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## *Hungarian Studies Review*

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### **PAPERS**

Thomas Kabdebo examines Jacobin military notions and their origins in constitutional proposals in Hungary. George Feuer discusses the contributions of Hungarian scientists in the development of biochemistry. Aniko Varpalotai writes about Physical Education and Socialist ideology in Hungary.

### **Book Reviews**

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## Hungarian Studies Review

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## **Some Jacobin Military Notions and Their Roots in Constitutional Proposals in Hungary**

*Thomas Kabdebo*

For King and shackled slave, a future and a fate!  
(J. Batsányi: On the Changes in France)

The Jacobin conspiracy in Hungary was the Habsburg Empire's most significant progressive movement in the last decade of the 18th century. Unlike its sister movements: the Austrian, Czech, Romanian, Polish and the Southern Slav associations of enlightened burghers, administrators, and intellectuals who had just the general ideals of the French Revolution as their goal, the Hungarians combined their aspirations of national independence with a revolutionary effort to achieve them. Like everyone else, living in the territories not liberated by revolutionary France, they were put down. Tracked by Francis II's police spies, they were arrested; interrogated in Vienna and in Buda, the leaders were tried and executed; the proven members of their twin societies—some 47 people—were imprisoned in Kufstein and their sympathisers were forced out of office in provincial Hungary.<sup>1</sup>

The historical postmortems, while never denying the symbolic importance of the Jacobins in the Hungarian context, brand the conspiracy as premature, isolated and lacking in the practical understanding of the exigencies of the situation. Perhaps we may venture to say that the Jacobin movement had only flourished and reached immediate practical results where, as in Belgium, French arms assisted it. Martinovics and Hajnóczy, the leaders of the Hungarian conspiracy, may have built up their organization also in the hope of some type of French assistance.

The conspirators had formed two secret societies: *the Society of the Reformers* and the *Society of Liberty and Equality*. Three directors of the latter—the higher of the two societies—namely

Laczkovics, Szentmarjay and Hajnóczy, confessed to their inquisitors that they had anchored their hopes in the *Convention* organizing and concerting revolts in Central Europe.<sup>2</sup> Although no such revolts were ever organized and no French military assistance was ever promised, it did not stop the leader, Martinovics, from creating illusions about them nor did it stop the conspirators from believing in these illusions. Whether or not the country as a whole was ready for full scale revolt and military action, the members of these secret societies (Benda estimates them at ca. 300) believed in planning such action.

Looking at it from the point of view of independence, the roots of the conspiracy can be traced to the *noble insurrection* of 1790 against the Germanising and centralising plans of Joseph II. The Hungarian nobility enjoyed the interdependent prerogatives of tax exemption and the duty “to bear arms in defense of the country.”<sup>3</sup> The call to arms of the nobles was, in 1790 called the *banderium* because it was an *insurrection* not called by the King but by the nobles to remedy constitutional ills. József Hajnóczy, Deputy County Lieutenant and the best jurist of his age, was busy drafting and re-drafting his constitutional proposals that Parliament should present to the King; János Laczkovics, captain of the Graeven hussars, was engaged in submitting proposals and memoranda to “Magyarize” the Hungarian regiments of the army.<sup>4</sup> (Laczkovics, who had distinguished himself in the Turkish war of 1788-1789, seems to have held the opinion that the Hungarians constituted the real pride of the Imperial army.) The *insurrection* extended its activities to take the form of encouraging the escape of regulars from the closing stages of the Turkish war and their joining the “banderia” (the noblemen’s army); throughout the country clerks and the Diet’s deputies became involved in rebellious, independentist, nationalist correspondence with officers in the army. Meanwhile the Diet itself—having achieved concessions from the dying Joseph II—persevered with the questions of autonomy together with the proposals to preserve the privileges of the Hungarian counties, and sought to regain those privileges, juridical and civil, that Joseph had wrenched away from them.

Looking again at the mood of the *insurrection* and the subsequent conspiracy, the conflict of loyalty of the participants will be apparent. Hajnóczy, Laczkovics, but also Szentmarjay, Sigray, Pál Óz or Szolártsek, in fact most of the conspirators to

be, had been Josephinists. Some, like the non-noble Hajnóczy, owed their appointments to the emperor, others endorsed the side of the royal plan that had tried to lighten the burden of the serfs, had spread schools around the dominions, and encouraged French culture. Yet, at the same time, the anti-Habsburg sentiment enveloped the country and the Hungarian deputies made overtures to Frederic William II of Prussia in the hope of securing his help for a change of dynasty. Since Leopold's skillful Austrian-Prussian Reichenbach agreement dashed their hopes of offering the crown to the Duke of Weimar, the nobility in the Diet of 1791 accepted a compromise which was to give up independence in exchange for an assurance of autonomy for the county system and their privileges as a class. Those, like Hajnóczy, who had compromised themselves as champions of a wider definition of Magyar nationality, were dismissed or pensioned off, while those who had owed their office to Josephinist legislation found themselves "outside the bastions," or out in the cold.

Assuming that a nation should only flex its muscles if it had military potential to match that of its adversary, or if it could hope for an interventionary force assisting it, we should cast a quick glance at the Hungarian army. The last time the *noble insurrection* had expressed its strength was in 1741 when the Parliament offered *vitam et sanguinem* to Maria Theresa and contributed 26,000 soldiers. Some of these had been absorbed into existing army units, others formed new regular regiments. In Hungary the system of a regular army goes back to 1715 when—after eight years of haggling—the nobles accepted that the *insurrection* alone "was not enough to defend the country." By 1715 the Hungarian contingent in the Habsburg army amounted to 11 infantry regiments: about 25,000 people—10 regiments of cuirassiers: about 10,000 people—3 regiments of dragoons: 3,000 people—4 hussar regiments which are 4,000 people. Altogether 42,000 people. Their own regulars of the standing army, therefore, outnumbered 2:1 the total strength of the *insurrection*. But, the theoretical combined strength of the Hungarian army—out of whom the standing army regulars were, as a rule, posted outside the country, and the *insurrection* soldiers, as a rule, inside the country—could have, at least numerically, matched the rest of the Habsburg regulars. In the year 1740-1741, at the beginning of the Habsburg wars of succession,

Hungary contributed 60,000 soldiers, 35,000 coming from Hungary proper, the rest from Croatia, Slavonia and Transylvania.<sup>5</sup>

In order to draw other general conclusions, it is worth our while to refer to lesser known aspects of the negotiating process between 1708 and 1715 that resulted in the formation of the Hungarian standing army.<sup>6</sup> The type of taxes which made the keeping of an army possible at all times, the mode of taxation, the general deployment and the control of the army, are dealt with in Béla Király's *Hungary in the Late 18th Century* and in Kálmán Benda's studies.<sup>7</sup> We merely wish to call attention to their general point, which concurs with that of Hóman-Szekfű, that tax and the recruitment was always made dependent on the Hungarian Parliament.<sup>8</sup> The particular point Király makes is that—with the exception of the four years between 1786 and 1790—the Habsburg army units serving in Hungary were supplied with food and fodder directly by the Hungarian counties. We would like to add that this could mean—at least theoretically—that in the event of popular discontent the local population could influence the army and in the event of open hostilities with the Habsburgs, as the vital supply line could be cut.

The negotiating process which established the army, the taxes and the supply system, was born of the recognition that a plain un-negotiated military tax, such as the 4 million crowns levied in 1697, could spark off, in fact did spark off an insurrection. When Joseph I convened Parliament in Pozsony in 1708, the chief rebel, Rákóczi, was invited (along with the counties). He refused. The assembled nobility proposed to defend the country by always staying within the frontiers, accepting that it is the King's duty to defend the borders. In 1709 we see the King's rescript which advised the nobility to pay tax in lieu of service. The final answer of the Parliament was that they were not prepared to pay direct taxes, but were willing to administer and apportion the taxes, according to the strength of taxpaying towns and counties. The Estates didn't say, just implied, that they reluctantly accepted the formation of a standing army. It is interesting to note that János Pálffy, the loyal, royal general, voiced the wish of the Diet: only Hungarians may bear higher ranks and the Hungarian regiments should be posted in Hungary. Still in 1711 an ad hoc committee, headed by the archbishop of Kalocsa Imre Csáky, proposed a



“systema militare” with one-third foreign and two-third Magyar troops, which was changed to one-half and one-half by Parliament. The 1714 Parliament requested that billeting and victualling should remain in the hands of the Hungarian Estates. Finally the Act 1715/VIII acknowledged the *de facto* Habsburg army of the day as the standing army, and seven years later, in 1722, the Concursus (a quorum of parliamentary and state officials) transferred the care of billeting to the King.

For a standing army which the nobility did not want to pay for and the feudal tenants and the towns couldn't quite afford, the recruiting was done in recruiting districts delineated by Parliament. Interestingly the regiments recruited their reserves from the recruiting districts where they happen to be stationed, with the occasional proviso that there should be a roughly equal proportion of voluntary recruits and conscripted persons.

Although Hungarians never filled all, or even the majority of officer positions in the eighteenth-century army, the military command for over a decade was under András Hadik as president of the War Council. Moreover, the new regiments of 1741 were initially headed by Hungarian magnates as commanding officers. At the beginning of the French wars the Hungarian regiments—as from the lands of the Hungarian crown—amounted to one-third of the Habsburg forces, with nine regiments of Hungarian hussars, a small portion of the budding artillery and whatever remained of the Hungarian noble guards as specials.<sup>9</sup> The total Habsburg army of 295,000 was composed of:

57 infantry regiments, 3 garrison regiments, 17 frontier regiments, artillery, sappers, miners, river patrol, 34 cavalry regiments and 13 military cordon detachments.

The troop count of the regiments from the crown land of St. Stephen amounted to a figure in excess of 90,000.<sup>11</sup>

As we have seen the “nationalist” demands of János Laczkovics' Graeven regiment had had a respectable prehistory in the early parliamentary debates, but they have been echoed by the submissions of other regiments too. In 1790 Hungarian cavalry regiments in Tuscany, the Splényi, Károlyi, Pálffy, Gyulay and Erdődy regiments, demanded the unification of the Magyar regiments into a Magyar army, under a separate *Council of War* which would be responsible to Parliament alone.

These were, of course, the same demands as Laczkovics' and all echoed the sentiments expressed in the beginning of the century; and notwithstanding article 12/1790's pronouncement of power-sharing between King and Parliament, there could be little doubt that the demands were not unconstitutional. Another 58 years would have to elapse, with an independent Hungarian government in the saddle, that on 26th April 1848 it should be decided that 10 permanent National Guard battalions should be set up—which was to form the nucleus of a new Hungarian standing army.<sup>12</sup>

Leopold II (1790-1792) manoeuvred not only the nobility into a sanctioned compromise position between 1790-1792, but he also bribed or cajoled progressive professionals to accept his kind of measured Machiavellian enlightenment that tolerated secret societies far and wide of the empire with built-in spies in the leadership.<sup>13</sup> In Austria, next to the prime mover of the Jacobin movement Baron von Riedel sat the secret police agent Franz Gotthardi, a coffee-house owner; Nikola Skrlec of Zagreb and Jakov Secanac freemasons kept in touch with Count Lamberg of Vienna and Ignaz Cordova of Prague, their letters were copied and excerpted by the Hungarian informer Ignác Martinovics, himself one of the eminent illuminati.<sup>14</sup> The Hofkommission investigated the conspiracy of the Lemberg Police Commissioner Trall, who had been democratic.<sup>15</sup> But it would be wrong to condemn the activity of secretly informing the King in an age where the monarch appeared to be expressing the collective will. It is well to remember that the intellectually disposed professionals and nobles were elected to be his councillors, like Martinovics, when everything, such as Laczkovics' reinstatement or his full pension in the army depended on the King.

A change of personality and a change of political climate, and within a year Hungary was seething with excitement once again. Francis II mistrusted and alienated the progressives; he declared war on France, the country of their ideals. When this (indirectly) led to dictatorship and the loss of crowned heads in France, his new ministers toughened his security, his judiciary and even his policy of recruitment. They enforced censorship. The reaction of the professionals and enlightened nobles was to seek more radical organisations, to fight for the liberty of man, against—what they called “tyranny,” and “autocracy.” “I call Jacobins all those who like the French constitution and who are

glad of French military successes,”<sup>16</sup> wrote one Hungarian correspondent to another in 1793, when—following the examples of French clubs at many points of the Habsburg empire—the Masons, Rosecrucians, Illuminati and even some Franciscan, Jesuit and Dominican priests became, or were labelled Jacobins.

The two interlocking Hungarian clubs implicated some 300 individuals: noblemen, administrators, ex-soldiers, lawyers, priests, professors and writers, although, for the “lack of evidence” only 47 of these were tried. Since it was the leader Ignác Martinovics who was the first to be arrested in Vienna on 23rd July 1794 and subsequently his co-directors: Hajnóczy, Szentmarjay, Laczkovics, Sigray, Óz and Szolártsek on 16th August 1794, most of the others had some time to burn documents and work out ways mitigating their involvement.

Each of the two societies: the *Hungarian Reformers’ Secret Society* and the *Society of Liberty and Equality* had a written constitution. The *Reformers’* catered to the liberal nobility and the burghers. Written in Latin, their rules appeared to have been composed in the autumn of 1793 by Ferenc Gyurkovics, a professor at Pest, with an important addition in May 1794 by Martinovics, at that time titular abbot of Szászvár, and what we would call today: a double agent. In the Constitution, which takes the form of questions and answers, Martinovics declares that an *armed insurrection* should be organized in Hungary on the pattern of the Polish war of liberation.<sup>17</sup> This is corroborated by his subsequent confession.<sup>18</sup> The constitution warns that should the French win the war, nobility would disappear, and Hungary would be transformed into a republic which shall dethrone the house of Austria. “Ad arma cives Juremus vitam liberam, independentiam a domo Austriaca...”<sup>19</sup> Hungarian soldiers serving abroad would be recalled, while Germans serving in Hungary, either demobilized or chased out by the armed citizens. It will all happen when the Reformers will have increased in number and had a trained core.

*The Constitution of the Society of Liberty and Equality* was written by Martinovics in French under the pseudonym: *Democrîte la Montagne*. It bears the influence of the *Contrat Social*, and of Holbach, Volnay, Collot D’Herbois and undoubtedly, of Thomas Paine’s *The Rights of Man*, which the Hungarian Jacobins must have known in French translation.<sup>20</sup> The two “directors” of the society were the two separate

Hungarian translators of its constitution: Szentmarjay and Laczkovics.

The aim of the society was to assume power after the country had risen and the *Reformers* have served their role in popularising the insurrection and the ensuring of the transformation. The *insurrection* merits a sub-chapter in the *Egalitarian Constitution*.

#### Chap. IV. De l'Insurrection.\*

Q. Que faut-il faire aux esclaves, s'ils recouvrent leurs forces?

R. Il leur faut faire valoir leurs droits naturels par une insurrection.

Q. Que veut dire l'insurrection?

R. Si le peuple esclave *se lève en masse*, et si par l'union des ses forces et des talents il brise le joug de son oppresseur: voilà l'insurrection.

Q. Pendant l'insurrection, quelle marche doit-il suivre le peuple?

R. La marche de la sagesse et de la moderation; il ne doit punir que les traîtres a la patrie, et organiser la forme representative democratique.

Q. Quelle difference y-a-t-il entre le peuple éclairé et abruti par rapport a l'insurrection?

R. Le peuple éclairé la fait sans effusion de sang, et sans y mêler ses vengances particulieres. Le peuple abruti tombe dans la plus affreuse anarchie, d'ou il ne sort qu'avec bien de la peine l'ordre et la liberté.

Q. Mais contre qui doit avoir lieu l'insurrection?

R. Contre de triple fléaux du genre humain; contre les rois, la noblesse, et les prêtres, toutefois qu'ils abusent de leur pouvoir.<sup>21</sup>

The pivot of the insurrection should be the "lève en masse," according to both documents. But the tone of the documents leaves no doubt that the members were expecting the approach of the victorious French armies.

There had been Hungarian soldiers in French captivity and

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\* Certain imperfections to the modern eye are due to the 18th century writer whose mother tongue was not French. Please note that the 18th century French of foreigners was different from the literary French of today.

captive French soldiers were kept in Buda in the summer of 1794. There is evidence of fraternisation with the populace, and a recognition by the French soldiers that the Hungarians, at least in sympathy, were on their side. But was there any more to the French connection than chance encounters, and the spread of French ideas? Was there any more to French assistance than the prisoners of war distributing *liberté-égalité* uniform buttons? <sup>22</sup>

According to the *unproven* theory of Ferenc Pulszky—himself a freemason and an inheritor of some Jacobin ideals—there had been a secret plot to free 3,000 French captives which was to have been the start of the uprising in 1794. <sup>23</sup> Martinovics, during his interrogation claimed to have received money from the Convention, and encouragement from Robespierre to assist in the insurrection. True or false, it had been the argument that suppressed the doubts of Hajnóczy, Laczkovics and Szentmarjay as it had lent viability to a possible rise of the people.

Since there was strict surveillance of all foreigners in the Habsburg monarchy from 1792 onwards, direct links between French and Hungarian Jacobin clubs were unlikely. Nonetheless, French clubs, aware of their fame as *exporters of liberty* often recited the verse: “Jusques a Vienne et dans Rome/Faites des Droits del’homme/Connaitre la majesté/” <sup>24</sup> just as the Hungarians sung *Ça ira*, the *Carmagnole* and the *Marseillaise*.

It is unlikely that any of the Hungarian Jacobins, despite their cultural and philosophical orientation and their excellent written French had ever visited France. The exception was Martinovics who in 1781 had accompanied the Polish magnate Count Potocki, the author of the 1791 Polish constitution, on his West European travels, in the course of which, he may have visited scholars like the historian G.T. Raynal or printers in France. He certainly had corresponded with Condorcet although none of his letters have ever turned up in France. On the other hand no one has completed a systematic examination of French archives from this angle. Nor, for that matter, have his pamphlets been scrutinised from the point of view of the printer and the place of printing. We do know that the Hungarian Jacobins were loosely allied with the Austrian ones and that one of the Austrian leaders, lieutenant Hebenstreit, had tried to convey a military invention to the *Convention*. A Protestant pastor, Karl Traugott Held took the secret design of this “War machine,” which was invented to help the French against the Austrians, to Paris, and

petitioned the Committee of Public Safety on 20 Thermidor, *an* II. Although the Austrian police, which had learned about this mission, suspected that the envoy was seeking the help of the Convention for Austrian revolutionaries, the French in fact arrested Held as an Austrian spy and only released him after several weeks in gaol. We do not know what happened to the war machine.<sup>25</sup>

The only figure who might have had contacts with Martinovics from Paris was Cloutz Johann Baptist a Prussian Jacobin nobleman. He had gone to Paris in 1792, played an active role there until 1794 when, as a Hebertist, he was guillotined on 23rd March 1794.

The nearest the Committee of Public Safety came to a plan that involved the “liberation” of a good portion of Europe was at the beginning of 1793 when Barere advocated that France defend “its natural frontiers” by assisting the formation of two friendly neighbouring republics. One would be the Roman, composed of most of the Italian states, the other one would be the German containing Switzerland, Bavaria, Austria with her dominions including the Transdanubian part of Hungary, Croatia and Dalmatia.<sup>26</sup> No Hungarian would ever have welcomed such a plan.

The idea of the *levée en masse* was very likely, germinating in the French successes of 1793 as reported by the *Moniteur* which all Hungarian Jacobins read. Furthermore, in a written submission to his interrogators on 10 March 1795 Martinovics claimed that even Montesquieu had observed in *De l'esprit des lois* (Livre VIII. Chap. LX) that whereas Hungary had little money it had military potential.<sup>27</sup>

The term *levée en masse* covers several connected meanings and it evolves with the passage of time. In a certain sense, the Hungarian Jacobins could have discovered it in Hungarian history: the crusader-type recruitment among the peasants by Capistrano for Hunyadi in 1456, the rising of Dózsa's peasants in 1514, the popular support for Bocskay and Rákóczi were all that tradition. Martinovics warns in his note written in September 1794 from prison that Laczkovics' father alone, could arm 5,000 peasants.<sup>28</sup> Yet the *levée* in the societies' constitution must have meant a plan for a conscription law similar to what Danton proposed in the Committee of Public Safety and which subsequently had practical results. The clue to what the

Hungarian Jacobins must have meant is to be found in Martinovics' plan for a new *Constitution for Hungary* that he worked out together with Laczkovics in 1793 and which they had based on an earlier *constitutional proposal* by Hajnóczy.<sup>29</sup> Under Chapter 12 entitled "Von der ungarischen Armee" we find a statement that Hungary's total military might, if conscription was introduced, could reach a total of 300,000 soldiers.<sup>30</sup> This may not sound at all fantastic if we consider that Carnot in the years 1793-1795 raised 14 armies in France with the total strength of 500,000 people.<sup>31</sup>

Beyond the societies' closer circle which included only one professional soldier, Laczkovics, their sympathisers included cavalry general János Fekete, correspondent of Voltaire and dilettante in the arts, Count Mihály Sztáray, former imperial guard and prominent member of the noble resistance of 1790, and many other gentlemen who had had military experience.

All that does not add up to more than saying that Hungary seems to have had the potential to stage a revolt, yet it had neither possessed the wide base of a burgher class that would have supported it, nor had the organization that could have converted peasant and noble to fight for the same cause. Without that, the *levée en masse*—militarily always a possibility—would have been the sleeping body of an army in revolt. Since the Jacobin conspiracy was nipped in the bud in 1794 it remained to be seen how far the Jacobin ideas were to be the portents of the future.

As a witness of its almost immediate consequences we may quote colonel Gerard Lacuée, Napoleon's official representative, who in 1802 wrote to Paris, that *the memory of the martyrs was revered in Hungary although their imprudence was blamed.*<sup>32</sup>

The ideas of the Jacobins, in a new context, came to blossom in the 1848/1849 Hungarian Revolution and war of independence, when the revolutionary left wing built its programme of social reform on Jacobin principles, and the middle nobility, their reluctant allies, drew on their own tradition of the resistance of 1790 to enforce *national* reform. In a certain sense, as Professor Deák in his book on Kossuth reminds us, the freedom fight tried out the *levée en masse* in October and December 1848, then again in May-June 1849 with very limited success.

What did happen in 1849 was, in a military sense, similar to the French successes of 1793: although recruited rather than conscripted, the Hungarian new recruits eventually blended in

with the regulars of a standing army, not unlike the French conscripts who had been regimented with the veterans.



This article presented one facet of the Jacobin military notion: *levée en masse* which connects the French revolutionary wars with the “catechisms” of the Hungarian Jacobins.\* As the aims of their secret societies had spelt it out the Hungarian Jacobins wanted to overthrow Austrian absolutism with the help of an armed revolt. The short analysis of Jacobin action in other Habsburg territories shows that none of the other regions had a serious commitment to revolution. In Hungary, on the other hand, there was a tradition of “armed resistance” as well as a standing army, both of which could be boosted numerically. It is conjectured that through the military expertise of some top Hungarian Jacobins, the leading *Liberty and Equality* society had hoped to involve the army into a revolution, an army whose numbers would swell by the *levée en masse*. Furthermore, the directors of the society were led to believe (by Martinovics, their leader) that a Hungarian revolt would be followed by similar revolts in other Habsburg lands. The leaders of the society believed in help from the Convention—it is conjecture that such assistance might be military—although there was no evidence of any promised assistance. Most probably it was the fabrication of Martinovics, but such fabrication was necessary in making out a convincing case for the successful revolution.

#### NOTES

1. Cf. K.Benda, *A magyar jakobinusok* (The Hungarian Jacobins) (Budapest: Bibliotheca Kiadó, 1947): pp. I-XXVIII and Albert Gárdonyi, *A magyar jakobinusok története* (The history of the Hungarian Jacobins) in: *A magyar jakobinusok emlékezete* (The memory of the Hungarian Jacobins) (Budapest: a Fővárosi Tanács, 1919), pp. 3-56.
2. V. Fraknói, *Martinovics és társainak összeesküvése* (The conspiracy of Martinovics and his associates) (Budapest: Ráth Mór, 1880), pp. 262-263.
3. B. Király, *Hungary in the Late Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), pp. 183, 261.
4. K. Benda, *A magyar jakobinusok iratai* (The papers of the Hungarian Jacobins) (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1942-1957), 3 vols., Vol. 1, pp. 207-13. With copious notes the original petition of 5 July 1790 is reproduced in Benda's compilation. The co-author György Festetich was deputy colonel of the Graeven hussars. After 1790 he retired from the army and established the famous Georgicon at Keszthely.

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\* The name given to the *Constitutions* of the two secret societies.



5. J. Bánlaky, *A magyar nemzet hadtörténete* (The military history of the Hungarian nation) (Budapest, 1941), p. 113.
6. This and the following paragraphs are based on D. Szabó, *Az állandó hadsereg beczikkelyezésének története III. Károly korában* (A History of the codification of the Hungarian permanent army at the time of Charles III.) (Budapest, 1911).
7. K. Benda, *Emberbarát vagy hazafi?* (Humanitarian or patriot?) (Budapest: Gondolat, 1978), pp. 336-7.
8. B. Hóman and Gy. Szekfű, *Magyar történet* (Hungarian history) (Budapest: Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda, 1928-1935), Vol. 5, Ch. 1.
9. P. Újhelyi, *Az állandó hadsereg története, 1657-1780* (The history of the standing army) (Budapest, 1914), Chapter V.
10. C.A. Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1966), p. 130.
11. Bánlaky, p. 276.
12. I. Deák, *The Lawful Revolution* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1979), p. 135.
13. D. Silagi, *Jakobiner in der Habsburger-Monarchie* (Wien-München, 1962). Wiener historische Studien, 6. It is fair to say that Leopold II is credited here with more honesty than we are prepared to accept.
14. E. Wangermann, *From Joseph II to the Jacobin Trials, 2nd ed.* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), and W. Markov: *I giacobini dei paesi asburgici* (Studi Storici, 3, 1962), pp. 493-525 compliment each other on this topic.
15. Silagi, p. 214.
16. Benda, *A magyar jakobinusok iratai*, Vol. 1, p. 179.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 1002, 1007, 1014.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 58-9, 149.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 1014.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 1017.
21. Ignaz von Martinovics, "Zweitschrift seines französischen Katechismus," in Silagi, p. 212.
22. Wangermann, p. 146.
23. F. Pulszky, *A magyar jakobinusok* (The Hungarian Jacobins) (Pest: Engel és Mandello, 1862), Vol. 1, p. 71. Pulszky may have drawn inference from the fact that in May 1794 Martinovics visited the French prisoners in Pest (Gárdonyi, p. 49).
24. C.C. Brinton, *The Jacobins*, (New York, 1930), p. 148.
25. Wangermann, p. 143.
26. "La Monarchie d'Ancien regime et les frontieres naturelles," *Revue d'Histoire Moderne*, 1933, pp. 305-33.
27. Benda, *A magyar jakobinusok iratai*, Vol. 1, p. 399.
28. Andor Cszmadia, *Hajnóczy József Közjogi-politikai munkái* (József Hajnóczy's legal and political works) (Budapest: Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, 1958).
29. "XCIX. Die streitende Macht der Urgarn bestehet aus der Ganzen Nation. C. Dreimalhundert Tausend Stehen aber unter der Requisition, der Heist sie sind bewafnet und beritten.  
Cl. Diese sind aus der Ganzen Nation auserwahlt und eingeschrieben, wie auch im Kompagnien, Bataillone, Escadrone und Regimenten eingetheilt...." (Benda: *A magyar jakobinusok iratai*, Vol. 1, p. 904).
30. Bánlaky, pt. 20.
31. D. Kosáry: "Napóleon és Magyarország" (Napoleon and Hungary) *Századok*, 1971, pp. 545-626.
32. *Ibid.*



## **The Impact of Hungarian Scientists on the Development of Biochemistry**

*George Feuer*

It may be stated, without being pompous or arrogant, that the development of biochemistry dominates most of the twentieth century medical science. Major achievements in the years between 1930 and 1960 have placed biochemical sciences in the centre of the scientific scene. Important consequences of these successes have led to the trend to describe all life processes in biochemical terms, apply biochemical methods in almost every field of medical and biological research, investigate biochemical mechanisms underlying disease conditions and utilize biochemical laboratory techniques for the diagnosis of the cause of illness.

The roots of biochemical research started in the middle of the last century. The year 1861 is considered the beginning, when the first chair of biochemistry was established in Tübingen for Felix Hoppe-Seyler. At the heroic beginning, many investigators were engaged to study an interplay of biology and chemistry, the main concept being to reveal the chemical structure of substances which occur in biological systems and to understand the chemistry of life. There were several schools mainly in Germany and to a minor extent in France. The core of their program was laboratory investigations where the analytical work was carried out. This analytical era resulted in many basic discoveries. Emil Fischer and his school established the composition of carbohydrates (sugar derivatives) and amino acids which are the building stones of proteins. Friedrich Miescher studied nucleic acids responsible for cell mitosis and characteristics of genes and heredity. Louis Pasteur's work led to the knowledge of enzymes which catalyze chemical processes essential in all cellular functions and for the maintenance of a balanced living organism. Later I.P. Pavlov described the enzymic and hormonal mechanism of digestion. The essential role of vitamins had also been discovered.

The importance of the new direction, studying the chemical composition of living organisms, was quickly recognized by the Hungarian medical public. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was only one place in Hungary where medicine was taught, namely, the Royal University of Science in Pest, and this university wanted to adopt the results of the new progress. Although the legal rights and financial support were greatly curtailed after the defeat of the Hungarian army in the War of Independence in 1849, the school submitted a proposal to the government that a chair in pathological chemistry should be created for studying chemical changes in the living cell and in post mortem tissues. The proposal was rejected by Vienna, and only after the compromise in 1867 was the government allowed to set up a pathological chemistry department. The first was established in Kolozsvár in 1872, organized by Lajos Markusovsky and in 1874 in Budapest with the leadership of Pál Plósz. Many years later, after the First World War when the University of Kolozsvár was relocated to Szeged, a chair was created for medical chemistry in 1930 and was offered to Albert Szent-Györgyi. The biochemical departments of Debrecen and Pécs universities were set up after the Second World War between 1950 and 1960.

From the early stages of biochemical research Hungarian scientists exerted an impact on the development of this discipline. The reason for this may originate from the advanced scientific interest and outstanding intellect of several individuals such as Pál Bugát, Károly Than, Ottó Hermann, József Lenhossék, Jenő Jendrassik, Ignác Semmelweiss, just to name a few. These men excelled either in various branches of the natural sciences or medicine. Their inspiration significantly influenced the course of young people interested in studying the foundation of biological phenomena. However, since the possibilities in Hungary were limited during the last century, Hungarian scientists learned the *métier* mainly at German universities. After this training many students returned to Hungary where they continued to teach and conduct research.

Some Hungarian scientists settled in Germany and became internationally known. Many scientists left Hungary after the First World War, during the periods of religious discrimination and persecution, or after the Revolution in 1956. Several Hungarian biochemists continued to further their scientific

career and made significant contributions to the advancement of biochemical sciences in their host countries.

Two of these Hungarian emigrants were among the first Nobel Prize winners. In 1914 Róbert Bárány won the Nobel Prize for his study on the physiology and pathology of the human vestibular apparatus in the ear and cerebellum. In 1904 Richard Zsigmondy invented the ultramicroscope in collaboration with Heinrich Siedentopf. With the help of this new research tool Zsigmondy determined the movement of colloidal protein particles. He described their heterogenous nature leading to important information on the status of colloids in the cell protoplasm. For this study Zsigmondy won the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1925.

In later years some other scientists of Hungarian origin won the Nobel Prize for biochemical or related studies. When Albert Szent-Györgyi received the award in 1937, he was the only biochemist working in Hungary. He won the Prize for his investigations of biological combustion, for the discovery of vitamin C and the catalysis of fumaric acid oxidation.

In 1943 George C. de Hevesy, who lived in Sweden, received the award; he was the first who used isotopes as tracer elements in research. In 1961 George de Békésy was recipient of the Prize for the discovery of the physical mechanism of stimulation of hearing within the cochlea (inner ear). In 1967 George Wald, a third generation Hungarian American, was awarded the Prize for his discovery of vitamin A and A-2 in the retina, and their role in the mechanism of colour vision. Imre Szörényi, who lived in the Soviet Union, also belonged among the great Hungarian biochemists. Szörényi received the Stalin Prize during the Second World War for his studies on the crystallization of muscle enzymes.

Generally, in the early years of biochemistry the Hungarian contribution was very modest, due to inadequate state support. Still, there were valuable contributions: István Bugarszky and Leo Liebermann described for the first time in 1898 that the surface of the egg white protein contains electric charges. This measurement was so accurate that even with the utilisation of modern methods, half of a century later, their data proved to be correct.

The second important period in the history of biochemistry was the investigation of metabolic processes and energy requirement of the cell. In this direction in Hungary Ferenc Tangl and Pál

Hári were outstanding. Tangl was first appointed to the chair of pathological chemistry, at the University of Budapest in 1903, Hári was his docent who became professor in 1915. The Tangl-Hári school was really the first in establishing biochemical research in Hungary. The central theme of their investigations was how metabolism regulates cell function, how this is connected with energy circulation and heat production and through this with the maintenance of health. Hári was also known for his spectrophotometric measurements of hemoglobin.

The application of isotopes, first introduced by Hevesy, represented a revolutionary advancement. The attention of biochemists turned to changes constantly occurring in the cell. It became known that the properties of the living matter are dynamic and ever changing, special qualities of life are associated with continuous turnover and modifications. This was the period when Szent-Györgyi started working in Szeged. He laid down the basis of modern biochemistry in Hungary. A brilliant and original investigator, his personality created a stimulating atmosphere and he trained many enthusiastic pupils. Most of the present generation biochemists learned from Szent-Györgyi or from his pupils the art of scientific thinking and investigations. Szent-Györgyi produced significant results in three areas: mechanism of cellular oxidation, identification of vitamin C, and the role of actomyosin and adenosine triphosphate, a high energy containing molecule in muscular contraction. A number of basic discoveries are attached to the achievements of the Szent-Györgyi group, including the isolation of myosin and actin, and the contraction of the actomyosin complex by the action of adenosine triphosphate. One of Szent-Györgyi's best pupils was F.B. Straub who discovered the actin. As a young assistant to Straub, I was the first who found that the actin contains adenosine triphosphate and that this compound is metabolised when actin filaments were formed.

The scientific activity in Szent-Györgyi's laboratory was various. Ilona Banga was involved in biological oxidation studies and later became interested in the synthesis of collagen, an important protein in connective tissue. Kálmán Laki's major contribution was related to the blood coagulation process and to the maintenance of hemostasis.

The roots of biochemical research was strongly planted by the Szent-Györgyi school and its merits were awarded by the Nobel

Prize. After this promising start, however, circumstances spoiled the smooth development. World War II scattered the members of the Szent-Györgyi group and after the revolution even more scientists left Hungary. Szent-Györgyi emigrated to the United States, and some of his co-workers followed him. In his eighties, Szent-Györgyi still works at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

Meanwhile the focus of biochemical research has changed. In this new period it seemed to be important to investigate the following: "what regulates the dynamic processes in the cell and what is the relationship between the cell and its surrounding?" Biological studies have established a principle that the living organism forms a unit with the environment and its existence can only be assessed by considering the interaction. With the recognition of the dynamic status of cell composition, biochemistry extended this principle to every constituent of the cell. Earlier the properties of isolated proteins, carbohydrates, and lipids have been studied, now researchers began to explore how these components manifest themselves in the unity of an organ and how various organs are interrelated by affecting the status of the living body.

This direction was recognized by Szent-Györgyi when he started studying the function of the muscle and the mechanism of muscular contraction. Following this tradition some investigators still continue research in this direction, Endre Biró in Budapest, John Gergely in Boston, Mihály Bárány in New York. Other investigators have been studying the processes of blood coagulation, the function of hemoglobin and role of abnormal hemoglobins in disease, Kálmán Laki in Washington, László Loránd in Chicago, and Zsuzsa Hollán in Budapest. Some investigations have attempted to reveal the biochemical mechanisms underlying brain functions. Maria Wollemann and myself, while working in Budapest at the Institute of Biochemistry, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, became interested in the problem of how energy producing processes are connected with the function of the brain cell and transmission of neural messages. Attila Fonyó and his co-workers investigated the association of adenosine triphosphate with subcellular particles of the nerve cell, particularly the characteristics of the mitochondrial transport adenosine triphosphatase enzymes. Maria Wollemann continued her interest in neurochemistry: at

the Szeged Biological Centre she has been working on biochemical changes occurring in brain tumors and on the molecular mechanism of how tranquilizers and sedatives affect the nerve cells. Meanwhile in London, I had been studying what is the biochemical basis of our emotional responses and how behavioural changes are connected with different emotional expressions such as cowardice and courage. We have found that these are regulated by hormones produced by various endocrine glands.

At present the biochemical research field is divided into two areas. Classical biochemistry is interested in the molecular basis of cellular function and how this molecular arrangement is connected with the structure of the cell and its subcellular components. Briefly, molecular biochemistry is concerned with the molecular mechanism of the regulation of life processes. The second direction is related to disease, it is called clinical biochemistry, aiming to reveal what kind of abnormalities or derangements of the normal molecular association represent the underlying mechanism of disease conditions. Briefly, what are the molecular changes leading to cell impairment and disease?

Our body is built of molecules, mainly simple or complex protein macromolecules, and it is logical to assume that all biological reactions have to be molecular, making life a molecular phenomenon. In 1950, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences created an institute for furthering biochemical investigations and training of post-doctoral students. The first director of this institute, Imre Szörényi, initiated studies on the structure and function of enzymes which remained the major direction of research under the directorship of F.B. Straub. The major achievements of this institute were to reveal the primary structure, and the effect of proteolytic modifications of the structure on enzyme activity. They found that enzyme action fluctuated in association with amino acid side chains but restricted when the prosthetic group of the enzyme became bound to the protein. The scientists involved in this program were Gertrud Szabolcsi, Tamás Keleti, Pál Elődi and Tibor Dévényi. Other investigations on molecular aspects of biochemistry included the regulation of enzyme action by Géza Dénes and his associates, alteration of the active centre of enzymes by L. Polgár, stereospecificity of hydrolytic enzymes by L. Ötvös, elucidation of the substrate specificity of some



proteolytic enzymes by T. Vajda, hormonal control of protein synthesis by F. Antoni and structural and functional studies on polypeptide hormones by G. Cseh.

An essential factor in the existence of higher organisms is the formation of cells and subcellular structures. The structural organization of the living matter into functional units provides the vital framework for survival. Considerable parts of cellular processes and regulation are connected with biomembranes. György Gárdos and his group have been investigating the importance of electrolyte transport through erythrocyte membranes. Recently, with my research team, I have been studying the role of a particular subcellular membrane, the endoplasmic reticulum of the liver cell; this cell particle is involved in the detoxication and elimination of foreign compounds. It is a puzzle why this membrane responds to the action of certain drugs or several foreign compounds by rapidly metabolizing them, while other compounds destroy these membranes leading to liver disease. The development of certain tumors caused by chemicals is also connected with the function of these particles. The results of this and similar investigations permit the fundamental conclusion that many if not all diseases originate from an impairment of the biochemical organization of the cell. This is mainly reversible but if the abnormal process does not turn back to normal level, it results in chronic disease and death.

There are many more brilliant immigrant Hungarian scientists who have participated in outstanding discoveries towards the advancement of biochemistry such as Mihály Polányi, who studied the crystalline structure of molecules and reaction kinetics, the basis of enzyme function. Paul György discovered riboflavin, vitamin B-6 and the role of growth factor in the development of the cell. Mihály Somogyi was a pioneer of abnormal carbohydrate metabolism and established an excellent method for the measurement of blood glucose. Hans Selye made a fundamental contribution to our present understanding of the onset of disease when he described the effect of stress as an important factor in the development of abnormal life conditions.

In this short paper I have attempted to illustrate the impact of Hungarian scientists on the development of biochemical research. The list is far from complete, and I may have unintentionally omitted valuable results and eminent

Hungarians. I had to restrict myself, however, to thematic selections as associated with the major directions and advancements of biochemistry.

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## **Physical Education and Socialist Ideology in Hungary**

*Aniko Varpalotai*

The concept of a physical culture is based on a number of theories.<sup>1</sup> Some of these ideas are traced back to Karl Marx, others have been elaborated since that time. Marx, in his treatise on polytechnic education, mentioned the need for "bodily education," both in the school curriculum and as a part of military training.<sup>2</sup> Though Marx and his close friend Friedrich Engels had little more to say about physical education, contemporary socialist educators consider the "education of the physical" to be of fundamental importance in the development of a socialist society and in the all-round, harmonious development of the new socialist man and woman. Socialism, it is argued, is to be a total way of life, encompassing not only economic or political advances, but also the transformation of the social and cultural world. Sport and physical education, as aspects of culture (hence physical culture) would also be transformed.

A great deal has changed since Marx wrote his 1866 treatise on polytechnic education. The most notable as far as physical culture is concerned are the increased amounts of both sedentary work, and leisure time. Perhaps what is important to us today is not so much the theoretical origin of socialist practice, but rather the aims and goals, the socialist developmental process itself, and the practical manifestations of these efforts to achieve a better way of life for all people. It must also be remembered that each nation within the socialist bloc is unique in its history and cultural traditions, and for this reason will necessarily use different means to achieve the ultimate end of a socialist society. In Hungary the political changes seemed to usher in scientific and technological transformations of the economic sphere, and ultimately cultural changes as well. These would radically alter the essence of education and would require the development of a physical culture for all ages.<sup>3</sup>

History demonstrates that mankind has engaged in forms of play, games and sports since the beginning of social life. Aside from the pleasurable moments provided by these activities they have also been utilized for military, political, ideological, educational and countless other instrumental functions. The significance of this popular cultural form, though, has received surprisingly little serious consideration.

Those who work most fully within the area of cultural studies, such as Britain's Paul Willis, believe that any social transformation will arise only from "reinterpretations, reformations of consciousness and fermentation from below around the most trivial, everyday and commonplace items."<sup>4</sup> Socialist revolutionaries, similarly, have always regarded a cultural revolution as vital for the victory of socialism. In Hungary it was only "towards the end of the sixties that the recognition became general that the structure of socialist society in itself does not do away with social problems."<sup>5</sup> Nor does a socialist culture spontaneously emerge with a change in the polity and productive relations.

It is not by accident that within the past two decades "cultural studies" in the west (such as Hall, Williams, Willis), and concern with a "cultural revolution,"<sup>6</sup> particularly in Eastern Europe, (e.g., Bahro, Köpeczi, Sapora, Terényi) have come to the forefront. This upsurge of interest in the area of culture, and in particular, physical culture, is what I intend to discuss next.

Eastern European nations, perhaps more than other nation-states, have realized and harnessed the power and appeal of sport to promote the cause and creation of socialism. In Hungary this was a particularly attractive public forum because of the centuries of tradition related to Hungarian sport.<sup>7</sup> In fact, Hungarian sport records are among the oldest to be found in Europe.<sup>8</sup> But the institutionalized use of sport to promote socialism has its inherent contradictions. Much of Hungarian sport had been traditionally the domain of royalty, aristocracy and the bourgeois classes. The socialist revolution was to have dramatically altered the basis of privilege and physical culture was to be democratized. Despite the term's incorporation into the socialist vocabulary, however, sport has basically remained the domain of the "elite," albeit a re-defined elite.

The early years of socialism in Hungary (1945-48) encouraged the democratization of sport as the exclusive clubs and facilities

were taken over by the workers' movement. Despite serious political and economic setbacks, sport in Hungary managed to flourish internationally, nationally, and to a lesser extent, locally. Attempts were made to provide underprivileged groups: workers, women, students, peasants, with opportunities to participate. These initiatives were organized campaign-style and although they received much publicity, economic conditions restricted any large-scale reorganization.

By 1950, the initial enthusiasm of the people was waning. State control was strengthened, clubs were given more direct support, and at the same time were pressured to produce more world-class athletes, at the expense of the mass participation programs.<sup>9</sup> The 1951 government organization of the OTSB (National Physical Education and Sport Council) united the political and professional leadership of physical education and sport in a single state apparatus, and thus solidified centralized state control.

The performance of athletes from socialist states at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics, where Hungary finished third, the Soviet Union, second, astounded the sports world. The Hungarian performances coupled with the phenomenal successes of the "Golden Team" in international soccer, encouraged Hungarian state authorities to further their investments in elite sport. The success of the Hungarian athletes was used to suggest, both internationally and internally, that socialist development was progressing at a smooth and steady rate.<sup>10</sup> Since, at this time, physical culture was seen as synonymous with international sport the Hungarian successes obscured any need for a critical examination of the actual development of a total physical culture program.<sup>11</sup>

Hindsight allows us to realize that although international sport, during this period, served the political ideology of the socialist government, it could hardly be called "physical culture" in the true sense of the term. Hungarians continue to be proud of their successful sports "ambassadors" but, notwithstanding this fact, the majority of the people still experienced physical culture only vicariously, from the spectator stands or through the mass media.

Clearly, there continue to be problems in defining and achieving a socialist society and within that context, a socialist physical culture. This is not to imply that no progress has been made in the area of sport and physical education in Hungary.

Opportunities for participation, and access to an ever increasing number of facilities has improved steadily during the 20th century. At the same time, these advancements cannot be attributed solely to the socialist system. In fact, the gap between the theory and current practice of socialist physical culture is almost as wide today as it ever was. One has to question how much of the state's commitment to physical culture is primarily to provide an international sport showcase for political ideology, and how much is truly a commitment to the incorporation of the cultural revolution into the totality of socialist transformation.

While sports authorities continue to struggle with these contradictions, there have been significant improvements in the area of *physical education*. Education, and especially the process of teacher training, is given a place of primacy in the socialist system. It is argued that since attitudes and lifelong habits are developed during the formative years, any lifelong commitment to physical culture must be commenced during the school years.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, in January of 1980, at the Moscow Scientific Coordination Meetings, the socialist countries agreed to cooperate in the 1981-85 plan to research the area of "Physical Education and Sport in the Socialist Lifestyle."<sup>13</sup> The first phase of this study was a comparative survey of "Coaches' and Physical Education Teachers' Training in Socialist Countries." The results of this study indicate a disproportionate emphasis on sports performance, even now, but indications from Hungary suggest that there is a growing concern for physical education and leisure time activities among Hungarians.<sup>14</sup> Two examples will illustrate the increased interest in physical culture. The five-day work week was initiated in 1982 which provides the possibility of the leisure weekend, common to other industrialized countries. Second, physical education has been increased from two to three hours per week at the high school level. This in itself is not unique but the comprehensive nature of the program is matched by few nations. Hungarian students now receive physical education training from nursery schools to university and other post-secondary educational institutes. Moreover, participation is compulsory for all students, with special classes offered for the handicapped and the gifted.

There is an obviously growing, and more sophisticated awareness of the meaning and values of physical culture. This is

in evidence in the mass media, and has been confirmed by sociological surveys.<sup>15</sup> But despite well-developed theories, and a clearer understanding of what physical culture means in socialist society, regular participation is not as good as the authorities would like.

The Hungarian College of Physical Education is a microcosm of the tensions and contradictions that exist between sport and recreation, participation and non-involvement. The institute is responsible for the training of the best qualified physical educators, coaches, and sports administrators in the country, and as such it plays an especially significant role in the development of Hungarian physical culture.

Some of the most fundamental tensions are best expressed in the following apparent dichotomies: the traditional and the progressive; the “theoreticians” and the “practitioners”; the goals of sport and physical education; and sport-for-all and high performance sport. Though these tensions are familiar to physical educators, coaches, and other sports leaders world-wide, they pose a particularly significant problem for the architects of a socialist physical culture. Physical culture in this context has to be related to the social totality philosophically, theoretically and practically.

Published material would suggest that there is a well-developed theoretical argument linking the various component parts of physical culture together. Moreover, elaborate studies like that of Földesi’s (1980) would suggest that the inseparable links had reached the general population as well.

My many conversations with, and observations of the physical educator at work in the college and in schools suggests, however, that there is a discrepancy between the written policies and the lived experience of the teacher/student. Many of the respondents felt that there was an overemphasis on elite sport at the expense of mass participation and that this imbalance should be redressed. There was a significant “generation gap” between the faculty and students, as well as a distinct polarization among the faculty who taught theoretical subjects and those who instructed sports and coaching. Almost without exception the “sports faculty” members expressed a deep commitment to the continued pursuit of sporting excellence (citing this pursuit as the ultimate aim of physical education), while other faculty members, and the majority of the students, stressed broader educational goals, such

as the aim of encouraging life-long mass participation. The students also complained of the high and often unrealistic expectations demanded of the applicants to the college, and of those subsequently accepted into the program. These were deemed to be generally unnecessary and inappropriate to the socialist ideals of physical culture. For their part, the older faculty (and many citizens, generally) still lament the decline of Hungarian sport and blame the lack of “discipline” in modern youth and the inadequate content of the physical education curricula in the schools.

A major curriculum review at the Hungarian College of Physical Education in 1978 has dramatically altered the direction which physical culture has and will take in future years. The rigorous, though revised, entrance exam remains, as does a reduced, but still demanding, skill component. The reforms also emphasized that sports excellence should be accompanied by more extra-curricular activities. Greater attention is to be paid to the creation and development of a physical education adapted to all of life’s stages. It was also noted that physical education as a school subject, and physical culture generally, are still underrated by most Hungarians. This, despite the fact that in 1945 the state officially granted equal status to physical education with all other subjects in the curriculum,<sup>16</sup> and that the Hungarian College of Physical Education, elevated to university status in 1975, is internationally renowned.

To combat this indifference to physical culture students and teachers suggest that a daily physical education program with: an emphasis on the enjoyment of a variety of physical activities, and, the knowledge of the individual health and social benefits, would go a long way to improving the status of physical culture.

Not only does there appear to be a change of attitude among the students with regard to the philosophy of physical culture but also in the types of positions they accept following graduation. As little as ten years ago, the majority of students graduating from the Hungarian College of Physical Education were seeking and finding coaching positions with one of the many prestigious sports clubs. Coaches were (and still are) granted a higher social status and receive more pay than the school teacher. Today, despite the continuing discrepancies, the trend has shown a gradual reversal. The majority of the students (86.5 percent of 4th year students in 1983) indicated that pedagogy as opposed to sports training was



among the most important subjects at the College as far as their professional training was concerned. They continue to find the practical requirements unnecessarily high and time-consuming, and desire an increased time-allotment to practise teaching, both to their peers and in actual schools.

This is not to imply that the coaching profession has been abandoned. Many students still engage in coaching upon graduating but more frequently this is a secondary occupation. What students are saying, in essence, is that physical education, and *not* sport, should be the foundation stone of a socialist physical culture.

There are important lessons to be learned from the ongoing Hungarian experience to develop socialist physical culture. Hungary is a powerful sports nation which has achieved tremendous international success. Olympic gold medals, however, do not make a nation of participants. The observations which faculty, teachers, but most particularly, the students, shared with me suggest that gradual, almost indiscernible changes are occurring in physical culture. No longer is it synonymous with international sports victories. It is much more than that. There is a serious and conscious attempt to realize the importance of sport-for-all programs and general leisure practices.<sup>17</sup> Change brings with it both contradictions and tensions, and, as Marx suggested in the *Theses on Feuerbach*, "it is men (and women) who change circumstances and...the educator himself needs educating." How much the circumstances will change, how far the educator will permit re-education remains to be seen. One thing is certain though, and I again quote Paul Willis:

Culture is not artifice and manners, the preserve of Sunday best, rainy afternoons and concert halls. It is the very material of our daily lives, the bricks and mortar of our most commonplace understandings, feelings and responses. We rely on cultural patterns and symbols for the minute, and unconscious, social reflexes that make us social and collective beings: we are therefore most *deeply* embedded in our culture when we are at our most natural and spontaneous: if you like at our most workaday. As soon as we think, as soon as we see life as parts in a play, we are in a very important sense, already, one step away from our real and living culture.<sup>18</sup>

## NOTES

1. The term "physical culture" used in Hungary, and socialist countries generally, is understood to include the whole range of physical activities such as physical education, both in the general sense: *testnevelés*, and as part of the school curriculum: *testnevelés*: recreational and competitive mass sport, elite sport, and the general maintenance of physical health.
2. Castles, S. and Wustenberg, W. *The Education of the Future; An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Socialist Education* (London: Pluto Press, 1979) :38-9.
3. Terényi, I. "A mai testkultúra fejlődésének tendenciái," *A sport és testnevelés időszzerű kérdései*, 23 (Budapest: Sport, 1980) :31-2.
4. Willis, P. *Profane Culture* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978) :7.
5. Boldizsár, I., ed., "Metaphor and Reality," *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, Vol. XXIII, No. 86 (Summer 1982) :4.
6. The term was not invented by Mao Tse-Tung, as is sometimes presumed. It appears to have been first used by Lenin in 1923; but the concept of cultural revolution is implicit in the whole of Marxist thought. (Castles & Wustenberg, p. 202)
7. Vető, J., ed., *Sports in Hungary* (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1965).
8. Földes, E., Kun, L., and Kutassi, L. *A magyar testnevelés és sport története*. Testnevelési Főiskolai Tankönyv (Budapest: Sport, 1982) :9.
9. A similar pressure is now being exerted on sports clubs, universities and voluntary sports associations in Canada.
10. Földes *et al.*, p. 422.
11. Schiller, J. "A sportszociológia aktualitása," *Testnevelés és Sporttudomány*, 1 (Budapest, 1980) :16.
12. Schiller, p. 13.
13. Schiller, p. 17.
14. Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Union of Physical Education, *Coaches and Physical Education Teachers Training in Socialist Countries* (A collection of studies in the International Scientific Cooperation) Prague, 1980.
15. Földesi, T. and Földesi, T. "Expectations Related to Physical Culture in Hungary," *International Review of Sport Sociology*, 3, No. 16 (Warsaw, 1981) :45.
16. Kerestes, A. "Physical Education and Sport in Hungary," Masters Thesis (University of Alberta, 1967) :16.
17. Zsiday, I., "Sports for Everyone," *Hungarian Digest*, 5 (Budapest, 1982) :117.
18. Willis, *Profane Culture*, op. cit.

## REVIEW ARTICLES

### **Est Vita Extra Hungariam: Hungarians in Canada**

*Robert Blumstock*

N.F. Dreisziger *et al.*, *Struggle and Hope: The Hungarian-Canadian Experience* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982).

If there were ever to be a contest to decide which people has wandered more over the face of the earth than any other, Hungarians might not win first prize, but they would certainly come close. From the moment that Árpád and his fellow tribesmen took those crucial first steps across the Carpathians and 'conquered' the fertile basin that comprises the core of the Hungarian homeland, it has been the rare generation of Hungarians who have not for one reason or another looked at their circumstances, pulled up stakes, and set out (often not quite sure of where they were going) to test their mettle in the world beyond their borders. Hungarians, consequently are to be found everywhere. This peripatetic, one might even say nomadic quality of Hungarian existence has not raised the status of the Magyar language to the level of French, German or English as an international means of communication. However, there is no shortage of stories which place Hungarians at the centre of world-class intellectual and artistic endeavours, from the creation of the atomic bomb, to the more glittering illusions of Hollywood and the Folies Bergère.

One of the places where Árpád's heirs migrated was Canada and now thanks to Nandor Dreisziger and his worthy phalanx of Bennett Kovrig, Paul Bódy and Martin Kovacs, we have a detailed account of this important story in *Struggle and Hope: The Hungarian-Canadian Experience*.

All too often in a multi-authored book there are differences in the quality of the contributions. In this case, however, there is a consistent high quality and each chapter's theme is clearly

defined. The end result is a well organized and nicely crafted book which begins with a brief summary of Hungarian history and moves through the different eras of Hungarian migration to this country.

There are however some interpretations, particularly in Kovrig's short chapter on "The Magyars and their Homeland," which require comment. To attempt to encapsulate Hungarian history in twenty-three pages can only be defined as heroic and Kovrig certainly does an excellent job, touching on all periods and highlighting the major figures. Yet there are, given the constraints of space, several points where brevity inspires elusion. This is particularly the case when the inter-war period is analyzed. For example, Nicholas Horthy is introduced as "a dignified and honourable figure..." (p. 16). This is too brief and simple a characterization and does not capture the contradictions of both the man and his times. To be fair, Horthy certainly was a popular leader who played a curious role as an Admiral of a Navy that no longer existed; a regent for a King whose return was actively discouraged; an acknowledged anti-semitic who feared the consequences of the Arrow-Cross lust for power more than he detested Jews, among whom were several of his closest cronies.

Further, the Horthy era was the prelude to the ultimate destruction of Hungary's Jews. However, while Horthy remained in power, Jews bore their difficulties in increasingly straitened circumstances, yet they remained virtually intact until the German occupation of the country. As Kovrig rightly notes, "Hungary remained a haven for Jews until...1944." (p. 18).

In discussing the Bethlen era, Kovrig also glosses over some important details. He states, "...the regime made peace with the Social Democratic Party and the trade Unions on condition that they abjure the radicalism that had characterized the Republic of Councils. The franchise was extended to some two-thirds of the adult population." (p. 17). While this is not incorrect, it avoids noting that one of the conditions agreed to by the Social Democrats was that their activity was to be restricted to Budapest. In addition the extension of the franchise was soon abolished and the "open ballot" was reintroduced in rural areas. This meant as Istvan Deak notes..."the dead were made to vote in the open ballot areas, and the living were kept

away from the polls by the gendarmes.”\*

Finally, Kovrig acknowledges that educational facilities were vastly expanded under the guidance of Count Kuno Klebelsberg. (p. 17) He fails to mention the *numerus clausus* law of 1920, which was meant to restrict the number of Jews admitted to institutions of higher education. While this law was largely ignored, it was not repealed and the later and much harsher Jewish laws of 1938, 1939 and 1941 were introduced into an environment in which restrictive legislation was well known.

If interwar Hungary is presented too benignly by Kovrig, he may well be too aggressively hopeful and optimistic about the quest for political democracy and national independence in Hungary today. Hungarians have always thrived on their illusions. This has led to renown in the arts and international recognition in the sciences, yet when translated into the often murky and practical world of politics, the end product has been the source of good jokes, but very dismal government. Hungary's "Goulash Communism" under Kádár's accomodating posture toward the Soviet Union is far from being the best of all possible worlds. However, this compromise does provide a measure of freedom and opportunity which Hungarians have rarely if ever experienced living at home. We in the West who live in democratic societies know what is lacking, and so do most Hungarians. If this accomodation to reality is something relatively new in Hungarian history, then the experience may well have its politically beneficial consequences in the future.

From the often debatable interpretations of Hungarian history, the next seven chapters, one each by Paul Bódy and Martin Kovacs and the final five by Nandor Dreisziger, all have more limited foci which present the patterns, events and issues which define the immigrant experience. The organization of the material is direct and flows easily. We are led from an analysis of emigration to the nature and types of settlements in Canada, culminating in a concise summary of the consequences of the Hungarian presence in Canada and the changing character of the Hungarian-Canadian community.

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\*Istvan Deak, "Hungary," H. Rogger and E. Weber, eds., *The European Right* (University of California Press, 1966): 375.

Paul Bódy's chapter, "Emigration from Hungary 1880-1956" brings together a mass of detail on who the immigrants were and why they decided to migrate. The basic organizing principle is the various periods of mass emigration from Hungary; before World War I, between the Wars, and finally the period after World War II, including those who left Hungary in 1956. Bódy notes that prior to World War I, the United States was the preferred destination, while during the interwar years, Canada was more generous in opening her doors to Hungarians and others from East Central Europe. The reason for this was the quota restrictions on immigrants, which limited entry to the United States to only 869 Hungarians a year. After World War II, this restrictive policy changed, yet proportionately more Hungarians came to Canada during the period 1945-1970 than to the U.S., with the vast majority coming after the 1956 Revolution.

The early emigration from Hungary, excluding the relatively small number of those who left after 1848, began in the latter part of the 19th century, largely as a result of the economic dislocations associated with industrialization. The major source of immigrants was the northeast, the area most affected by agricultural unemployment. The migrants were largely young men who looked to America as a place to earn money with which they hoped to buy land in Hungary. For most this dream never became reality, yet the money they sent home and their letters to friends and family were a major source of information for those who followed them. Bódy sees this information and the linkages established both at home in Hungary and in North America as part of a 'migration chain' which eased the confusion and pain of the migration process.

The second wave of immigration after World War I was not limited to economic motives, although this was a constant factor. Now the truncated Hungary that emerged after the shattering Treaty of Trianon, and the Red Terror of the Republic of Councils, and the White Terror of the Horthy regime found a more varied and urban population seeking refuge in the West. In addition the Hungarian minorities in the neighbouring countries found themselves less than comfortable and for many the only solution was to move, either back to Hungary or to any place where they could gain entry. The numbers, compared to the earlier migration were small. This was not a time when immigrants were welcomed anywhere.

The post World War II migration was the most varied in its composition. There were first those whom we have come to know as Displaced Persons, who as a result of the War found themselves outside Hungary's borders. Among them numbered Jews who were forcefully transported from their homes after the German occupation in 1944 as well as those who left with the retreating Germans and now found themselves stateless. A bit later there were also those who saw the handwriting on the wall and feared the new reign of terror which did occur after the Communist seizure of power in 1949. Finally, 1956 saw the consequences of eight years of enforced isolation when over 200,000 Hungarians voted with their feet and left their homes rather than continue to be players in a humiliating totalitarian farce. Since then there has been little new blood added to the now aging, assimilating and increasing native born Hungarian communities that began their 'conquest' of North America over 100 years ago.

While Canada was not the primary destination of Hungary's pre-World War I emigrants, the combination of effective promotion through immigration agents and the lure of a 160 acre homestead was sufficient to attract many both from Hungary and those who had earlier gone to work in the mines and mills of the burgeoning industrial cities of the U.S. Martin Kovacs, drawing from his extensive research on the Hungarian farming communities in Saskatchewan, presents in his chapter, "The Saskatchewan Era, 1885-1914," a capsule analysis of the nature, history and changes which have affected the earliest Hungarian settlements in Canada. The result is one segment of the development of the Canadian West: the survival of a tough breed of pioneers facing harsh conditions, who managed to organize their communities and lives so that future generations would reap the harvest of their toil. The transition from 19th century Hungarian peasantry to 20th century Canadian farmer was not easy and Kovacs presents the strains between the desire for cultural continuity and the necessity for change in an expansive environment which threatened tradition while offering opportunities all but unheard of by those who took the first important steps to "The Last Best West." These Saskatchewan farming communities are no longer the centre of Hungarian life in Canada. As generations have come and gone they have come to resemble the amalgam which defines the mosaic of

Canada. The historical markers, cemeteries, churches and small museums which dot the prairies recall the simpler times of the past when the demands of existence were met with vigour and hope for a better life.

From these beginnings Nandor Dreisziger in the final five chapters takes us through to the present, decade by decade, describing the character, issues and organizational dynamics of the developing Hungarian-Canadian community.

In the 1920's with entry into the U.S. restricted, Canada became the primary target for Hungarians coming to North America. However, it was not all that easy as Canada's immigration regulations limited entry to those with either the money to buy a farm or those who were guaranteed farm jobs. Dreisziger goes beyond the official statistics and notes that more than a few thousand of this cohort were middle and upper class refugees who sought sanctuary from the disorder which was convulsing East Central Europe. Although the data are admittedly sparse, this new migration tended to adopt an urban life style more quickly than those who had settled a decade or two earlier on Saskatchewan homesteads. It was a young, predominantly male group from varied backgrounds with a wider range of experiences than those who had arrived earlier. This ethnic generation gap did not enhance the cohesiveness of the Hungarian community, yet it was at this juncture that the associational bases of the Hungarian-Canadian community was established with churches, schools, sick-benefit associations and newspapers organized to help the immigrants confront their new homes in the language of their birth.

The 1930's were a tough time for all in Canada. The promise of the first three decades of the century were replaced by drought, unemployment and bread lines. For some a return to Hungary was the only alternative, for others a knowledge of the geography of Canada was gained as they travelled from one end of the country to the other looking for work. To the older farming communities in Saskatchewan were added two new identifiable Hungarian centres, the 'Tobacco Belt' area of southern Ontario and the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia. This pattern of dispersal throughout the country continued the pattern of the 1920's and while Hungarians entered urban areas in increasing numbers, their general pattern of life was still very much rooted in the soil of rural Canada.

Few new immigrants entered Canada during this decade



and consequently the community was characterized by an increasing proportion of Canadian-born Hungarians. Further, the economic difficulties led to a decline in the support of many of the struggling organizations and churches which had been established in more prosperous times. Adding to the general difficulties of Hungarian community life was the ideological debate between left and right which likely alienated many second generation Hungarians whose Canadian experience hardly gave them the background to appreciate and involve themselves in these old-country debates. It was an unhappy time and for the most part Hungarian associational life languished as the great depression ran its course.

A limited and superficial solidarity developed during World War II, but this unity was short lived and Hungarian-Canadian community life did not experience a lasting renaissance. On the contrary, the economic prosperity of this period saw less rather than more emphasis on maintaining community facilities. The battle between maintaining cultural interests and the seduction of economic rewards was resolved with Hungarian ties increasingly replaced by Canadian involvements. It was clear that the process of adjustment and assimilation had taken hold and was not to be reversed.

The postwar period, including the period after 1956 which saw the mass emigration of over 35,000 Hungarians, significantly augmented the numbers of the declining Hungarian-Canadian community. However, a familiar scenario was replayed. The new migrants had different experiences from those who preceded them and these differences were expressed in life style variations which precluded any overarching organizational unity. The temporary vitality of Hungarian-Canadian associational life was closely tied to the necessity of aiding the large number of newcomers. But this was short lived as again assimilation and the attractions and rewards of life in Canada took precedence over cultural affinities. Dreisziger notes that Hungarian-Canadian institutional life has always been characterized by atomization. Each generation of immigrants would join existing organizations, but as needs and interests differed new organizations were continually developing, while the older facilities declined through natural attrition. One explanation is offered in which Dreisziger attributes the organizational problem to "the Hungarian national traits of excessive individualism and pride, which make cooperation within institutions

difficult.” (pp. 225-226) This is certainly a plausible explanation, but in order for it to be taken seriously, comparative work on the institutional vitality and decline of other nationality groups would have to be examined. This clearly is beyond the scope of the work undertaken. Yet, it may be that these ‘traits’ are less crucial to the understanding of the problems of ethnic organizational continuity, than the different generational experiences of the various migrant cohorts. The time of migration has important consequences in terms of the ways in which interests and goals are articulated. In addition, education, region, and religion, not to mention occupation and more general class factors, all of which inspire and generate different world views, are too powerful to be conflated by the ties of language and culture.

Since this great inflow over twenty-five years ago there has only been a trickle of Hungarians immigrating to Canada, hardly enough to maintain a continuing and significant presence. Further, Dreisziger notes that Hungarians, in contrast to others, are less enthusiastic about language maintenance. With the loss of language as a crucial bonding element, the panoply of cultural distinctiveness will inevitably fade. But before the funeral dirge for Hungarian-Canadian life is played, it might be well to note that this process is not unnatural. The immigrants who took the risks of beginning a new life in a foreign land hoped that the future would be different from the past. This insight was very much part of their motivation. Of course the details of the differences were only to become clear when the realities of the new opportunity structures became available to their children and grandchildren. Transitions of this magnitude are never easy and the exchange of one life style for another is never accomplished without some losses.

At this point I would like to add a personal reflection. I know, as many readers of this journal know, either through their own experiences or through those of friends and relatives, what the pain of leaving familiar surroundings entails. Accompanying the burden of loneliness and alienation of the immigrant is the necessity to justify the decision for the life chosen. My mother, with a wisdom honed by her own experiences as an immigrant, knew very well what the costs and benefits were of having to begin life anew. She often reiterated a phrase in Hungarian which roughly translated suggests that given the nature of human anatomy, it was impossible to sit comfortably on two chairs at the

same time. Her resolution was to accept the consequences of her decision and to get on with life.

The fact is that it was nearly impossible for her to feel completely at ease in her North American 'chair'. In her formative years she had become accustomed to Hungarian upholstery and she was always more relaxed in it than in anything else. For those of us born and educated on this continent, we are confidently aware that we can sit on a variety of chairs. We know that Canada has the better chairs and there is little doubt that it is here that we feel most at home. Hungary will always remain the source of our origins. Understanding the immigrant experience makes it easier to see why our parents and grandparents decided to emigrate. One important consequence of this knowledge is to reaffirm our own commitments to their choice.

The title of this essay derives from a well known patriotic maxim, *Extra Hungariam non est vita — si est vita non est ita*, which translates as "Outside of Hungary there is no life — if there is life it is not comparable." What we learn in this welcome and thoughtful work is that life for Hungarians in Canada is different from that in Hungary, and in many ways it offers more, even as it seems likely to be less Hungarian in time. But there is no doubt that there is a good life outside of Hungary. How this life has evolved and developed is ably documented in *Struggle and Hope: The Hungarian-Canadian Experience*.



## **Hungarians in the United States**

*László Kürti*

Julianna Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok az Egyesült Államokban 1880-1940* (Hungarian Immigrants in the United States 1880-1940). Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982. 639 pages.

Julianna Puskás' study is about Hungarian immigration to North America between 1880-1940, a subject that has been neglected in recent Hungarian scholarship. Puskás, a member of the Institute of History, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, has been an exception. She has won recognition for her studies of Hungarian immigrants and immigrant life. Since the late 1960s she has been active as a researcher and author in both Hungary and the United States. She has written valuable studies relating to the early Hungarian migration and the lives of Hungarians in the New World. The present book is the culmination of this two decades efforts.

This bulky book is divided into three major parts: the first part deals with the early period of emigration from Austro-Hungary, roughly from 1880 until 1914, and the official attitudes and policies concerning emigration in Hungary. The second part describes Hungarian immigrants in their new environment; and the third analyzes Hungarian-American society between 1920 and 1940, including the problems of acculturation and integration of immigrants into the larger host society. The actual text comprises 400 pages, with an additional 200 pages reserved for tables, indexes, figures and contemporary and archival documents. In a short introduction the author places her subject into the current historical framework on migration and emigration. Puskás admits, and rightfully so, that earlier historical literature in Hungary neglected this topic and that previous American scholarship, the "melting pot" theory, did not contribute to the objective understanding of this huge mass-movement at the turn of this century that involved more than 50 million people from Europe (pp. 20-2). She calls

attention to the fact that only recently there has been a major shift in historical research on American immigration and ethnicity. She contends that in Europe it was the Scandinavian scholarly community, through the works of F. Thistlethwaite, S. Akerman, C. Erikson, H. Norman and others, that pioneered investigation into western European emigration to America. In fact, she models her analysis on the Scandinavian results, although she also takes into account some recent American historical works that deal with East European immigration to the United States. In this part, she also surveys the most important literature on the subject but this should not be taken as exhaustive (pp. 50-6).

In Chapter 1 the author expands on her original 1975 essay dealing with the process of pre-World War I Hungarian emigration. Puskás lists the main factors that caused Hungarian emigration overseas: demographic pressure, limited social mobility, discontent on the part of the agricultural population within the borders of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, wide gaps between wages, and the emergence of the so-called “pull” factors of American jobs and income (pp. 87-98). Her discussion parallels, but is not always coincidental with, the analysis provided by István Rác in his *A paraszti migráció és politikai megítélése Magyarországon 1849-1914* (Peasant Migration and its Political Policies in Hungary 1849-1914) (Budapest Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980). Puskás well illustrates most of her theses with charts, graphs, maps and tables that provide additional data on the age, sex, religion, locality and ethnic background of emigrants.

In the second part Puskás deals with the foundation of Hungarian-American society and surveys, perhaps somewhat superficially, Hungarian settlements in the United States (p. 186). The farming settlement in Florida that was known as Kossuthville; the strawberry farming community, Árpádhon in Louisiana; and Himlerville, the once-famous mining settlement in Kentucky, to mention only a few, receive trivial attention and treatment. It seems, furthermore, that most of the author's information comes from second-hand sources. I feel that an examination of the study by K. Bonutti and G. Prpic, *Selected Ethnic Communities of Cleveland* (1974), could have strengthened the author's conclusions as to the nature and characteristics of immigrant settlements. Cleveland is a major

American city and was built by many ethnic groups, among whom the Hungarians played a major role.

Puskás surveys the many and diverse cultural institutions of Hungarian immigrant society, an area that is difficult to deal with. Puskás categorizes immigrant institutions into the following groups: religious, lay and social (p. 231). This fails to take account of the complexities of Hungarian life and the diverse organizations that have played major parts in it. Where would, to give an example, the Hungarian Scout Movement fit in the author's typology? Obviously, it could belong in all three types. The danger of Puskás' typology is clear: the Hungarian immigrant experience does not allow for such a simplified generalization.

In the third part the author discusses the period between 1920 and 1940, and deals with the conflicts and major problems that created various processes within the immigrant society. Puskás is right in stressing that this period is particularly notable for the marked changes that occurred in Hungarian-American circles; for example, the stronger tendency toward assimilation; the upward mobility of certain immigrant circles within the ethnic enclave; disintegration of a considerable number of social, cultural and religious institutions; and even the creation of new settlements and organizations (pp. 319-404). This chapter seemed to be somewhat better balanced than the other two. I was able to detect only a few minor mistakes, among them the date of the first Pittsburgh "Hungarian Day" (p. 349), which was not in 1926 but in 1925; its purpose was to collect money to mount a permanent Hungarian exhibit at the Cathedral of Learning. The first Hungarian Day in New York was organized only in 1934. The author dates the foundation of the first singing societies (*dalárda* in Hungarian) and theatres to the first decade of this century (pp. 240-41). The fact is that the first such attempts may be traced back to the 1848 immigrants and to the 1880s and early 1890s. Perhaps not all of these performances were organized and shown in the Hungarian community *per se*. In documenting the history of the early Hungarian theatre, the names of the Királffy brothers and Jenő Endrei should be remembered and recognized as they contributed to the emergence of this major part of the ethnic community.

In the final section of the book Julianna Puskás included

several letters and interviews, obviously to support her conclusions on Hungarian immigrant life in America (pp. 551-79). It is not known, however, how the selection was made. Moreover, it seems that they were carefully edited, some appear fragmented, others seem to be only an abridged version of the original. One of the letters is dated 1963 (p. 579). Since there is no reference to earlier years in the letter it is puzzling how this letter can refer to the time period discussed in the book.

Unfortunately, there are some major mistakes in the figures and tables of the Appendix. One would hope that these are just misprints, but they are too numerous not to be mentioned. A few examples follow. On page 617 the author mentions the *Hungarian Miners' Journal* (Magyar Bányászlap) and locates its editorial offices in New York in 1914, and then in Himmlerville, Kentucky. The journal, however, moved to Columbus, Ohio in 1928; in 1931 to Cleveland; then in 1933 to Detroit; and finally, in 1950, to Pittsburgh. The *American Magyar Review* was published not only in 1937 (p. 611), but in the subsequent years as well. At the same time, the *Magyar Napi Híradó* was initiated in New York in 1937, and the *Amerikai Magyar Világ*, established in the same year in New York, are not mentioned in Puskás' list. Another journal, the *Szabad Sajtó*, was not printed in Passaic (p. 620), but in Garfield, New Jersey. The socialist *Munkás* was printed in New York and not in Cleveland (p. 619). Several cities in New Jersey, such as Passaic, Newark, Hoboken, Roebling and others, all large centres of Hungarian life, are placed by Puskás in New York State (p. 535).

Aside from these outright errors there are several broader issues that could detract from the seriousness of this otherwise tremendous study. The author seems to take a rather ethnocentric look at the immigrant society. She puts an undue emphasis on the role of the leftist, in particular communist tradition within the history of immigrant society. By limiting its point of view to organizations and newspapers of the left, the book also ignores or treats lightly the essential contributions made by immigrant institutions, especially those outside the church. For example, more emphasis should have been placed on cultural and educational circles, artists' colonies, foundations, benefit societies and others as institutions that shaped the immigrant society and promoted ethnic awareness among Hungarians.



The section on work and immigrant lifestyle (pp. 203-222) is marred by a lack of definitions. Phrases such as *etnikai tudat* (ethnic consciousness) and *közösség-centrikus tevékenység* (community-centred functions) are not clear to this reviewer in light of data presented. There are also conceptual problems that stem from the material. For example, the dichotomy between *amerikai magyarok* (American-Hungarian) and *magyar etnikai csoport* (Hungarian ethnic group) is confusing. In the former she includes only those “who grew up with Hungarian culture and language” (p. 15), while in the latter she includes the second and even the third generations as well. It is not clear why this distinction is meaningful.

The author also avoids the problems of ethnic tension and the ongoing ethnic hostilities that have characterized East European immigrant life from the beginning. The problems of Hungarian-Slovak, Hungarian-Rumanian, Hungarian-Jewish and other inter-ethnic relations have played a fundamental role in shaping ethnic consciousness and identity among Hungarians in America. Puskás also classifies the Hungarian-Jewish community as being part of the greater Hungarian-American society (p. 16), where, in fact, this group has consistently formed a separate social and cultural group.

Puskás also makes some claims that are not verified by her data. For example, on page 248, she states the following: “The feeling of nationality and nationalism and its development in this period (the first decade of this century) was felt in wider social circles of Hungarian immigrants.” The question that comes to mind immediately is, of course, was that not also true of Hungary and Hungarians as a whole in that time? She also argues that Hungarian immigrants participated in the production and fostering of “fake Hungarian” and “bourgeois ethnic symbols” (p. 246) in order to express their ethnic identity. It is important to point out here that this was not only the case with Hungarian immigrants, as Puskás seemingly suggests, but of Hungarians as a whole. Hungarian-American society received not only political and economic help from the various governments of Hungary but it has been manipulated greatly by the latter regarding political and economic goals as well. One fundamental aspect of this process has been the creation of different “ethnic” and “national” symbols. In this, the role of the upper class élite, both here and in Hungary, has been overwhelming, a fact that is outside of Puskás’ real interest.

There are some other questionable propositions as well. The problem of socio-economic heterogeneity of the immigrants and the limits of social mobility, areas of sociological and anthropological interests, are mentioned by Puskás only in passing. Her argument, however, is not very convincing. She asserts that the former, Old World, background largely determines the new socio-economic standing (pp. 218, 219). While this might well be the case to a certain extent, it cannot be applied to all cases and every period of Hungarian immigrant history. There are two final comments that should be made. First, Puskás' view of the decay of the Hungarian immigrant schools (p. 276) might be misleading. Accounts of early schools and the immigrant teachers themselves clearly show that the failure of the educational system was not based on solely generational problems, as she claims, but on economic hardships and diverse ideological attitudes, such as lay versus religious leadership, and real differences in pedagogical principles, foundations. The second comment, or rather suggestion, has to do with the time and spatial limits of Puskás' study. The 1940 cut-off point of Hungarian-American community life does not refer to the end of Hungarian culture in America. In fact, a renaissance of the immigrant community has been attributed to the newcomers after 1940. The role of the 1956-ers, in creating and helping the emergence of new Hungarian life in North America, is well known. In this sense, in future studies, it will not be justified to simply talk about "emigrant Hungarians," for the second and third generations and other later newcomers may not belong to this category.

In conclusion, it should be stated that this book is a valuable addition to the growing literature on Hungarian immigration history and ethnicity. It deals with an immense amount of data and a subject of great complexity that would require volumes. Puskás has done a valuable service in gathering important information and archival materials on this topic. I believe that this book will be of great use not only in its assertions and conclusions but by the many intriguing questions it will surely generate.

## **Trianon: Sixty Years After**

*János M. Bak*

Béla K. Király, Peter Pastor and Ivan Sanders, editors, *Essays on World War I; Total War and Peacemaking. A Case Study on Trianon. War and Society in East Central Europe*, Vol. VI, New York: Social Science Monographs, Brooklyn University Press, 1982. 678 pages.

A comparative study of the verbal and other commemorations of the anniversaries of the Trianon Peace Treaty of June 4, 1920 would yield an interesting potpourri of intellectual and political history of Hungary and Hungarians. The tenth anniversary must have been drowned in the miseries of the Great Depression, while the twentieth may have been blotted out by the "successful" revision of it with the help of Hitler and Mussolini, which was partially the cause of the twenty-fifth anniversary's being marked by the preparation of the "re-edition" of Trianon in the Paris Peace Treaty of 1946. The thirtieth, fortieth (and even fiftieth) anniversaries were probably commemorated only by the openly revanchist "right" in exile or small "underground" circles in Hungary. In Communist Hungary the mere mention of the name of this pavilion in the garden of Versailles would have counted as subversive nationalist propaganda in 1950, 1960 or even 1970, despite the fact that Lenin's Soviet Russia and the Comintern had repeatedly denounced the imperialist peace treaties of Versailles. Democratic emigrés shied back from the subject, for they were, understandably, primarily interested in building a common front against Stalinist and post-Stalinist dictatorships with exiles from other successor states rather than risking such an alliance by raising questions of borders and minorities. However, the sixtieth anniversary in 1980 triggered reflections in highly varied quarters, and in the very last years several conferences, books and

articles addressed the question “sixty years after.” I am referring not only to the University Symposium in New York (of which this book is an extended record), but, among others, to a conference in Strasbourg in the Summer of 1984, devoted to Trianon, and to the fact that the problems connected with that peace treaty and its consequences loomed also large at the internal debates on “problems of national consciousness” held in June 1984 at the Historical Research Institute in Budapest.

I wonder, whether it is mere Hungaro-centric myopia, but it seems that of all the peace treaties following the First World War the many problems “of Trianon” are perhaps the most vivid, but in comparison to their significance, the least widely discussed in any contemporary terms. Of course in Germany, discussions and soul-searching about the rise of Nazism always imply questions going back to Versailles, but the treaty is only one of many. German ethnic minorities created by Versailles have been long ago either called “home into the Reich” or expelled by post-World War II régimes. St. Germain commands more scholarly than popular interest in Austria, even though the borders and the autonomy of the present-day republic are based on those decisions. True, the *Südtirol-Alto Adige* irridenta still excites a small and militant constituency, but the rest of the Austrians learned to appreciate the 1920 prohibition of an *Anschluss* to their peril. The history of Bulgaria has certainly changed much after Neuilly, but at least the size of the national minorities on both sides of the borders is limited. Finally, pre-Sèvres Turkey belongs most definitely to ancient history and the Turks of today do not regret not being in charge of the most conflict-torn regions of the world, that formerly belonged to “their” Empire. In contrast, historical Hungary’s loss of sizeable territories and of millions of ethnic Hungarians to the newly established or extensively enlarged successor states did not quite become “past.” To begin with, unlike the other peace treaties, Trianon was re-decreed in 1946. To an even greater extent it is the consequence of a failure to face realities. Neither the Horthy régime nor the Communist one permitted open and sincere discussion of Trianon. The former – while actively politicking for its revision – utilised it primarily as an excuse for conservative authoritarianism, and the latter pretended that it was a “non-issue.” In the years of Stalinism, or even longer, the quite explicit charge of Hungarians being a “guilty nation” that

deserved its losses by having “abandoned Communism” in 1919, then by joining the anti-Soviet war (and jumping off too late) was consciously nurtured by the Party ideologues. But it is also a fact that more than half a century and more than one political and social revolution later the issues left unsolved (or created) in Trianon are still causing misery to considerable-sized ethnic minorities and tensions between allegedly allied and “brotherly” states. Hence, the present renewed interest in Trianon, in Hungary and abroad, does not originate in mere coincidence, although the generational change may have something to do with it. The truly alarming conditions in Rumania, where the Hungarian population is clearly suffering more than others, and signs of anti-Hungarian sentiment in Slovakia acted as catalysts that made a wide range of Hungarians, including even the official Hungarian authorities, overcome their understandable reluctance of discussing these matters. For decades any mention of the problems of Trianon was inevitably tinted with implications of Horthyite revisionism. That, however, was seen by many as responsible for the devastations suffered by Hungary in and after the war, and—in the last resort—for the re-imposition of the borders of 1920. When, however, several decades during which only “socialist internationalism” and “Leninist nationality policies” were preached, proved to be unable to overcome old nationalist prejudices or even created new ones, the unsavoury implications of speaking of Trianon had to be suspended for the sake of a sober review. Were one not aware of these far reaching implications, all this might appear as digging up long buried battle axes, but—alas—the issues are not dead and mere silence does not make them go away.

The purpose of this handsomely produced and well written (in parts also well translated) book is a scholarly re-visitation of Trianon by Hungarian and non-Hungarian scholars, authors from the Hungarian People’s Republic, Britain, Israel and North America. Many of them prepared original material for the volume utilising archival research on documents that became recently accessible, others offered summaries of their previous research or articles published in less accessible languages. It would be futile—and for the reader tedious—to summarize and comment on thirty-two articles on diplomatic, intellectual, social, economic and literary history, all of which are more or less relevant to the problem of Trianon. That all authors agree, the

Trianon Settlement was unjust, influenced as it was by prejudice, bias and resentment (to say nothing of a good measure of ignorance), is not surprising, and may not originate merely in editorial choice. It is notable that the authors living in Budapest provide a more nuanced approach to Trianon than those abroad, and, maybe, not merely because of internalized censorship. But, in general, few historians and political scientists would today approve of the inconsistent and often haphazard decisions taken in the years of debates in Paris. What remains to be asked are questions about the background of the decisions of those years and the significance of their consequences for our world.

As to the reasons of the admittedly unjustified harsh treatment of Hungary, the main issue seems to be the long standing anti-Hungarian (or anti-Magyar) sentiment in the West, probably in France first and England later. The exact chronology, the addressees and motives of it still demand detailed inquiry. One of the crucial figures in the background of Trianon, whose role—played partially by omission—emerges here more clearly than before, was R.W. Seton-Watson. He, as *Scotus Viator*, had set the tone vis-a-vis Old Hungary around the turn of the century and did not hasten to revise it in the face of a revolutionary, democratic one in November 1918. Since, as Stephen Borsody points out, “Trianon was above all a triumph of propaganda,” the analysis of the opinion-makers is of paramount importance. Hence a short piece by Hugh Seton-Watson on his father, augmented by a contribution from Budapest (by Károly Vigh) and an excellently researched study by Thomas Sakmyster are among the most interesting papers in the volume. Sakmyster draws, on the basis of extensive archival material from the Public Record Office and elsewhere, a much more differentiated picture of British policies vis-a-vis Hungary than those hitherto presented. He shows the difference, the incoordinated divergence and even conflict between the views and interests of Lloyd George’s government, the diplomats and the “experts.” Sakmyster augmented considerably what Hugh Seton-Watson was able—or willing—to tell about his father. Still, neither of them offers an explanation for R.W. Seton-Watson’s failure to support his old friends, such as Oscar Jászi, when the chips were falling. Jászi and his associates had placed their hopes in the democratic West, represented by Seton-Watson and Steed, and had suffered maltreatment in their country for keeping

friendship with these Englishmen. Why did they not speak up for their prewar colleagues, who were now in the government of a new, democratic Hungary in the crucial last months of 1918? Would Seton-Watson's suspicion of "Count" Károlyi as just another aristocrat be a sufficient explanation? Or was Jászi right, when he—already before the war—warned Seton-Watson of losing his political judgment and accusing "the Hungarians" without any differentiation of chauvinism, instead of addressing the active culprits: the régime? Or was it rather so that the revolutionary events in Germany and Russia, together with the many domestic and colonial problems in the first months after armistice, simply diverted the interest from the Danubian Basin. Sakmyster's conclusion supports the last option. It is a very sobering and realistic one, sad as it may sound to the people in the Danubian Basin: among the many issues Britain had to face in 1919-1920, the Hungarian borders were hardly of high priority. The fate of the constituent parts of the Habsburg Empire was decided, at any rate *de facto*, during the months between October 1918 and May 1919, before serious work on "peacemaking" had even begun. Those who really could have offered a differentiated view on the Entente side, and those—such as Jászi—who had opposed the pre-1914 policy of Magyarisation, were overwhelmed by events in which the shots were called by local commanders of Allied forces and politicians of the successor states. This is also the scenario that emerges from the detailed studies of these months, such as Peter Pastor's, Mária Ormos's and Zsuzsa L. Nagy's. While the Western friends of democracy and national self-determination cannot be exonerated for what happened in these months, they may have seen themselves faced with *faits accomplis*: a situation in which, essentially French interests (see the excellent archival studies of M. Ádám and A. Orde), anti-Habsburg propaganda, dislike for the Hungarian Establishment in liberal circles of the West, and—increasingly—fear of Soviet-type revolutions dictated the steps.

The volume contains much information on the immediate and long-term effects of Trianon, including the Baranya-dispute and the plebiscite on the Austrian border (around Ödenburg-Sopron). A few other topics, such as the impact of Trianon on the Jews and on Anti-Semitism in Hungary would have deserved a less cursory treatment ; but space was, of course,

limited. Lee Congdon's brief survey of the democratic emigration and its dilemma of choosing between cooperation with the Little Entente or remaining politically ineffective protesters against the Horthy-régime is indeed a very astute analysis. It draws attention to a peculiar *cul de sac* (with the word of the oft-quoted István Bibó) of Hungarian intellectual history: the country's great contemporary poet, the recently deceased populist Gyula Illyés, felt it appropriate as recently as a few years ago, to intimate that Jászi, Károlyi and their political friends may have pursued treacherous paths when they cooperated with Beneš against Horthy. (This problem is not touched upon in K. Nagy's paper on a recent collection of Illyés's relevant essays.)

It was a valiant effort by the editors to include intellectual and literary aspects of "Trianon" as well. It is much more difficult, however, to correlate a peace treaty with poetry or historiography than with economic and social consequences. The studies on László Németh, Sándor Reményik, Gyula Illyés and on the interwar historians add interesting spotlights, yet do not add up to a systematic analysis. One of the crucial issues was that the victorious democracies, by refusing to grant credibility to a pro-Entente revolution in Budapest or to negotiate a solution out of a dictatorship of desperation, seemed to be responsible for having abandoned the weak forces of democracy in Hungary. Thus, many a Western-oriented intellectual saw the events of 1918-20, not unfoundedly, as having caused not only unjust borders but — and this is more profound — having also discredited democracy and social transformation for generations. This disappointment shaped the better part of Hungarian intellectual life for more than just a few years after Trianon. The myth—mixed with reality—of "being abandoned" grew and resurfaced many times since. We still are in need of a consistent evaluation of the impact of lost wars, failed revolutions and unjust peace-treaties on the consciousness of the nation. Because 1945 was experienced not only as "liberation," but also as destruction and humiliation; the borders of 1946, equal to those of 1920, not only as logical outcome of misdirected revisionism, but also as one more example of historical "bad luck." And, for the last 30 years little of all this could be cleared up in open debate and analysis. It is indeed a question worth exploring: how can a healthy—neither crushed nor chauvinistically inflated—national self-respect emerge from this



history, one that is able to accommodate concern for the fate of ethnic minorities without nursing revanchist dreams. Some of these points are raised very succinctly in the last section of this book.



## **Essays on World War I**

*N.F. Dreisziger*

Samuel R. Williamson, Jr., and Peter Pastor eds., *Essays on World War I: Origins and Prisoners of War, War and Society in East Central Europe* series, Vol. 5, Brooklyn: Social Science Monographs, 1983. 264 pages.

Peace on earth and human rights: these are the burning issues of the Twentieth Century. Both had been profoundly affected during 1914-1918, especially through events that had taken place in those years in East Central Europe and Russia. Some of these developments are discussed in ten papers collected in this volume.

The first part of this book is entitled *The Origins of World War I Reconsidered*. It contains essays by Paula Sutter Fichtner, William Jannen, Jr., Michael Palumbo, as well as Professor S.R. Williamson, the editor of this section. Professor Fichtner, to take the papers in no particular order, deals with the wartime roots of the conservative revolution of the 1920s, particularly in Austria. Dr. Palumbo explains how Austrian misconceptions about Italian loyalty to the Triple Alliance contributed to Vienna's decision to embark upon what was expected to be a "local war" against Serbia. Professor Jannen outlines an even broader basis for miscalculation on the part of the Viennese leaders. Using the approach of psychoanalytical history, he asserts that by July of 1914 Austrian leaders were so frustrated with the Serbian terrorist onslaught on their Balkan provinces that they came to the conclusion that military action was the only way out of an untenable political situation. Up to July of 1914, the Austrian leadership had always considered Russian sensitivities, but after the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, it abandoned this policy of caution. Hungarian Minister President István Tisza warned against the "terrible calamity of a European war," but his peers among the Austro-Hungarian elite were determined to risk a war lest their country

would be considered weak both by other powers and by their own minorities, especially the South Slavs. The peculiarly “blinkered approach” of these men, Jannen argues, was shared by other European leaders at the time who “repeatedly perceived themselves as having no choice but to issue an ultimatum, or to mobilize, or to fight, while they saw their opponents as free to back down, to compromise, or to pursue some alternative line of action.” (p. 59). Where the Austro-Hungarian leaders differed from the other European leaders was that in July of 1914 they paid even less attention as to how other countries’ governments might react to their decisions. The responsibility for the calamity of the war then lies heavily with the Viennese leadership, a conclusion that editor S.R. Williamson also endorses in his own study. His essay, based on a more traditional historiographical approach, examines among other things the increasingly hawkish attitudes to the question of Austro-Serbian relations of such men as General Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, Count Leopold Berchtold, and even the aging Francis Joseph. It is an irony of history, that the very man who could and probably would have opposed this trend effectively, Francis Ferdinand, was killed by the Serbian terrorists themselves.

The second part of the volume, edited by Professor Peter Pastor, is entitled *Case Studies on East Central European Prisoners of War in World War I*. It contains six papers as well as a list and a map of prisoners-of-war camps in the Russian Empire (1914-1917). Most of the essays deal with one or more Central or East European national groups in Russian captivity after 1914.

In his introduction to this half of the book, Professor Pastor suggests that the Soviet tradition of the *gulag*, a network of concentration camps stretching from Poland to the Far East, had its roots not so much in Stalin’s time, but in the prisoners-of-war camps of World War I. Most of the two million POWs held by the Russians during the war came from the Habsburg army, and were made up of various nationalities. Tsarist Russia was not prepared for their reception. Arrangements for their transportation, care and housing often had to be improvised under adverse conditions. According to Professor Pastor, the Russian military leadership’s “callous handling of its own troops also extended to the prisoners of war.” (p. 114).

The POWs were often neglected, manipulated, exploited and, after the revolution, were increasingly subjected to political

propaganda and were dragged into the country's nascent civil war. Ethnic divisions and national animosities among the POWs were exploited and exacerbated to the extent that within the Russian civil war there developed a civil war of East Central Europeans as well.

The most comprehensive paper in this collection is Gerald M. Davis' "The Life of Prisoners of War in Russia, 1914-1921." Its author assigns responsibility for the misfortunes of many POWs not so much to the callousness of the Russian command, but to the harshness of Russian conditions — both climatic and economic — as well as to administrative ineptitude. With inefficient transportation, and inadequate medical services, sanitation, housing and food supplies, coupled with hostility from the local population, it is not surprising that hundreds of thousands of POWs failed to survive their ordeal. Those that did, found their lives further complicated by the Russian Revolution and the Civil War. During 1917-1921 POWs "became actively involved in every aspect of the struggles and in every geographical area." (p. 185). The process of final repatriation was undertaken only in 1920.

The essay that is of most interest to Hungarian specialists is Professor Pastor's own paper, "Hungarian POWs in Russia during the Revolution and Civil War." The study points out that under the Provisional Government of Alexander Kerenskiy, discrimination against non-Slavic POWs increased. Among the revolutionary parties only the Bolsheviks paid attention to the plight of the prisoners-of-war, and promised peace with the prospect of return home. These and other factors induced many Hungarian captives to hope for Bolshevik victory. In the meantime most Slavic POWs pegged their hopes on the triumph of the Kerenskiy government in Russia and an Entente victory in the war. The stage was set for conflict among Hungarian subjects among the POWs within the larger civil war brewing in Russia. Indeed, many Hungarians did end up fighting on the Bolshevik side. Professor Pastor argues that their motive for joining was not so much ideology but the fact that in Bolshevik victory they saw a "new chance to return home." (p. 152).

Collections of essays can often be criticised for not including enough papers to cover most aspects on their subject. In connection with this particular collection it might be said that a few more papers on each of its main subjects would have

justified the printing of two books rather than one, yet such criticism should not be made lightly. Editors and publishers are limited in what they can offer at a given time, and for them to wait until more, and more suitable papers become available might mean the demise of their publishing project. If this had happened to the volume under review, students of history would have been deprived of a collection that offers much that is new and one that is helpful for the understanding of the roots of our days' most profound issues.

## **Book Reviews**

*Economic Development in the Habsburg Monarchy in the Nineteenth Century.* John Komlos, ed., New York: Columbia University Press, 1983. East European Monographs, No. 128. 204 pages.

For nearly twenty years economic historians have laboured to revise the picture of the economic development of the Habsburg Monarchy inherited from traditional historians—that the Empire was economically backward, and remained so because it could not overcome certain institutional and natural barriers to growth, such as its feudal structure, lack of entrepreneurs, lack of financial institutions, lack of natural resources and unfavourable location. This poor economic performance, traditional historians contended, contributed to the political disintegration of the Monarchy and to its break-up into national states following World War I.

Economic historians have demolished practically every element of this traditional view, and this volume of reprinted and original essays presents an extensive sampling of that work. In the opening essay, “Austria-Hungary in the World Economy,” Nachum Gross places the Habsburg economy in an international context. True, the Habsburg economy was backward relative to the United Kingdom, Germany and France, but it was advanced relative to Italy, Russia and the Balkan countries. Thus, it fell in the midst of the northwest-southeast path of development that traversed Europe during the nineteenth century.

In addition, Gross shows that backwardness did not mean stagnation. The Habsburg economy underwent considerable growth and development during the years prior to 1914. It industrialized gradually, starting as early as the eighteenth century and continuing through into the twentieth—a pattern, Gross believes, that is far more typical than the “big-spurr” experienced by Germany.

Most of the essays concern an evaluation of the barriers to growth listed above and of the government policies designed to

remove those barriers. In “Agriculture as a Source of Labor Supply: Conjecture from the History of Hungary, 1870-1913,” Scott Eddie demonstrates that Hungary’s feudal structure did not pose a barrier to growth. Despite the dominance of the lords’ latifundia, Hungarian agriculture did release sufficient labour to allow industrialization to proceed at a rapid pace. In “Industrial Growth and Entrepreneurship in the Early Stages of Industrialization in the Czech Lands,” Arnost Klima shows that resident and immigrant entrepreneurs, both common and noble, initiated industrial ventures in Bohemia and Moravia as early as the eighteenth century. In “The Austrian Credit Mobilier in a Time of Transition,” Eduard Marz describes the entrepreneurial activities of the Empire’s foremost financial institution. John Komlos further refutes the notion that Austria-Hungary lacked financial institutions. His essay, “The Diffusion of Financial Technology into the Habsburg Monarchy Toward the End of the Nineteenth Century,” describes the benefits of various financial reform measures undertaken by the Empire in the 1880s and 1890s. The last two barriers mentioned above—the lack of natural resources and the Empire’s unfavourable location—from the foil for the essay by László Katus, “Transport Revolution and Economic Growth in Hungary.” Through building a transport network, especially railroads, Hungary was largely able to overcome its natural disadvantages. Rail lines linked coal and iron-ore deposits, allowing a domestic iron industry to develop; rail lines linked the grain growing areas to world markets, fueling exports. Overall, therefore, transport became a leading sector in the Hungarian economy.

What of government policy? Did it hinder or promote development? Three essays address this topic. In “Economic Revolution in Austria,” Richard Rudolph downplays the influence of policy, especially the neo-absolutist reforms that followed the 1848 revolution, on the Monarchy’s development. In contrast, David Good, in an essay entitled, “Economic Union and Uneven Development,” stresses the high degree of economic unification achieved by the Monarchy. This benefited the more backward regions of the Monarchy, especially Hungary, as noted by György Ránki in his essay, “On the Economic Development of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.”

Taken together these essays comprise a new composite view of the Monarchy’s economic development—that of a growing



economy modernizing itself in response to stimulus from the more advanced countries of Europe. Therefore, if economic performance undermined the Monarchy's political cohesion, it was probably by making nationalist causes the vehicle for the rising expectations of the bourgeoisie and workers.

*Thomas Huertas*  
*New York City*

Gyivicsán, Anna, ed., *Tanulmányok a kelet-európai irodalmak és nyelvek köréből* (Essays from the Sphere of East European Literatures and Languages). Budapest: Eötvös Lóránd University, 1980. 376 pages.

This work is a *Festschrift* in honour of the 70th birthday of László Dobossy, Professor of Czech literature at the University of Budapest. It contains forty-three literary and linguistic articles written by colleagues, students, friends and followers of the celebrated professor.

Professor Dobossy's birthdate and the geographic location of his birthplace on the Central European political map has had much more influence on his intellectual development than these factors usually have on individuals. He comes from that disputed territory between Hungary and Czechoslovakia which, during his lifetime, has changed national sovereignty three times due to the unwanted interference of more powerful governments. Consequently, he was exposed to different cultural trends. He studied in a Hungarian secondary school and at a Czech university. He later completed his education at the Université de Paris. The *Festschrift* contains a bibliography of his publications, about 350 titles, on topics of Central European and French literature and linguistics. His publications demonstrate a typical Central European erudition. The title of one of his publications, *Our Homeland; Central Europe*, is symbolic of this Central European man who, in the racially and linguistically mixed region, was exposed to more than one cultural tradition. One can find the following qualities in a Central European man: he owes allegiance to his homeland, to his nation, he speaks several languages and with his cultural curiosity he turns towards the cultural centres of Budapest, Cracow, Paris, Prague, Rome and Vienna.

From such horizons, László Dobossy looked at the special Central European problems with the perspective required for the objectivity of his writings. By choosing to write in Czech, French, German and Hungarian about comparative literary topics, he served as an intermediary among those European nations which were unaware of each other's culture due to language barriers. Similarly, the contributors to the *Festschrift* originated from various countries from Canada to the Soviet Union written in English, Czech, French, Magyar and Russian. The volume is proof of the widespread recognition of the extraordinary literary productivity for the septuagenarian professor on the part of his colleagues living in other countries. László Dobossy, with his scholarly abilities and literary activity, is propagating understanding among the highly cultured nations of Central Europe which have had to endure many calamities—past and present.

*Charles Wojatsek*  
*Bishop's University*

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**Special Issue:**

**THE HUNGARIAN EXPERIENCE IN ONTARIO**

**N.F. Dreisziger**

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## PREFACE

This volume celebrates two anniversaries. One is the bicentennial of Ontario, and the other is the centennial of the beginnings of Hungarian settlement in Canada. Ontario's bicentennial was held in 1984, and the 100th anniversary of Hungarian immigration to Canada is noted this year. Both of these dates are somewhat arbitrary. Constitutional experts would probably argue that 1991, marking the 200th anniversary of the creation of Upper Canada (by the Constitutional Act of 1791), is a more appropriate date for Ontario's bicentennial. At the same time, some students of immigration history might select a date before or after 1885 as being a more representative beginning of Hungarian ethnic life in this country. Be as it may, we thought that the mid-1980s represent a suitable time to publish a special issue of our journal dealing with the Hungarian experience in the Province of Ontario.

The appearance of this volume coincides with an important development in the history of Hungarian culture in Ontario. This event is the establishment of the Hungarian Research Institute, an scholarly organization affiliated with the University of Toronto. The Institute, which is the first of its kind in North America, is expected to continue on a more sophisticated level the work began by the Hungarian Readers' Service, and to complement the activities of the University of Toronto's Chair of Hungarian Studies. The Institute is planning to establish a close relationship with our journal with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of our efforts to serve the cause of Hungarian studies not only in Ontario but also in all of Canada and elsewhere in the world.

The printing of this issue was helped with a "matching grant" from the Ontario Government's Department of Culture and Recreation, for which we are most thankful. Most of the research that made the writing of this volume possible was done over the past decade with the help of grants from the Multiculturalism Directorate of the Secretary of State of Canada. A draft of this study was read and commented on by Mrs. Susan Papp of the Canadian Broadcast-

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Kingston, Ontario. December, 1985.  
N.F. Dreisziger

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## Chapter 1

### THE BEGINNINGS

Through the ages the world has had two differing images of Ontario. One of these pictures the Province as one of the strongholds of WASP culture in the New World. The other projects Ontario as the home of a great variety of peoples and religions, deriving from the four corners of the world.

Paradoxically, these differing images are not entirely inaccurate reflections of the reality. Ontario, or Upper Canada as this land became known soon after the start of settlement here, was a solidly British colony where Loyalist sentiments dominated the political and cultural scene for generations. The colony, under its early governors, foremost among them John Graves Simcoe, was moulded deliberately in the image of Britain with the aim of making it into an outpost of British power and culture in the interior of the North American continent. For the whole of the nineteenth century, the colony — and later the Province — remained highly “British” in marked contrast to most of its neighbours. Ontario was English, monarchist and dominated in part by the Anglican Church. Its neighbours south of the Great Lakes were republican with tendencies toward grass-roots democracy in politics and fundamentalism in church affairs. To the east, there was francophone Quebec (Lower Canada or Canada East as it was known at certain times in its evolution), with its ultramontane Roman Catholic Church. To the West, there was at first the Red River settlement with its mixed population of Indians, Métis, and Scottish, French and Canadian traders and pioneers, supplanted later by the Province of Manitoba with its bicultural institutions and — after the turn of the twentieth century — increasingly multicultural population.

A superficial observer of Ontario even in the twentieth century, might be impressed with the prominence of British institutions, a

WASP establishment and a highly “English” culture. Yet from the very beginning of Ontario’s history, there was another aspect to its existence, a tendency toward multiculturalism. The very founders of the Province, the Loyalists who came here during and after the War of American Revolution, were a polyglot lot. They were predominantly settlers and soldiers who derived from various English and non-English counties of the United Kingdom, and, to a lesser extent, from the various German and non-German states of Central Europe. Throughout the decades that followed, these early settlers shared the land with Native, i.e. Indian populations, with newcomers from Quebec, and with immigrants of various cultural and religious backgrounds. Although the majority of these derived from the United States and Britain, there were also many settlers from various parts of continental Europe. But even those who came from the United States or the United Kingdom, were often of non-WASP background, as was the case with immigrants deriving from Ireland. More importantly, after the turn of the twentieth century, the proportion of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants increased among peoples who came to the Province. This process, accelerated during the middle decades of the century, has led to the development of an Ontario where significant sections of the population is non-WASP and is of diverse cultural background.

One of the components of this non-Anglo-Saxon Ontario is the Hungarian community of the Province. For the purposes of a quick overview, it might be mentioned that this community is mainly the product of four “waves” of Hungarian immigration to Canada. The first came during and immediately after the turn of the century, in effect during the economic boom that lasted (with minor interruptions) from 1898 to 1911. The second (and much larger) wave came between 1924 and 1930. The third was made up of the postwar “displaced persons” who came during 1948-1952, and the fourth wave was composed of the “refugees” who arrived during 1956-57. While members of these waves made up the bulk of Hungarian immigration to Canada, it should be noted that Hungarians kept coming to Canada in smaller numbers at other times as well, with the exception of the time of the two world wars when immigration to this country from East Central Europe was banned.

Today, people of Hungarian background number over 59,000 in Ontario.<sup>1</sup> Some 21,000 of these still use Hungarian or *Magyar* as the language of communication at home.<sup>2</sup> The majority of them are concentrated in the Province’s large cities: Toronto and Hamilton contain the largest concentrations of them. The only notable exception to this is the largely rural Hungarian colony of Norfolk

County, the so-called “tobacco belt”. In terms of occupational distribution, Hungarians can be found in all walks of life ranging from manual work to the professions. The following paragraphs outline the origins and development of this diverse ethnic group.

### Early Visitors

The first Hungarian known to have reached the shores of Canada was Stephen Parmenius of Buda who accompanied Sir Humphrey Gilbert on his ill-fated voyage to Newfoundland in 1583. Who was the first Hungarian to reach the land what is now Ontario, is not known for sure. During the age of New France, persons from Central Europe often reached this continent either as soldiers in the pay of the French military, or as missionaries serving with the Jesuit order. If there had been Hungarians among these visitors to New France, they might have strayed onto Ontario territory in the course of their trips to the lands of the Indians. One Hungarian who is known to have reached the shores of Hudson Bay around the year 1700 was Andreas Cassender, a fur-trader from Transylvania. He may not have been followed to this part of the world by another Hungarian until the wars of the mid-eighteenth century, when once again soldiers from Central Europe served with both the English and French armies fighting for the control of North America.

The first amply documented visit by Hungarian travellers to Ontario took place in 1831. The visitors were Count Ferenc Béldy and Alexander Bölöni Farkas. The former financed the tour, while the latter wrote a book about it, a fact which made his name famous in mid-nineteenth century Hungary. Because of his book, Farkas is of interest to us. He was born in 1795 into a Transylvanian gentry family. Because his parents were poor, and especially because they belonged to the Unitarian Church, prospects for the young Alexander's future in the Habsburg Empire of the time were not bright. Had he been the son of an aristocrat, or at least the offspring of a Roman Catholic gentry family, he might have been able to look forward to a career in the imperial bureaucracy, or in the Habsburg Army; but being both poor and of the wrong religious persuasion predestined him to a life of genteel poverty as a local functionary in his native Transylvania. On the salary he got as a clerk, he could hardly afford to travel abroad, but the opportunity of a lifetime presented itself to Farkas in 1830 when Count Béldy asked the young man to accompany him on a tour of Western Europe and North America.

The two men set out on their long journey in November of 1830. After extensive travels through France, the Low Countries and England, they arrived in New York in September of the following year. After visiting several American states, they crossed north into British North America, into what was then called Lower Canada (today's Quebec). There they visited several locations including Montreal, from where they began a voyage up the St. Lawrence River to Upper Canada. In this province their first stop was Kingston, a busy commercial center and garrison town at the time. Here, Farkas was especially impressed by Indians coming with canoes to shop for provisions, and by the masses of immigrants who stopped in the city on their way to the interior of the colony.<sup>3</sup>

From Kingston, Farkas and Bélydy took a ship to York (the latter-day Toronto), the capital of the young British colony. Farkas described this settlement in the following way: "The town itself consists of entirely new buildings. The governor's residence, the colonial legislature, a school named King's College, military barracks, and a few churches are the public buildings. On the streets there are still many thick tree stumps and at barely a half-mile distance primeval forests..."<sup>4</sup>

A visit to a capital city, if indeed we can call the York of those days as such, gave an excuse to Farkas to talk of politics. Here it should be mentioned that Farkas belonged to that group of early nineteenth century Hungarian intellectuals who resented the domination of Hungary (and Transylvania) by the House of Habsburg. Accordingly, Farkas was a confirmed anti-monarchist, and a believer in reform and in democratic ideals. His travels throughout the United States only reinforced these convictions in him. Not unexpectedly, he came to admire the American Republic and many of its "democratic" institutions. His beliefs, and especially, his impressions gained south of the border, helped to colour his views about the political situation in the Ontario of the times.

Not surprisingly, Farkas described the political and economic system of both Upper and Lower Canada in quite negative terms. "Both Canadas," were ruled by the Governor, the "representative of the British crown." In both colonies there were legislative bodies, but constant conflict existed between the Upper House, which was dominated by the aristocracy, and the "democratically inclined Lower House." While England did not collect direct taxes in the two colonies, she still derived benefits from them for "maritime and commercial" reasons. The Canadas, according to Farkas, were backward colonies, where the presence of the military was much more obvious than in the United States, and where land prices were



only a fraction of those south of the border. Even in somewhat more prosperous Upper Canada, the ordinary people looked to the American Republic with "undisguised yearning." The leaders of the common people were engaged in a prolonged struggle for constitutional reform.<sup>5</sup>

Farkas' book about North America became a major publishing event in Hungary of the mid-1830s. Despite its pro-republican overtones, at first the Habsburg authorities allowed its publication and distribution because they mistook it for a travelogue. Only after the second edition of the book, in 1835, was the attention of the police directed to it and a ban placed on it. By then, thousands of copies of it had been sold, many of which were read aloud in Hungarian households both in Hungary and Transylvania. There can be no doubt that the book helped to shape Hungarian public opinion. In particular, it helped to make the American model of democracy more popular in Hungary, rather than the more radical French revolutionary model. At the same time, the descriptions of colonial Ontario in this book helped to reinforce in the Hungarian public the anti-monarchist tendencies that were already gaining popularity in Hungary.

Thus took place the first major interaction in the evolution of Ontario and Hungary. Although some Hungarian refugees of the 1848-49 War of Independence are known to have stayed for some time in Ontario (then known as Canada West) during the 1850s, no further significant interaction took place between Hungarian and Ontario history until about half century later.<sup>6</sup> That new interaction was to be the result of the beginning of settlement by Hungarians in the Province.

### Early Settlement

Very little is known about the early settlement of Hungarians in Ontario. What is known to historians is that by 1905 there were the beginnings of small Hungarian colonies in several Ontario centres including Brantford, Galt, Hamilton, Niagara Falls, Welland and Windsor. The largest and probably the oldest of these colonies was Hamilton's. According to Jenő Ruzsa, one of the earliest chroniclers of the Hungarian-Canadian experience, the Hungarian colony of Hamilton in its early days was made up of workingmen who originally had gone to the Canadian West, but soon after their arrival moved to this industrial centre in Central Canada.<sup>7</sup> Already before the First World War, Hamilton's Hungarian colony had

established its first institutions. One of these was a Reformed congregation; another was the First Hungarian Workers' Sick-Benefit Society, the predecessor of a federation of left-wing Hungarian organizations that was to become quite influential in the 1930s and 1940s.

During the First World War the trans-migration of Hungarian settlers from the prairie homesteads to the industrial centres of Ontario accelerated. Particularly impressive was the growth of the Hungarian colony of Welland and its environs. Indeed, a few years after the war, in 1921, some of the Hungarian residents of this industrial town formed a "self-improvement circle" with sixty-six members. The organization still exists today. Elsewhere, the war saw the growth of the existing Hungarian colonies, and the birth of new ones. Despite all this growth, on the eve of the 1920s, the vast majority (close to 90 per cent), of Hungarian Canadians continued to reside in the Canadian West (primarily in Saskatchewan), and most of the major centres of Hungarian-Canadian ethnic life (such as Bekevar, Otthon and Stockholm in Saskatchewan and Winnipeg in Manitoba) were west of the Ontario-Manitoba border.

The 1920s were to change this situation dramatically. During the middle part and second half of this decade, a new and much larger wave of Hungarian immigrants came to Canada. The arrival of this new group contributed to a fundamental transformation of Hungarian-Canadian society. The most important manifestations of this change were the tripling of the community's size, a radical alteration of its geographic distribution, and a diversification of its social composition.

The influx of nearly thirty thousand Hungarians into Canada during the 1920s had its origins in developments elsewhere in the world. Up until the First World War, the traditional destination of overseas Hungarian immigrants was the United States. The war and its aftermath saw the triumph of nativistic sentiments in the United States along with the imposition of the notorious "quota system." This system ended the mass influx of Hungarians into the U.S.A. From this time on, Hungarians wishing to start life anew in North America had to be satisfied with coming to Canada rather than to the American Republic. The other important development influencing emigration of Hungarians happened in Europe: after the war the ancient Kingdom of Hungary was dismembered. Vast parts of the country were transferred to its neighbours. Many of the detached provinces had large Hungarian minorities or even majorities. Many Hungarian residents of these areas refused to be transferred to what they considered "alien rule" and fled to places that remained under

Hungary's jurisdiction. Others gave life in their new country a try, but found it distasteful and sought refuge in emigration overseas. With the influx of refugees from the detached territories, truncated Hungary found herself with an oversupply of certain professions such as government bureaucrats, teachers, railway officials, estate managers and military officers. Opportunities for these people were limited in the small and impoverished Hungary that was left to exist, and many of these people also chose emigration as a solution to their problems. By the end of the 1920s, thousands of these refugees from the detached Hungarian provinces had made their way to Canada either as citizens of Hungary, or as emigrants from Czechoslovakia, Rumania or Yugoslavia.

During the immediate post-World War I era, Hungarians were considered to be non-preferred immigrants in Canada. Restrictions on their entry were gradually relaxed, and by 1924 two categories of Hungarians were allowed to apply for entry into the country: farmers with money to buy land, and agricultural labourers with guarantees of farm work. Further conditions for entry were good physical and mental health and basic literacy. Newcomers had to have valid passports, as well as railway tickets to their destinations in Western Canada. Despite these precautionary measures, designed to insure that only "bona-fide" agriculturalists came to the country, many non-farmers had managed to enter Canada at the time. Others might have planned to give farm-work on the Canadian prairies an honest try, but social, economic and not the least climatic conditions soon encouraged them to leave the drudgery and isolation of work on western homesteads behind, and to seek employment in the cities, especially in the cities of Central Canada. As a result, the second half of the 1920s experienced an exodus of Hungarians from the Prairies, and a dramatic expansion of their colonies in the central, and to a lesser extent, westernmost regions of the country.

The results of these internal re-migrations were two-fold: Hungarians became dispersed in more regions of Canada than they had ever been before and, from a largely rural group they became one that was almost evenly divided between urban and rural residents. A few statistics might be cited to illustrate this transformation. Between 1921 and 1931 Saskatchewan's share of Canada's Hungarian population declined from more than two-thirds to less than a third, despite an absolute increase in the size of that province's Hungarian community. Other western provinces experienced a doubling, or even quintupling of the size of their Hungarian colonies in the same period. In Quebec, in particular in the City of

Montreal, a Hungarian colony of some 4,000 members evolved in less than a decade, while Ontario's already sizable Hungarian community underwent an eight-fold increase.<sup>8</sup>

In 1926 a journalist from Hungary by the name of Ödön Paizs toured much of Canada and reported on her Hungarian communities. In southern Ontario Paizs encountered Hungarians in Oshawa, St. Catharines, Port Colbourne, Thorold and St. Thomas, in addition to the centers of Hungarian life that had been mentioned above. According to this visitor, the largest Hungarian colony in Ontario was to be found in Hamilton. At the time of Paizs' visit, the city had about 1,000 Hungarian residents. The vast majority of them were casual labourers, but there were about a hundred people among them who had steady jobs as mechanics, tradesmen and railway employees. In the winter, the size of Hamilton's Hungarian colony increased as hundreds of farm-workers and navvies moved into the city to wait for the resumption of work on the farms and in canal construction in the spring. Most Hungarians lived in the city's "East-side" where housing was the cheapest. The recreational and religious needs of these people were fulfilled mainly by immigrant institutions, such as social clubs and ethnic congregations. At one time or another the city even had a Hungarian "ethnic" newspaper, but these tended to relocate in other Hungarian centres, or disappear altogether. Of course, Hungarian press-products were available to anyone interested in them from the United States, or from Winnipeg.

Although Hamilton's Hungarian colony continued to grow until the Great Depression, and even perhaps thereafter, by the end of the 1920s, "Steel City" had ceased to be the largest centre of Hungarian ethnic life in the Province. It was surpassed in size, though for some time not in importance, by the "upstart" Hungarian colony of Toronto.

Prior to World War I, Toronto did not have a Hungarian colony worthy of mention. There were a few dozen immigrants from Hungary in the city, many of them were Jewish. The influx of Hungarian gentiles did not begin really until the mid-1920s, but then Toronto's Hungarian colony underwent a very rapid increase. Organized community life seems to have started in 1926 when the Presbyterian Church of Canada established a mission for Hungarian Calvinists. Within two years, the Lutheran Church and the United Church followed suit, while Toronto's Hungarian Roman Catholics became to be served by Hungarian missionaries operating out of other centres (the City of Welland had a Hungarian Roman Catholic parish by this time). One of Toronto's first large Hungarian

lay organization was the Hungarian Catholic Circle; it was started in 1929 and through its activities paved the way for the establishment of a Roman Catholic "ethnic" parish several years later.

It is interesting to note that, although Toronto's Hungarian community overtook in size most (and, in the end, all) other Hungarian communities in the Province, for some time after its beginnings, it existed in a subordinate position vis-a-vis several older Hungarian colonies in southern Ontario. Toronto's Hungarians were often served by missionary priests and ministers from Hamilton, Welland and elsewhere; while the sick-benefit associations of Brantford and Hamilton opened sub-branches in Toronto (usually operating out of someone's apartment) to serve their clientele in that city.

### Problems of Immigrant Life

Ontario's immigrant Hungarian communities had numerous problems. Some of these were demographic. The fact is that immigrant Hungarian society in Canada, and especially in Ontario, suffered from what might best be described as a skewed population structure. To put it into simple terms, this meant that there were far too many young adults in the population and too few children and middle-aged and elderly people. In 1931, for example, 56 per cent of all Hungarians in the Province were in the twenty-five to thirty-five age bracket. The equivalent figure for Canada's British population was 19 per cent. A further demographic anomaly was the uneven ratio between men and women. Adult males outnumbered adult females by more than two to one. And when it came to figures regarding the ratio of eligible (i.e. unmarried) men and women, the situation was much worse. In Canada as a whole, there were 13 Hungarian bachelors for every four unmarried adult Hungarian women, and there is every reason to suspect that the situation was worse in Ontario.<sup>9</sup>

This situation had a definite impact on marriage patterns within the Hungarian immigrant community. With an abundance of young adult males, Hungarian women had better opportunities to marry than members of most other ethnic groups in the country. One might even say that they were under pressure to marry, and to marry young. Indeed, a larger proportion of Hungarian women in Canada were married than women of any other Caucasian group in the country. Furthermore, a larger proportion of Hungarian teenage females were married than that of any other immigrant

Canadian group. The youthfulness of the Hungarian-Canadian population, the high marriage-rates for women, resulted in fertility rates for Hungarians that were roughly double those for the Canadian population as a whole.<sup>10</sup>

There can be little doubt that social and cultural life for the members of Ontario's early Hungarian communities left a great deal to be desired. They had to accept the absence of certain age-groups within their social circles, and many men could not find women of their own nationality to socialize with or to marry. These factors accentuated the difficulties the newcomers experienced, and often increased their feelings of despair.

The most immediate hardships Hungarian (as well as most other) immigrants experienced after coming to Canada were economic. The greatest problem was that in the Canada of the 1920s there was hardly if ever year-round employment for newcomers. Canada of those days was what was called an "eight-months" country where the climate determined employment opportunities, and where most type of work came to a halt during the winter. Virtually all types of economic activity was governed by the seasons. On the farms there was work from the spring until the autumn, although a high demand for labour only happened at harvest time. During the off-season, farm workers had to seek employment on construction sites, in railway maintenance, in logging camps (in many places the only activity in the winter), or had to seek casual work in the cities. There, a variety of possibilities existed: woodsplitting or snow-shovelling, maintenance work around people's homes or shops, or, very rarely, even work in factories. Those who couldn't find work spent their time looking for it and lived on their meagre savings or money borrowed from friends or relatives. Whether employed or not, everyone lived frugally, with several people sharing a room in a boarding house, maintained usually by a Hungarian immigrant family.

Some Hungarian immigrants faced special handicaps after arrival to Canada. A few came to Canada with money borrowed to pay for the journey. The first concern of these people after arrival was to repay these debts. This meant that for years the newcomer could not save money for down payment on a farm or a business. Most newcomers failed to save money for other reasons. They had close relations, or even family members in Hungary who depended on them for part of their livelihood. These immigrants felt obliged to remit some of their earnings to support their relations in the o'country. Some of these people also felt obliged to save for the transportation of members of their immediate families to Canada.

Only a few of these saw their plans for family reunion realized in the interwar years. Some of those who came out with the idea of saving for the voyage of their wives and children after arrival in Canada, could not save enough money before the arrival of the Great Depression, and could not be reunited with their loved ones until after World War II, or, in some cases, never.

But the greatest handicap Hungarian newcomers to Canada faced was probably their near-total lack of appropriate occupational or language skills. The majority of them had no training in anything other than subsistence farming, and most of them had very limited knowledge of English. Opportunities to learn trades and to acquire good English were limited in the Ontario of the time; as a result, these handicaps remained with the immigrants for years if not decades after their arrival here.<sup>11</sup>

## Social Life

Although the vast majority of Hungarian newcomers to Ontario never earned the \$1,500 a year that were needed in the 1920s to keep a family out of poverty, most of them managed to live a satisfying social and cultural life wherever they could set up their immigrant associations. One such organization, about whose activities a fair amount of detail is known, was the Hungarian Roman Catholic Circle of Toronto. This lay organization was established late in 1929. It rented a large room in a house on Beverley Street. Here, meetings, lectures, dances, and English classes were held for the Circle's members and their friends. Membership grew from eighteen to over one hundred. Next, a whole house was rented for these and other activities, and for a small library. In the summer, there was outdoor activity, such as ice cream parties and picnics. During the winter, there would be dances and amateur theatrical productions. Occasionally, part of the house would be rented to other Hungarian clubs for dances or shows.<sup>12</sup>

In those days, most of Toronto's Hungarians lived within walking distance of Beverley Street. The whole area was inhabited mostly by immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe. It never became a "little Hungary" as other parts of the city became "little Italies" since Hungarians never constituted the majority in this part of the city. Nevertheless, the Beverley Street area for many years served as a relatively compact "home" to Toronto's Hungarians, perhaps the most concentrated one they would ever have in the city. The area had seen better days, but with the original owners gone to more

fashionable sections of the city, the Beverley Street district became a residential area with large, often deteriorating rooming houses. In time, the adjoining business areas, located along Queen Street, Spadina Avenue and College Street, also became part of "ethnic" Toronto, through the establishment of ethnic businesses on them. Some Hungarian families did not stay in this immigrant ghetto for more than a few years. As soon as they improved their economic position, they tended to move to more desirable sections of the city.<sup>13</sup>

Hungarian immigrant society in Ontario was not free of social disharmony at the time. Tensions occasionally arose between members of the pre-war and the post-war waves of immigration. Further tension was caused by the fact that some of the immigrants of the 1920s were from middle or even upper class elements. Ordinary peasant-folk often found it difficult to trust and get along with more recent arrivals who had different outlook on life and presumed that people of lower social standing will defer to them in community affairs.

Still another problem for the community life of Hungarians in Ontario was the near-total lack of effective spokesmen who could represent them in mainstream Ontario society. People with a good command of English, a knowledge of Canadian customs, and in general, wide social connections among Anglo-Saxons, were almost non-existent among Hungarians, making it difficult for the community to have influence in the host society. Among those who came to Canada in the late 1920s, educated persons were more numerous, but it took time for these people to gain respect both among Hungarian Canadians and Canadians at large. In time, a few of them would gain the community's trust and attain the appropriate social position that would enable them to act as effective spokesmen (or spokeswomen) for their kind.<sup>14</sup>

### Organizational Life

Although a few of the ethnic organizations established by Hungarians in Ontario have been mentioned, some general comments might be made here about the organizational life of the Province's Hungarian community.<sup>15</sup> Probably the most important of the early Hungarian immigrant institutions were the ethnic churches. Although almost three-quarters of Hungarians in Canada belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, only in rare cases were R.C. parishes organized in Hungarian colonies before congregations of Protestants were established. The reason for this seems to be the different



approach taken by Canada's Churches to the idea of "ethnic" congregations. For most of the Protestant denominations this idea was acceptable, in fact a handy tool in gaining the loyalty of newcomers to the country. For the Catholic Church, it seems, the idea of parishes organized on national basis, was not attractive at the time. As a result, strictly Hungarian Roman Catholic parishes were organized usually only after many delays.

Among the Protestant Churches, the United Church seems to have developed close relations with some of Ontario's Hungarian communities. The Church maintained "missions" for many groups of newcomers to the country, encouraged the establishment of Hungarian congregations, subsidized a periodical in the Hungarian language for them, and attracted a handful of young, well-educated Hungarians to the ministry.

The efforts of Hungarians to establish their own congregations were usually followed by attempts to obtain their own houses of worship. Often, these aspirations were frustrated by economic problems. In rural areas or in small towns, where land was cheap, these problems could sometimes be overcome by the extensive use of volunteer labour. In cities buildings and even building lots were expensive. Money had to be collected to purchase them, a difficult task given the poverty of most immigrants. Nevertheless, Hungarians gave to their churches and those that could not give money usually volunteered their labour. Two examples of their generosity are the Hungarian Roman Catholic and Baptist churches of Welland, both built during the late 1920s.

Following the establishment of ethnic churches came the creation of ethnic schools for the young. Invariably, these were schools that supplemented rather than replaced public education available in Ontario. Instruction in the Hungarian language and culture was provided two, three, or four times a week, sometimes after school, sometimes on the weekends, or both. The schools, much like the ethnic parishes and congregations, suffered from a number of problems. One of these was the constantly changing membership, caused by the high degree of insecurity in employment. People had to follow job opportunities and had to move repeatedly, leaving their ethnic institutions behind. A further problem was the frequent lack of qualified people to lead the ethnic churches and the schools.<sup>16</sup>

Immigrant Hungarian society's network of religious and educational institutions was supplemented or complemented by lay associations.<sup>17</sup> These served the social, recreational and to some extent even the economic and political needs of the newcomers. Some organizations tried to serve all or most of these needs; while

others were highly specialized and were dedicated to certain specific purposes.

Perhaps the most interesting and important of Hungarian immigrant organizations in Ontario during the first half of the twentieth century were the sick-benefit associations. The first of these was established in 1907 in Hamilton. It was the First Hungarian Workers' Sick-Benefit Association of Hamilton. Although primarily economic in purpose, this institution tried to serve the social and cultural needs of its members and, as we shall see later, became a very politicized institution in time as well. Another successful and similar organization was the already mentioned Self-Improvement Circle of Welland. Like its Hamilton counterpart, the Circle maintained a sick- and death-benefit scheme, and catered mainly to the recreational needs of its members.

Most of these Hungarian immigrant organizations usually confined their activities to a certain city or specific region of the Province. Many of them also stayed away from politics. The most notable exception to these generalizations was the above mentioned organization in Hamilton. Almost from the start, it tried to extend its activities to other centres. In time, the leadership of the association became more and more involved in radical politics, until by the end of the 1920s, the Hamilton organization became the focal point of a federation of Hungarian workers' sick-benefit associations aligned closely to the Communist Party of Canada.

One of the earliest branches (1913) of the Hamilton organization was set up in Brantford. In 1926 this branch split from its parent body, and became the Brantford Hungarian Mutual Benefit Society. It then established branches of its own in many parts of the Province, and elsewhere (including the industrial districts of Nova Scotia where the Maritime provinces' only Hungarian communities existed). And while the Hamilton group gravitated toward the political left, the Brantford group remained loyal to conservative, Christian, and patriotic Hungarian traditions.

Both the local branches of the Hamilton or Brantford federations, as well as independent Hungarian lay associations tended to strive for the acquisition of private buildings of their own. These were usually called "Hungarian Halls" or "Hungarian Houses." Some of these were rented premises, while richer organizations, or associations in places where real estate was cheap, could afford to buy their own buildings. Like many of the ethnic churches of Hungarians, some of their "houses" were built with volunteer labour, piecemeal, as the membership's financial and other resources permitted.

## The Ethnic Press

Completing the network of Hungarian immigrant institutions in the province was the ethnic press.<sup>18</sup> Hungarian-language newspapers and periodicals were rather slow to come into existence in Ontario. The main reason for this was no doubt the fact that by the mid-1920s an extensive Hungarian ethnic press had developed in the United States, in such centers as New York, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit etc. There was a well-established Hungarian-Canadian newspaper by this time published in Winnipeg as well, further reducing the need for Hungarian papers produced in Ontario. Another reason for the slow birth of a Hungarian-Canadian press in Ontario was the nature of the business of publishing ethnic papers. Non-English-language papers could only be produced in the Province on a shoe-string budget. Budget restrictions meant that “ethnic” publishing houses could not afford a large staff. This meant that the publisher often had to be editor and business manager as well; the typesetter had to double as maintenance mechanic; and the advertising manager, as subscription secretary. Some Hungarian periodicals of the time managed to get by with even fewer staff who had to supplement their income by occasional or part-time outside employment. If any member of the staff became ill, or had to relocate to another city, the existence of the ethnic paper could be threatened.

Despite these difficulties, there was no lack of effort to try to bring the Hungarian-Canadian ethnic press into existence in Ontario. The first attempts at printing newspapers seem to have occurred in the Niagara Peninsula and in Hamilton. The products of these attempts were the *Kis Ujság* (Little Newspaper), the *Kanadai Magyar Népszava* (Canadian Hungarian People’s Voice), and the *Kanadai Magyar Hirlap* (Canadian Hungarian Journal). The first of these newspapers lasted for nearly two decades, while the other two proved to be more ephemeral. More successful was the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* (Canadian Hungarian Worker). Launched in 1929 as a very small newspaper, it became the voice of the bulk of the Hungarian left in Canada within a few years.

In addition to the ethnic Hungarian newspapers, there were the religious periodicals. Perhaps the most notable of these was the *Az Otthon* (The Home), a journal subsidized by the United Church of Canada, and edited by a remarkable clergyman, Ferenc Hoffmann. In time, *The Home* was succeeded by the *Tárogató*, edited by another remarkable United Church minister, Ambro Czako. Other priests or ministers, similarly remarkable and energetic men, published

other periodicals or newsletters for their followers. Historians know little more than the titles of these: the Roman Catholic *The Sentinel*, the Calvinist *The Observer*, and *The Candlelight*, *Lutheran Life*, later *Lutheran Home*, the *Reformed Herald*, and the Baptist *Light*.

## Community Ventures

The community life of the Hungarian-Canadian community of Ontario in the late 1920s went beyond the establishment and maintenance of local lay and religious organizations. Occasionally ventures of Canada-wide or even international significance were undertaken, or, at least, Hungarians in Ontario assumed important roles in such undertakings.

One such venture was the attempt in 1928 to establish an umbrella organization to serve as a nation-wide lobby of all Hungarians in Canada. This body was the Canadian Hungarian Federation (the *Kanadai Magyar Szovetség*, not to be confused with the present-day Hungarian Canadian Federation, the *Kanadai Magyarok Szovetsége*). The Canadian Hungarian Federation was not the first federation of Hungarians in Canada. There had been attempts to establish such supra-communal organizations before, to be more exact, a few years prior to the outbreak of the First World War. These early attempts failed to create viable organizations; in any case, no such organization could have survived the war, as Hungarians were regarded as enemy aliens after 1914 and their political organizations had to disband.<sup>19</sup> With the return of normalcy in the 1920s, and the coming of thousands of new Hungarian immigrants from the countries of East Central Europe, the time became ripe to renew the efforts for the establishment of a Canada-wide organization of Hungarian Canadians. The Hungarian government was also anxious to see Hungarians in their various countries of settlement organized into more effective lobbies, preferably under leaders that were sympathetic to the mother country's foreign and internal policies.

While the Budapest authorities were in favor of national federations of Hungarian immigrants abroad, and had actively encouraged some Hungarian-American leaders to renew efforts at national unity in the U.S.A., there is no substantial evidence to prove that the efforts to this end in Canada were made on the initiative of Hungary's leaders. On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that the push for action originated with Hungarian-Canadian leaders. Perhaps the most prominent of these was the Reverend János Kovács, the minister of Western Canada's most active Hung-

arian Calvinist congregations, that of the colony of Bekevar, Saskatchewan. Kovács arranged for a preparatory conference to convene in 1927 in the city of Regina.<sup>20</sup>

In the meantime, a few hundred miles further east, in Winnipeg, the idea of national Hungarian-Canadian union found another advocate in György Szabó, a ticket agent, as managers of travel agencies used to be known in those days. Others joined the bandwagon with the result that another “preparatory conference” was held in Welland, an industrial town with a large Hungarian colony in southern Ontario. This was followed by the “founding convention,” held in February of 1928 in the bitter cold of Winnipeg. Here, the Canadian Hungarian Federation was established with much fanfare in the form of receptions, banquets, and the inevitable speechmaking. Problems came up only when the elections were held to the Federation’s executive, for it seems that the people who were elected were not the ones that had planned and prepared the organization. As a result, the executive was attacked and an influential group of Hungarian-Canadian leaders, made up mainly of pre-1914 arrivals, established a rival federation at a convention in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. In the end, both federations selected Winnipeg as their national headquarters.<sup>21</sup>

The Canadian Hungarian Federation established early in 1928 was plagued by many of problems. First of all, there were rivalries between two different streams of immigrants, the pre 1914 ones and those who came in the 1920s. There were also difficulties stemming from religious differences: some people denounced the Federation as a “Calvinist” organization. But the greatest source of mischief came from an unexpected quarter: from Canada’s two main railway companies. The fact was that both of these were deeply involved in immigrant affairs (not only as railway companies, but also as colonization agencies, as well as owners or partners in steamship lines carrying passengers from Europe and back). Naturally, both of them wanted influence within the budding federation, mainly through having their own men elected. The extent of the railway companies’ meddling in the affairs of the just-established Federation is best illustrated by the fact that the headquarters of the two organizations just established were in the ticket offices of two persons, one working for the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the other for the Canadian National Railway, respectively.<sup>22</sup>

The difficulties experienced by Hungarian-Canadian society’s political leadership were to some extent solved during the course of 1928. Largely as a result of the efforts of a visiting statesman from Hungary, the two rival federations resolved their differences and, at

the Canadian Hungarian Federation's next annual convention, held early during 1929, managed to elect an executive acceptable to a large majority of those in attendance. The new leaders looked forward to the rest of 1929 with great expectations. Unfortunately for their cause, they were to be disappointed. To make the long story of the Federation's demise short, it should suffice to say that the organization, despite the valiant efforts of some of its leaders, never managed to become financially viable. It tried to collect membership fees of one dollar a year from Hungarian Canadians, but what little was collected this way was not enough. The Federation also tried to sell life insurance, but this scheme too, proved a financial failure. Without adequate finances, the Federation could not acquire a paper of its own (which was seen as useful if not necessary), but what was much more serious, it could not repay the loans it took out when it began functioning. It did try to pay one loan off with another; but in the end its financial reserves became completely exhausted, its credit destroyed, and the organization disintegrated. Some of its provincial chapters continued to function for some time, but by 1931 the parent body was, for all intents and purposes, dead.<sup>23</sup>

### The "Justice for Hungary" ocean flight

Just about the same time that the Canadian Hungarian Federation was being organized, another project was started by Hungarians in North America. This was the plan to cross the Atlantic with a plane to be called "Justice for Hungary," and thereby to call international attention to the plight of truncated Hungary. In this venture Hungarians from Ontario played an even more important role than they did in the efforts to establish and maintain the Canadian Hungarian Federation.

The central protagonist of the ocean flight story was to be a certain Sándor Magyar. Magyar, whose original family name was Wilczek, received his training as a pilot during World War I in Hungary. After the war, he spent some time in Germany. It was there that he proved that he was a man of much bravado, and almost lost his life in doing this. What happened was that on one day Magyar learned that a well-known Hungarian actress was involved in the shooting of some outdoor scenes for a film near the airfield where Magyar was working. Anxious to make a good impression on the starlet, Magyar borrowed a small, reputedly rather unreliable plane from the airfield and, with a bouquet of flowers in his hands, took to the air. His intention was to throw the flowers to the film-star, but

something went wrong with Magyar's plane, and he had to crash-land in a cemetery.<sup>24</sup>

After recovering from the injuries suffered as a result of this adventure, Magyar emigrated to Canada. He spent a few years in southern Saskatchewan, working on farms during the agricultural season, and spending much of the rest of the year in Regina. In 1928 Magyar left the Canadian West and settled in the industrial town of Windsor, Ontario. It was here that he became a friend of the local Hungarian Calvinist minister Jenő Molnár and his wife, Rózsa Waldman Molnár. Rózsa was an intelligent, energetic woman who did much to help all kinds of Hungarian immigrants in Windsor, especially members of her husband's congregation. She was a recent arrival from Hungary. Presumably, she sympathised with other recent arrivals such as Magyar, who probably found it difficult to find employment and must have felt despondent at times. It may have been at a time when Magyar was particularly dispirited and felt quite helpless that Rózsa suggested to him that he should do something extraordinary, such as repeating and bettering Charles Lindbergh's feat, by flying across the Atlantic, but not to Paris but all the way to Budapest. Apparently, the idea that this deed should be used to call attention to the injustices of the Treaty of Trianon was also the brainchild of this woman.<sup>25</sup>

To implement the plan, a campaign to collect money for a plane was started. In Windsor, one of its early promoters was the Reverend Molnár. One of the first people to contribute to the campaign was an unemployed member of Molnár's congregation, István Rimaszombathy. He gave \$30, probably all or most of his savings.<sup>26</sup> Soon, the campaign expanded. Postcards were printed and were sent to prospective supporters of the venture, as well as to influential political figures in many countries. In distant parts of the continent, campaign workers were recruited to manage the appeal in their respective regions.<sup>27</sup> In the United States, the cause of the ocean flight was endorsed by Géza Berkó, an influential newspaperman. Berkó's own paper, the *Amerikai Magyar Népszava* (American Hungarian People's Voice), actively supported the appeal.<sup>28</sup> Yet, not enough money was coming in. By 1930, economic conditions for most immigrants, and especially newcomers, had become so bad that many people were not in position to give more than what the postcards cost: \$1; and some people not even that much. The campaign stalled, and the flight had to be postponed.

There can be little doubt that, despite the dedication of many ordinary Hungarian immigrants to North America who gave away part of their savings to support this cause, the campaign to achieve

the “Justice for Hungary” flight would have met the same fate as the Canadian Hungarian Federation had it not been for a few prosperous people who made substantial donations. By far the most important of these was Emil Szalay of Chicago. Szalay came to America at the end of the nineteenth century as a young child of an immigrant family. He started out as a butcher’s apprentice and, by the 1920s, had become a moderately prosperous man. Determined to help his country of birth, he decided to see to it that the ocean flight scheme was realized. He contributed enough money to the campaign to cover most of the cost of a suitable airplane, a Lockheed Sirius model.<sup>29</sup> The plane, constructed mainly out of wood, was named “Justice for Hungary.” Much of the balance of the cost was apparently made up by an even richer man, an English friend of Hungarians, Lord Rothermere, the newspaper magnate.<sup>30</sup> With these donations, the preparations for the flight could begin in earnest.

The intervention of Szalay and the others came just in time. Not only was the campaign to collect money not yielding the desired results, but the venture was encountering opposition from various quarters. For some unexplained reason, the Reverend Molnár, one of the campaign’s earliest supporters, changed his mind about it and withdrew his support. Another very influential Hungarian religious leader, Monsignor Pál Sántha of Stockholm, Saskatchewan, gave only lukewarm support to the project.<sup>31</sup> Still others, whose identity might forever remain unknown, began spreading derogatory rumours about Magyar and the campaign’s chief organizers. These in turn attributed the attacks to Little Entente sources, believing that Hungary’s neighbours had good reasons to prevent the flight from taking place.<sup>32</sup> In Hungary herself, the plan was welcomed, and the Hungarian government dispatched György Endresz, one of the country’s most experienced pilots, to take control of the flight (Magyar was to act as his back-up pilot and navigator). Test flights were made with the plane already in 1930. Then, alterations were made to it, including the addition of extra storage tanks to hold enough fuel for the long journey.<sup>33</sup>

The final preparations for the crossing were made in the late spring and early summer of 1931. Szalay had, in the meantime, left for Europe by steamship, hoping to be in Budapest when the “Justice for Hungary” plane arrived there. At this stage, only the weather forecasts were delaying the moment of departure from Grace Harbour, Newfoundland, the easternmost airfield of the North American continent. Finally, after delays that must have seemed interminable, Endresz and Magyar decided to risk the journey despite a not too promising weather forecast.<sup>34</sup>



The flight was not without some precarious moments. The first of these occurred right on takeoff. The plane, loaded with far more fuel than it was designed to carry, could hardly clear the obstructions near the end of the runway. A few yards further away, it hit the top branches of a tree, yet it continued its flight and even cleared the top of a nearby hill, but only barely. Then it began its long journey across the ocean. At first, Endresz and Magyar flew very low, under the cloud cover. When the mist above the ocean enveloped them, they had to increase their altitude in order to avoid dipping too low and hitting the waves. Their primitive instruments made flying “blind” very risky. The plane took two hours to climb to an altitude of 6,000 feet. Here, they could see again; however, they could determine their position only by the stars, and through contacting steamships below them with their (for those days) ultra-modern radio equipment. Early next morning they encountered a storm. By this time they had entered the airspace over Western Europe. Leaving the disturbance behind them, they flew over the valleys and meadows of Germany, following notable landmarks at low altitude. Soon, they reached the western border of Hungary. A few minutes later, some 20 miles short of their intended destination, the plane’s motor stalled. The fuel in one of the aircraft’s tanks was spent. There was a little more of it left in one of the spare tanks, but Endresz had switched not to this one, but to another empty one: the plane was apparently not equipped with proper fuel gages. By the time the mistake was discovered it was too late to restart the motor. Endresz and Magyar had to make an emergency landing in a field near the village of Bicske.<sup>35</sup>

Despite this anticlimactic ending, the ocean crossing was a success. The “Justice for Hungary” set a new record for non-stop long-distance flying: it covered nearly 6,000 kilometers, and it crossed the Atlantic in record time. The flight received a great deal of international attention. Endresz and Magyar got a tumultuous welcome in Hungary. Even though the plane failed to reach its ultimate destination, everyone concerned was satisfied, at least for the time being.



## Chapter 2

### THROUGH DEPRESSION AND WAR

By the time the ocean flight was completed, Canada was heading towards the gravest economic crisis of her history. The advent of bad times affected every resident of the country but none so badly as recent arrivals. The first to feel the adverse effects of the slump were agricultural workers in the Canadian West, but soon Hungarians elsewhere also began to suffer from the drastic decline in economic activity. Casual workers could no longer count on seasonal or occasional work they had depended on in previous years. Workers with steady jobs often lost them, had to put up with prolonged lay-offs, or had to accept cuts in their wages. Those who were self-employed, faced reduced income or bankruptcy. People with debts often faced the prospect of not being able to pay their creditors and losing their collaterals. As a result, farmers lost their farms, and businessmen lost their stores, shops, etc. Those who lost their livelihood faced dire consequences. In the Canada of the 1930s there were only limited opportunities for people to obtain welfare. Relief payments were hardly enough for people to survive on, and in many municipalities they were restricted to long-term residents only. Immigrants found to be receiving relief were liable to deportation to their country of origin. Thousands of newcomers were deported from Canada in the early years of the Depression. Hundreds of these were Hungarians. Other Hungarians entered camps for the unemployed, established for the purpose of providing subsistence to young men, and for keeping them out of populated areas where they could be the focal point of political disaffection. Members of the camps got board and lodging plus 20 cents a day in return for working on a government construction project.<sup>1</sup>

The miserable economic conditions induced many newcomers to

try their luck in other parts of the country. People from the prairies came to Central Canada to look for employment, while Ontarians left for Alberta or British Columbia to do the same. Some people kept travelling for months if not years, forever hoping for a job in some part of the country. Those who had no money for travel did so on the roofs of railway cars. Many Hungarians are known to have been killed when they, tired from the long journey and numb from the cold, fell off these trains.<sup>2</sup>

In the end some Hungarian immigrants were able to find work. This often happened in parts of the country where only few and small, or no concentrations of Hungarians had existed until then. In the West, Hungarians found employment or farming opportunities in the agricultural districts of the Lower Fraser and Okanagan Valleys of British Columbia, and in the sugar-beet growing regions of Southern Alberta. In Ontario, they found a livelihood in the so-called "tobacco-belt" centered on the towns of Delhi and Tillsonburg.

#### New Settlement: The Tobacco-Belt

There is good reason to believe that a few Hungarian families had settled in this part of Ontario before the Depression. The 1931 population census found 153 Hungarians in Norfolk County, where much of the tobacco-growing lands of the province exist today. Many of the first tobacco farmers in the region seem to have been of Belgian (Flemish) extraction. At first Hungarians worked on tobacco farms as hired hands. In 1933 so many of them came there to seek work during harvest time that public concern was expressed about them in Delhi. Gradually some of them became share-croppers, while others bought unprofitable farms on the fringes of the tobacco-growing area and converted them to tobacco farms. With perseverance and hard work, some of them became prosperous tobacco farmers. Others, less industrious, less experienced, or just less lucky, failed. Often they were replaced by still other Hungarians who were willing to give this demanding and risky profession a chance. They had few alternatives. In a world with few opportunities a family with no skills other than the knowledge of farming had to turn to the production of some cash crop even if it meant heavy work, much investment, and no guarantee of success. The magnitude of the Hungarians' influx into Norfolk County during the depression years was revealed by the 1941 census figures. By then over 1,300 Hungarians had settled there.<sup>3</sup>

There were other changes in the life of Ontario's Hungarian community during the Depression as well. One of these was the cessation of large-scale immigration from Hungary. In the 1930s only immediate family members of Hungarians already resident in Canada were allowed in, and even these only if their Canadian relatives could guarantee that they would not become public charges after arrival here. Another change was a dramatic decline in the fertility rate for the Hungarian-Canadian group. One reason for this was the aging of this particular population, another was, no doubt, the discouraging economic outlook for the future. Despite these tendencies toward slower population growth, Ontario's Hungarian community increased by more than 8,000 during the decade between 1931 and 1941 (representing a 60 per cent growth rate). There can be little doubt that much of this growth was the result of the migration of Hungarians to Ontario from the prairie provinces where the effects of the Depression were even more severe than in Central Canada. This influx established Ontario as the province with the largest Hungarian-Canadian population. In 1931 Ontario had about the same Hungarian population as Saskatchewan. By 1941, Ontario's lead had become undisputed. In that year, the province was the home of over 40 per cent of Hungarians in the country. Saskatchewan's share had by then declined to 26.7 per cent.<sup>4</sup>

### Political Impact

The Great Depression had a traumatic impact on Hungarian-Canadian society's politics. It greatly increased friction between the conservative and radical factions of the community, a development that accelerated the politicization of this ethnic group. The damage caused would remain with the community for decades.<sup>5</sup>

In order to understand these developments it is necessary to examine some aspects of Hungarian-Canadian society's historical background. Special attention must be paid to two events that took place in Hungary soon after the First World War. One of these was the revolutions (the October, 1918, democratic revolution associated with the person of Mihály Károlyi, and the March, 1919, Commune led by Béla Kun) that shook the country in the wake of the war, and the other was the dismemberment of the old Hungary that took place at the same time and was carved into international law by the Treaty of Trianon of June, 1920. These two developments had a profound effect on the Hungarian community that

evolved in Canada in the 1920s and 1930s. In fact, it might be argued that the aftershocks of these two events were as keenly felt in Hungarian-Canadian society as they were felt by the masses of Hungary.

The chief legacy that the Hungarian revolutions of 1918-19 bequeathed to Hungarian-Canadian society was an ideological split that began growing slowly in the 1920s and which, by the early 1930s had almost totally and irreparably divided Hungarian Canadians between the followers of Marx and members of the Christian-patriotic camp. The origins of this chasm should be sought in the arrival to Canada, during the first half of the 1920s, of former members of Hungary's revolutionary movements. Although their numbers were small, they were joined by people who had left Hungary because of their disillusionment with her ultra-conservative system. By the late 1920s these elements had coalesced into an organization of their own, the Canadian Hungarian Sick-Benefit Federation (C.H.S-B.F.), the predecessor of the Kossuth Federation of the 1940s and 1950s. The C.H.S-B.F. was a part of the communist movement in Canada. Its mouthpiece was the already mentioned paper, the *Worker*.<sup>6</sup> During the first part of the 1930s, when economic conditions for immigrant workers in Canada were abysmal, the ranks of the Federation swelled, and the split between the radicals and the conservatives (those who stood by "God and country") permeated virtually every Hungarian-Canadian colony and affected every community association.

The impact of the dismemberment of Hungary on the evolution of Hungarian-Canadian society is a more complex matter that requires a longer explanation. In Hungary this event produced what has been called the "Trianon syndrome", a national neurosis that created a pathological preoccupation on the part of most Hungarians with the question of "treaty revision" as the movement for the modification of the peace settlement's territorial provisions was called. In Hungarian-Canadian society the "shock of Trianon" produced a similar, if not more acute syndrome. The reason why Hungarian-Canadian society was more afflicted with the Trianon syndrome than the Hungarian community in the United States, was because of its tender age and the nature of its composition. A large majority of Hungarians in interwar Canada were new arrivals. As such, most of them had experienced the shock of Trianon before their departure to Canada, that is where it was most dramatically felt, in East Central Europe. It is not surprising then that the impact of the peace settlement was keenly ingrained into the minds of these people. At the time of their arrival in Canada, these people exercised

little influence over Hungarian-Canadian community affairs, but as time passed, the newcomers worked their way into positions of influence and by the early 1930s, they had come to dominate many Hungarian immigrant institutions.

There is some historical evidence which makes it possible for us to gauge to what extent these immigrant institutions were imbued with the "spirit of revisionism." We may take as an example the *Hungarian Canadian News* of Winnipeg. Established in the winter of 1924-25, the paper had a modest start, but in a few years it became a large, semi-weekly publication with subscribers in many parts of Canada. It even managed to absorb a couple of Hungarian language papers started in Central Canada. Within a decade-and-a-half of its founding, the *News* became one of the two viable Hungarian newspapers in Canada; the other was the *Worker*. Significantly enough, in 1941 an official of Canada's External Affairs Department described the *Worker* as the organ of Canada's Hungarian Communists, and the *News* of Winnipeg as the voice of the "Magyar-speaking refugees from the old Hungarian provinces that had been turned over to Yugoslavia (*sic*), Roumania and Czechoslovakia."<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the ardent revisionism of the *News* is also noted in a study that was done on its editorial policies.<sup>8</sup>

It is not a mere coincidence that for much of the time under consideration in this paper the guiding spirit behind the *News*' operations was an intelligent, energetic young man, Béla Bácskai Payerle, who hailed from the region that had been transferred by the Treaty of Trianon to Yugoslavia. Other refugees from Hungary's "old provinces" made it to the leadership of other institutions. Indeed, it is hard to think of any Hungarian-Canadian leader of the 1920s immigration stream who did not have close personal ties to one or more of the provinces detached from Hungary. Some of the leaders of the Canadian Hungarian Federation were from this group of refugees; so were several of the most influential Hungarian-Canadian religious leaders of this period.<sup>9</sup>

The single most important characteristic of Hungarian immigrant politics in Ontario during the Depression then, was division along ideological lines. The split permeated all levels of the Hungarian community down to local social clubs and benevolent organizations. The ardent patriotism of the "patriotic right" was reinforced by official propaganda emanating from Hungary, while the left was feeding on Communist propaganda and on the miseries of the Depression. Only the passing of the economic crisis and the passage of time would reduce the problems that the acute ideological strife was causing for the Hungarian community of the Province.

## The War Years, 1939-45

For Ontario's Hungarians the Second World War brought new difficulties, anxieties, and also, new opportunities. Since Hungary did not get involved in the war until 1941, Hungarians in Canada were not seriously affected during the first two years of the war. Late in 1941 Canada declared war on Hungary, and the legal position of Hungarians in this country changed. Luckily for them, the Canadian government assumed a generous attitude toward enemy aliens (and recently naturalized immigrants) from certain Axis satellite countries as a result of which Hungarians were not placed under the same restrictions as most other enemy aliens in the country. The last several months of the war were perhaps the most traumatic for the Hungarian community of Ontario, as news of tragic developments in the "o'country" preoccupied almost everyone.

During the late-1930s, few Hungarians in Ontario were aware of the dangers that lurked behind the international developments of the times. As Canadian residents they felt to be at a safe distance from the trouble-spots of the world. As natives of Hungary they believed that a re-arrangement of the international order in Central Europe would probably benefit their mother country. Indeed, each of the crises experienced by Czechoslovakia in 1938 and 1939 resulted in territorial adjustments in favour of Hungary. The vast majority of Hungarians, in Ontario and elsewhere, could only applaud the return of "ancient Hungarian lands" (populated mainly by Hungarians), to Hungary. That these changes exacerbated a nationality problem in Hungary (especially in the case of a small but influential and vociferous German minority), and tended to draw the country closer into the Axis orbit, was realized only by a few Hungarians at the time.

When the war broke out in the late summer of 1939, most Hungarians in Ontario knew where their loyalty lay. With their country of adoption at war with Germany, and their original homeland still firmly neutral, they were not troubled by a case of divided loyalties. Only Hungarians under Communist influence were supposed to oppose the "imperialist war." Yet, neither the patriotic nor the leftist Hungarians suffered much or had reason to worry a great deal in this period. The former were left alone as long as Hungary was not officially aligned with the Axis powers, while the latter suffered only to the extent that their leading organs were watched by the government. No Hungarian played a major role in the Communist Party of Canada and we are not aware of any from Ontario who were interned by Canadian authorities as opponents of the war effort.<sup>10</sup>



This situation changed gradually as a result of international developments in 1941. The German invasion of the Soviet Union resulted in the U.S.S.R. becoming a member of the alliance against the Axis, an event that led to a gradual relaxation of the restrictions on Communists in Canada. Once bureaucratic inertia was overcome, leftist leaders were released from internment camps and their organizations (often in the guise of non-Communist but "progressive" causes), regained their previous political influence, or became more powerful than ever before. In the meantime, the position of the patriotic Hungarians deteriorated.

The root cause of this latter development was Hungary's involvement in the Second World War in June of 1941. Late in that month Hungarian targets were bombed by planes whose identity is still being disputed.<sup>11</sup> The Hungarian government of the time accused Russia of perpetrating the raids and declared the existence of a state of war between Hungary and the U.S.S.R. The country's involvement in the war did not bring an immediate declaration of war on her by Britain and her allies. But as the alliance between the British and the Soviets was formalized, the latter brought pressure on the former to produce a declaration of war against all of Russia's enemies, especially Finland and Hungary. This pressure in turn resulted in the British government asking the Dominions to follow the British lead.

The request from London was first discussed by the Canadian War Cabinet on the 29th of October. Prime Minister W.L.M. King was not ready, as yet, to call for a declaration of war. "Considerable numbers of Finns and Hungarians," he explained to his colleagues, "engaged in essential industries in Canada... would be adversely affected by a declaration of war."<sup>12</sup> In light of the Prime Minister's views, the War Cabinet decided not to comply with the British request for the time being.

A month later the issue returned to the agenda of the Canadian government. The news came from London that the British government had resolved to act on the matter, and that it had sent ultimatums to Finland and Hungary (as well as Rumania), demanding that they cease hostilities against the Soviet Union. On this occasion the Canadian War Cabinet decided to follow the British example.<sup>13</sup>

The onset of an official state of war between Canada and Hungary on December 6, might easily have resulted in most Hungarians in Canada becoming "enemy aliens" and being treated the same way as Germans and Italians were, and Japanese would be in a few weeks. This would have meant internment at worst, and at best, restriction

of basic rights (monthly report to the police, the need to carry identification documents, restrictions on travel etc.) in most cases. Fortunately for Hungarians, their lot as “enemy aliens” was not to be the same as that of the Germans, Italians, etc.

The question of the treatment of enemy nationals and immigrants from Axis satellite countries came up before the Canadian government at the time the issue of war with Finland and Hungary was discussed. At the end of November, 1941, Norman Robertson, one of Canada’s most influential civil servants, explained that in the “event of war” a distinction should be made between Finnish (and Hungarian) and “other enemy aliens.”<sup>14</sup> Although it was known to the Canadian government that the British leaders were not planning to treat their Finns, Hungarians etc. differently from Germans and Italians, the Cabinet in Ottawa decided to exempt these people from many of the disabilities imposed on Germans and Italians. Prime Minister King argued: “Most of these people were law-abiding, well disposed and loyal inhabitants of Canada, contributing to its war effort and disavowing any allegiance to the Nazi controlled governments of their countries of origin.”<sup>15</sup>

Even after the Canadian declaration of war on Hungary, Hungarians in Ontario (in fact, in all of Canada), were allowed to continue their daily lives in peace. This is not to say that they did not suffer from anti-Axis prejudices of the Canadian population. These anti-foreigner feelings were strong during the war and resulted in the dismissal of many people with German, Italian and other “enemy alien” names or accents from their jobs, and their non-hiring by other employers. As these sentiments were directed mainly against Germans and Japanese, however, Hungarians tended to be less affected by them.

To counter the effects of such discrimination, and in order to gain the support of immigrant ethnic groups for the Canadian war effort, the government in Ottawa embarked on an ambitious and novel venture: direct dialogue with such minorities as the Hungarian. These new policies had their immediate origins in the establishment, in July of 1940, of the Department of National War Services. In 1941 a few people inside this new ministry, and several outside of it, began working toward the creation of an office within the Canadian government service whose task it would be to keep in touch with the country’s immigrant ethnic groups. The idea was supported by the first Minister of National War Services, James G. Gardiner. His successor in that office, Joseph T. Thorson, an Icelandic-Canadian, also worked toward this same end, but the most effective promoter of it was one of his deputies, Judge Thomas

Davis, a Westerner who developed his sympathy toward immigrants during his many years of public service in Saskatchewan. In the Cabinet the idea was supported by still another Westerner, Thomas A. Crerar, who as Minister of Mines and Resources was in charge of Canadian immigration policy and relations with immigrant groups.

As a result of the work of these and other men, late in 1941 a bureau was created within the Department of National War Services. It was to be known until the end of the war as the Nationalities Branch. To provide advice to it, the government established the Committee on Co-operation in Canadian Citizenship (C.C.C.C.). The Committee consisted of prominent public figures and academics knowledgeable about ethnic affairs in Canada. One of its most influential members was Watson Kirkconnell, a noted poet, teacher, verse translator and publicist. The head of the Nationalities Branch was an Englishman by the name of Tracy Philipps who had come to Canada to promote the allied war effort among Eastern European immigrants to this country. Kirkconnell and Philipps became close friends and collaborators.<sup>16</sup> Between the two of them they spoke (or at least read) just about every language spoken by Canada's East and Central European immigrants.

One of the projects undertaken by the Nationalities Branch was the hiring of a few individuals to undertake what might be called "missions" to a few ethnic groups. One of these was to be the Hungarian. The aim of these missions was to establish a dialogue between the government and the leaders and members of the group, to promote the Canadian war effort, to assure immigrants of the government's good will toward them and, if possible, unite these groups under leaders loyal to the Canadian government.

The government's 1942 mission to the Hungarian-Canadian community was entrusted primarily to a Hungarian resident of Montreal, Béla Eisner. Though the undertaking failed in its most practical objectives, it was perhaps the most effective of all the missions undertaken at the time. Both the successes and the failures of the mission derived to some extent from Eisner's character. A hard and conscientious worker, Eisner threw himself into work with a great deal of determination. But his drive and ambition no doubt contributed to the negative reaction he encountered among Hungarians in many places.<sup>17</sup>

One of the most memorable episodes of Eisner's mission was his tour of the Hungarian communities of southern and northern Ontario. Eisner undertook this tour after informing Hungarian-Canadian leaders and newspapermen of the government's aims in regard to immigrant groups. Next, he announced to these people

his plans to visit them in their own communities. The visits were not without their difficulties. Both community leaders and ordinary immigrants were often too busy to help Eisner in his efforts. Many of them were on shift work, or were putting in overtime (a fact which illustrates how greatly the employment situation had improved for immigrants since the 1930s). Another blow to Eisner's campaign came when the Hungarian communists came out against him, and denounced him and his Ottawa backers with full vigour. Even those ethnic leaders who were impressed with the importance of Eisner's aims often developed second thoughts about the matter once the visitor left their city. Only in a few localities did the various Hungarian immigrant organizations unite as a result of Eisner's proddings.<sup>18</sup> The establishment of a national umbrella organization for Hungarians in Canada continued to elude this group despite the efforts of Eisner and his backers.

Eisner wrote a detailed report on his visits to Ontario's Hungarian centres. This report paints a very different picture of life in these communities than that which had prevailed there during the Great Depression. Now, factories were operating full-steam and most workers could put in as much overtime as they wanted. People were taking advantage of the economic opportunities partly in order to make up for wages lost during the 1930s, and partly out of fear that at the end of the war employment opportunities would decline once again. The same fear was driving Hungarians into unions, the expectation being that unions would insist on the seniority principle when it came to lay-offs, and immigrant workers with many years of employment behind them would not be fired in order to make room for native-born persons.<sup>19</sup>

Eisner's report said little about Hungarian ethnic life in Toronto. The organization of a united Hungarian co-ordinating committee in that city had been entrusted not to Eisner, but to a local resident, Nicholas Hornyanszky, a noted artist. Although the latter's efforts came to nought in 1942, in the following year Toronto's Hungarian community, in part under Hornyanszky's leadership, succeeded in buying a Hungarian House on the edge of the city's "Little Hungary" (roughly, Toronto's Chinatown of recent years). In a few years the building proved too small, and a larger property was purchased nearby, on College Street near Spadina Avenue. This new building would serve Toronto's Hungarian community until the establishment of the present-day Hungarian-Canadian Cultural Centre on St. Clair Ave. West during the early 1970s.<sup>20</sup>

The national unity that had eluded Hungarian organizational life during the 1930s and the early war years would at last be attained,

even if only temporarily, during the closing years of the war. Two developments made this possible. One was a series of dramatic events in Hungary, starting with a German military occupation of the country in March of 1944 and ending with its capture, after months of bitter fighting, by the Red Army a little more than a year later. The other development was more complex and subtle. It was the increased respect and influence the political left gained in Canadian public life in 1943 and 1944. Indeed, the creation of wartime unity in Hungarian public life in the last two years of the war was achieved through the participation of the left.

The campaign to unite Hungarian-Canadians had its origins in the call of one Hungarian newspaperman for the collection of money for relief supplies for war-torn Hungary. The call was made in June of 1944, but it was not embraced by the Hungarian community as a whole until the end of the war. In April of 1945 however, a Canada-wide campaign was started with the backing of most of the important Hungarian-Canadian organizations. In August of the same year a congress was held in Hamilton, at which a united umbrella organization was established to spearhead the relief effort. In the resulting "Committee" representatives of the Hungarian-Canadian left sat side-by-side with those of the group's Catholic and Protestant congregations. The campaign continued with reasonable success until the middle of 1947 when dissension between the right and the left led to its demise.<sup>21</sup> Within a few years another Hungarian-Canadian umbrella organization would rise on the ruins of its war-time predecessor. But its story belongs to another phase of Hungarian history in Ontario (where it was to happen) and will be discussed later.

### Institutional and Social Developments, 1939-45

During the Second World War Toronto emerged as one of the most important centres of Hungarian-Canadian life not only in Ontario but in the whole of Canada. It is not surprising that this development brought a flowering of organized Hungarian religious life in that city. Progress was made, for example, in the life of Toronto's young Hungarian Roman Catholic parish. In 1939, the parish received a new priest in the person of Leo J. Austin. Father Austin was to guide the church during the war and the immediate post-war period. The most important event during his tenure was the purchase of a house of worship by the Hungarian Catholic community of Toronto. It was located at the corner of Dundas Street

and Spadina Avenue, close to the city's main Hungarian residential area. The down payment on the building was collected through a fundraising campaign and a "matching" donation from the Roman Catholic diocese of Toronto. An almost equally important event in the war-time evolution of the parish was the arrival from Saskatchewan of a few Hungarian members of the order of Roman Catholic nuns known as the Sisters of Social Service.<sup>22</sup>

The work of the Roman Catholics in Toronto served as inspiration to their co-religionists elsewhere. In Hamilton, for example, a movement was started for the establishment of a distinct Hungarian parish. After some opposition by the local Catholic leadership, the efforts of Hamilton's Hungarians were crowned by success. A few years after the war, they were also successful in acquiring a church building of their own.<sup>23</sup>

Most Protestant congregations continued their development much as they had before the war. Yet both they and the Catholic ones were plagued by problems, the most serious of which was the lack of adequate number of priests and ministers. As there was no immigration from Hungary, the recruitment of men of the cloth became next to impossible. Second generation Hungarian Canadians found the idea of serving ethnic churches unattractive. Consequently, new Hungarian congregations often had to make do with non-Hungarian priests, or in the case of the Protestant ones, with visiting ministers or missionaries from other parts of the province. In the meantime, the weekend and Sunday schools associated with the ethnic churches were also plagued with the problems of declining enrollment and the dearth of qualified volunteer teachers. Part of the problem was Ontario's new wartime prosperity: most people were so busy working that they had little time to devote to the "ethnic" education of their children.<sup>24</sup>

Indeed, there is evidence that the improvement in the economic situation of the Hungarian community of Ontario in some respects contributed to the weakening of its ethnic solidarity. Most importantly, the new prosperity contributed to the community's increased economic and social stratification. As some families became more prosperous than others, their outlook on life and even their lifestyles became different. For example, the little wealth that some families accumulated enabled them to leave the "ethnic neighbourhood" and to buy houses in better districts. In Toronto, for example, during the war more and more Hungarians left "Little Hungary" south of College Street, and bought houses in the more prestigious Madison Avenue – Huron Street area north of Bloor Street.<sup>25</sup>

The increased economic and therefore social stratification of

Ontario's Hungarian community probably reinforced the process of assimilation that every immigrant community in Canada sooner or later undergoes. As the majority, even perhaps the vast majority of Hungarians in the province were people who came here as young adults in the second half of the 1920s and the early years of the Depression, it can be said that Hungarian-Ontarians had reached middle age during the war. Their children were growing up and leaving the family nest. They had been brought up in a Canadian environment and tended to assume Canadian lifestyles as soon as they got married and set up their own housekeeping. This was especially true of children who married outside their ethnic group. With these processes going on, it was only question of time that a visible, viable and identifiable Hungarian ethnic life would disappear in the province. What prevented this from happening was a series of postwar developments, more precisely, the coming of two new waves of Hungarian immigrants to Canada, and especially to Ontario.





## Chapter 3

### THE POST-WAR ERA

As was the case in the interwar years, the evolution of Ontario's Hungarian community during the post-war era was greatly influenced by events in East Central Europe. The most important development there was the extension of Soviet power hundreds if not thousands of kilometers west of the traditional confines of Russian influence. This expansion of U.S.S.R.'s sphere of political influence came first of all through its defeat of Nazi Germany, and secondly through the gradual subjection of the region to communist rule.<sup>1</sup>

Being very much at the centre of the landmass acquired by Stalin's empire during the war, Hungary could not escape these developments. In fact, as an enemy state, it could only expect harsher treatment than allied states, or those that managed to change sides before the end of the hostilities. Indeed, the country became the scene of much bitter fighting during the final phases of the war, and was subjected to a strict occupation regime after it was over. Thereafter it was brought under complete Soviet political control through the gradual establishment of a "dictatorship of the proletariat" a one-party communist state controlled by a communist leadership loyal to Stalin.

These developments in Hungary resulted in the exodus of hundreds of thousands of people. The first and by far the largest wave left when people began fleeing the country in fear of its imminent occupation by the Red Army. The last of them was the exodus that took place in wake of the unsuccessful attempt by the Hungarian people in 1956 to shake off Soviet rule.

Tens of thousands of these refugees from Hungary eventually settled in Ontario. Since Canada was late to open her gates to wartime refugees (the so-called displaced persons), while she

responded generously to the plight of the 56-ers, far fewer of the former settled in Ontario than the latter. Nevertheless, members of both of these groups were to play important roles in the massive transformation of Ontario's Hungarian community in the decades after 1945.

### The Displaced Persons

A large variety of people left Hungary during and immediately after World War II. Though the war was the general cause of their departure, their specific motives for fleeing their country of birth were often quite different. Most of them probably left during the winter of 1944-45 because they feared the imminent occupation of their homeland by the Red Army. Some had other reasons. Jews who survived the holocaust often felt reluctance to remain (or to return to) a country that, in their opinion, had betrayed them. Those Hungarian officials who had close ties with the country's pro-Nazi Arrow-Cross regime feared retribution after the war and fled to Germany in the last days of the war. Eventually, they ended up in refugee camps and emigrated mainly to South America. A great number of the officers of the Royal Hungarian Army and Gendarmerie also left the country at this time. After staying in German and Austrian refugee camps for years they scattered to the four corners of the world, including Canada. Still another large group of people who left Hungary as a result of the war were German-speaking Hungarian citizens who were expelled from the country by its post-war regime. In the late 1940s these people were followed by political refugees who chose emigration over life in an increasingly communist-controlled society.<sup>2</sup>

Canada's gates to Hungarian D.P.s were opened in 1949. In that year well over 1,000 Hungarians were allowed to enter. During the following few years an additional 8,000 arrived before their influx slowed during the early mid-1950s. The majority of the arrivals were adult males. Canadian government statistics describe the bulk of the newcomers as farm workers or unskilled labourers, but this should be taken with a grain of salt: many prospective Hungarian immigrants to Canada denied their education in order to improve their chances of gaining entry as farm workers or manual labourers.<sup>3</sup>

At least half of the newcomers planned to settle in Ontario. In time even some of those who had gone to other parts of Canada changed their minds and relocated in this province. The 1951

census reveals that out of the 5,500 Hungarian immigrants who came to Canada in the immediate post-war period, 62 per cent were living in Ontario. Almost exactly 20 per cent of the group had chosen Toronto as their home. That city was fast becoming the most important centre of Hungarian community life in Canada, outdistancing Winnipeg, and slowly even Montreal. In Ontario, the second most important such centre remained Hamilton which had attracted some 250 of the new arrivals.<sup>4</sup>

A few words might be said about the relations that came about between the now "old" immigrants (the newcomers of the 1920s) and the new arrivals. Their early contacts, often in the reception centres that were set up for the newly arrived D.P.s, were pleasant enough; however, as time passed some friction inevitably developed between the two groups. As has been explained before, a large portion of the newly-arrived group was made up of upper-class and upper-middle class elements. Their predecessors, the immigrants of the pre-World War II era, hailed mainly from the lower classes. The marked class and cultural differences between them now began surfacing, and became a cause of friction. What made the situation worse, and increased mutual resentment, was the fact that the formerly down-trodden were now the well-off, while the formerly prosperous people were the penniless newcomers. There were examples in this period of onetime servants from the estates of Hungarian noblemen offering employment to their one-time superiors.

Even though the intermingling of the mainly lower-class "old" immigrants and their newly-arrived "social betters" caused some disharmony in the community life of Ontario's Hungarian society, there were many benefits from the arrival of thousands of additional Hungarians.<sup>5</sup> These benefits were felt first and foremost by the Hungarian ethnic churches. The coming of the newcomers meant, above all, that in many communities the existing Hungarian parishes and congregations expanded in membership. Elsewhere, the coming of the D.P.s made the establishment of new congregations possible. But the most visible benefit the churches received from the new influx was the arrival of scores of refugee priests and ministers. These could assist in the task of catering to the religious needs of both the old and the new Hungarian immigrants. By the early 1950s, the long drought Hungarians in Ontario had experienced as far as the availability of religious leaders was concerned, had come to an end. With clerics being persecuted in Hungary throughout the 1950s, Hungarians in Ontario would be assured of a steady supply of refugee priests and ministers for the time being.

Existing lay associations were less likely to benefit directly from the influx of the post-war refugees. The fact was that the newcomers rarely joined the organizations of the "old" immigrants. The reasons for their not associating themselves with the institutions of the leftists are obvious: their political outlook was nearly diametrically opposed to communism. They had fled the prospect of Soviet rule, or in case of the refugees of the late 1940s and early 1950s, actual communist rule itself, and had no inclination to join any leftist movement in Canada. Somewhat more complex are the reasons why the newcomers usually shunned even the patriotic organizations of the old immigrants. The most important were the class and cultural differences between the two groups. Some of the newcomers simply believed that their predecessors possessed no social graces or refined culture and that shared community life with them would not be worthwhile or even possible. As a result, wherever numbers warranted, the newcomers set up organizations of their own (in which more educated or prosperous members of the old immigration stream were usually welcome). The ethnic churches tended to be an exception to this practice. In them, new and old were expected to be able to get along, something which was easier to accept in theory than to implement in practice.

The reluctance of the newcomers to join the lay organizations of the old immigrants was just one of the blows that was dealt to the latter in the post-war period. Another was the increasing availability of social assistance as well as life and other types of insurance from large insurance companies. These developments lessened the immigrants' dependence on their selfhelp organizations, a fact which led to a slow decline of the numerous sick-benefit organizations that had come into being during the interwar years or even earlier. In some cases, however, these immigrant institutions were replaced in importance by ethnic credit unions, often associated with a parish or congregation. An important role continued to be played by a number of the Province's Hungarian "houses." The one in Toronto seems to have been quite typical of these. Its aims were defined by its leaders in 1954 as the improvement of its members' material and social circumstances, the preservation of the Hungarian culture and its passing on to the next generation, the helping of the members in their everyday existence, and the creation of a bridge between Hungarian community and Canadian society at large.

While traditional Hungarian immigrant organizations continued to function with varying prospects for success and longevity, new ethnic institutions were being established in the province by the newcomers.<sup>6</sup> Some of these were simply the Canadian offshoots of

the political organizations that the new Hungarian emigration was setting up in the West. The best example for this was the scout movement. With the imposition of communist rule in Hungary, the scout organizations of that country were banned, and scouting had to go underground so to speak. However, a free Hungarian scout movement was brought about in Western Europe and the New World wherever there were recent Hungarian immigrants. Its leaders were recruited mainly from scoutmasters who had left Hungary at the end of the war or in the postwar years. During the early 1950s Canada became an integral yet separate part of a Hungarian Scout movement in exile. Half the Hungarian-Canadian scout troops were located in Ontario.

One of the best-known Hungarian organization in Ontario today is the Helicon Society of Toronto. It is famous above all for the sumptuous annual balls it organizes, but it performs an even more important function in promoting Hungarian culture through supporting a school program and helping Hungarian artists and writers. It is a by now largely forgotten fact that the Helicon Society, much like the Hungarian scout movement, was at one time a part of an international movement of the post-war Hungarian emigration. Interestingly enough, similar Helicon societies failed to survive in other parts of the New World, while the Toronto branch of the movement prospered. Its vitality is a testimony to the strength and relative importance of the post-war group of immigrants in the Hungarian community life of Toronto and its environs.

Another international organization of the post-war immigrants that became very much Toronto-bound is the Rákóczi Association. Like the Helicon Society, over the years this society also performed various functions and to some extent overlapped in its membership with the other organization. It differed from the former partly in the composition of its leadership (coming mainly from former members of the Royal Hungarian Armed Forces), and in its involvement in ventures that had Canada-wide, or continentwide ramifications. The success of both of these societies can be attributed in part to certain individuals whose drive, determination and organizational abilities allowed these immigrant institutions not only to survive for decades, but also to prosper. While it would be difficult to list these people in a short study such as this one, a few might be mentioned by name. Tivadar Borsi was involved in the founding of Helicon society. Gyula Torzsay-Biber was the guiding-spirit behind the operations of this same society from its early days to the 1970s, while Miklós Korponay, a younger man, struggled tirelessly for decades to keep the Rákóczi Association in prominence.

Even more important than the establishment of the Helicon and the Rákóczi associations was the creation in 1951 of a viable federation of Hungarian organizations in Canada.<sup>7</sup> It may be recalled that the Hungarian-Canadian war-relief movement disintegrated during the winter of 1947-48. Relief efforts continued, however, both through the Kossuth Federation and through a new organization of the "patriotic" Hungarians, the Council of Hungarian Churches and Clubs for Suffering Hungarians. The Council did not achieve the respect needed to enable it to speak on behalf of all or at least the majority of Hungarians in Canada. The need for an organization that could do just that was emphatically pointed out to Hungarians in the summer of 1951, when a delegation of Hungarian-Canadian leaders, many of them from Ontario, appeared before Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent to bring to the government's attention the political grievances of Hungarians behind the Iron Curtain. St. Laurent advised the men present to establish a nationwide Hungarian-Canadian organization that could speak with authority on behalf of all Hungarians in Canada.

The efforts to establish just such an organization took place mainly in Ontario. At first a provisional federation was set up with the participation of leaders and Hungarian ethnic organizations from Toronto and elsewhere. Next, a call was issued for a founding convention. It was signed by six persons, including some of the Hungarian ethnic group's most prominent religious and lay leaders. The convention was held in December of 1951 in the basement hall of Toronto's St. Elizabeth of Hungary church. The meeting established the Canadian Hungarian Federation (CHF), an organization that exists to this day. There was no conflict between the "old" immigrants and the newcomers in the founding of this organization: the leaders of the 1920s wave of immigrants received most of the positions on the federation's executive.

Within a few months' of the CHF's establishment, many of the large and influential Hungarian-Canadian organizations joined it. Especially encouraging was the participation of religious congregations. This was undoubtedly the result of the fact that Hungarian-Canada's most prominent churchmen had supported the idea of a federation from the outset. Probably because of the important role some priests and ministers had in the federation, the organizations of the left stayed away, and a few that joined at first withdrew shortly thereafter. Their absence did not damage the cause of Hungarian-Canadian organizational unity: the early 1950s were time of the Cold War and no Canadian government would have expected "patriotic" immigrants to cooperate with Communists. More serious

than the absence of the left was the lack of proper financing for the federation. Knowing probably that the proposition of collecting fees from individual Hungarians was hopeless (as the Hungarian Canadian Federation of the late 1920s had found out), the leaders of the new federation planned to collect membership dues from member organizations only. These dues were so modest however, that they left the CHF with a very small income. Partly as a result of this, the federation could not play a prominent role in Hungarian ethnic affairs for many years. The event that catapulted the CHF into prominence in the end was the Revolution in Hungary in 1956 and its aftermath in Canada.

### The Events of 1956

On the 22nd of October, 1956, anti-government demonstrations took place in Budapest, Hungary.<sup>8</sup> The next day the unrest spread and erupted into a full-scale uprising against the country's Soviet-backed regime. The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 had many and complex causes. Basically it was a popular uprising against a Stalinist-type communist dictatorship. Soviet-type rule had been imposed on the country during the late 1940s, under the leadership of Mátyás Rákosi. During the early 1950s the communists' grip on the country increased and was accompanied by police terror, persecutions, show trials and a radical transformation of the Hungarian nation's economic, social and cultural life. The drastic measures to transform the country's economic system led to large-scale mismanagement, a decline in living standards and worker dissatisfaction. The extreme forms of political repression resulted in seething hatred of the regime by a wide range of persecuted groups. The excessive demands made on the peasantry in form of forced collections, and the campaign of forced collectivization in the countryside alienated Hungary's rural folk from the regime. The half-hearted attempts at retrenchment from the Stalinist methods that were made after the start of de-Stalinization in the Communist Camp served only to increase the Hungarian people's disdain for the regime they had to endure since Rákosi's rise to power. Under the circumstances it was not surprising that the news of anti-government demonstrations, and of clashes with the police, sparked a nationwide uprising against a hated and despised regime.

The week that followed the events of the 23rd of October in Hungary saw the complete collapse of communist authority. Not

even the use of locally stationed Soviet troops could save the Hungarian communist government. Only the intervention of some twenty divisions of freshly “imported” Soviet forces could re-establish the authority of the communists. That intervention began on the 4th of November. Before complete communist control was reimposed – and the country’s borders were once again sealed shut – over 200,000 Hungarians fled Hungary in part to protest the crushing of their attempt to rid their country of foreign rule. The arrival of Hungarians in the West was to have important consequences on the Hungarian community of Ontario.

### Developments in Ontario

The news of the outbreak of the uprising in Hungary was received by the Hungarian community in Ontario with great interest. In Toronto, which by then was the largest and most influential center of Hungarian life in the Province, all regular social and cultural activities were suspended and frenzied work was started in hope of aiding the revolution in Hungary.<sup>9</sup> Many of the Hungarian community’s efforts aimed at calling national and international attention to the events in Hungary. Another type of activity aimed at protesting against Soviet intervention in Hungary. Throughout these days many demonstrations were held in Ontario, the most important taking place in Toronto and in Ottawa. In the latter city a long motorcade passed by the Soviet Embassy. At the same time that these demonstrations were held, Hungarians were collecting money for medical supplies to be sent to Hungary, donated blood for the same purpose, and a few people were beginning preparations for the despatch of volunteers to fight in Hungary.

After the massive intervention by fresh Soviet troops on the 4th of November, these activities were transformed into efforts to help the revolution’s refugees. As it became obvious that supplies of food and medicine could not be sent into Hungary, the money and other donations collected for this purpose were diverted for refugee resettlement programmes. In the meantime, funds continued to be raised for the benefit of the refugees.

How many of the thousands of Hungarians who were streaming into Austria at the time would eventually re-settle in Canada was not clear at the time. The Canadian government was at first somewhat slow to act in the matter.<sup>10</sup> It did place Hungarian refugees in a preferred status as far as processing for admission was concerned, but it failed to take decisive action for their wholesale admission. As



the public demand for vigorous steps increased, the government changed its policies. Some of the calls for the free admission of the refugees came from Ontario's churchmen and newspapers; especially emphatic was the call issued in this matter by the Toronto *Globe and Mail* on the 24th of November. Four days later the federal government announced a dramatic programme of refugee admission, allowing for the speedy transportation and permanent settlement of thousands of Hungarian refugees in Canada. According to J.W. Pickersgill, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration at the time, the government made its decision in this matter before much of the demand for a change in policy was made (see the Honorable Jack Pickersgill's comments on this printed in the appendix to this volume).

In this process of arranging for the re-settlement of refugees in Canada, an important role was played by the government of Ontario. During the second half of November, several steps were taken by Queen's Park to prepare the entry of Hungarians into the Province. J.P.S. Armstrong, Ontario's Agent-General in London, was sent to Vienna to gain an impression of the approximate number of refugees who would be interested in settling here. In the meantime, a delegation of Ontario officials met with Pickersgill in Ottawa to discuss Queen's Park's plans for the bringing of Hungarian refugees to Ontario. Apparently, the Ontario government was ready to charter ships and aircraft for bringing Hungarians across the Atlantic, but abandoned these plans when it learned that Ottawa had made arrangements to undertake this task. The provincial government however, did go ahead with a scheme of establishing refugee reception centres to accommodate on a temporary basis an as yet undetermined number of refugees.<sup>11</sup>

The federal government's new policy on refugees, announced in Ottawa on the 28th of November, envisaged the admission to Canada of an unlimited number of Hungarians from the refugee camps of Europe. The cost of transportation was to be assumed by the government, and admission was for permanent rather than temporary purposes. To facilitate the transfer of refugees to Canada, negotiations were undertaken with transportation companies to provide passage. Pickersgill flew to Vienna to oversee the re-vamping of the procedures used by his department for the processing of refugees for immigration purposes. This involved the relaxing of application and screening procedures to the extent that in some cases a full examination of the newcomers was postponed until after their arrival in Canada. Measures were also taken for the temporary relocation of a large number of refugees in Holland,

France and Britain until their admission to Canada could be put into effect.<sup>12</sup>

In the meantime, the movement of Hungarian refugees to Canada had already started. The pace of refugee arrivals picked up early in 1957 when it was decided that Hungarians should be transported here with the Air Bridge to Canada or the ABC scheme. This plan had originally been devised to bring British immigrants to the country, but when the Hungarian refugee problem presented itself, the decision was made to fill any vacancies on ABC flights with Hungarians. Before the fall of 1957, over 200 such flights took place from Britain, and many of them brought refugees. For some time in this period, two aircraft chartered for this purpose, brought Hungarians to Canada directly from Vienna. Others made their way here by transatlantic ships that left the ports of Western Europe or Italy on periodic basis.<sup>13</sup>

Some statistics on refugee arrivals might be of interest. By the end of 1956, 4,167 had reached Canada. By the fourth week of January, this number had reached 9,913, and by the end of that year, 36,718. By this time most of those who had been in temporary asylum in Holland, France and Britain, had reached Canada. The influx of refugees declined considerably after 1957. Authoritative sources estimate the total number of refugees coming to Canada to be 37,565.<sup>14</sup>

### Helping the Refugees

While the governments in Ottawa and Toronto devised their admission and re-settlement policies, the Hungarian community of Ontario was involved in preparations for their reception. A major aspect of these preparations was a campaign to raise funds for the benefit of the refugees. The campaign had its beginnings in the collection of money for the helping of the Revolution; however, when it became obvious that the uprising would be crushed, the aim of the campaign was changed to aiding the refugees. At first the fund-raising effort was handled by the Hungarian community itself, but when it became obvious that it had neither the expertise nor the institutional structure to handle a major campaign, the Red Cross took over. Many prominent Canadian public figures participated in the drive. In the end, close to \$900,000 was collected.<sup>15</sup>

While money was collected by the Red Cross, the Hungarian community concentrated on helping the refugees who were arriving daily. Newcomers were welcomed at ports and air terminals. They

were transported to reception centres or to homes of long-time Hungarian residents. Those refugees who were not placed in government-maintained lodges, were given food, clothing and temporary shelter. Many of them were also helped in finding apartments, jobs, and in the purchasing of household necessities. Many Hungarians in Ontario took complete strangers into their homes, and for weeks or even longer treated them as relatives. While this kind of work was being done by individuals, Hungarian-Canadian immigrant institutions were also deeply involved in the work of helping the refugees in their re-settlement. Much of this organizational work was being done by the ethnic churches. Some of these functioned as reception centres, placement offices, and places that maintained family counselling as well as basic language training. Often religious differences were blurred, and refugees in need of advice or help went to whichever church had the best reputation of offering a sympathetic hearing and effective aid. Still another task for the leaders of the Hungarian community's organizations was to intervene with Canadian authorities if any refugee, perhaps in ignorance of Canadian customs or laws, got in trouble with the police.<sup>16</sup>

There can be no doubt that this kind of help was extremely valuable to the newcomers. The reception of newcomers by friendly and helpful co-nationals must have been reassuring to bewildered people who were coming to a world they knew very little about. The aid and comfort that was extended to Hungarian refugees by Hungarians who had been living in Ontario certainly helped in their early adjustment to social, economic and cultural conditions in this country.

### The Refugees: Social and Occupational Composition

The Hungarians who came to Ontario in 1956-57 were predominantly young people. Of the 37,565 refugees who entered Canada in 1956-57, almost a third were under the age of twenty four, while only about 5,000 were over forty-five.<sup>17</sup> Thousands of them were university students, intent on careers as professionals. In regard to the religious composition of this mass of refugees it should be mentioned that two-thirds of them were Roman Catholics, Catholics being the most numerous in Hungary's population. The rest of the refugees were made up of Protestants and Jews. The members of the Jewish faith or origin were over-represented among the newcomers. It has been estimated that almost 7,000 Hungarian Jews

entered Canada after the revolution.<sup>18</sup> Hungary's Jews were a highly urbanized group, and there is every reason to believe that the overwhelming majority of those that came to Canada settled in the main centres of Jewish-Canadian culture: Montreal and Toronto.

According to well-informed sources, professional and intellectual elements were over-represented among the refugees. Nearly a quarter of refugee men, and more than a third of refugee women belonged to this category.<sup>19</sup> A great many of them were engineers, medical doctors and technicians. A large portion of the refugees, and especially of refugee men, were skilled workers: mechanics, metal workers, electricians, pipe fitters etc. Apparently, agricultural workers were hardly to be found among the masses that left Hungary.<sup>20</sup> The majority of the refugees came from Hungary's cities, in particular, from Budapest. It is not surprising that most of these newcomers settled in Ontario's cities, especially Toronto.

Those Ontarians who had expected the 1956 wave of Hungarians to fill unskilled jobs in the Province's labour market were probably disappointed as most refugees quickly graduated from these positions to something more in line with what they had been doing before their departure from their homeland. This transition from menial work to semi-skilled, skilled or even highly skilled positions was especially quick for people with skills that did not require extensive re-training in language and Canadian practices. Thus, technicians, some engineers, professionals such as musicians and artists, had an easier time in resuming their earlier career patterns than, for example, lawyers or teachers in the humanities. A few of the latter would never be able to make the transition to the Canadian equivalent of their professions in the "old country."

A large portion of the refugees were college or university students. It has been estimated that more than a thousand of these had entered Canada before the opening of the 1957-58 academic year. Many of these students originated from the city of Sopron, located only a few kilometers from the Austrian border. In 1956 Sopron had two institutions of higher learning, a school of forestry and an institute of mining engineering. During the revolution the students of both schools joined the uprising. For a while, they even contemplated the defending of their city against advancing columns of Russian tanks. When this plan came to naught, most of the students, and many members of the two schools' faculty, fled to Austria, some of them carrying their weapons with them. There they waited, some with the hope that they would return to their hometown along with Western or United Nations forces that would liberate their country from Russian occupation. Soon, however, they

realized that their fate would not be a return to Hungary but exile in the West.<sup>21</sup>

The largest concentration of these refugees from Sopron were the students and faculty of the forestry school. At first they thought of reconstituting themselves as a Hungarian college in Austria, but the Austrian authorities balked at the idea fearing that the Soviets would accuse their country of violating its recently won neutrality. Accordingly, the Soproners made inquiries elsewhere, and in the end it was Canada that accepted them as a school. During early 1957 the Sopron forestry people: students, faculty and families of the latter, moved to British Columbia, and in the fall of the year resumed their studies in their own school which became an adjunct of the Forestry Faculty of the University of British Columbia. The school existed until the last of its students graduated in 1961.

The students of the Sopron mining engineering school were not able to reconstitute their institution in exile. Even though most of them came to Canada, they could not resume their studies in a body, and in their own language. Nevertheless, they made up the bulk of the over one hundred Hungarian refugee engineering students that registered in the University of Toronto in the fall of 1957.

### Adjustment to Canadian Life

Rebuilding their disrupted lives was not easy for the Hungarian refugees who settled in Ontario during 1956 and 1957.<sup>22</sup> Some of the difficulties they encountered were the same that had faced members of previous waves of immigrants from Hungary to this land. These were the problems of adjusting to a new social and cultural environment and learning a new language. But other problems were different. The 1956 refugees had gotten used to a social and economic system that was very different from Canada's, or for that matter, from that of pre-war Hungary. Hungary of the 1950s was among other things a welfare state where the individual's dependence on the state was accepted and even fostered. Certain sections of society, such as children of industrial workers, were even pampered, provided they supported the country's new ideological system. While much if not all of Hungarian society endured a very low standard of living, people were assigned to jobs by state employment agencies, accommodation (however substandard) was found for those favoured by the state, education and medical care were free, and paid vacations were provided for many workers. For people who took these things for granted, the idea of having to find

jobs, apartments on their own, and paying for college education as well as for vacations, came as a shock. The refugees found freedom in Canada but they felt that they exchanged it for a great deal of social security. True, for a while the Canadian state did support the refugees, but this might just had the effect of encouraging some to expect state support not on a temporary but on a permanent basis. Of course, those refugees that found satisfactory work soon abandoned any craving for state handouts and might even revelled in the wages they got, which seemed much higher than those that they had been used to in Hungary. Yet even these people were prone to "culture shock" when they had to pay high fees for medical care or for the college education of their children. A few refugees, however, quickly adjusted to Canada's free enterprize system and became involved in business ventures, usually on a small scale at first, and made a quick adjustment to Canadian social and economic values.

A more complex problem was the process of emotional adjustment to the change that had taken place in many-a-refugee's life. Unlike members of previous waves of immigration from Hungary, the refugees did not have a chance to reconcile themselves to the idea of leaving their native land before their arrival to Canada. The "old immigrants" had months if not years to contemplate the prospect of abandoning their homeland, relatives, friends and everything else they had been close to. In contrast, most of the refugees made the decision to leave Hungary in an instant. Many of them never even contemplated leaving their country until they found out that the police were looking for them, presumably because of their role in the events of the Revolution. These people left at once (if they were lucky), and headed for the Austrian or Yugoslav border. A few weeks later, they found themselves in Toronto, or Hamilton, or Welland, or some other Ontario centre, and only then did they have time to reflect on the tumultuous events that had crowded their lives since those heady days of late October. Some of them went into shock or were overtaken by grief. Many refugees came without their families; these found the prospect of being separated from their loved-ones hardly bearable.

Professional people, skilled workers, intellectuals had still other problems in adjusting to Canadian conditions. Professional practices, technical procedures, educational preparation in the various occupations, were different in Hungary and Canada. Hungarian doctors, dentists etc., for example, could not get their degrees recognized in Canada. They had to pass Canadian examinations before resuming their practices. This was not easy for many, largely

because of the language barrier. Most technicians had to get used to imperial measurements. Many refugees simply had to re-educate themselves in the process of resuming their old careers.

### Impact on the Hungarian Community in Ontario

The coming of the refugees had a great impact on the Hungarian communities of Ontario.<sup>23</sup> This is particularly so in the case of this province since nearly half of the refugees that came to Canada settled here rather than other parts of Canada. The 1961 census figures indicate that Toronto received the largest number of them of any city in Canada: nearly 8,700. Hamilton became the home of about 1,350 of them, and Ottawa of 700. In the case of Toronto and Hamilton this meant that an existing Hungarian community doubled or tripled in size, but in the case of Ottawa, it practically brought the birth of a new Hungarian colony. Another city to receive a Hungarian community, however small, was Kingston.

The social, cultural and economic impact of the coming of the refugees on Ontario's Hungarian community is more difficult to gauge. The arrival of tens of thousands of people was bound to have a profound effect on an immigrant group hardly more numerous than the mass of newcomers. The coming of the previous group of Hungarians had resulted in a substantial increase in the number of Hungarian ethnic organizations in the province. To some extent the same phenomenon was observable after the arrival of the refugees.

Several of the organizations of the Hungarian "freedom fighters" went into exile after November of 1956, and some of these established "branches" in a number of countries, including Canada. One such organization was the World Federation of Hungarian Freedom Fighters, whose Canadian branch became known as the Freedom Fighters' Federation of Canada. Quite often in its existence it operated out of Toronto. Another Hungarian refugee organization was the Federation of Hungarian University and College Students. After the suppression of the uprising in Hungary, this organization established itself in the West and maintained its headquarters in Western Europe. One of its more influential branches was the Federation of Hungarian University and College Students of North America. Within the latter organization sub-branches came into existence. Some of these existed for some time in Ontario, but only at the University of Toronto did a viable local unit exist for more than a brief period. At one time, some of the Canadian refugee students aspired to a separate national status

within the wider federation rejecting the idea of being represented at the Federation's world congress by delegates chosen mainly by the American branches of the North American refugee organization. The controversy over the status of the Canadian refugee students did not last long however, as these organizations proved ephemeral. Once the people who had been active in the Hungarian student movement of 1956 completed their university studies, their organizations gradually became social clubs for students of Hungarian background, refugee and non-refugee alike. At the University of Toronto such an organization existed throughout most of the 1960s, but thereafter only at such times as an enterprising student or a group of students bothered to keep one functioning.

Despite the example of the Freedom Fighters' and refugee students' organizations, in Ontario the refugees were not prone to the establishment of many new ethnic organizations. Perhaps by 1956 there were so many of these (established by the "old immigrants" and the D.P.s), that there was little need for new ones. The possible exception to this generalization is the birth of a few artistic and professional groups after 1956, most of them brought about by refugee artists, musicians or professionals. Perhaps the best example for one of these is the Kodaly Choir (later Ensemble) of Toronto, about which more will be said later in this volume. Other examples were organizations of professionals; in the course of time Hungarian engineers, writers, agronomists, teachers all had their more or less successful (or, one might say, more or less ephemeral) associations functioning in Canada, many times with their headquarters being in Toronto or another Ontario city.

While the coming of the refugees had an important impact on the organizational life of Ontario's Hungarian community, and even more important consequence of their arrival was the fact that they created an expanded market for Hungarian culture in the province. The addition of thousands of persons to the existing Hungarian colonies in the province, only few years after a previous group of Hungarian immigrants had arrived, led to a substantial expansion of all kind of cultural (including sports) activity within this ethnic community. This meant that some special types of immigrant activities that could not be feasibly carried out before, became possible with increased numbers. Ethnic schools could be organized for children even where previously numbers did not warrant their establishment. Soccer teams could be brought into existence in places where before there were not enough young people to play the game on the level of other, often larger ethnic groups. More importantly, some sub-groups within the province's Hungarian



community now could flourish as a result of the influx of more of their members. Perhaps the best example for this is Toronto's Jewish-Hungarian community. After 1956 this sub-group would be responsible for a great deal of cultural and other activity. Some of this, such as Hungarian-Jewish religious life, was exclusive to the sub-group, but other aspects of it, for example the maintenance of a Hungarian-language theatre, was shared with the larger Hungarian community.

### The Hungarian Ethnic Press from the 1950s

The best historical evidence of the increase in the cultural, social and other activities of Ontario's Hungarian communities in the 1950s, mainly as a result of the coming of the D.P.s and the refugees, was the growth and increased diversification (and, in some cases, sophistication) of the Hungarian-language press in the province.<sup>24</sup>

At the beginning of the new, post-war Hungarian immigration to Ontario, little was left of the Hungarian-language press that was started by the previous wave of Magyar immigrants. What market there was for Hungarian newspapers and periodicals was filled by press-products from outside of the province. The most widely-read Hungarian-Canadian newspaper in Ontario was the *Canadian Hungarian News* of Winnipeg, but there were also several American-Hungarian papers that had large circulation here. Of the papers founded in Ontario in the interwar years, only the *Worker* survived.

The 1950s changed this situation dramatically. At least a dozen new papers were founded during this decade, some of which survive to our very day. The *Kanadai Magyarország* (Canadian Hungarians), one of the large Hungarian-language papers in the province today, was started in 1951 by László Kenesei. The *Magyar Élet* (Hungarian Life), in many ways the former paper's rival, transferred its operations to Toronto from Argentina in 1957. Both of these papers have several thousand subscribers and are read in Ontario as well as other Canadian provinces and American states. The *Menora Egyenlőség* (Menorah Equality), still another sizable paper, was started in the early 1960s and serves the Hungarian Jewish community of the province, and indeed, much of North America. All three of these papers are printed in large format and their spread varies from eight to sixteen pages. All three are produced in Toronto.

The 1950s and early 1960s saw the establishment of numerous other Hungarian-language press-products in Ontario. Many of these were quite specialized publications. Perhaps the most special-

ized of these were two Toronto papers that dealt only with news of the sports world. Because these papers were quite unique in the history of the ethnic press in the province, it might be worth while to tell their history in some detail in a few paragraphs.<sup>25</sup>

It is a widely-known fact that the 1950s marked the golden age of Hungarian sport. Though a small country both in size and in the size of its population, Hungary was a sports superpower. Hungarian athletes were competing with those from the United States and the U.S.S.R. for top honours in international competitions, and Hungary's national soccer team scored victory after victory against such established giants of the soccer world as England and Scotland.

Among the thousands of Hungarians who came to Ontario in this decade there were many athletes and even more sport enthusiasts. Their thirst for sport news, and especially, sport news from Hungary, created a demand for an ethnic information service. It was in these circumstances that Toronto's *Sporthíradó* (Sport News) was born in January of 1954. Its founder was Kálmán Bálint, a sports-enthusiast who came to Canada in 1951 and who, within a few years, opened a book-store, acquired a press, and launched a number of unique publishing ventures which survived until his health deteriorated in the 1960s.

Bálint's first undertaking was the launching of the *Sporthíradó* in January of 1954. As he had no formal training in sports or sports reporting, he recruited as editor another Hungarian immigrant, Géza Szuper, a soccer coach. Bálint became the publisher, Szuper the editor, and Mrs. Bálint produced the publication with a Gestetner machine. As the little bulletin was sold for only a dime, production costs had to be covered from the profits of the Bálint family's book-selling business.

The publication's first issue appeared on 23 January 1954. It was entitled *Sport és Társadalmi Híradó* (Sport and Social News). It contained mainly soccer news: information on the coming World Soccer Championships, and speculations about the forthcoming match between Hungary and England. Subsequent issues occasionally featured political news, news of the Toronto Hungarian community, notices about services of interest to newcomers, and, occasionally, an editorial. The latter were anti-communist in tone. One of them stated that the explanation for the great achievements of Hungary's athletes lay mainly in the fact that Hungary's communist regime was in position to reward lavishly those who lived up to its expectations, and could punish with impunity those that did not.

The publication changed little during the balance of 1954. It appeared fortnightly, more often if there were sport events of

interest to Hungarians, less if there were problems with production. Distribution was through the Bálint family's bookstore, a few Hungarian restaurants in Toronto, and similar places in a few other Canadian cities. As time passed, the number of distribution places increased, and a few centers in the United States were added to the list. The number of community notices also increased with the passage of time.

In 1955, the paper assumed the title *Sporthiradó* (Sport News). Appropriately, the coverage of community events became limited to minimum, although there would be more news of Hungarian sport activity in North America. Changes during the next few years would be an increase in the paper's price to 20 cents, and the introduction of an annual subscription fee. A more important change would come in December of 1957. The Bálint family had purchased a press, which made the publication of the *Sport News* in newspaper form possible. An enclosure in the 4-page newspaper was another press-venture launched by the Bálints, the *Magyar Nők Lapja* (Hungarian Woman's Weekly). Readers were told that for the time being the two papers (similar in format and size) were to be considered as one newspaper.

In 1960 Bálint and his editor, Szuper, parted company, but the latter took the paper with him and continued to publish it. As Szuper registered the paper first, he kept the original title. Bálint also continued with the venture, and published the *Magyar Sporhíradó* (Hungarian Sport News). His new editor was another post-war newcomer, László Szilvássy, a writer. During the following year the Bálint family's press was damaged by fire and publication ceased for some time. In November of that year the *Hungarian Sport News* was revived by another Hungarian publisher and sports-enthusiast, Károly Székely. About eight years later, Székely sold the paper to László Berta, still another Hungarian publisher. Berta, however, soon left for the United States, and an end came of this particular venture in Canadian ethnic sports news publishing. It was just about this time that Bálint, the paper's original founder, died. The *Sporthiradó*, now in Géza Szuper's hands, survived him however, and was still on the newsstands when information for this volume was collected.

By then some of the Bálints' other publications had ceased, as did many of the other, smaller and often more specialized press-ventures that had been born in the 1950s and the 1960s. A few of these might be mentioned by name, while their detailed history awaits examination by historians.<sup>26</sup> The *Egységes Magyarság* (United Hungarians) served the Hungarians of the Niagara Peninsula. The

*Élet: Dohányvidéki Kisujtság* (Life: Little Newspaper of the Tobacco District), served the Delhi and Tillsonburg area. Among the religious papers that for a time appeared in Ontario were the Roman Catholic *Szív* (Heart), and the Reformed *Uj Élet* (New Life). Still another publication was the *Világhíradó* (World Review), launched by the Bálint family. This magazine tried to interest Hungarians in the entire diaspora, bringing news and pictures from all countries where there was organized Hungarian community life. Alas, this enterprise also went the way of many of the other contemporary ventures, and had to leave Canada and later cease publishing altogether.

## Chapter 4

# CONTRIBUTIONS TO ONTARIO'S CULTURE

It might be asked at this point what was it that Hungarians have given to this province through the ages and what are they likely to give it in the future? Their first contributions have been, on the whole, the same as those of other immigrants. The vast majority of them came to start life anew in this land and worked hard to attain their dreams of a better life. In doing so, they have helped to develop the province's economy. The early immigrants brought with them little more than their strong hands and backs, and their determination to place their existence on a solid economic footing. Most of them toiled for years and decades in circumstances that demanded a great deal of physical stamina and often a willingness to risk one's health, and even life itself. Most of the old immigrants' colonies had had their martyrs, men (or occasionally women) who lost their lives in industrial or construction accidents. Those who were disabled or reduced to ill-health by unsafe industrial environment were less likely to be remembered, but were undoubtedly just as or even more numerous. In a sense, the later arrivals had it somewhat better as proportionately fewer of them had to work at menial jobs. Nevertheless, they too, worked hard and rarely spared themselves in their efforts to achieve the "good life" aspired to by most people in the province, immigrant and native-born alike. It should be mentioned that many of the later newcomers brought with them valuable expertise which they used, after overcoming initial problems connected with resuming their careers, to the benefit of Ontario. Their contributions were not confined to economics. Many Hungarians who came to Canada in this century, and in particular during the decade after 1948, were able and experienced artists, musicians,

and so on. Their contributions were predominantly in the realm of culture.

While most of these contributions were those of individuals, there are examples of Hungarians making collective contributions to the development of Ontario. Any list of these has to be arbitrary and can serve only as an indication of what types of enterprises were undertaken by Hungarian-Canadians the result of which was the enrichment of the province's cultural or in some cases economic or social life. Some of these contributions were the result of the organized, collective efforts of a great number of Hungarian Canadians, while others were the work of a small group of them, or the achievements of a handful, acting as individuals.

### Toronto's Central Hospital

An example of a contribution to Ontario attained mainly as a result of the initiative of a few people, is Toronto's Central Hospital. Located on Sherbourne Street, in the heart of this multi-ethnic metropolis, this hospital is a unique multicultural institution that provides medical services to thousands of Torontonians, and people from other parts of the province, in their own language. It is centered on a six-story modern building where a staff of multi-lingual medical personnel treat people who lack adequate command of English to undergo treatment in another hospital.

This remarkable institution was founded in 1957 by two Hungarian doctors, Paul Rékai and his late brother John. The Rékais left Hungary in 1948, driven by their country's incipient communist transformation. After spending a few years in France, they immigrated to Canada. They arrived in Toronto in May, 1950. Soon thereafter they had an interview with the Registrar of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. During this interview the Registrar complained to the Rékais — who by then were fluent in English — that many immigrant doctors tried to resume their medical practice before they learned English adequately. He asked: "how can they expect to treat patients without being able to understand them?" It was a question that the Rékais would recall on many occasions.<sup>1</sup>

After passing the licensing examination they opened a medical practice recruiting their patients among Toronto's numerous non-English-speaking immigrants. They realized that people with limited knowledge of English needed medical service in their own language. As no hospital in Toronto was in a position to provide

medical treatment on this basis, the Rékais decided to remedy the situation by opening a hospital of their own. First they bought a building which had been used by the Canadian Institute for the Blind as a retirement home, assuming a huge mortgage in the process. They obtained a further loan for the purpose of alterations and renovations.<sup>2</sup>

The Rékais' hospital was opened in May of 1957. In 1961, a new wing was added, enabling an increase in the number of beds from 32 to 72. The expansion was made possible by the assumption of further debt by the Rékais in the form of mortgages, bank loans and private loans. No public money was expended to help the project. The following years were spent in preparations for the transforming of a small, private hospital into a modern, 175 bed facility. These aspirations were realized in 1970 when the new building was opened in a ceremony presided over by former Premier John P. Robarts. In 1975 a multi-specialty out-patient clinic was added, in a building adjacent to the hospital.<sup>3</sup>

Since 1957 the hospital has treated more than 200,000 inpatients. Its clinic has more than 35,000 out-patient visits a year. Seventy per cent of these patients were born outside of Canada, and twenty per cent of them needed language assistance. In recent years the most often required languages were Portugese, Italian, Chinese, Greek, Spanish, Magyar, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, and German.<sup>4</sup>

Over the years this first multilingual hospital in Canada has pioneered health care methods now widely used across the country in helping patients whose mother tongue is other than English (or French). The first component of the hospital language service is an interpretation service available in some 30 languages. This service is provided voluntarily by hospital and clinic staff who speak the patient's language. The second component is a language aid service. Patients who do not speak English are visited every second day by a member of the non-medical staff who speaks the patient's language. The visitors enquire about the patient's progress, comfort, and any problems regarding communications with the medical staff. The third aspect of the hospital language services is the use of multilingual forms: instruction sheets, questionnaires, consent forms, dietary sheets etc. In addition, care is taken that the individual patient's religious practices and traditions concerning food are respected. There can be no doubt that the existence of such facilities has made life for many tens of thousands of Ontario residents — Hungarians as well as members of many other ethnic groups — easier to bear, especially in critical moments of illness and uncertainty.<sup>5</sup>

## The “Hungarian Chair” and the *Review*

While the Rékai brothers struggled to realize their dream of a hospital where patients can get treatment and encouragement in their own language, other Hungarians were working toward the goal of more effective dissemination of knowledge about Hungary.<sup>6</sup> These efforts were manifold. Various people, groups and organizations engaged in this enterprise at various times in the history of the Hungarian community in the Province. Most of their work was done in Hungarian, which limited its effectiveness to people who already had a good knowledge of Hungary. Sometimes, efforts to this effect by Hungarian residents in the province came to fruition elsewhere, often in the United States, when publications paid for in part by monies collected in Ontario appeared through publishers located elsewhere. But there were a few campaigns to disseminate knowledge about things Hungarian, or to promote Hungarian studies, that centered very much on this province and the results of which have helped to enrich the cultural and educational development of Ontario.

Perhaps the most remarkable of these campaigns was the one that resulted in the establishment of a privately and permanently funded program of Hungarian Studies at the University of Toronto. The Chair of Hungarian Studies, as it is known to Hungarians in the province, was, at the time of its establishment, a unique institution in the Western World. (There is now another such chair, functioning at an American university; it was brought into existence through the efforts of the Government of Hungary.)

Plans for a Hungarian program at an accredited university go back many years in the history of the Hungarian community of Ontario, and indeed, of all of Canada. Suggestions to this effect were made occasionally starting with the 1950s. The first major fundraising campaign to achieve this aim was launched early in 1964 on the initiative of the Széchenyi Society of Calgary.<sup>7</sup> From the monies collected, a course in Hungarian history was sponsored at Montreal's Loyola College. The program functioned until the end of the decade under the leadership of Professor Dezső Heckenast. The average annual cost of running the program has been given as \$2,000. In 1969 an attempt was made to fund a similar program at the University of Toronto, at a projected cost of \$12,000 annually. The provision of this sum would most likely not have caused difficulty, but the issue of the selection of the professor to teach a course was raised during negotiations with the university, and the discussions came to nought. The Hungarian community seems to



have been responsible for Heckenast's appointment in Montreal, and at least a few of its members hoped that they could exercise some influence over the selection of the professor at the University of Toronto as well. However, these expectations did not endear the plan to the university's chief officers who scrapped plans for the program's establishment for the time being. A valuable opportunity seems to have been missed to begin a Hungarian studies program at a post-secondary institution in Ontario at a very reasonable expense.

In 1972 a meeting was held in Toronto for the purpose of organizing a Canada-wide fundraising campaign for the resumption of the efforts to establish a Hungarian program at a university in southern Ontario where most Hungarian Canadians lived.<sup>8</sup> The prime mover of the new campaign was once again the Széchenyi Society of Calgary. Many people, both from the Society and from other Hungarian-Canadian organizations devoted a great deal of their time and energies to the campaign that was started. Perhaps it will not seem unjust to these people if the name of only one of them is mentioned. That particular individual is László Duska of Calgary, a former officer of the Royal Hungarian Army who, with indefatigable energy and boundless determination worked, often in the face of criticism, for the realization of the campaign's aim. And, this time the goal was more ambitious: nothing less than a permanently endowed Chair of Hungarian Studies to pass on the knowledge of the Hungarian culture and history to second and third generation Hungarian-Canadian university students, and to enable young people of other nationalities to familiarize themselves with things Hungarian.

The campaign was not conducted without difficulty. In many Hungarian-Canadian communities, campaigns to collect money for other, often major projects, were under way, or were started just about this time. In Toronto, for example, donations were solicited for the purchase of a larger building, to accommodate a Hungarian-Canadian cultural centre. As the months and even the years passed, the cost of establishing an endowed chair at a good university also went up. By 1973, the figure was \$600,000. Luckily for the Hungarian community however, the federal government came to the campaign's rescue, and promised to double the money collected by the Hungarian community. This was done under the government's newly-established scheme of encouraging the creation of ethnic studies programs at Canadian universities. This development infused new life into the campaign and led to the negotiations that in 1978 resulted in the establishment of the University of Toronto's permanent Chair of Hungarian Studies.

Simultaneously with the launching of the Széchenyi Society's 1972 program, preparations were accelerated for the launching of an English-language journal of Hungarian studies. The history of efforts by the Hungarian community in the English-speaking world to start and maintain such a journal go back many years. The first of these attempts were journalistic in nature. One might recall in this connection the paper started by the late Béla Bácskai-Payerle in Winnipeg before the last war, the *Young Hungarian American*. More scholarly successors to Bácskai's paper were the journals the *Hungarian Quarterly* and the *Studies for a New Central Europe*. The former was started before the war with the help of the Hungarian Government, but was re-launched years later as a periodical of the Hungarian emigration centered on the East Coast of the United States. The latter journal was the joint venture of Hungarian and other émigré scholars from East Central Europe.

Neither of these journals succeeded in becoming financially viable undertakings or in gaining the support of a wide section of the Hungarian émigré middle-class in North America. They may have been seen as losing propositions, in the hands of inappropriate peoples. Accordingly, support grew for the launching a journal more in tune with the aspirations of the Hungarian community. One campaign to start such a journal was begun in 1970, just as these sentiments were gaining popularity with many Hungarian émigré leaders both in Canada and the United States. The author of that campaign was an Ontario resident, the late Ferenc Harcsár of Ottawa.<sup>9</sup> His original scheme was to start a periodical in which people with great deal of knowledge about Hungary would dispel some of the mistaken notions that the peoples of the English-speaking world held about Hungary and Hungarians. To gain moral and financial support for the idea, Harcsár approached the leaders of scores of Hungarian organizations in Canada and elsewhere, while to obtain editors for the journal, he recruited academics, including the writer of these lines. It was from these beginnings that the predecessor of this journal would be born in 1974 with the rather awkward title, the *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies*.

In time, it became apparent to Harcsár that the venture he dreamed about would either have to be a scholarly journal of Hungarian studies, produced and edited very much as scholarly journals are produced in North America, or it would have to be an English-language version of the usual émigré publications imbued with more-or-less obvious political overtones. Luckily for the cause of scholarship, Harcsár opted for producing an academic periodi-

cal. The decision cost the venture some support, and for Harcsár it resulted in a few strained friendships. Nevertheless, the journal persevered with the backing of the Hungarian Readers Service, a federally incorporated charitable organization, sustained for many years almost exclusively through Harcsár's labours. The Readers Service fully supported the campaign to establish a chair of Hungarian studies and came to a tacit understanding with the Széchenyi Society that after the establishment of the planned program in Hungarian studies, the journal in question, usually referred to as "*The Review*", would become an integral part of the "Chair." Harcsár did not live long enough to see his dream realized. He died in 1979, a year before an arrangement was finalized for cooperation between the University of Toronto's Chair of Hungarian Studies and the journal, resulting in the transfer of the editorial office to Toronto, and the publication of the journal under its present name and in its new format.

At the end of the 1970s then, a unique development took place at the University of Toronto. Instruction was started in the Hungarian language, in the history of Hungarian literature, and related subjects. In fact, some courses were conducted in Hungarian. In the *Review*, the program acquired a learned journal, at the time the only one of its kind in the English-speaking world. It can be presumed that these developments helped to inspire the Government of Hungary to work toward the implementation of a similar program at a leading American university. It speaks of the achievements of the people responsible for the creation and enrichment of the program in Toronto that the realization of a similar undertaking at Indiana University (with its Chair of Hungarian studies and its affiliation with the newly-established journal, the *Hungarian Studies*.) was completed only recently, years after the work of the Toronto Hungarian Chair and of the *Hungarian Studies Review* had started in Ontario.

### The Kodaly Ensemble

A different type of contribution to Ontario's cultural life has been made by the Kodaly Ensemble of Toronto.<sup>10</sup> Named after the noted Hungarian composer and ethnomusicologist Zoltán Kodály, the Ensemble had its origins in the years that followed the arrival of the 1956 refugees. In 1960 György Zadubán, a relative newcomer, organized a male choir mainly out of recently-arrived Hungarians in Toronto. Soon thereafter the choir became a mixed one, and a

folk-dance group was added. From these roots would develop, over the next few years, the Kodaly Ensemble. Periodically it would be supplemented by an orchestra, and on some occasions it would mount performances involving well over a hundred performers.

The main function of the Kodaly Choir and of the Ensemble during the early years of its existence was to present the choral and folk-dancing traditions of Hungary to Hungarian as well as to non-Hungarian audiences. Most of the ensemble's leading figures had been exposed to these traditions in post-war Hungary. Zadubán himself had been a student of Kodály, while Julius Prommer, the dance group's leader in the early years, had been a professional dancer in Hungary and had exposure to the folk-dancing choreography that was fashionable in that country in the 1950s. Not surprisingly, the repertoire of the Ensemble during the early 1960s mirrored that of amateur and state-sponsored ensembles in Hungary in the first post-war decades. In fact, the Ensemble's most-often performed stage productions in those days were patterned on what has been called the choreographic "extravaganzas" of the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble.

In addition to staging performances featuring parts of the repertoire of the State Folk Ensemble of Hungary, the Kodaly Ensemble also produced original works. The most remarkable of these was the 12-minute "story dance" number: "Este a Faluban" (Evening in the Village), with its music and choral work by Zadubán and choreography by Prommer. In performing this and other pieces produced for choir, orchestra and a dance group, the Kodaly Ensemble was doing pioneering work in the history of theatrical folk art in Canada.

Both the production of original numbers, and the presentation of the repertoire of dance ensembles in Hungary, were greatly appreciated by audiences in Toronto as well as in other metropolitan centres with large Hungarian populations in neighbouring provinces and states. The emotional welcome that the Ensemble received in some communities, especially in those that were made up of members of a former wave of Hungarian immigration, can be explained by the fact that for these people the Ensemble revived long-forgotten memories and created a tangible contact with long-abandoned cultural roots.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s the Ensemble, in particular its dance group, was faced with a major challenge. As original leaders and members retired — and attrition was especially fast among dancers for whom not only expertise and dedication but also superb physical conditioning is a requirement — new people were needed

to replace them. After a short existence the Ensemble, and in particular its dance group, was faced with the prospects that confront many immigrant organizations only after a prolonged period of existence: the threat of extinction caused by a lack of people who have the appropriate cultural skills to carry on the organization's work. By this time it seemed that the dynamism that the refugees represented in this particular aspect of Hungarian-Canadian cultural life was spent. While the work of Hungarian immigrant organizations requiring few skills other than the knowledge of the ancestral language could continue, the existence of this very special cultural institution was threatened. People with the appropriate skills could not be easily obtained. Immigration from Hungary had stopped. Relations between the Hungarian community in Western emigration and the regime in Hungary were bad, and there was no possibility at the time of saving the Ensemble through some form of cultural cooperation or exchanges with Hungary. The Ensemble's salvation had to come from the resources of the Hungarian community of Ontario, in particular, from a younger generation of Hungarian Canadians. But young Hungarian Canadians did not have the necessary cultural skills. Kodály was certainly correct when he said that "Culture cannot be inherited — each generation must master anew the culture of its forebears."

The Kodaly Ensemble's salvation then lay in its ability to involve a new generation of Hungarian Canadians in its work, in inducing young members of the group to master the culture of their forefathers, in this case the art of folk-dancing. Without perhaps making a conscious decision to become an instrument of culture transmission, the Ensemble became increasingly involved in the teaching of folk-dancing to newer and newer groups of Hungarians living in the Province. Increasingly, people who came to join the Ensemble, and in particular its dance group, were young men and women who received their first exposure to Hungarian folk-dancing in Canada. It was this trend that led to the formation of a junior dance group in the mid-1970s, and a children's group a few years later.

Still another development that was to help in the maintenance of a Hungarian folk-dancing tradition in Ontario was the gradual establishment of links between Hungarian folk-dancers in this province and those in Hungary and, later, in Transylvania. These links were sought usually by younger members of the Ensemble's dance group, who, in order to further their knowledge of Hungarian folk-dancing, travelled to Hungary to observe Hungarian dancers in action, either during casual occasions, or during the practices or performances of amateur or professional groups.

The traffic between Hungarian folk-dancers in Ontario and Hungary soon became a two-way affair. In the mid-1970s Károly Falvai, a choreographer and ethnographer in Hungary, was invited to Toronto to teach the members of the dance group. His visit was just the first of many visits by dancers, choreographers and musicians from Hungary, at the invitation of the Kodaly dancers. The most notable among these was the remarkably talented couple, Zoltán and Ildikó Zsuráfszky, who visited and instructed the Ensemble's dancers on three separate occasions during the early 1980s.

The increased emphasis on teaching the young and the establishment of contacts with young artists in Hungary had a profound impact on the evolution of the Ensemble and especially its dance group. Most importantly, the danger of disintegration was averted. As the original, Hungarian-trained members of the dance group retired from dancing, others stepped into their places. The most dedicated among these learned their skills in Canada, from dance-masters visiting from Hungary, or on visits to the old country itself. In time, the inspiration for these people was no longer the highly-choreographed, extravagant productions of the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble of the 1950s, but a new trend in folkdancing in Hungary, the so-called *táncház* movement.

This particular movement became popular in Hungary during the early 1970s.<sup>11</sup> In essence, it was the mastery of authentic styles of peasant dancing in many cases from the Hungarian districts of Transylvania. The diagnostic characteristic of this type of dancing is that it is highly improvisatory in nature, just as most Hungarian folk-dancing had been in times gone by. The word *táncház* itself means dance house, and refers to the practice of Hungarian villagers in Transylvania getting together in a community hall, or in someone's living room, and dancing to the music provided by a small gypsy band. The practice was revived in the early 1970s in Hungary's cities and led to the establishment of numerous folk-dance clubs that met for the purpose of dancing these traditional Hungarian dances regularly in a relaxed, often informal atmosphere.

These developments in Hungary served as example and inspiration to a number of young Hungarian Canadians, both dancers and musicians, in Toronto. To them, the movement provided a new perspective on Hungarian folk culture. *Táncház* dancing (and music) had greater meaning and relevance than the highly choreographed and therefore rather artificial dancing they had become familiar with in the early 1960s. The new style had its roots in the

Hungarian past, it also linked the folkdance and folk-music enthusiasts to a Hungarian presence: to the isolated and persecuted Hungarian minority of Rumania. These young devotees of the new movement embraced the new trend in folk-dancing with zeal, mastering its intricacies during trips to Hungary and Rumania, from teachers brought out for dance seminars from the former, and from recordings, 8 millimeter movies, and later, from videotapes. The consequence of all this was that the Kodaly dancers became the first major Hungarian dance group in the Western world to adopt the new direction in Hungarian folk-dancing.

In 1980 Zadubán, the Ensemble's founder and veteran conductor, retired. With his departure, the Kodaly Ensemble lost its potential to have a professional orchestra. His expertise in conducting could not be replaced; however, the choir was saved when Margit Zydron assumed the position of choirmaster. At the same time, Kálmán Dreisziger became the Ensemble's Artistic Director. He was one of those younger members of the dance group who received their first exposure to Hungarian folk dancing in the Ensemble itself during the early 1960s. He refined his skills through repeated visits to Hungary and Rumania, and through contacts with Hungarian folk-dancers both in North America and in Eastern Europe. Under his leadership, both the nature of the dancing performed by the Kodaly dancers and the Ensemble's repertoire were transformed. Emphasis was placed on the preservation of the traditional elements of Hungarian folk-dancing and on the presentation of this type of dancing to audiences. To underscore these trends, a small orchestra, called *Életfa* (Tree of Life), was added to the dance group. It was patterned after the folk orchestras of rural Hungary and Transylvania of the old days. The Kodaly's teaching efforts were also continued. Members and former members of the dance group were responsible for teaching more than half-a-dozen Hungarian folkdance groups in southern Ontario. The lion's share of this work has been done by Dreisziger himself who paid regular visits to folkdance groups as far apart as Windsor and Niagara Falls.

The Kodaly Ensemble celebrated its 25th anniversary this year. To mark the occasion, it presented an anniversary concert. The concert's programme was designed to reflect the work of the Ensemble during the past quarter century. With the help of Zadubán, who came out of retirement for this occasion, the Ensemble produced several integrated numbers (performed by the dance group accompanied by choir and a full orchestra), as well as some authentically choreographed traditional dances, accompanied by the *Életfa* orchestra. The ability of the Ensemble to transmit the

Hungarian folk-dancing tradition to newer generations was plainly evident. Four dance groups made up of people in different age groups were featured during the performance: the youngest made up of children in their pre- and early teens, and the oldest made up of the “veterans” of the 1960s who returned to the Ensemble to participate in this special performance.

The folk-dancers, singers and musicians of the Kodaly Ensemble have performed services to the Hungarian community of Ontario beyond entertaining its members and familiarizing them with truly Hungarian dance and music forms. By attracting hundreds of young people to folk-dance groups throughout the province, they have helped in the Hungarian community’s efforts at culture maintenance. For many a second and third generation Hungarian Canadian in the Province, this folk-dancing represents the main if not the only link to Hungarian culture. But these folk-dance enthusiasts have also helped to enhance the reputation of Ontario’s Hungarian community through the acclaim they have gained by their performances in neighbouring provinces and states. The Kodaly Ensemble in particular has helped to enhance the whole of Canada’s reputation in the realm of folk-dancing. The group was asked during the early 1980s to act as Canada’s emissary at an international folk-dance festival in Puerto Rico. Its most important contribution to Ontario’s culture, however, is the enrichment of the lives of many people in the Province, and the establishment of a tradition that is likely to continue to make the lives of many Ontarians richer and fuller in the decades to come.



## **Chapter 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS:**

# **ONTARIO AND HUNGARIAN ETHNIC LIFE IN CANADA AND ELSEWHERE**

The coming of the refugees in 1956-57 was the last great momentous event in the history of the Hungarian community of Ontario. The evolution of this ethnic group since that time has not been uneventful, but no development during the past two-and-a-half decades has come even close to the transformation that had taken place as a result of the arrival of the refugees. Undoubtedly, in the life of some subsections of the Hungarian community there have been important turning points in this period. The establishment in 1974 of the Hungarian-Canadian Cultural Centre in Toronto undoubtedly has been a milestone in the life of the Hungarian community of that city. Other important events that might be mentioned were the founding of the Toronto Hungarian School Board in 1971, the establishment of a Hungarian Jesuit noviciate a few years later, and the creation of the Chair of Hungarian Studies at the University of Toronto. But all of these (and other — the list could go on) developments affected only a portion, in some cases a small portion of the Hungarian community in the Province. There might have been events that were memorable for the whole, or at least large portions of the community, such as the visit of Cardinal Mindszenty during the mid-1970s, but these hardly had lasting and fundamental consequences for the group as a whole.

Nevertheless, important developments have been taking place within the group during these last few decades. One of these is the increasing respect and influence many members of the group enjoy in the Province. Numerous Hungarians have “made it” in their

vocations, professions, business undertakings and even in social circles. They have successfully adjusted to Canadian life. Simultaneously with this process of adjustment came another development, one that might cause some concern to the leaders of the community. This is the increasingly rapid assimilation of the group as revealed both by census figures and scholarly research. Census after census, fewer people in Ontario report speaking Hungarian as the main language of communication at home. Moreover, studies of ethnic group attitudes to language maintenance reveal that Hungarians tend to be the least concerned about this issue. At the same time that the group is becoming more and more assimilated, its leadership — made up often of immigrants who came as D.P.s or refugees — is aging. More and more of the group's organizations are headed by men in their 60's and 70's. Inevitably, these tendencies will lead to a crisis in the community's evolution, a crisis that will manifest itself only slowly, but will lead to a fundamental change in the group's long-term evolution. The Hungarian community of Ontario of the future might become a culturally far less distinct group than it is today.

Whatever the fate of this community at the turn of the twentyfirst century and later, we can count on Ontario remaining the focal point of the Hungarian subculture in Canada for a long time. The Province has been a magnet for Hungarian-Canadians ever since the beginning of this century; the growth of its Hungarian population has been faster than that of most of the other provinces. It might be just recalled that in 1921 Ontario was the home of about 13 per cent of Canada's Hungarian population whereas sixty years later slightly more than half of Hungarian Canadians resided in this province. While this extraordinary rate of growth may not recur in the future, it is most likely that the Hungarian community of the Province will continue to experience increases in its size that will be greater than those of the Magyar colonies of any of the other provinces.

The presence of a Hungarian subculture in Ontario on a long-term basis is undoubtable. What has been changing during the past few decades, and what is most likely to continue to change in the future is the nature of that presence. Until recently, Hungarians in this province constituted a subculture that was very much an immigrant subculture. In recent times the transition to the status of a predominantly non-immigrant, ethnic subculture has started, or, more precisely, accelerated. Unless a new wave of Hungarian immigrants will arrive from East Central Europe in the near future, this transition will continue during the balance of this century, and

the early part of the next. Eventually, it might lead to total, or at least near-total assimilation, and the disappearance of an identifiable Hungarian subculture in the province. But until that happens, if it will happen at all, Hungarians will continue to enhance the cultural diversity of Ontario and will continue to make a valuable contribution to its cultural development.

The well-being of Ontario's Hungarian community is important not only to this province, but also to Hungarian communities elsewhere in the world. With one out of every two Canadians of Hungarian background living in Ontario, it is inevitable that the political leadership of Canada's Hungarian community emanates mainly from here. Furthermore, it might be argued that the flowering of the Hungarian subculture in Ontario has concrete and positive impact on Hungarian communities elsewhere on this continent and, especially, in neighbouring American states. A few concrete examples might be given to illustrate this point. The three large Hungarian-language papers of Toronto, for example, have numerous subscribers outside the Province, especially in some large American cities. The Kodaly Ensemble often gives performances south of the border, and a few of its present and past members have been involved in the teaching of Hungarian dance groups there. The University of Toronto's Chair of Hungarian Studies, in addition to publishing North America's only English-language journal of Hungarian affairs, also hosts the annual conference of the American Hungarian Educators' Association once every three years. These examples could be multiplied, as other Hungarian organizations in Ontario also extend their activities south of the border.

Probably more important than the work of ethnic institutions is the participation of individual Hungarian-Ontarians in the activities of Hungarian organizations that transcend international boundaries. An example that might be cited is the work of various committees, made up mainly of Hungarians from all parts of the Western World, dedicated to lobbying in Western capitals on behalf of the oppressed Hungarian minorities of Rumania and Czechoslovakia. While the majority of these committees have their headquarters elsewhere, a great many Hungarians in Ontario support their efforts either by monetary donations or by participating in some of their lobbying efforts or protest demonstrations.

This mention of Hungarians in East Central Europe should serve as an introduction to our penultimate point. That point simply is the following: the existence of a viable Hungarian community in Ontario is also of importance to Hungarians in their ancestral

homeland, in Hungary and the neighbouring lands of Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and, to a lesser extent, the U.S.S.R. and Austria. First of all, Hungarians in Ontario have often been a source of economic support to their relatives and friends in the o'country. Early Magyar immigrants to this province often sent home part of their savings to support their kinfolk. Help was especially generous in times of crises in East Central Europe. This fact has been illustrated by the success of the Hungarian-Canadian fundraising campaigns of 1945 and 1956. But the aid extended to Hungarians in the o'country transcended the realm of economics. Magyars in Ontario have served — and continue to serve — as sources of comfort, encouragement and even of reliable information on the state of international politics in times when their co-nationals in East Central Europe lived under an authoritarian regime. In fact, for some families at certain times, a relative or friend living in Ontario might have constituted the only link with the democratic world. This was true for much of East Central Europe's Hungarian population in the not too distant past, and it is still true for a few of the Hungarian minorities in that part of Europe, as their members still live in isolation from the outside world in accordance with the unacknowledged desires of their own governments.

Ontario's Hungarian community then, is a component of two different worlds. It is an integral part of the society of this province and therefore, that of Canada's. At the same time, it is also a part of the Hungarian diaspora and of the Hungarian cultural group of this planet. The continued existence of this community as a culturally distinct ethnic group is in the interest not only of Ontario, but also that of Hungarians everywhere. In fact, there might even be a very special reason why the survival of Magyar ethnic islands such as exist in this province might be of particular significance. Hungarians have an unusual geographic distribution in the world. About ten per cent of them live on this side of the Iron Curtain, the rest, in communist countries of rather divergent political orientation. This fact makes Hungarians into potential links between countries of the West and of the East. Indeed, there is evidence that unwittingly and to some extent unconsciously, Hungarians have begun to play this role already. Cultural and social contacts between Magyars in the Western diaspora and in East Central Europe have always existed. They have only intensified in recent years due mainly to the availability of convenient air travel. In Hungary too, the tendencies toward increased cultural and economic contacts with the West have strengthened in recent years and are not discouraged, and in some respect are even cultivated, by the country's government. Although

it is too early to tell what benefit these trends might bring for the rest of mankind in the long run, if they will help to reduce East-West tension and will help to promote understanding between the super-powers, humanity would be well-served.

Should the Hungarians, perhaps in combination with other East Central European nations, succeed in playing such a role, the Magyar community of Ontario will no doubt make a positive albeit necessarily small contribution. In the meantime, its members will be preoccupied mainly with other, more mundane matters. The "average" Hungarian-Canadian in the Province will most likely concern himself or herself with matters of everyday existence, while the more perceptive of their leaders will be most concerned with, among other things, the group's prospects, especially its continued cultural survival. This issue will undoubtedly remain an important one, as only time can tell if and for how long a small ethnic group can retain its cultural uniqueness in an age of mass culture and rapid social and technological change.

## APPENDIX

### **J.W. Pickersgill and the Admission of Hungarian Refugees to Ontario, 1956-57**

*The following is an excerpt from a letter by the Hon. J.W. Pickersgill to the author dated 4 April 1983. It contains interesting information on the coming of Hungarian refugees, and especially refugee students to Canada in 1956-57. Mr. Pickersgill (1905 – ) was the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration in 1956.*

Dear Professor Dreisziger:

I have waited until I have read the whole of *Struggle and Hope* before writing to thank you for giving me a copy. ... I wish I might have talked to you before you did the final text of the migration of 1956-7, not that I have any real quarrel with what you say except on two points. I do not think it is correct to say (that) the federal government yielded to public pressure in its action in November, 1956. Our decision on free passage and chartering planes was made and under way before the *Globe* editorial and before I was approached by the Ontario Government.<sup>1</sup> I had been Minister of Immigration long enough to know (that) no large scale immigration ever gets votes in the short run. Mr. St. Laurent, Walter Harris, L.B.

Pearson<sup>2</sup> and I thought what we wanted to do was right and we persuaded our colleagues. By the time I returned from Vienna, the Ontario government was not co-operative, though most of the other provincial governments were, including the Duplessis government in Quebec. The Hungarian refugees did not have to meet the admission standards, they had only to apply to the office in Vienna and they were treated on a first come first served basis. The medical examinations took place in Canada; all who passed were landed as immigrants and the rest as visitors until they could pass the medical tests, when they were landed.

My second point is not a difference but a clarification of the sentence on pp, 207-8 that “so many Hungarian students came to Canada in the wake of 1956 that they were regarded as a special class of refugees.” Shortly after my return from Vienna, the immigration officials reported that most receiving countries did not want students. Without consulting the Cabinet, I directed my Deputy Minister to telephone our office in Vienna and give an oral instruction that, without disturbing the official policy of first come first served, every effort was to be made to get students at the head of the queue every day. My reasoning was that the cost might be greater in the short term, but that the long term advantage to Canada would be more than correspondingly greater. I also took a very active part in assuring the admission of Hungarian students in most of the universities throughout Canada. In this effort I received very effective support from Senator and Mrs. Hartland Molson. ...

J.W. Pickersgill

### Notes.

1. The editorial in the *Globe and Mail*, demanding a more vigorous refugee admission policy, appeared on 24 November 1956. The decision by the federal government to embark on a generous programme of refugee admission was announced in Ottawa on the 28th of the same month. On this subject see Gerald E. Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1977), chapter nine, especially pp. 195-99.

2. Louis St-Laurent was Prime Minister of Canada at the time. Walter E. Harris had been Pickersgill's predecessor in the immigration portfolio and was Minister of Finance in 1956, L.B. Pearson was Secretary of State for External Affairs at the time.

## NOTES

### Notes to Chapter 1: The Beginnings.

1. Canada, Statistics Canada, *Update from the 1981 Census, Highlight Information on Ethnicity...* (Ottawa, 1983), p. 3.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
3. In recent years two translations of Farkas' book have been published. See Theodore and Helen Schoenmann (eds. and translators), *Alexander Bölöni Farkas: Journey in North America* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1977); and, Arpad Kadarkay (ed. and translator), *Sándor Bölöni Farkas: Journey in North America* (Santa Barbara, Ca.: ABC-Clio Press, 1978). All references here are to the first of these volumes. See especially p. 122. A somewhat more detailed discussion of Farkas' visit can be found in N.F. Dreisziger, "The Critical Visitor: Alexander Boloni Farkas' Tour of Canada in 1831," *Quarterly of Canadian Studies*, 1982, pp. 147-152.
4. Farkas, *Journey*, p. 124.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 117f and 125. While this rather one-sided description of the state of things in Ontario of the colonial period may have been partly the result of Farkas' liberal and anti-monarchist prejudices, on reading his accounts of his visit it becomes evident that there was a more concrete reason for his critical views. This reason becomes evident when we try to find out from whom or what sources Farkas and Bélyd received their information on Upper Canadian politics. In this connection we learn from the former's account of an overnight boat trip they took from York to the south shore of Lake Ontario. On this voyage they met a journalist and legislator by the name of "Mackenzie," with whom they talked about politics for many hours, in fact throughout most of the night. Farkas does not mention exactly who this Mr. Mackenzie was, but we can guess that he was no other than William Lyon Mackenzie, the colony's leading radical politician, the leader of the Upper Canadian struggle for constitutional reform and a most relentless opponent of the ruling élite in the colony. There can be little doubt that Mackenzie described the Government of Upper Canada to the visiting Hungarians in the blackest of terms, and that the latter believed what he said without any second thoughts.
6. The most famous of these post-war Hungarian refugees in the colony was Márk Szalatnay, a workingman's advocate and trade union organizer. See the entry on him in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, X, pp. 670ff.
7. Jenő Ruzsa, *A kanadai magyarság története* (The History of Canada's Magyars) (Toronto: by the author, 1940), pp. 210-11.
8. N.F. Dreisziger, M.L. Kovacs, Paul Bódy and Bennett Kovrig, *Struggle and Hope: The Hungarian-Canadian Experience* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), pp. 101-02. Unless otherwise indicated, references to this work are to chapters by the principal author.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 110f.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 112-14. See also, N.F. Dreisziger, "Immigrant Lives and Lifestyles in Canada, 1924-1939," in George Bisztray and N.F. Dreisziger (eds.) *Hungarian Cultural Presence in North America* (Toronto: Hungarian Studies Review, 1981), pp. 64-68.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 70f.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 71f. Dreisziger, *Struggle*, p. 117.
14. N.F. Dreisziger, "In Search of a Hungarian-Canadian Lobby: 1927-1951," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* Vol. XII, No. 3 (1980), pp. 82f.



15. The following paragraphs are based on Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 119-22.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 122f.
17. The following is based on information detailed *ibid.*, pp. 123-25.
18. The following paragraphs are based on the subchapter "The Press", *ibid.*, pp. 125-27.
19. M.L. Kovacs, "The Saskatchewan Era," in Dreisziger *Struggle*, pp. 78-83.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-30.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 28f.
23. Dreisziger, "In Search of a Hungarian-Canadian Lobby," pp. 86.
24. Ferenc Grob, Kivándorlásom és Szemelvények a Kanadai Életből, s Életemből (My Emigration and Observations on Canadian Life and My Life), MS, pp. 20f. Copies of portions of this manuscript are in my possession, courtesy of Mr. Grob.
25. *Ibid.* In his recollections, Magyar gave a different story. His own account of the birth of the ocean flight idea is quoted in great detail in Kornél Nagy, "Igazságot Magyarországnak! A magyar oceanrepülés" [Justice for Hungary: The Hungarian Ocean Flight], *Magyar Szárnyak*, Vol. X (1981), pp. 6375.
26. Ruzsa, *A kanadai p.* 274.
27. Ferenc Grob, who was a friend of Magyar's from the time of the latter's stay in Regina, was in charge of the campaign in Saskatchewan.
28. Julianna Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok az Egyesült Államokban, 1880-1940* [Immigrant Hungarians in the United States, 1880-1940] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982) p. 371.
29. Grob, pp. 22f.
30. Norbert Csanádi, Sándor Nagyváradai and László Winkler, *A magyar repülés története* (The History of Hungarian Aviation) (Budapest: Műszaki könyvkiadó, 1977), p. 140.
31. Grob, pp. 26f.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Csanádi, *et al.*, p. 141.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-43.

## Notes to Chapter 2: Through Depression and War.

1. Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 139-42; Dreisziger, "Immigrant Lives," pp. 74-77. On the relief camps see J.H. Thompson and Allen Seager, *Canada, 1922-1939: Decades of Discord* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1985), pp. 267-70. The camps were disbanded after the Liberal Party was returned to power in the general elections of 1935.
2. Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 142f.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 143f. On this subject see also Susan M. Papp, "The Delhi & Tobacco District Hungarian House," in Susan M. Papp, ed. *Hungarians in Ontario*, a double issue of *Polyphony, The Bulletin of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario*, Vol. 2 No. 2-3 (1979-80), pp. 81-88 *in passim*.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 145-49.
5. The following is based in part on a paper of mine "Old World Politics — New World Immigrants," presented to a conference on Eastern Europe held at the University of South Florida's New College, in March of 1985.
6. Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 158f.
7. Copy of memorandum, Department of External Affairs to the High Commissioner for Canada in the United Kingdom, 7 November 1941; Record Group 25, G 2, file 2330-40c, accession 83-84/259, Public Archives of Canada.
8. Carmela Patrias, *The Kanadai Magyar Ujsag and the Politics of the Hungarian Canadian Elite* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1978), pp. 38f.

9. The Monsignor Pál Sántha's roots were in the north-eastern provinces. Ferenc Hoffmann, one of the most respected United Church ministers in Saskatchewan, had taught before the war at an agricultural institute in Kassa (today, Kosice in Czechoslovakia). Sister Mary Schwartz, who later became the leading figure in the Hungarian Sisters of Social Service order, came from the Burgenland, a part of Hungary that was divided between that country and Austria as a result of the peace settlement.
10. Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 169-71.
11. N.F. Dreisziger (ed.) *Hungary and the Second World War* (Toronto: Hungarian Studies Review, 1983), see especially the introduction to part I, and the papers by Francis Wagner, Thomas Sakmyster and Dreisziger.
12. Minutes of the meeting of the War Cabinet Committee, 29 October 1941. W.L.M. King Papers, J series, Vol. 424. Public Archives of Canada.
13. Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet, 27 November 1941. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.* See also the memorandum by Norman Robertson, 27 November 1941, *Ibid.*, J series, Vol. 274. On Robertson's sympathies toward the Finns see also the note by him of 22 June 1941, *ibid.*
15. King's statements on the matter of war with Hungary are recorded in the minutes of the Cabinet and War Cabinet Committee cited in the preceding footnotes.
16. Their extensive correspondence is available to researchers in the Kirkconnell collection housed in the archives of Acadia University. A less extensive record is preserved in the Tracy Philipps collection in the Public Archives of Canada. I am indebted to the archivists in charge of these two collections for permitting and facilitating my research in them during 1984 and 1985.
17. Information from Mrs. Alexander Andras, the former Mrs. Eisner. See also Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 171f. Béla Eisner died not long after the war.
18. Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 172ff.
19. The papers of the late Béla Eisner are at the present in my possession. A copy of his report on his mission can be found in the central library of the Multicultural Directorate of Canada in Hull, Quebec.
20. Dreisziger, *Struggle*, p. 176.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 176-79. Dreisziger, "In Search of...", pp. 88f.
22. Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 179f.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 180.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 181.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 182f.

#### Notes to Chapter 3: The Post-War Era.

1. On this subject see Bennett Kovrig, *Communism in Hungary: From Kun to Kadar* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1979), Part Three: "Return to Power". For a brief summary of Kovrig's views see his chapter in Dreisziger, *Struggle*, especially pp. 19f.
2. Paul Bódy, "Emigration from Hungary, 1880-1956," in Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 74f. Also, Papp, *Hungarians in Ontario*, pp. 45-48.
3. Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 195f.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 196.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 198f.
6. On this subject see *ibid.*, pp. 197-200 *in passim*, and Papp, *Hungarians in Ontario*, pp. 48f.
7. Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 200-02.
8. See our journal's fall, 1976 special issue: *The Hungarian Revolution: Twenty Years Later*, especially the paper by Peter Gostony. Also, Béla Kiraly *et al.* (eds.) *The First War between Socialist States: The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and its Impact* (New York:

- Social Science Monographs, Brooklyn College Press, 1984). This work contains an extensive bibliography of the subject (pp. 551-93.)
9. N.F. Dreisziger, "The Impact of the Revolution on Hungarians Abroad: The Case of the Hungarians of Canada," in Kiraly, *The Hungarian*, pp. 411-25. Papp, *Hungarians in Ontario*, pp. 67-70.
  10. Canadian government policies on the question of refugee admission are described in Gerald S. Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunism?* (Montreal: McGill Queen's Press, 1977), pp. 190-96.
  11. *Ibid.*, p. 198.
  12. *Ibid.*, pp. 199f.
  13. *Ibid.*, pp. 200f.
  14. *Ibid.*, p. 202.
  15. Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 204f.
  16. *Ibid.*, pp. 206f. Papp, *Hungarians in Ontario*, pp. 63-70.
  17. Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, p. 203.
  18. B.L. Vigod, *The Jews in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1984), p. 6.
  19. Miklós Szántó, "Kivándorlás, emigráció, emigrációs politika" (Emigration, The Emigration, emigrant Politics), *Társadalmi Szemle* (Budapest), Vol. 37, No. 5, p. 95.
  20. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
  21. L. Adamovich and Oscar Sziklai, *Foresters in Exile: The Sopron Forestry School in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1970). Dreisziger, *Struggle*, p. 208.
  22. The following is based mainly on Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 208-10.
  23. *Ibid.*, pp. 210-13.
  24. George Bisztray, "The Hungarian Canadian Press," in Papp, *Hungarians in Ontario*, pp. 54-58.
  25. The following paragraphs constitute a slightly revised version of a short article prepared for a future issue of *Polyphony*. They are based on reading many issues of the papers mentioned and an interview with Kálmán Balint's widow.
  26. For brief surveys of this topic see Bisztray, *cit.*, and Dreisziger, *Struggle*, pp. 202f and 212.

#### Notes to Chapter 4: Contributions to Ontario's Culture.

1. See Pál Rékai, "A torontói Central Hospital őszinte története." (The frank history of Toronto's Central Hospital), in *Krónika* 8:7-8 (summer 1982), pp. 12-15. Also, *The Spark* 13:3 (fall, 1982), *in passim*. Further details were provided to me by Dr. Rékai (31 Dec. 1985), for which I am grateful.
2. In the process of converting the building to a small hospital, three entrepreneurs helped the Rékai's by providing free services or goods, or supplying equipment on the condition that it be paid for when and if the hospital would start turning a profit. Two of these helpers were Hungarians, a third was an official of a prominent medical supply company.
3. Rékai, "A torontói, ..." pp. 5f.
4. Information from Dr. Rékai.
5. The hospital will soon begin the construction of a nursing home adjacent to the hospital which will help to fill another void in multilingual health care in Ontario. The Central Nursing Home, moreover, will be the first hospital-affiliated non-profit nursing home in the city of Toronto, and is intended to serve as a model for nursing homes located in ethnic areas from coast to coast. (Information from Dr. Paul Rékai.)
6. Attempts to promote knowledge of Hungary in North America are among the subjects treated in Stevan Bela Vardy, "Hungarian Studies at American and Canadian Universities," *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies* 2:2 (fall 1975), 91-121.

7. The subject of the Hungarian Chair's origin is a controversial one for most Hungarian Canadians. As a result, unbiased accounts of it are few. This particular account is based on my own recollection of events and an article in *Nyugati Magyarság* (Hungarians of the West), Aug. 1983, pp. 6-7. I am also indebted to Professor George Biztray for his comments on an earlier draft of this part of this volume.
8. Much private correspondence concerning the campaign to establish a permanent chair of Hungarian studies is in my possession.
9. What follows is a story of my close association with Harcsár throughout the 1970s.
10. This story of the Ensemble is based mainly on information obtained from its current Artistic Director, Mr. Kálmán Dreisziger Jr. A somewhat briefer history is printed in the 25th Anniversary Concert booklet (Toronto: Kodaly Ensemble, 1985).
11. The following is based in part on an as yet unpublished paper by Steven Satory of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, "*Táncház*: Improvisatory folk dancing and string playing in Toronto's Hungarian community", given at the inaugural conference of the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada, in June 1985, in Montreal.

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Steven Bela Vardy, "Hungarian Studies at American and Canadian Universities," *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies* Vol. 2, No. 2 (fall 1975). Pp. 91–121.

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