



## FREE LOVE AND ARTIFICIAL PARADISES

In Fiume, with its atmosphere of “**time suspended**” and total subversion of social mores, not only the soldiers, but also the women, engaged in behaviour marked by **sexual freedom**.

“It was a flourishing period for rapid, impromptu, casual sexual relations between the soldiers and uninhibited girls or the prostitutes that filled the numerous brothels”. According to records and the memories of those present, the Fiume episode was “a **period of delirium and revelry** [...]. Everyone enjoys themselves here, making love to the girls of Fiume, who have a reputation for being beautiful and permissive”. The reports of the **Dionysian atmosphere** that held sway in the city did not fail to elicit outrage amongst the more conventional, including among the left-wing. [...] Alongside the widespread practice of heterosexual sex (including group sex) [...] there were **homosexual relations**, which came out freely in the general climate of **subversion of traditional morality**. [...] **Cross-dressing and role reversal** between men and women were also not uncommon.<sup>1</sup>

I never saw officers whiling the night away playing cards – all the recreation was aimed at the **immediate gratification of the senses**.<sup>2</sup>

And, in a city which appears to have chosen **systematic transgression** and libertarian vitalism as its pole star, **narcotics** were naturally in regular use, cocaine in particular: “There was a basement, all decorated with polar bear skins; at the back, among incense smoke, **unmentionable orgies** went on, alternating with **Satanic libations**: and neither were artificial paradises out of the picture. **Cocaine** by the barrel-load snowed down on these encounters, and steaming blood was sipped from human skulls ...” --- **Léon Kochnitzky**

“Although her physique seemed overly robust, her mouth was extraordinarily beautiful, and she was immediately, spontaneously kissed. She looked trapped in her clothes, didn’t speak and made hand gestures first rejecting me then beckoning me. When I removed her scarf I recognized ‘her’ as one of the soldiers who came to pass the evenings with us, and who promptly ran off towards the woods”.

“[...] Enrico, wearing Grethe’s dress, appeared, making a number of nimble dance moves, like a more beautiful, more brazen version of Grethe. His bare arms, decorated with long ribbons, accompanied the movements of his legs. My friend jumped up onto the sofa to chase him, like a faun chasing a nymph, but the agile Enrico got away, still dancing. Then out of the same door came Grethe dressed as a soldier”.<sup>4</sup> --- **Giovanni Comisso**



“Poor Nitti is beside himself over the shameful goings on in Fiume [...]. Not only have they proclaimed the Republic of Fiume, but they are now preparing a landing at Ancona, two air raids over Italy and other such delights. Fiume has become a brothel, a hideout for the underworld and prostitutes of all kinds. He [Nitti] told me about a certain Marquise Incisa, who goes around dressed like a soldier, complete with dagger. Unfortunately he cannot say all of these things in Parliament, for the honour of Italy”.<sup>5</sup>

Filippo Turati.

1. Giovanni Savegnago, critical review of the book by Claudia Salaris *Alla festa della rivoluzione. Artisti e libertari con D'Annunzio a Fiume*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2002.

Source: <http://www.pavonerisorse.to.it/storia900/libri/fiume.rtf>

2. Giovanni Comisso, *Le mie stagioni*, Edizioni di Treviso – Libreria Canova, 1951, pp. 73-75.

Source: [http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utente:Justinianus\\_da\\_Perugia/Storia\\_dell'Italia\\_antica](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utente:Justinianus_da_Perugia/Storia_dell'Italia_antica)

3. Giovanni Savegnago, critical review of the book by Claudia Salaris *Alla festa della rivoluzione. Artisti e libertari con D'Annunzio a Fiume*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2002.

4. Source: [http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utente:Lupo\\_rosso/Sandbox/consultazione/personaggi\\_impresa\\_fiumana](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utente:Lupo_rosso/Sandbox/consultazione/personaggi_impresa_fiumana)

5. Letter from Filippo Turati to his partner Anna Kuliscioff. Source: [http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impresa\\_di\\_Fiume#cite\\_note-15](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impresa_di_Fiume#cite_note-15)