatian coast in the northern Adriatic became known for shipbuilding and continued to engage in that family tradition in America.
(Daniela Tarabocchia, Monfalcone)

Immigrants from the Croatian Littoral (Krk Island and Vinodol) at the top of a skyscraper in Chicago. Immigrants sent with pride photographs like this one from the promised land to relatives in their homeland.
(City Museum of Rijeka)

Workers in a ceramic plant and a mill in Pittsburgh. Many Croats as well as Slovaks, Poles and others from the heart of Europe came here.
(Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb)

Wages began to rise at the end of the nineteenth century and the hours of the working day decreased to fewer than 60 hours a week, but many workers in the steel mills continued to work twelve-hour days. As a result, the number of accidents and deaths continued to be high, with around 20,000 workers killed each year in factories, while around a million workers suffered injuries.¹²

Economic crises, such as those in 1893 and 1907, did not lead to protests against difficult working conditions as many workers feared becoming unemployed. Millions of workers indeed lost their jobs during such years of economic depression, and spent long periods without any work. The fate of workers who arrived from Central Europe of course did not substantially differ from that of other industrial workers, but they remained in generally more dire straits than native-born Americans.

Reports concerning accidents, deaths, unfortunate incidents, alcoholism and criminality flooded the immigrant press as well as newspapers in the homeland, which used such examples as a means to show the unfavorable face of the "American Dream" and thus discourage emigration.

One of the best weapons used by those opposed to emigration was to publish the complaints of those from America who reported on their misfortunes. Thus, *Die Slawonische Presse* from Osijek in Croatia carried a report on March 5, 1911 from one Slavonian worker who claimed that hundreds of frozen, unemployed workers wandered the streets unable to find jobs, and advised those in the homeland not to come to America as they could return home after a short period as crippled and sick people.

The most pathetic returnees, along with those who had become unemployed or otherwise had been unable to adapt, consisted of women, having no family, who due to mental diseases and lack of money, had been returned to Europe by American authorities. Emigrant ports became the initial witnesses of such personal tragedies. Newspapers in Rijeka, for example, regularly carried stories about "crazy women" who returned in the company of nurses.¹³

The union movement began to grow at the beginning of the 1880s, and large strikes at factories in Chicago and steel mills in Pennsylvania broke out starting in 1886. Some of these protests were bloodily suppressed and the strikes would go down in defeat. Despite attempts to politicize the workers' movement and transform it into a revolutionary uprising, immigrants generally did look kindly on the agitation of anarchists and certain union leaders.

One mythical story concerns the strike in Calumet, Michigan in 1913 which brought fame to one Croatian immigrant, Annie Clemenc, nicknamed "Big Annie." Annie would carry the American flag while leading parades of miners during the strike (a number of strikers were killed and the strike itself lasted a year).¹⁴

Despite working at the most difficult jobs, immigrants generally did not take the lead in battling their bosses, but associated themselves in organizations to provide assistance in times of trouble. They established voluntary and fraternal organizations and ethnic societies and met in their own houses of worship.

The publication of newspapers and books in their own languages and the promotion of ethnic cultural programs also proved to be important. By congregating in ethnic communities and organizations, they not only strengthened their sense of security and unity in a foreign land, but also encouraged the self-consciousness of their ethnic kin.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 431.

¹³ *Novi list* (Rijeka), December 8, 1907.

¹⁴ Jelena Dunato, *Merikanki – žene i emigracija*, in *Veliki val*, p. 191.







Because of emigration, many villages became practically deserted. Priests would implore parishioners from their pulpits not to leave their homes. Usually the best men would leave, during the peak of their working lives. Women, children and the elderly would be left behind.
(Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb)

10

IMMIGRANT FATES

FIFTEEN STORIES



IMMIGRANT FATES – FIFTEEN STORIES

Vignettes of immigrant life in America have been credibly provided by the immigrants themselves, in their letters to their families. More descriptive, though sometimes less believable, are articles in immigrant newspapers as well as those in the homeland. The latter usually would be opposition newspapers which blamed the government for massive emigration.

A rich source also consists of numerous memoirs written about life in America, written by those who made use of the chance they had been provided as well as those who wasted it or had been devoured by great financial crises.

Fifteen examples of individual immigrants and their families show the varied social and national origins and fates of Americans of the Great Wave.



Hans Kudlich, an opponent of all types of oppression.
(Merika, Rijeka 2008)

HANS KUDLICH - A DESIRE FOR THE HOMELAND

(Lobenstein, Silesia, 1823 - Hoboken, New Jersey, 1917)

Hans Kudlich is one of the most well known of the Austro-Hungarian revolutionaries who became transoceanic refugees.¹ The son of serfs and born in Lobenstein in Silesia, he received special permission from his feudal lord to study law at the University of Vienna.

During his studies, he associated with reformers, but at the beginning of the March Revolution of 1848 he determined that his place was among the revolutionaries.

Kudlich became famous as the man who, on March 13, 1848, demanded in the Reichstag the final elimination of serfdom.

From Vienna, he left for Frankfurt and later traveled to Switzerland where he completed his studies in medicine at the University of Bern (1853). There he also married, but due to pressures from Austrian authorities he had to flee again. Much later he wrote in a letter to his brother in 1869 that he had become "a persecuted wild animal - the dogs of the huntsmen of despotism chasing the animal further and further from the frontier of his beloved homeland."

After arriving in America, he opened his own medical practice, first in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, and subsequently in Hoboken, where he worked until his death in 1917.

In America, he became an opponent of all types of oppression, including the slavery of African Americans in the southern United States. He joined the Republican Party and strongly supported the election of Abraham Lincoln.

After amnesty was granted to the so-called "Forty-Eighters" who had participated in the 1848 revolutions (1866), he became consumed with "Austrian" patriotism and traveled to Austria, where he considered making a final return. But, he found himself in disagreement with the more radical nationalism of the day.

Deeply disappointed, he returned to America and ceased thinking about returning to his homeland, though he continued to examine the issues of freedom and nationalism in the speeches he gave and in the articles he published during his subsequent trips to Europe.

¹ Dubrović, *op.cit.*, pp. 166.-169.



ZDRAVKO MUŽINA – A NATIONAL CROATIAN LEADER

(Rijeka, Croatia 1869 – Chicago, 1908)

Zdravko Valentin Mužina, a journalist and publicist, served as one of the founders of the Croatian National Society, a mutual benefit society known today as the Croatian Fraternal Union.²

He completed elementary school and the gymnasium in Rijeka and studied law in Vienna and Zagreb. As a result of his political activities, Zagreb University expelled him. With the assistance of like-minded friends, he left his homeland for the United States. Mužina embarked from the French port of Cherbourg, aboard the *French Line* steamship *La Touraine*, arriving in New York on October 24, 1892. He initially settled in Chicago where he worked as a journalist. Mužina did not agree with the concept that Croatian immigrants should become Americanized as soon as possible.

By 1893 two Croatian newspapers, *Sloboda* (Freedom) of Chicago and *Napredak* (Progress) of Hoboken, had begun to advocate the establishment of a fraternal organization that would aid ethnic Croats in the event of illness, accident or death.

Mužina went to Pennsylvania, which boasted a large Croatian population, arriving in Pittsburgh toward the end of 1893. Upon his arrival he immediately established links with leaders of the Croatian immigrant community, with whom he would establish the Croatian National Society.

To have even greater influence in the community, he founded, with the assistance of the Slovak patriot, immigrant agent and banker, Peter Rovnianek, the paper *Danica* (Morning Star) which appeared on New Year's Day, 1894.

His main goal was to promote the establishment of as many Croatian societies as possible, which would then be united into one federation. In response to criticism that he had been attempting the impossible, he pointed to the successes of the Czech and Slovak communities. In spite of the naysayers, six Croatian groups met in Allegheny City on September 2, 1894 to establish the Croatian National Society.

The reasons for his subsequent departure from the Society and the disputes with most of its national leaders remain obscure. Most Croatian immigrant papers ignored his early death, despite his indisputable services to his community. The paper *Hrvatski svijet* (Croatian World) stated that Mužina had been a morally weak but gifted man without whom the history of Croats in America could not be written.



Zdravko Mužina, gifted man without whom the history of Croats in America could not be written. (Povijest Hrvatske bratske zajednice, Zagreb, 1994)

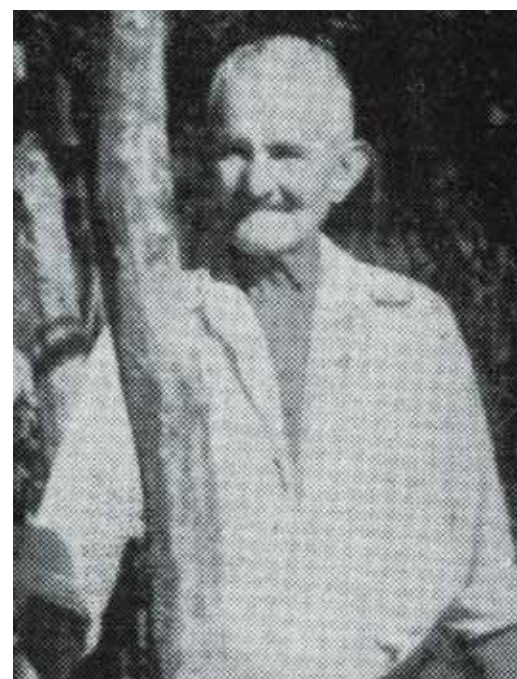
MIKE MARČELJA – NO SUNLIGHT IN THIS WORLD

(Marčelji, Croatia, 1869– Marčelji, Croatia, 1952)

Mike - Mate Marčelja Jurkotov from Halubje in Rijeka's hinterland, traveled to America four times.³ He had a large family, four sons and three daughters. He decided to go to America even though he was more prosperous than his neighbors: he had cows while his neighbors only had goats. He went despite his age, his young children and his wife Cecilia – Cila (1870 –1952).

He embarked in Trieste on June 27, 1905 and after three weeks arrived in New York, travelling on to his friend in Chicago.

Because he was illiterate, Mate had few choices in America and found a job in a mine. In a letter to Cila composed with the aid of one of his countrymen, he complained about having to work in a hole in the ground. "It's risky, every once in a while, someone gets killed. You never see the sun. It's dark when you go to work, it's dark while you're working and it's dark when you go home. It seems that there is no sunlight in this



Mike Marčelja, an illiterate, he found a job in a mine. (Kastavština, Zbornik, Zagreb, 1957)

² Vesna Kukavica, *Godišnjica smrti Zdravka Mužine – publicista, urednika i utemeljitelja Hrvatske bratske zajednice*, Vijesti, Hrvatska matica iseljenika, 25. travnja 2007., pp. 1.–2. Ivan Čizmić, *Povijest Hrvatske bratske zajednice*, Golden marketing, Zagreb, 1994., pp. 32.–36.

³ Ivo Jardaš, *Kastavština, Zbornik za narodni život i običaje*, Knjiga 39, Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, Zagreb, 1957, pp. 359–360. Ruža Marčelja Halilić, Marčelji Ellis Island Immigration Museum, New York



world.” Explaining that he was not sending money as a result of expenses he incurred related to a move, Mike went on to provide Cila with some advice related to the running of their farm and noted his desire to have the veal, which would soon be ready back home.

From a mine in Pennsylvania, Mate-Mike left for Gladstone, Michigan, where many of his countrymen had settled, and got work in the lumber industry, making railroad ties. But the sun didn’t shine for him there either, nor in the forests near Tacoma, Washington. Mate returned to his home village several times, in 1909, 1912 and July 1913. He took the last of his trips there on the *Kaiser Franz Josef I*, a steamship of the *Austro-Americana Line*.

His granddaughter still recalls the good fortune he had as a result of his failure to board the *Titanic* in 1912. But, Mike’s younger brother proved not to be so lucky. When he was just about to return home, he was killed by one of his countrymen, his roommate, after he caught the latter stealing his savings.

Unlike his unfortunate brother, Mate returned for good and put his savings to use. After every return, he invested in his property – building a well, restoring his home and buying a local bar.



Michael Bosák, a banker, who established a fund for the liberation of Slovakia.
(Historical Museum, Bratislava)

MICHAEL BOSÁK – THE RICHEST SLOVAK UNDER THE SUN (Okruhle, Saris, Slovakia, 1870 – Scranton, Pennsylvania, 1937)

Michael – Michal Bosák left for America in 1886, as a sixteen year old.⁴ He arrived with \$1, given to him by his uncle, and that dollar was stolen from him on his very first night in New York.

He obtained his first job loading coal on a crusher in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. In 1890, he moved to Freeland where he worked as an assistant in the store of his ethnic kinsman, Čajka, and then for a beer merchant, Zemaný, also a Slovak. Among his countrymen, he met Zuzana Hudakova whom he married in 1891.

The first business run by Bosák was a saloon frequented by Slovaks in Olyphant, Pennsylvania. He earned their trust and began to engage in various financial transactions and acted as an agent to obtain steamship tickets. By 1897 he opened a large store selling alcohol and his first bank, the Bosak Private Bank. From this beginning, his banking career expanded. In 1902 he became a member of the board of directors of the First National Bank in Olyphant (in which he owned stock) and later became its President. As private banks at the time issued currency, his signature could be found on \$5, \$10 and \$20 notes issued on June 25, 1907. A few years later, he established the Slavonic Deposit Bank in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, with an initial capitalization of \$100,000. Banking became his obsession – in 1915 he established the Bosak State Bank in Scranton, owned shares in the Miners Savings Bank and owned the American State Bank in Pittsburgh.

During the First World War, he became active in Slovak societies and in May 1917 became the treasurer of the First Catholic Slovak Association. He also established a fund for the liberation of Slovakia. In 1920, he returned to Europe and Slovakia for the first time since he emigrated. He first visited Rome, where in the name of the First Catholic Slovak Association he presented Pope Benedict XV with \$500 in gold. He assisted in the building of many schools and churches in Slovakia.

Along with many other bankers and emigrant agents, the “richest Slovak under the Sun” faced ruin during the Great Depression (a similar fate befell the richest Croat Frank-Franjo Zotti and the Slovene Frank Sakser as well as Bosak’s countrymen Peter Rovnianek, some of whom had already been hit hard by the Panic of 1907). Bosak’s property in 1929 had been estimated to be worth \$15 million, with the Bosak State Bank alone having deposits of \$5.5 million. Though creditors sued him for the loss of their

⁴ Martin Besedič, *Kontakt Tatré banke s Američko-slovačkim bankama*, thesis, Philosophical College, Trnava University, Trnava, 2002. M. Bosak and R. Boak, *Michal Bosák – američki bankar iz Šariša*, Prešov, 1997.



savings, the courts found in Bosak's favor. Despite his losses, he remained active. On February 3, 1937, only two weeks before his death, he led a delegation of American Slovaks to see President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

LIZA ŠKOFIC – A COOK IN NEW YORK WHO DIED OF HUNGER

(Ljubno, Styria, Slovenia, 1871 - New York, 1919)

Liza-Elizabeth Škofic was the fourth of seven children in a poor Styrian family.⁵ Her father died when she was seventeen.

Even prior to her father's death, around 1896, her older sister Theresa (Tereza) left for New York to live with a cousin who had emigrated earlier. Liza followed, and all three young women worked as servants and cooks for "better families."

These three close relatives did not get along well - Liza did not like her cousin and she also criticized her sister for her light-mindedness. She treated herself and others strictly. She worked a lot, saved as much as she could and sent money to her mother.

After a few years of work, the sisters returned home in 1910. Theresa would stay in her homeland for the remainder of her life.

Liza, in spite of the difficulty and boredom of work as a maid and cook, returned to New York as she wanted to make more money. From a letter to her mother which she wrote in a caring and sympathetic way, one can sense that Liza allowed herself few pleasures. She was completely consumed by issues arising from her work in the home of a Jewish family who had taken her on because she spoke German.

She had no friends. The other servants in the house did not like her due to her strictness and her criticism of their spending habits. She trusted no one, and kept to herself. By early 1916, she had amassed savings of \$100.00 from her monthly pay of \$45.00

At one point she contemplated marriage to a widower who drank to excess. She even purchased a wedding dress, but in the end decided not to marry.

During World War I her life changed for the worse. She changed jobs often, was homesick and worried about her mother. She was often ill, her nerves weakened, and she finally died while hospitalized. Her death was attributed to severe malnutrition. She left a silver watch, some jewelry and clothes, a necklace with a cross, a rosary and two savings accounts.



Liza Škofic had no friends and trusted no one.
(Marjan Drnovšek, Ljubljana)

⁵ Marjan Drnovšek, *Iseljavanje Slovenaca - Budi pozdravljena, domovino slobode!* in *Veliki val*, pp. 321-322.



Josif Teicu worked in heavy industry in Indiana.
(Dumitru Teicu, Reșița)

JOSIF TEICU RETURNS TO HIS NATIVE BANAT

(Ilidia, Banat, Romania 1882 – 1969)

Josif Teicu came from the mountainous area of southern Banat, in present-day Romania, near the town of Anine (known as Steierdorf in German).⁶ At the time of his birth, his village of Ilidia had experienced much more emigration than other villages in the area, and it came to be known as “Little America.” Romanian emigrants to the United States tended to settle in industrial areas, such as New York, Detroit, and Gary, Indiana. Most of them eventually returned home, using their monetary gains to buy land and build homes.

Josif Teicu emigrated to the United States in 1907. He worked in heavy industry in Gary, Indiana, and regularly sent money to his family in Banat. Like many of his countrymen, he returned to Romania in 1932. He married Elena but they had no children.

His American earnings allowed Josif to support his family and to build a house in Ilidia. He became involved in cultivating fruit and vineyards. His work in America allowed him to have a comfortable life, which he recalled after the arrival of Communism and the introduction of collectivization in Romania. In his old age, Josif was cared for by his brother Peter, who inherited Josif’s properties after his death. His uncle’s stories of America have remained in the memory of his nephew, Dumitru Teicu, who listened to them with awe as a child.



Antonio Glavina was in the “Devil’s hands.”
(Lorida Frankola Grlaš, Rijeka)

THE UNLUCKY ANTONIO GLAVINA IN NEW YORK

(Kršan, Croatia, 1892 – New York, 1942)

Antonio Glavina spent his youth in his native Istria.⁷ He left for America at age twenty, boarding the Cunard’s *Carpathia* in Rijeka, reaching New York on April 8, 1912. He first went to Chester, Pennsylvania, but later returned to New York. After the First World War, he went back to his homeland, to Rijeka, where he bought a house in its suburb of Turnić, and married Antonia Francolla (b. 1893) from Plomin, a small town not far from his native Kršan. He soon had a daughter, Avellina (b. 1922).

Not long after the birth of his daughter, he again returned to the United States, coming back home in 1929 when he stayed only a few months.

His daughter remembered her father’s homecoming when she was seven years old, the horse drawn carriage that brought him to his house and the large seamen’s chest which contained a number of presents. He also gave her some money every day, which she used in the nearby store to buy candy.

Though Antonio again left, the family believed that they would again meet in America, as soon as Antonia and her daughter obtained the necessary papers, and Antonio prepared everything for their arrival.

But while Antonia did indeed obtain a passport for herself and her daughter in 1931, America was then going through the Great Depression, so they postponed their journey. At the same time, Antonio began to become seriously ill, so the family’s arrival was further delayed until he could recover and find work to support his family.

In an April 27, 1934 letter from New York, Antonio wrote with some optimism: “My dear wife, I wanted to let you know that, thank God, I am somewhat well and hope that you are all as well. I sent a little bit of cash . . .” He goes on: “You wrote to me once that I am in the devil’s hands, and indeed I was, but thank God I am, still alive.” He complained that he had been forced to spend his money and had been left “in great misery.” Not surprisingly, he often repeats how “a penny needs to be turned over twice before it is spent.” But, Antonio’s health did not improve with time. He remained in New York while Francolla and Avellina stayed at Turnić in Rijeka.

⁶ Sabrina Žigo, *Iseljavanje Rumunja*, in *Veliki val*, pp. 428-429. Based on the memoirs of the director of the Museum of the Mountainous Area of Banat (Resita, Romania), Dr. Dumitru Teicu, nephew of Josif Teicu and son of Peter Teicu.

⁷ Personal papers and photographs of the Glavina family held by Lorida Frankola Grlaš, Rijeka



He died in Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan, of unspecified natural causes, after a hospitalization of four days.

His friends who later returned to their homeland said that, despite his illness, he had been a happy and a good man, who had often been called upon by his illiterate ethnic kin to write letters to their families in their home towns.

His daughter Avellina never forgot her father. During her entire life she remembered those few fortunate months of her childhood when she and her mother had been together with her father. She recalled the gifts and the candy. After more than half a century, in 1984 she finally fulfilled her dream to come to America and to visit her father's grave in New Jersey.

LOUIS ADAMIC – THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A FAMOUS IMMIGRANT

(Prapoče/Blato near Grosuplje, Slovenia, 1898 – Milford, New Jersey, 1951)

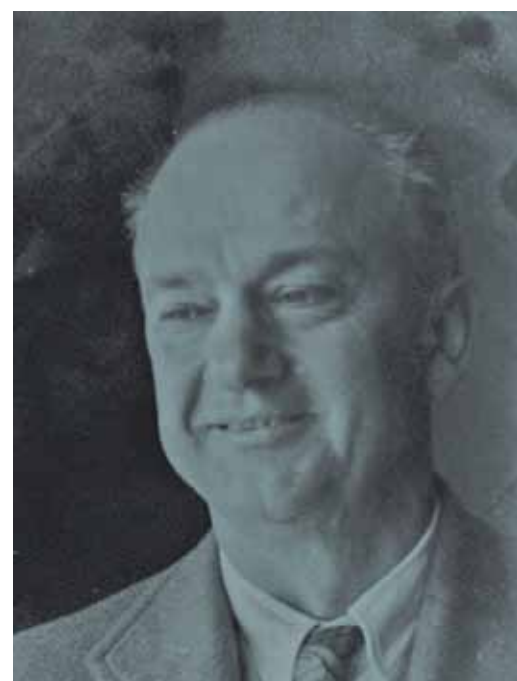
Alojz Adamič, Louis Adamic, was the oldest son of a peasant family.⁸ He entered the gymnasium in Ljubljana in 1909. By his third year at school, he had joined the movement for the unity of all Southern Slavs and participated in street demonstrations. Arrested during a demonstration, he spent a short time in custody. He was expelled from school and lost the right to attend any state schools. He therefore decided to emigrate. In December 1912 he boarded the steamship *Niagara* in Le Havre and arrived in New York at the age of fifteen.

He first went to the far West – to California, to a community of Croatian fishermen living in San Pedro. He had no other choice but to start working as a laborer, but he soon started writing for the Slovenian daily newspaper, *Glas naroda* (The Voice of the People) which was published in New York. In 1916 he joined the army, and served in Panama, Louisiana and Hawaii. In 1918 he became an American citizen.

In 1923, he began his full-time literary career, writing for American newspapers and translating Slovenian writers. In 1929 he moved to New York and during the following fifteen years he published about one book a year.

From 1931 on he wrote almost exclusively in English and his books focused on social, immigrant and homeland themes. He wrote his memoirs about his childhood and about the life of Slovenian immigrants. His work, *Laughing in the Jungle: The Autobiography of an Immigrant in America* (New York & London, 1932), received the Guggenheim prize. After spending a year in Europe, he wrote his most successful book, *The Native's Return: an American Immigrant Visits Yugoslavia and Discovers His Old Country* (New York & London 1934). That same year, he travelled and gave lectures all over America. In his book *My America: 1928–1938* (New York & London, 1938), he combined an intimate tone with his social thoughts and dreams of a united American nation.

His sudden death has never been explained. On September 4, 1951 he was found shot dead on his farm in Milford, New Jersey; his house had also been set on fire. Some claim that he committed suicide, while others say that he had been a victim of a 'Balkan' (Yugoslav) political clash.



Louis Adamic, who would be found shot dead on his farm in Milford, New Jersey.
(City Museum of Ljubljana)

⁸ Marjan Drnovšek, *op. cit.*, pp. 326-327.
Janja Žitnik, *Slovenska izseljenska književnost - Severna Amerika*, vol. 2, Ljubljana 1999, pp. 387.-389.



Johnny Weissmüller won five gold medals in the Olympics.
(Arcadia Publishing, Portsmouth, USA)

JOHNNY WEISSMÜLLER – THE FAMOUS “TARZAN”

(Szabadfalu/Freidorf, Romania, 1904 - Acapulco, Mexico, 1984)

Tarzan - Johnny Weissmüller, was born in the suburbs of Timisoara in Romania, an area where large numbers of ethnic Germans lived.⁹

His parents, Peter Weissmüller, a captain in the Austro-Hungarian Army, and Elisabeth Kersch, a worker in a tobacco factory, married in 1903 and soon afterward had a son.

Unsatisfied with their living conditions, his parents decided to emigrate to America. They traveled to Rotterdam, where they boarded the steamship named for that city on January 14, 1905, arriving in New York on January 26.

That same year he and Elisabeth had another son, Peter (1905). In Chicago, they opened a pub and Elisabeth started working as a cook. Because of the older Peter's dissolute lifestyle, the pub soon came under debt, and fights erupted in the home, leading the father to abandon his family in 1916. Elisabeth became so distressed that she could not admit that her husband had left her, but claimed that he had tuberculosis. Given their poverty, the children had to find work.

While going to school, Johnny got a job when he was 12, working as a hotel elevator boy.

Johnny had contracted polio when he was nine, and a doctor advised him to start swimming. When he was barely fourteen, he became the youngest member of the YMCA first string team. He soon won the American National Championship in Honolulu, Hawaii (1923). He participated in the 1924 Paris Olympics, winning three gold medals there, and two more at the Olympics in Amsterdam (1928).

But he achieved his real fame playing the lead role in the popular *Tarzan* movies (starting in 1932). His private life was just as adventurous as his movie life in the jungle. He married five times and had three children – Johnny, Jr., Anna Wendy and Heidi Ellis.



Wladek Zbysko won the wrestling World Heavyweight Championship.
(National Park Service, Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, New York)

THE MIGHTY ZBYSKO BROTHERS FROM CRACOW

The brothers Stanislaus and Wladek carried the same nickname, Zbysko, the name of a medieval knight found in the well-regarded Polish writer Henryk Sienkiwicz's novel *Knights of the Cross*.¹⁰ Both brothers were well educated intellectuals who devoted their entire professional lives to being wrestlers and wrestling coaches.

Stanislaus (Stanisław Jan Cyganiewicz, Jodlowa near Cracow, Poland 1879 - USA 1967) studied music, philosophy and law in Vienna, but was also attracted to sports. He joined the well-known Viennese Vinodobona Athletic Club and the Sokol, a nationalist gymnastics society in Austria-Hungary which had Polish and other Slavic members.

At the turn of the century, Stanislaus learned that he could make good money through wrestling, which led him into the sport and away from more intellectual pursuits. He became especially confident in his physical activities after his initial victories and soon started competing in Berlin.

The next few years saw his career in Greco-Roman style wrestling reach great success, and he competed in numerous meets in 1903, becoming one of the best European wrestlers. He soon began to compete in Great Britain, the United States and throughout the world, but his most famous match occurred against the World Heavyweight Champion Frank Gotch, whom he battled to a draw in a one hour match in Buffalo, New York in November 1909. He became especially popular in America in the 1920s and one of the most influential European wrestlers ever.

His younger brother Wladek (Władysław Cyganiewicz, Cracow, Poland, 1891

⁹ Jovana Ivetić, Novi Sad
Donauschwabische Zentralmuseum, Ulm

¹⁰ Barry Moreno, *Image of America*, Ellis Island, Arcadia Publishing, 2003.



- Savannah, Missouri, 1968) studied law at the University of Cracow and received his doctorate in Vienna, but instead of a legal career also became attracted to wrestling. He first competed in America in the Empire Theatre in Chicago in 1913. In 1917 he won the AWA World Heavyweight Championship. In May 1918 he was briefly detained at Ellis Island, allowing its Chief Registry Clerk, Augustus P. Sherman, who had photographed thousands of other immigrants, to take striking photos of his muscular build.

Along with his brother, he appeared in numerous meets in Europe, as well as in Argentina, Brazil and the United States. After the end of their wrestling careers, the brothers trained numerous future successful wrestlers.

THE TARABOCCHIA FAMILY

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NAME ANTONIO

The Tarabocchia originate from the small island of Susak (also known in Italian as *Sansego*), located in the Kvarner Gulf off the coast of northern Croatia.¹¹ The island today has no more than a few dozen inhabitants, although a large number of emigrants from the island or their descendents live in America, mostly in and around Hoboken, New Jersey. Real confusion had been caused by the arrival of a number of immigrants from the island having the same name who arrived in the same year, and went to the same address, 232 Adams Street in Hoboken. All of them were called Antonio Tarabocchia.

Forty year old seamen Antonio Tarabocchia came to New York on May 22, 1905 and went to Hoboken, to his neighbor and friend Martin Busanich, where he had earlier spent a number of months.

Soon afterwards, on January 2, 1906, a twenty-five year old with the same name, and then a third man, also with the same name, arrived. The last of the arrivals, unlike his other two namesakes, had never previously crossed the Atlantic.

A number of people from Susak lived at the same address in Hoboken, including a few from the Tarabocchia family, among them Giovanni and Matteo.

After the fall of Austria-Hungary, when the small island had been awarded to Italy, the brothers Luigi and Luca Tarabocchia, came to be with their older brother Antonio.

In 1922, immigrants from the Lošinj Archipelago (consisting of the islands of Susak, Lošinj and Ilovik) established in their new home in New Jersey their own organization – the Lusignana Benevolent Society – which continued to function for more than half a century.

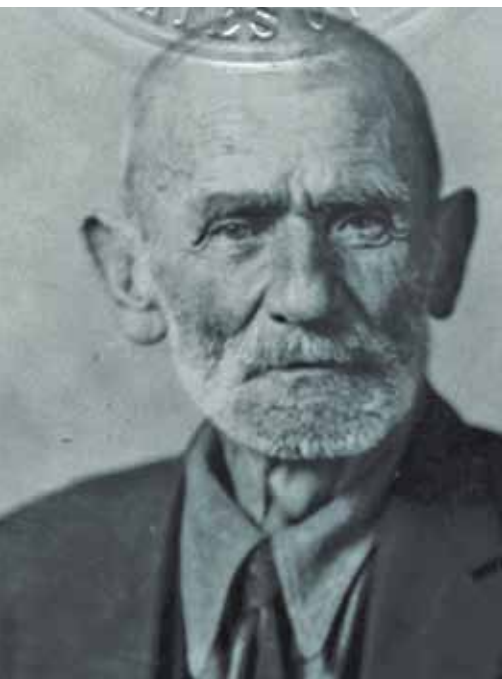
Not all of these immigrants were poor. Many people from Lošinj and the nearby islands became known as seamen, ship owners and ship builders. Indeed, the famous Cosulich family, the founders of the same-named Triestine shipping concern and co-founders of the *Austro-Americana line* (which took over a hundred thousand emigrants from Trieste to America) originated from there.

The Tarabocchia family had its own ship building yard on Lošinj, as did the Martinolich, Picinich and Scopinich families. Some of these families also established shipyards in America, including the Tarabocchia family, which successfully engaged in the same business in America they had learned in their homeland.



Luigi Tarabocchia came from a ship building family from Lošinj (Lussino), Croatia.
(Daniela Tarabocchia, Monfalcone)

¹¹ Javier Grossutti, *Iseljavanje iz Austrijskog primorja*, in *Veliki val*, pp. 295-313.
Juliano Sokolić, *Brodogradnja na otoku Lošinju*, Mali Lošinj, 2010.



Peter Martinis Poškotov from Komiža in Croatia.
(Zoran Martinis, Saronno)

THE MARTINIS FAMILY OF DALMATIA AND THE KING OF SALMON

Of the hundred or so Martinises listed in ship manifests in the years between 1896 and 1926, twenty of them came from Dalmatia, most from the island of Vis.¹²

Along with those, who generally considered themselves Croats, most Martinises came from southern Italy, from small villages such as Verdivali, Guardavalle and Nicastro in the area of Catanzara in Calabria as well as from the region of Trapani in Sicily.

Many Martinis also came from Greece (from Sparta, Athens, Megalopolisa) as well as the Dardanelles in Turkey. A few came to the United States from Spain and Latin America.

Peter Martinis, known by his family nickname as Poškotov (Komiža, Vis, 1852 – 1937), numbered among the first Dalmatians with this surname to arrive in America. He left his native island around 1900, in his mature years. The Poškotovs had been among the wealthier islanders, having a large stone house along the town's main quay, and had lived on the island for centuries. Peter's wife, Rose (Ruža) (maiden name Marinković) followed him to New York in 1906.

The family settled in Oregon where a number of Martinises from Vis settled – soon, more of the family lived in the United States than in their homeland.

The most well know of all the Poškotovs in America was Paul Martinis (Komiža, Vis, 1893) who boarded the *Martha Washington*, a steamship of the *Austro-Americana Line*, in Trieste in 1913. He primarily went because he did not want to serve in the armed forces. He also came to Astoria and obtained work in a restaurant. He went on to Tacoma as soon as he heard about the presence of fisherman from his native Komiža where he joined them to engage in harvesting salmon at the mouth of the Columbia River and in Puget Sound, between Tacoma and Seattle.

He soon purchased his first boat, but upgraded to a new, 60-foot boat the very next year. He skippered the boat and headed to the north, to Alaska and the Bering Sea. He soon became well known throughout America as a result of his pioneering efforts in the fishing industry and his physical endurance in working under very harsh conditions. Other fisherman began to say that only Native Americans and those from Komiža could fish in such cold seas in the extreme north. Paul had his greatest success fishing in extreme conditions and had record catches in Bristol Bay and the Bering Sea, near the Aleutian Islands. As a result of his accomplishments, in 1958 he received a great honor when President Eisenhower called him the King of Salmon and personally handed him a commendation.



Ljubica (Violette) and Giovanni Giuriceo from Krk (Veglia) in Croatia
(Giuriceo Family, New York)

THE NUMEROUS MEMBERS OF THE GIURICEO FAMILY

Of the 20,000 ethnic Italians who came to the America from Austria-Hungary at the turn of the century, most came from the poorest areas, the region surrounding Pazin in central Istria and the Kvarner Islands (all these areas are now located in Croatia).¹³

The Giuriceos were one of the Italian families who lived in the small town of Krk (*Veglia* in Italian) located on the island of the same name. The old town of Krk was the only large-Italian enclave on this island predominately settled by Croats. The Giuriceos (whose name appeared in various forms in historical sources - Juriceo, Georgiceo, Jurjević, Georgijević, Grgičević) had been on Krk for at least several centuries. Among the more well known members of the family in older times were a writer and composer from Split and a priest and painter from Krk. In newer times, Antonio Giuriceo (Krk 1780 - Dubrovnik 1842), served as the Bishop of Dubrovnik beginning in 1830 – among his other titles and honors, he had been appointed as “advisor to the King and Emperor.”

¹² Zoran Martinis, Family documents, Saronno, Italy.

¹³ Judy Giuriceo, Curator of Exhibits and Media, Ellis Island Immigration Museum.



But the more recent Antonio Giuriceo (born in 1870) and his large family belonged to the humbler branch of the family, though this did not mean that they were necessarily poor.

Antonio and Maria Udina Giuriceo (born in 1874) had seven children: Clemente, Matteo, Giovanni, Ruggiero, Antonio, Renata and Anna. They cultivated their gardens, vineyards and olives close to town and sometimes fished. They took their grapes and olives with their own boat to sell in Rijeka. When the First World War broke out, Antonio and his older sons fought for "Emperor and the Homeland." The War years caused numerous troubles for the family. Giovanni suffered wounds and became temporarily blind from a gas or bomb attack, while the sisters he had left behind at home suffered from various illnesses.

After the War, the family systematically began to leave the island. In addition to hopes for a better life, the reason for their decision lay in political instability. Krk Island first fell to Yugoslavia, then Italy occupied it, only to have Yugoslavia take it again.

The eldest sons followed their uncle Nicolo in early 1920, then one by one the younger sons and the father also left, Antonio returning at one point to take his wife and daughters. For the most part, they embarked at Trieste. His daughters Renata (then 18) and Anna (then 16) loved living on Krk, having many friends there, and they were sad to leave. The Giuriceos settled in the Bronx and in Yonkers.

One of Antonio's sons, Giovanni (1899-1968), who left in 1921, had been followed by Ljubica (born Manestar, 1896-1973), who came from nearby Crikvenica across from Krk Island on Croatia's mainland. They married in 1923 and had two children, John and Mario. Other brothers and sisters also had spouses who came from their home island, as well as the nearby Croatian coast and northern Italy.

The Giuriceos had no trouble establishing themselves in America. The brothers found construction jobs and soon started their own business. Though the Great Depression of the 1930s slowed their progress, they quickly thereafter started again on the road to success in America.

The numerous members of the Giuriceo family became American citizens, fought in the Second World War in the American Armed Forces and, despite the various paths they took in life, continued to come together at family functions. Those of their children born in America became attorneys, artists, university professors, contractors and merchants and engaged in various other professions.

But as a result, Krk Island has no trace of the Giuriceo family today, though they had been there for half of a millennium.

THE AUSTRIAN BREWER FRITZ AND HIS SON FRED ASTAIRE

The modest Austrian brewer with a sonorous name – Friedrich Emanuel Austerlitz, better known as Fritz (Linz, 1968 – Omaha, 1924), boarded the *Red Star Line's Westernland* in Antwerp and arrived in New York on October 26, 1892.¹⁴

After disembarking in New York, Fritz went to Omaha, Nebraska. There he soon met the much younger Johanna (Ann) Geilus, a daughter of German Lutherans, from Prussia and Alsace. They married in 1894 in the First Evangelical Church in Omaha. They had a daughter, Adele, born in 1896, and a son, the future famous singer and dancer Fred (Omaha, 1899 – Los Angeles, 1987).

When his plans of joining in a business with two Austrian friends collapsed, Fritz went to work in a brewery. His son later liked to tell the false story that Fritz was a descendant of a long line of brewers.

In 1905 Fritz and Anna decided to help their talented children make a career in



Frederick Austerlitz, better known as Fred Astaire.
(Christian Brandstätter Verlag, Vienna)

¹⁴ Dubrović, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-75.



Andy Warhol, son of Ondrej Varchola from Slovakia.
(Christian Brandstätter Verlag, Vienna)

vaudeville in New York, so Fritz remained in Omaha to earn money, while Ann took the children to dance school. They chose a new surname too – instead of their real one, which sounded too much like the Napoleonic battle, they took their mother's Alsatian surname.

Nine-year-old Adele and seven-year-old Fred started their rise on the stage and appeared in numerous shows, but Adele remained on stage only until she married, while Fred Astaire reached great fame appearing in Broadway musicals and in Hollywood movies - *Broadway Melody of 1940* (1940), *Easter Parade* (1948), *Funny Face* (1957).

THE RUSYN FAMILY OF ANDY WARHOL

Ondrej Varchola, a Rusyn and Greek Catholic born in Medzilaborce in today's Slovakia, first came to the United States in 1907.¹⁵ But he soon returned home, met Julija Zavacky and married her in 1909. They lived in Mikova, located 17 kilometers from his birthplace. When drafted in 1912, Ondrej decided that he would be better off in America and he fled. After the end of World War I and the death of her parents, Julija decided to join her husband, leaving for America in 1921. Ondrej worked at a construction site and in a coal mine in Forest City near Scranton, from which they later moved to Pittsburgh.

Julia Zavacky-Warhola (Mikova, Slovakia, 1892 – Pittsburgh, 1972), was uneducated, but multi-talented. She liked to sing Rusyn folk songs, and dance folk dances. She made crepe flowers, embroidered, painted Easter eggs (Pisanky) and drew cats and angels. She nurtured her interests in her children.

The Varcholas (they later renamed themselves the Warholas and still later Warhol) had three sons: Paul, John and Andrew – Andy Warhol, the famous pop-art painter, claimed that he inherited his talent from his mother.

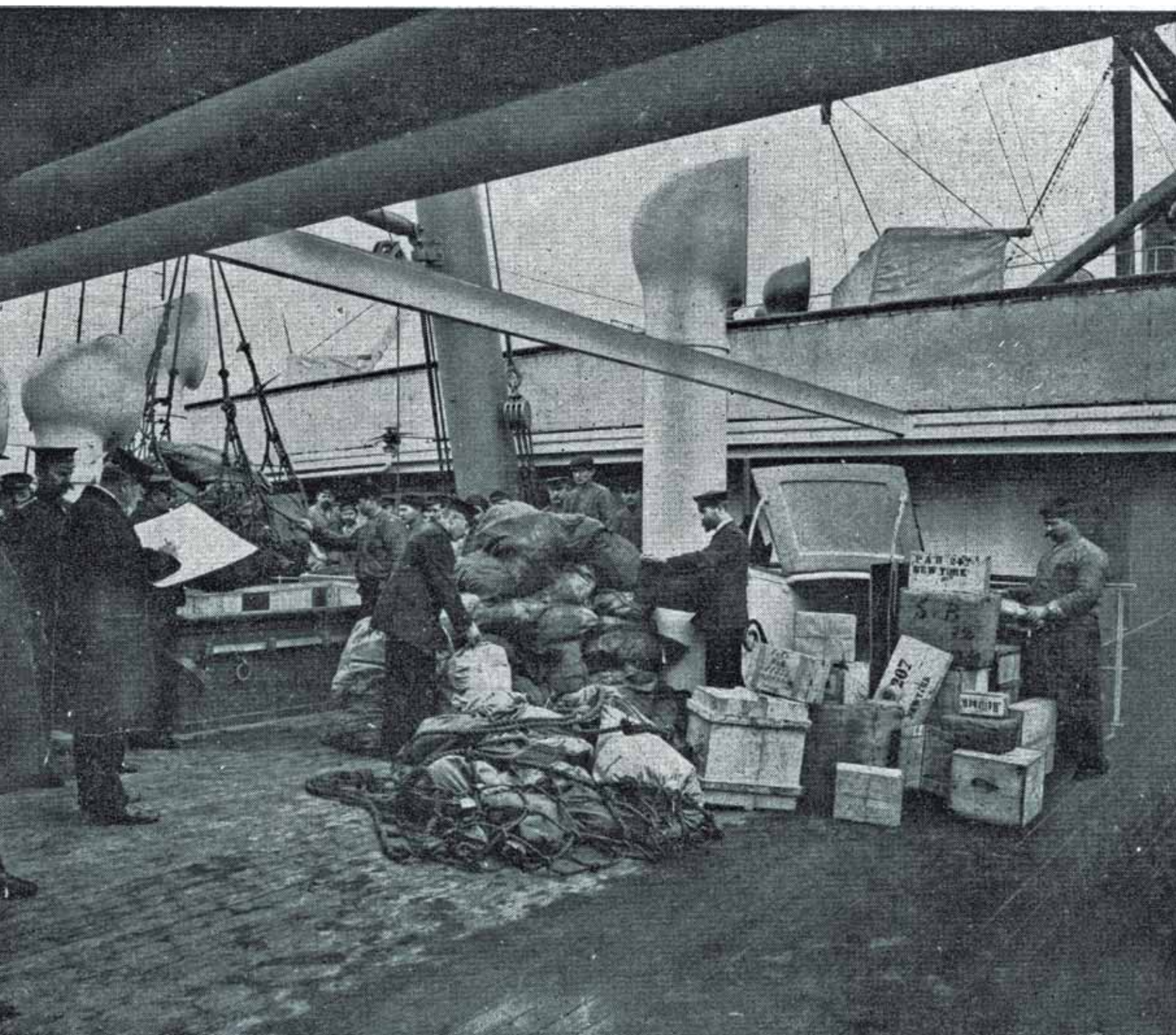
In the early 1930s, during the Great Depression, the family lived on the brink of poverty and they often moved from one industrial suburb of Pittsburgh to another. Since the father worked at building sites away from home, the boys became very close to their mother, most of all little Andy, who was only 13 when his father died in 1942.

Andy Warhol (Pittsburgh, 1928 – New York, 1987) became the most talented of the three brothers, both in painting and media promotion. He took ordinary, everyday items, like a Marilyn Monroe photograph or a Campbell Soup can, and turned them into famous, widely known works of art. His nephew also became a successful artist.

Although his father's wish had been that Andy attend college, his mother supported him heartily and she joined him in New York in 1952, backing him up in his artistic rise.

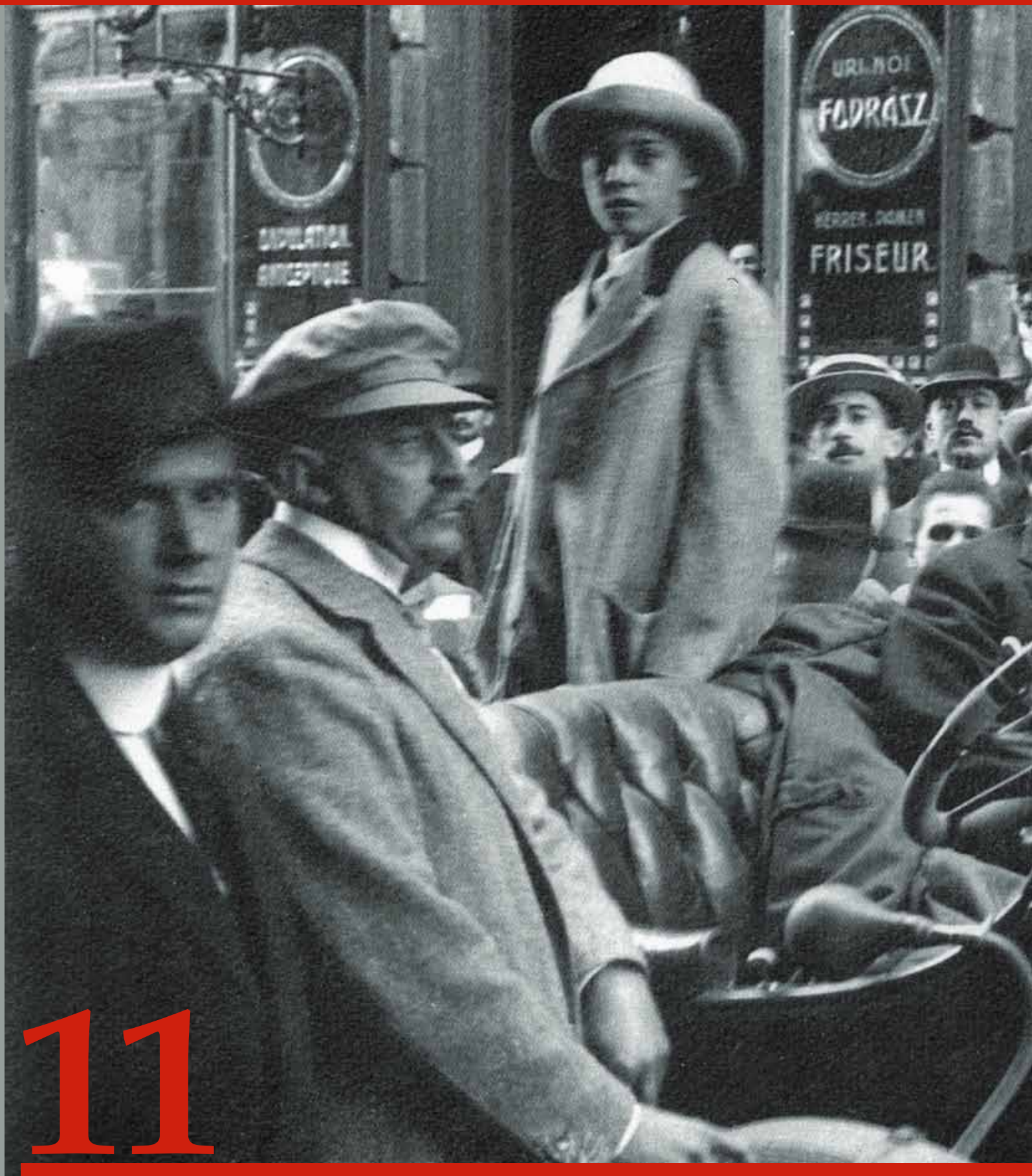


¹⁵ Dubrović, *op.cit.*, pp. 198-99.



The sorting of postal bags and the carrying of same into postal warehouses. At a time when the majority of people had become literate, a tremendous amount of mail went across the Atlantic in both directions. From one end come letters, from the other, packages and money. (The Progress of German Shipbuilding, Berlin 1909)

WHAT DID AMERICA GIVE TO CENTRAL EUROPE?



11

Thomas Alva Edison visiting Budapest and Bratislava in 1911. The American inventor had become well-known in Europe and his inventions, such as the phonograph, became loved everywhere. By the second half of the nineteenth century, American goods began to make headway into the Austro-Hungarian market, especially agricultural machinery. By 1850, steam engines began to be built in Hungary using English and American models. On the eve of the First World War, Caterpillar tractors were imported.
(National Széchényi Library, Budapest)





WHAT DID AMERICA GIVE TO CENTRAL EUROPE?



Technical marvels especially impressed relatives in the homeland, as did photos of their relatives in automobiles, even if others owned them. Such photos showed that a person had started on the road to success. (City Museum of Rijeka and Josip Žgaljić, Rijeka)



The complaints of those who did not adapt to the New World are more vocal than the enthusiasm of those for whom America became a new home. A young man who moved from the Pannonian plains to Pittsburgh wrote to his uncle: "Dear Uncle! I wanted to let you know that I arrived safely in America. . . . I would have been fortunate had I listened to you and that I had remained at home! Here one must work everyday, on holydays and on Fridays. I am trusting in God that I will get paid in the next four to five months, and I will be back, because I believe that I will otherwise leave my bones here before the year is out. . . ." ¹

One of his countrymen who had also recently arrived advised his neighbors in the homeland not to think about coming to America as the "fences are not made of sausages and cooked chickens simply do not fall in one's lap." ²

One returnee from America, on the eve of the First World War, claimed that half of all Croatian emigrants in America who had died had been killed in accidents at work, a fifth died of tuberculosis caused by poverty and an unhealthy lifestyle and only a fifth died of natural causes. ³

Criminality and alcoholism became especially common among immigrants. Their uncertain and poor living conditions in overpopulated areas, such as New York, Chicago and Pittsburgh (where most Austro-Hungarian immigrants had settled), in many cases proved to be more frightening even in comparison to the wooden hovels and huts covered with straw from where these people had fled across the ocean. Life in damp, dark and unbreathable city basements became more difficult and less dignified than the lives of large peasant families gathered around their poor hearths of their own small houses. Recent peasants placed in an urban environment in many cases became members of the underworld, constantly surrounded by crime. ⁴

After the first Croat in America had been hanged in 1903, a sense of discomfort arose among his countrymen, but only a few years later they had to calmly admit that "today there are so many executions of our people that they are only noted in passing." ⁵

Still, such problems concerned only a small part of those whose departure for America proved to be a turning point in their lives. Many more of them found their way, first working in the most difficult and dangerous jobs, but eventually raising themselves up from even the worst conditions and from the edge of complete poverty. These people slowly became part of American society, bringing their families and beginning to live better lives than in their homeland. Some were impressed even on their initial entry into America with what was so different from everything that they knew until then -- not only in their home villages but even when compared with what they had seen in European cities during their days-long journeys to their embarkation point for their trans-Atlantic trip. The excitement of the new arrivals began at the entry to the country to which they had decided to trust their fate, as they had their first look at the Statue of Liberty and Manhattan. An excited twenty-one year old Slovene wrote: "Greetings to the land of the free, it will be my new home. God is my witness that I will love you as much as my birth place." ⁶

One Slovene priest wrote to his friends at home: "In America, everything is going my way, I am satisfied in every way . . . I have no need to miss Europe and I can forget the flowers which bloomed for me there last year." ⁷

This contrasted with many who initially had been impressed but later became disappointed. Nikola Tesla had been initially disappointed but became impressed later

1 Dubrović, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-159.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 160-161.

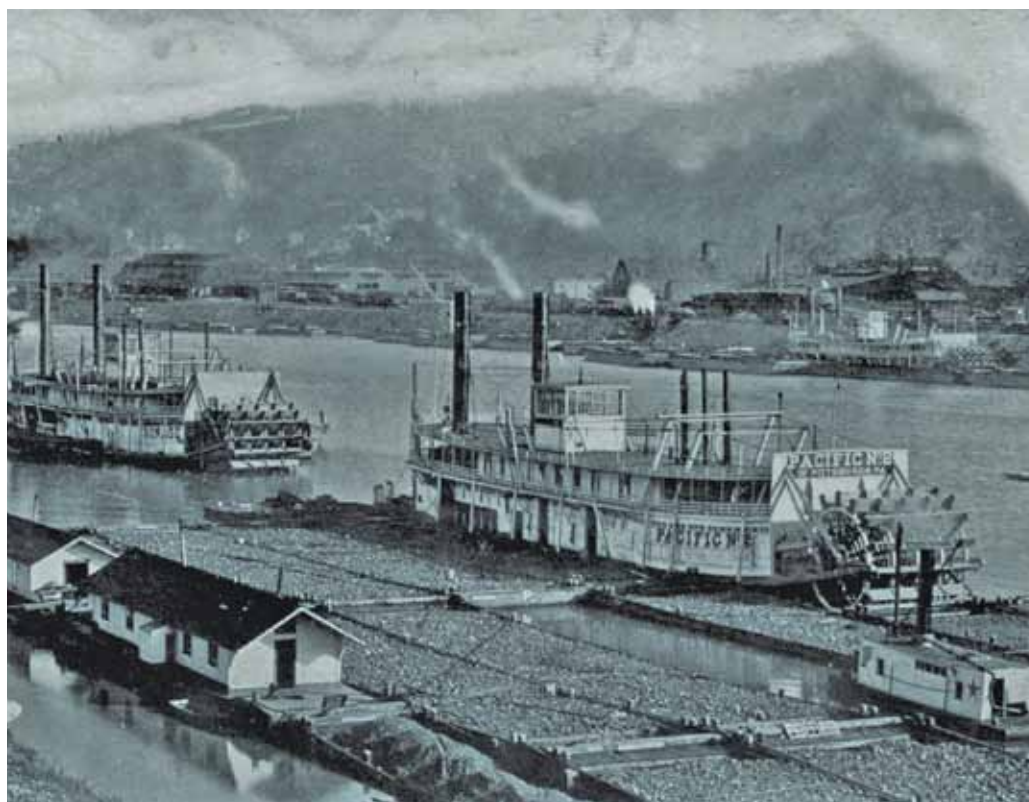
3 *Ibid.*, pp. 158-159.

4 Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives, Studies Among the Tenements of New York with 100 Photographs from the Jacob A. Riis Collection*, The Museum of the City of New York, Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1971.

5 Dubrović, *op. cit.*, pp. 158.-159.

6 Marjan Drnovšek, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 320.



Workers in factories in Chicago, Pittsburgh and Cleveland worked hard for their money and sent funds to their families back home. Working at difficult jobs for many became a source of blessings and progress which had been blocked in their home lands. (Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb)

BANK MONEY ORDER.
Keep this as your Receipt.
NOV 22 1930 19 No 40855
Sold to *Max Mance*
Payable to *Iran Mance*
AMOUNT

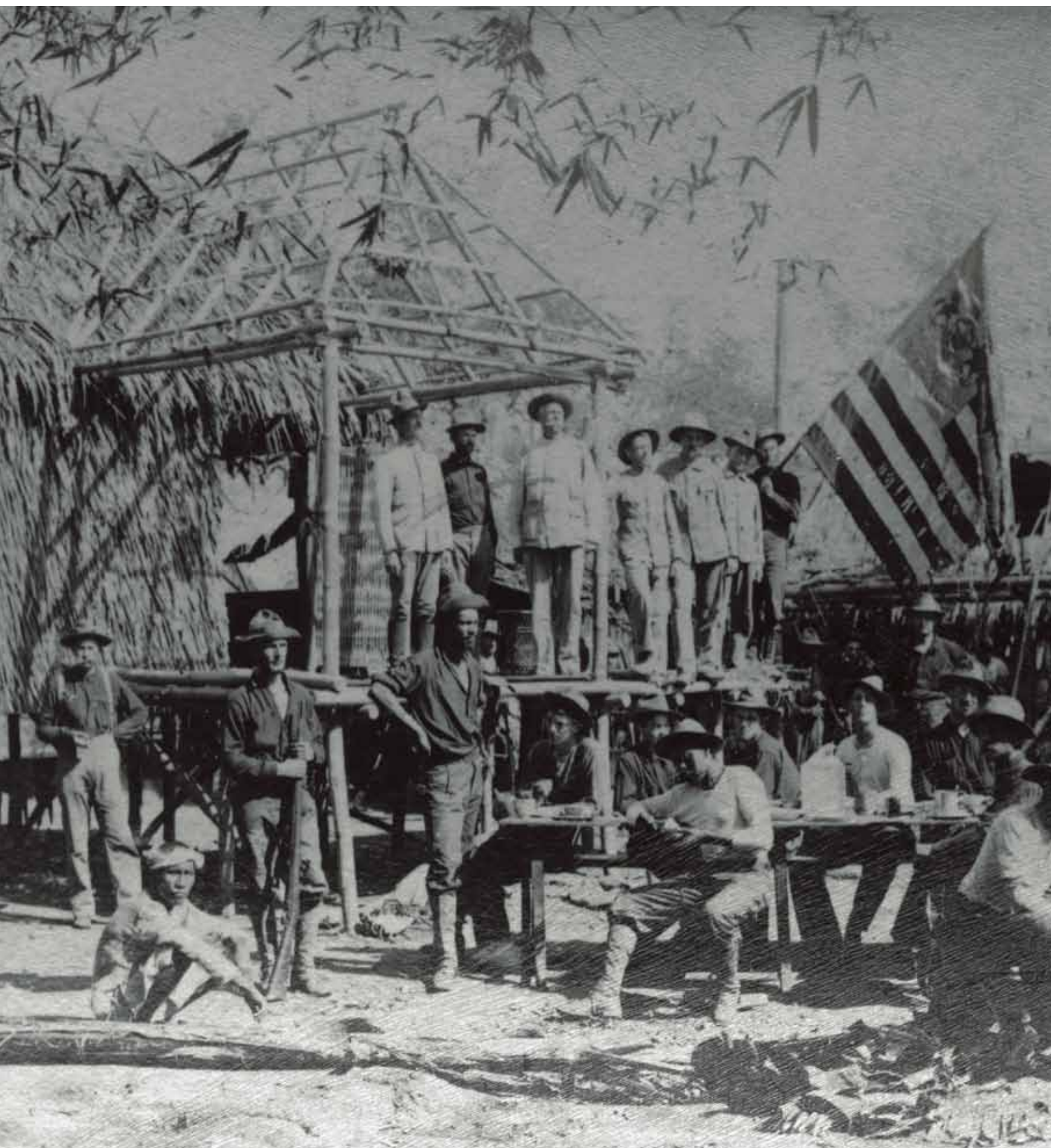
DOLLARS	CENTS
55	7

 FEE

CENTS
25

BANK OF DAWSON
DAWSON, NEW MEXICO
CASHIER *[Signature]*

A bank receipt from Dawson, New Mexico, in the amount of \$55, sent to the homeland. Such golden showers would be sprinkled over many and prompted the development of national economies. Many used American money to build homes and to live better. (Maksimilijan Mance, Rijeka)





on: "I wish I could put in words my first impressions of this country. In the Arabian Tales I read how genii transported people into a land of dreams to live thru delightful adventures. My case was just the reverse. The genii had carried me from a world of dreams into a world of realities. What I had left was beautiful, artistic and fascinating in every way; what I saw here was machined, rough and unattractive 'Is this America?,' I asked myself in painful surprise. 'It is a century behind Europe in civilization.' When I went abroad in 1889 - five years having elapsed since my arrival here - I became convinced that it was more than one hundred years ahead of Europe, and nothing has happened to this day to change my opinion."⁸

Though the famous physicist from Smiljan, Croatia published his autobiography in 1919, thirty-five years after his arrival in America, his belief in the strength of the "Land of Golden Opportunity" in comparison with Europe remained the same. Another physicist also became an enthusiastic citizen of the New World, Michael Pupin (born in Idvor, Banat, now in Serbia) who came to the United States in 1874. After studying at Columbia University, he returned across the ocean to continue his studies at Cambridge and in Berlin, but he had already become "infected" by America. In his autobiography which later won the Pulitzer Prize (1924), he noted the thoughts which circulated in his head when he first went back to the Old Continent. "Michael Pupin, the most valuable asset which you carried into New York harbor nine years ago was your knowledge of, and profound respect and admiration for, the best tradition of your race...and the most valuable assets which you are now taking with you from New York is your knowledge of, and profound respect and admiration for, the best traditions of your adopted country."⁹

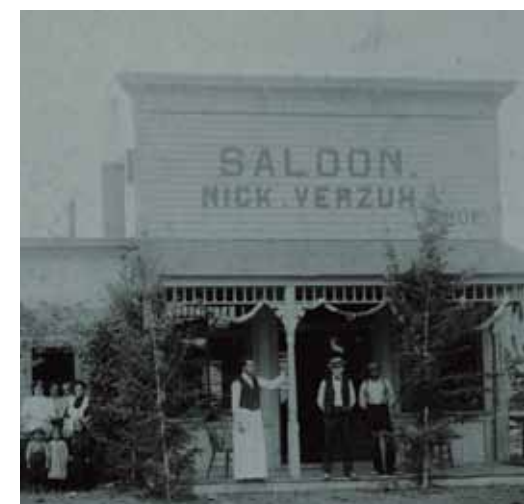
But the "common people" who did not come to conquer America and the World, for the most part came to make some money and to return as soon as possible to their homes. While many of them returned numerous times to their homelands, the greatest number remained forever in America. Thus, a seaman from around Rijeka who sailed from the California coast to Alaska, had a house near the Pacific Ocean outside of San Francisco with an orange tree growing in his garden. He did not even think about returning to his birth place. Content with his life in California, he especially remembered how he had been forced to work hard at his old home.¹⁰

Indeed, he called on his friend to join him, even offering to pay for his fare and promising that he would find him work. He encouraged him with a few very descriptive, but very credible sentences. America was his chosen home in which he had built his nest, established a family and wanted to lay down his roots. "What would I do at home? I married a Mexican woman. We have two kids They will be true Americans. That's how it is here."

At least three quarters of all immigrants remained in America and their children became "good Americans." Neither the fathers nor their children belonged to the old country, which remained only in their memories and ever more fading in their stories.

Still, around a quarter of immigrants from Central Europe returned to their homeland after experiencing America for a few years and receiving American salaries. According to statistics, 295,145, or around a quarter of all immigrants from the Kingdom of Hungary, returned to their homes between 1899 and 1913. The largest number returned in 1908 after the financial crisis that hit America halted immigration. The 53,770 returnees in that year outnumbered the number of immigrants from the Kingdom.¹¹

Such returns would be caused for the most part by great economic crises, such as those in 1907 and 1929. Many immigrant agents, businessmen and bankers, who held deposits of immigrants, went insolvent during such crises, losing the savings of numerous of their ethnic kinsmen. For example, three ethnic bankers, the Croat Frank



Nick Verzuh (Vržuh) who settled in Montana, can say that he succeeded in his life - he had his own saloon in America.
(Damir Krizmanić, Rijeka)

Despite economic shocks and crises which arrived at regular intervals during the 1890s, in 1907 and 1929, the great momentum of the American economy allowed many Europeans to begin a new way of life and gave them the opportunity for much greater success than would have been possible in Europe. Not only were daily wages several times higher but the ability for social advancement remained completely unrestricted.
(City Museum of Rijeka)

8 Nikola Tesla, *My Inventions: The Autobiography of Nikola Tesla* (edited by Ben Johnson), Barnes & Noble, New York, 1995, p. 71.

9 Michael Pupin, *From Immigrant to Inventor*, New York 1923.

10 Dubrović, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-163.

11 Julianna Puskás, *Emigration from Hungary to the United States before 1914*, *Studia Historica Academiae scientiarum Hungaricae*, 113, Akademiai Kiado, Budapest, 1975, pp. 6- 7.



Hands Across the Sea. Friends from across the ocean greet one another. (Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb)



A basket with flowers on a greeting card sent to one's home country. Such cards continued to be printed among immigrant circles in their own languages, and arrived in the homeland with echoes of far away and amazing America. (Regional Museum, Ozalj, Croatia)

Zotti, the Slovak Peter Rovnianek and the Slovene Frank Sakser, failed during such economic hard times.

Some of the returnees could be described as almost being seasonal employees ("birds of passage"), who went back and forth. The port of Trieste, as in other places in 1908, saw a large number of returnees, among them a significant number of unfortunates who, at least temporarily, became wards of the municipal social services, which provided them with board and a minimal amount of funds.¹²

But of all the returnees only a small number returned without having achieved their goal of having at least a small amount of savings. The majority of returnees had received enough compensation that they could have a better life and a more prominent status. "All who did return either to stay or only to visit became a distinct group in Croatia. They were different from their neighbors. Everybody respected them, even the authorities . . ."¹³

An additional fact is especially important. Along with returnees, America gave its immigrants the opportunity to shower their homelands with a "golden rain" of monetary wealth.¹⁴ Numerous houses and other structures were raised using money sent from America. In addition to money, the returnees also brought back new ways of thinking, as well as technology and knowledge which they could not obtain in their homeland, which, like their money, also became useful to the economic development of emigrant regions and countries.



¹² Dubrović, *op. cit.*, based on the unpublished manuscript of Francesco Fait, Civici Musei di Storia ed Arte, Trieste, pp. 126-127.

¹³ George J. Prpic, *The Croatian Immigrants in America*, Philosophical Library, New York, 1980, p. 162.

¹⁴ William Klinger, *Doznake u domovinu: zlatna kiša*, in *Veliki val*, pp. 465.-467.



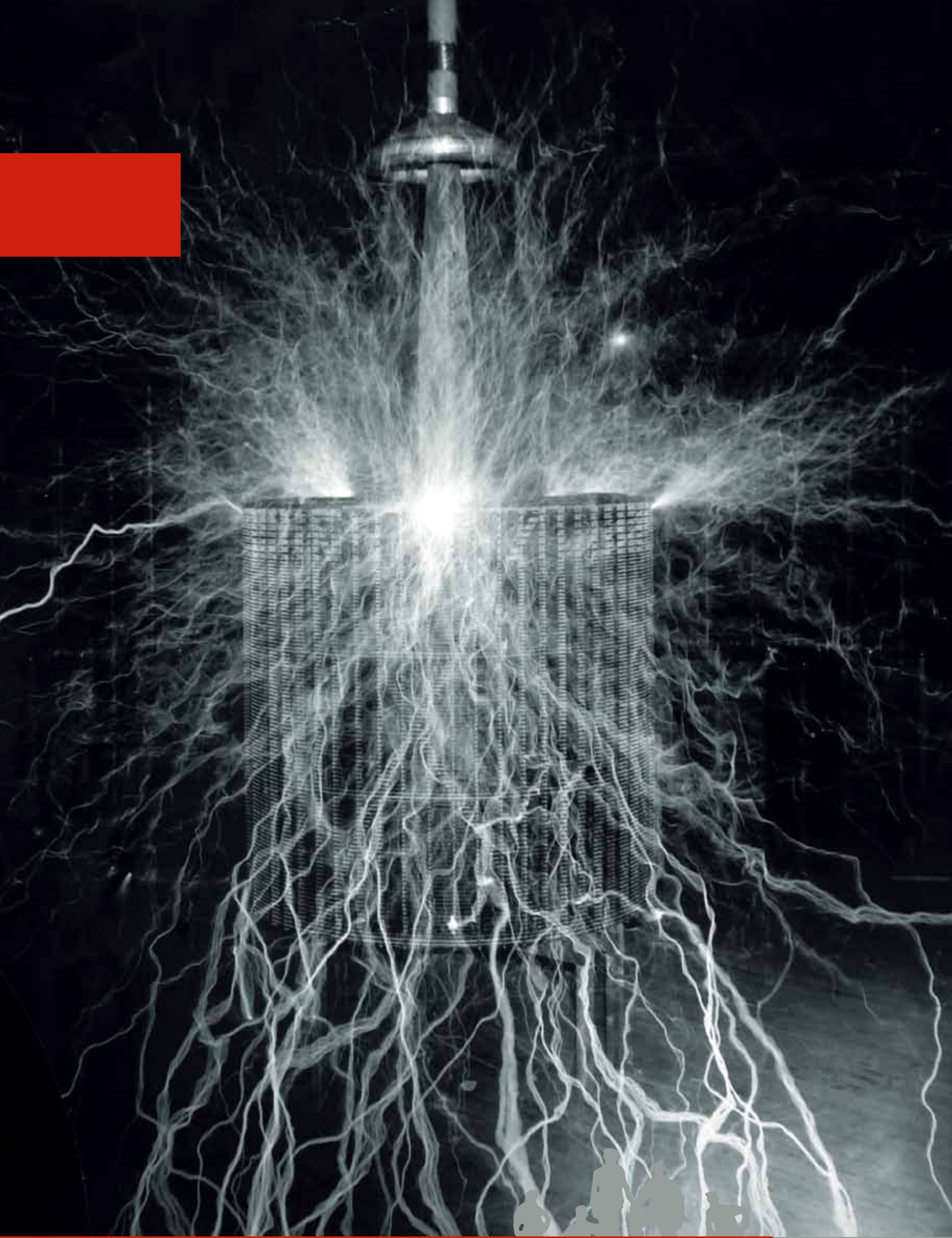
Kate Lučić with her daughters. Their husbands and sons left for America. Of the ten members of this family from the hinterland of Rijeka, five of them, the father and four sons, went to America. The wives waited for years, but at least profited from the results of American work. They built a house, expanded their property and bought a sewing machine. (Novosel and Pizzul families, Rijeka)



WHAT DID CENTRAL EUROPE GIVE TO AMERICA?

12

An electrical experiment by Nikola Tesla who "brought light" to America. The great inventor worked for years and finally succeeded in having alternating current replace direct current. His inventions and practical applications of same confirmed his visionary proposals. He became famous as the designer of the impressive hydro electrical facility at Niagara Falls, the promoter of the wireless transport of energy and communications and the inventor of many other items.
(Nikola Tesla Museum, Belgrade)





A young self-confident German dressed in traditional costume of his home area located on the border of Lower Austria and Bavaria. He just arrived on Ellis Island but his demeanor shows that he will use all his own strength to succeed in America. (National Park Service, Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, New York)



Giovanni Giuriceo, descended from an Italian immigrant family from the northern Adriatic, became a proud American soldier. (Giuriceo Family, New York)

What Did Central Europe Give to America?

At the beginning of the twentieth century, America officially had a relatively negative reaction to immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe. According to the U.S. Immigration Commission from 1907, Austro-Hungarian immigrants in New York had been responsible for more crimes than any nationality other than Italians. Based on the incidence of various diseases, hygiene and the higher degree of criminality in comparison with those coming from other countries, the Commission concluded that these immigrants did not represent "good citizens."¹

While having a different view than the Commission on their qualities as citizens, immigrants to America also spoke of the incidence of crime, alcoholism and accidents in the United States and the inability to adapt oneself to the New World.²

A poor impression of immigrants can be expected from any native inhabitant who feels that his privileges are under threat. The causes of criminality and alcoholism can be various, with part of the blame placed on the uncongenial conditions to which immigrants had been subjected, conditions to which they were not accustomed.

The fact remains that only young people, in the prime of their working lives, left their homelands -- people who represented the best individuals in their villages and regions, and who passed stringent police and health controls prior to coming to America. They would be further examined when they received their passports, prior to boarding at their port of embarkation as well as prior to landing in New York. During the key years of emigration, from 1905 to 1907, one sees that for the most part young men left their villages looking for a better life and higher wages. Indeed, those under thirty represented 59.9% of all emigrants from Hungary. They left with full faith in their abilities and the possibility that they could make their mark in America.³

According to the reports of the Dillingham Commission, which based its findings on investigations into the sources of European emigration, visits to emigrant ports, and meetings with American consular officials, capable and ambitious young people came to the United States. Emigrants generally had been better educated and had higher literacy rates than the average in their homelands. The fact that those at the peak of their abilities left perhaps did not result in the greatest of gains for America, but it represented a great loss for their homelands, which remained without their most capable people who would spend the largest share of their working lives in America.

Fortunately, emigration from Austria-Hungary did not reach such dramatic proportions as in Ireland. The latter had 8,105,000 people in 1841, and only 4,705,000 in 1901. Nevertheless, Hungary, which had greater rates of emigration than Austria, saw its population growth significantly impacted by emigration. During the three years of the highest level of emigration, from 1905 through 1907, emigration from Hungary equaled 76% of the country's natural population growth rate, while in the following few years (1908 through 1913) emigrants continued to make up a third of the growth rate.⁴

Certain parts of the country faced depopulation -- a situation made worse by the fact that the best workers and most capable sons in each family would leave, leading even priests to urge their parishioners from the pulpit not to leave their homes.⁵

Upon arriving in America, only a minority proved unable to adjust, with a majority quickly adapting to the American style of life. Those who adapted most quickly consisted of emigrant agents, merchants, saloon keepers and bankers, who for the most part dealt in commercial transactions with their ethnic kin. In addition to acquiring

1 E. Wilder Spaulding, *The Quiet Invaders, The Story of the Austrian Impact upon America*, Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, Vienna 1968. p. 75.

2 Croat Dr. Ante Biankini (1860-1934) made special efforts to research alcoholism and criminality among immigrants, having himself lived through the immigrant experience, albeit different from the experiences of the great majority of this ethnic kinsmen. Dubrović, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-186.

3 Julianna Puskás, *Emigration from Hungary to the United States before 1914*, *Studia Historica Academiae scientiarum Hungaricae*, vol. 113, Akademiai Kiado, Budapest 1975, p. 8.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 6.

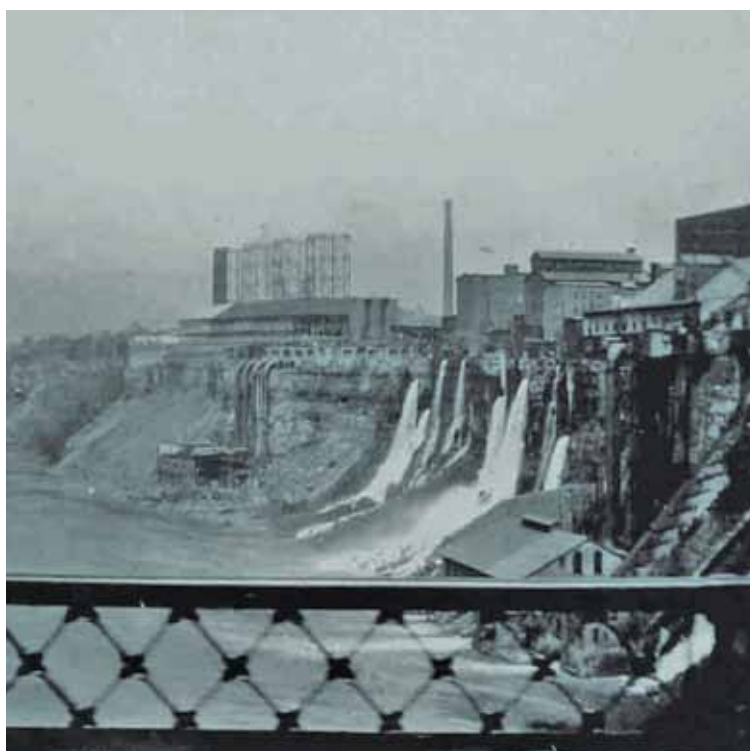
5 Dubrović, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-119.



The young American seaman Mario Giuriceo from a family which only settled in the United States in the 1920s. The Giuriceo family immigrated after the end of the "Great Wave," after the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. This industrious family, which had been better educated than most, found its bearings quickly in America and became completely enveloped in American life. (Giuriceo Family, New York)

Members of the Tarabocchia family from the Lošinj (Lussino) archipelago in the northern Adriatic off the Croatian coast. As at home, they worked in a shipyard in Brooklyn and became Americans. (Daniela Tarabocchia, Monfalcone)





Nikola Tesla – one of the greatest scientists of modern age (Smiljan, Croatia, 1856 - New York, 1943). He studied at the Technical College in Graz, and later in Prague. After working in Budapest for a short time, he headed to France. He arrived in New York on June 6, 1884. In 1889, when he left America to go abroad for the first time, he became convinced that America was one hundred years ahead of Europe, later writing in his memoirs (*My Inventions*, 1919), that “nothing has happened to this day to change my opinion.” His work leading to the construction of the Niagara Falls power plant and his research in telegraphy and radio gained him recognition as one of the greatest scientists of the modern age. (Nikola Tesla Museum, Belgrade; City Museum of Zagreb)



wealth, they moved relatively quickly up the social ladder. Once poor European peasants, who had only recently become “replanted” Americans, gradually became transformed into successful American citizens, with those at the highest levels entering the American middle class.⁶

In addition, however, numerous Central European intellectuals, scholars and artists sought and found their chance in America. The first musicians, physicists, anthropologists and university professors from Central Europe had already begun to make contributions to America by the end of the nineteenth century. Those born in America or who came here as small children became the fruit of European roots and American education. Those who came as educated individuals brought to America the best side of European upbringing, veneered by their own creativity and ambition. Some came only for a short time and had already become well-established in their fields, such as Antonín Dvořák, who became inspired by the American ambience to compose works important to both sides of the Atlantic. Still, a substantial number of people arrived in their youth and found a bountiful field for their work in America. These included the Czech anthropologist Aleš Hrdlička who received his initial education in his homeland, completed medical school in New York and went to Paris for further specialization. They also included physicists from Croatia and Serbia, Nikola Tesla and Michael Pupin. Even the publishing magnate from Hungary, Joseph Pulitzer, the founder of modern American journalism and the Pulitzer Prize, brought with him the essence of the spirit of Central Europe infused with the German, Hungarian and Jewish traditions of his family.

The first edition of *Who is Who in America*, published at the very end of the nineteenth century (1899-1900), included 32 “Austrians” in its list, placing immigrants from the Habsburg Monarchy seventh among those Americans born abroad, more than Italy, Russia and Sweden, which each had around fifteen persons listed.⁷

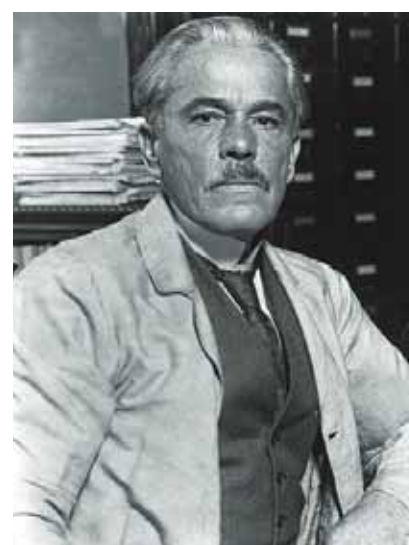
Despite the large number of artists and scholars who arrived between the end of the nineteenth century and the First World War, the greatest number came in the 1930s, fleeing Nazi persecution. For the most part, they consisted of Jews, mostly from Vienna, but also from other areas of the former Empire. Some of the most famous artists and scientists of the twentieth century fled to America, such as the composer Arnold Schönberg, film directors Otto Preminger, Fred Zinnemann and Fritz Lang, actor Hedy Lammar, painter and photographer Laszlo Móholy Nágy, photographer Andre Kertész, architects Richard Neutra and Marcela Breuer, and gallery owner Leo Castelli.

After the Second World War, some, such as the Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović, fled Communism, while others, such as the soccer player Gino Gard (Gardassanich), did not flee from persecution but simply sought a taste of the American Dream.

If one could compare the indisputable primacy of America over Europe, at least after the middle of the twentieth century, with certain ancient examples, such as the Roman conquest of Greece, one can say that while America may have conquered Europe, Europe has retorted with a quiet “cultural invasion,” similar to how ancient Greek culture overpowered the Romans. Central Europe played an important role in this silent invasion, which generally characterized American culture during the following decades.



Physicist Michael I. Pupin (Mihajlo Idvorski Pupin, Idvor, Serbia, 1854 - New York, 1935), was born in Vojvodina, in Serbia, as one of ten children of a poor peasant family. Between 1889 and 1929, he patented twenty-four inventions, the most famous of which is the “Pupin coil,” which extended the range of long-distance telephone communication by placing loaded coils of wire at predetermined intervals along the transmitting wire (a process known as pupinization). In his autobiography, *From Immigrant to Inventor* (1923), for which he received the Pulitzer Prize in 1924, he described his progress from a village shepherd to scientist. (Museum of Vojvodina, Novi Sad)



Aleš Hrdlička – The Pioneering Anthropologist (Humpolec, Czechia, 1869 – Washington, 1943) He developed the theory that the initial colonization of America came from Asia around 15,000 years ago. He argued that Native Americans had descended from Asians who had migrated across the Bering Strait, supporting his theory with arguments based on his examination of excavated human bones and on studies of the peoples of Mongolia, Tibet, Siberia, Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. (Jakov Radović, Zagreb)

⁶ John Bodnar, *The Transplanted, A History of Immigrants in Urban America : The Rise of an Immigrant Middle Class*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1987, pp. 117-143.

⁷ Spaulding, *op. cit.*, p. 75.



Erich von Stroheim – An actor playing German aristocrats (Vienna, Austria, 1885 - Maurepas, France, 1957)

He arrived in New York on November 25, 1909. Although of Jewish descent and having a middle class background, Erich wanted to embellish his past when he came to America and introduced himself as a noble. He started his career in Hollywood in 1914. He acted in a number of acclaimed movies, the most famous of which are Jean Renoir's *La Grande Illusion* (1938) and Billy Wilder's *Sunset Boulevard* (1950). Although not a "real" aristocrat, he is remembered for his roles as a German aristocrat. Von Stroheim also directed some celebrated movies, including *The Merry Widow* (1925). (Arcadia Publishing, Portsmouth, USA)

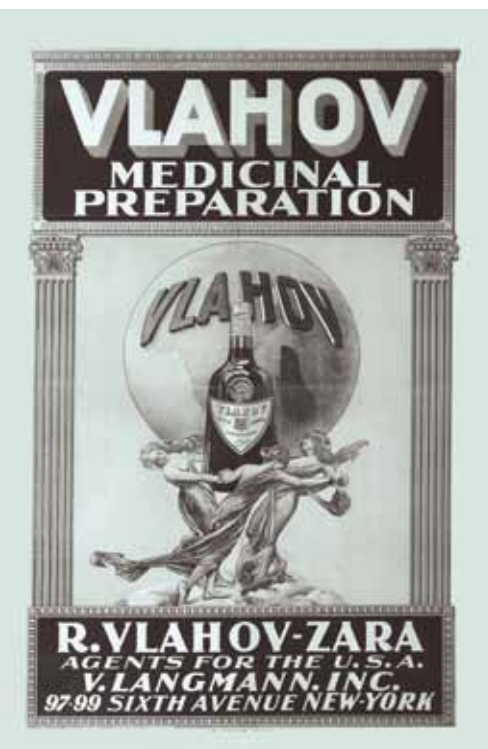


Bela Lugosi – Dracula from Romania (Lugos, today Lugoj, Romania, 1882 – Los Angeles, 1956)

The Hungarian theatre and movie actor Bela Lugosi was expelled from school when he was twelve. He began to act in his native region and in the early 1900s appeared in comedic operettas and Shakespearean dramas. Afterwards he also appeared in minor roles in Hungarian films. He received his first role on Broadway in 1922 (*The Red Poppy*), but became a true theatrical hit in 1927 after his role as Dracula in an adaptation of Bram Stoker's novel. The play appeared on Broadway 261 times before going on tour. While he appeared in his first American movie in 1923 (the fantasy-comedy *The Devil in the Cheese*), his role as Dracula in the 1931 Universal Pictures production (directed by Tod Browning) made him into a Hollywood star. That role so marked his film career that he was buried in a Dracula costume. (National Park Service, Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, New York)

The Newspaper Magnate Joseph Pulitzer (Mako, Hungary, 1847 - Charleston, South Carolina, 1911)

Newspaper magnate Joseph Pulitzer may be the perfect example of a person who achieved the American Dream, though he had to overcome hurdles on the way to his success. He is credited, together with William Randolph Hearst, with creating modern American journalism. His most important business move occurred in 1883 when he purchased the struggling New York World which, under his management, increased its circulation from 15,000 to 600,000. Along with his contributions to the development of journalism, he provided funds in 1912 for the establishment of a school of journalism at Columbia University. He died in 1911, leaving funds and instructions for the establishment of the Pulitzer Prizes for journalism and art (the Prizes were first awarded in 1917).



The ambitious Romano Vlahov of Zadar (Croatia) produced the well-known maraschino liquor and also sought to sell medicinal preparations on the American market. (Modiano SPA, Trieste)



The American Goalie – Gino Gardassanich - Gard

(Sušak/Rijeka, Croatia, 1922 – Westchester/Chicago, 2010) Gino Gard (known until 1949 as Gardassanich) began his successful soccer career as a goalie in his home town. After the Second World War, he played with the Rijeka club Kvarner (1946-1947), in Yugoslavia's First League, and later for a number of well-known Italian Clubs, Fiorentina, Marsala and Reggina. In 1949 he left Italy and played for Chicago's Slovak team in the National Soccer League of Chicago. He remained with the same club, which won a number of championships, until the end of his professional career in 1959. Gard's talents were recognized soon after his arrival in the United States -- he was the best American goalie in 1950, and he served as part of the American team in the FIFA World Cup in 1950. (Igor Kramarsich, Rijeka)

Joseph Pulitzer (left in the photograph) with his son Ralph. For decades he had been one of the most powerful and influential publishers in American journalism. (National Park Service, Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, New York)



