

LJUDI IZA RIJEČKOG TORPEDA

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Grupa riječkih poduzetnika (I. i P. Scarpa, F. Jellousheg, W. C. Smith, G. Verzegnassi, G. Francovich, C. Sporer) sredinom 19. stoljeća uočava kako je potrebno da Rijeka dobije tehnološku poveznicu s novim industrijama Europe. Osnivaju dioničko društvo i grade 1853./54. modernu ljevaonica metala (*Fonderia Mettalli*). Iako je ljevaonica zasnovana s ambicioznim ciljevima i mogla je zapošljivati do 400 radnika, to se pokazalo nedostižnim jer je u prvim godinama radilo do 25 radnika. Da bi svoje društvo oživjeli, iz Trsta su pozvali engleskog inženjera *Roberta Whiteheada* koji u Rijeku dolazi 1858. godine. Whitehead odmah reorganizira ljevaonicu i počinje izrađivati velike brodske parne strojeve za Austrijsku ratnu mornaricu. Mijenja ime ljevaonice u Riječki tehnički zavod (*Stabilimento tecnico in Fiume*). Broj radnika odmah je narastao na 200, da bi 1877. dosegao oko 500 zaposlenih. U to doba Whitehead se povezuje s Riječaninom Giovannijem Luppisom (Ivanom Vukićem), umirovljenim kapetanom Austrijske ratne mornarice, koji mu predlaže da razvije njegovu ideju "spasitelja obale" (*Küstenretter*) u novo mornaričko oružje. Nakon dvogodišnjih pokusa, Whitehead krajem 1866. uspješno predstavlja Luppis-Whiteheadovo torpeda Austrijskoj mornarici. Nakon toga tvornica prelazi na proizvodnju torpeda, lansirnih torpednih cijevi i visokotlačnih kompresora zraka.

Razvojem proizvodnje broj radnika u tvornici stalno raste da bi na prelazu stoljeća dosegnuo oko 800 zaposlenih, a prije Prvoga svjetskog rata, 1913./14., čak 1 499 radnika. Zaposlenici tvornice torpeda posebno su cijenjeni stručnjaci, dobro plaćeni, vjerni svojoj tvornici, tvornica je rasadnik novih znanja i tehnologija za druge riječke tvornice.

Nakon završetka rata, broj radnika u tvornici torpeda smanjio se pa su krajem 1925. bila zaposlena 383 radnika i službenika. Prelaskom tvornice u talijanske ruke te tijekom priprema za nov svjetski sukob, broj radnika raste – 1936. već ih je oko 1 000, a maksimum je dosegnut tijekom Drugoga svjetskog rata, kada u lipnju 1943. tamo radi 4 209 ljudi. Na kraju rata, u travnju 1945., taj se broj smanjio na oko 400 radnika.

Povratkom u jugoslavensko okruženje, rad tvornice oživljava pa ona 1950. zapošljava 1 696 ljudi – u vojnom dijelu 1 457, a u civilnom 239 osoba. Godine 1962. u tvornici rade 1 952 osobe – u vojnom dijelu 1 775, u civilnom 177 radnika i službenika. Od 1966. tvornica napušta proizvodnju torpeda i prelazi na proizvodnju dizelskih motora, motorne opreme i vozila. Godine 1968. u njoj rade 1 543 radnika, a 1972. godine 2 093 radnika i službenika. Malo poslije zbog brojnih razloga tvornica ulazi u poslovne probleme pa se smanjuje opseg proizvodnje i broj zaposlenih. Tako su 1993. u njoj radila 1 053 radnika, 1996. godine 854 radnika, a nakon otvorenog stečaja 2005. taj broj pao na 40. Danas više nema ni tvornice *Torpedo* ni njenih radnika. Na mjestu bivše tvornice torpeda sada djeluju neki novi poduzetnici pa će budućnost pokazati hoće li slavna prošlost biti nadmašena.

PEOPLE BEHIND THE TORPEDO IN RIJEKA

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A group of entrepreneurs in Rijeka (*I. and P. Scarpa, F. Jellousheg, W. C. Smith, G. Verzegnassi, G. Francovich, C. Sporer*) in mid-19th century perceived the need to provide Rijeka a technological link with the new industries of Europe. They set up a joint-stock company and in 1853/54 built a modern foundry for metals (*Fonderia Metalli*) with the aim to open Rijeka's economy to the advances of the industrial revolution. Although the foundry was set up with ambitious goals and could have employed up to 400 workers, this proved unattainable, and in the first few years only up to 25 workers were employed. In order to enthuse life into their joint-stock enterprise, they invited the English engineer Robert Whitehead from Trieste. Whitehead came to Rijeka in 1858. Immediately, he reorganized the foundry, and started to produce large steam machines for ships for the Austrian Navy. He changed the name of the foundry into the Rijeka Technical Establishment (*Stabilimento tecnico in Fiume*). The number of workers quickly grew to 200, and in 1877 reached a number of 500. At that time Whitehead links up with *Giovanni Lupis (Ivan Vukić)* from Rijeka, a retired captain of the Austrian Navy, who proposes to Whitehead to develop his idea of the "Coast saver" (*Küstenretter*) into a new marine weapon. After two years of testing, by the end of 1866 the Luppis-Whitehead torpedo was successfully presented to the Austrian Navy. After that, the factory switches to the production of torpedoes, shafts for the launching of torpedoes and high-pressure air compressors. With the growth of the production, the number of workers in the factory also grew, and at the turn of the century reached a number of 800. Just preceding the First World War, in 1913/1914 the number of workers was 1499. These employees were respected professional workers, well paid, loyal to their company, and their factory was a seeding ground for new knowledge and technologies for other factories in Rijeka.

Upon the end of the war, the number of workers shrunk, and by the end of 1925 there were 383 workers and clerks. With the transition of the torpedo factory into Italian hands, and during the preparations for a new world conflict, the number of workers is again on the rise. Thus, in 1936, their number is around 1000, and the peak employment figure was 4209 in June 1943. At the end of the war, in April 1945, this number was reduced to around 400 workers.

With the return of the factory into the Yugoslav environment, the volume of work picks up again and in 1950 the factory employs 1696 people, of which 1457 in the military programme and 239 in the civilian one. In 1962 the factory employs 1952 persons, 1775 in the military part and 177 workers and clerks in the civilian part. Since 1966 the factory ceases with torpedo production, switching over to the production of diesel engines, machine equipment and vehicles. In 1968 it employs 1543 workers, and in 1972 a total of 2093 workers and clerks. In subsequent years, due to a number of reasons, the factory is assailed by business problems and the production shrunk, so that in 1993 it had 1053 workers, in 1996 their number was 854. Upon declaring bankruptcy in 2005 the number of workers was down to 40. Today, the "Torpedo" factory exists no longer, nor do its workers. On the location of the previous torpedo factory some new entrepreneurs are developing their businesses and it remains to be seen whether the glorious past will be overcome.