

Preface

Over the decades our journal has presented several special volumes devoted partly or exclusively to Hungarian-American contacts and/or Hungarians in North America. This little volume is still another special issue in this series. It offers three articles and two review articles dealing with the subject of Hungarians in the United States — as well as a documentary article dealing with Hungarians in Canada.

While the mass migration of Hungarians to North America did not start until the last decades of the 19th century, individuals or small groups from Hungary have been coming to this continent, mainly as visitors or sojourners, ever since North America's colonial days. One of these early visitors was Ágoston Haraszthy who, after a visit to the United States in the early 1840s, returned to settle there, in particular in the newly developing region of the West Coast. He is perhaps the most famous of the early Hungarian settlers of California. His achievements — real and invented — are the subject of the first paper in our collection of essays.

The most famous Hungarian who visited the United States in the 19th century was Lajos Kossuth the leader of the Hungarian War of Independence against the House of Habsburg in 1848-1849. Although he was received with great enthusiasm in the end he left America as a disappointed man who achieved none of his expectations. He had no ambition to settle in any part of North America but a few members of his extended family did. Their lives and adventures are the subject of the second paper in our special volume.

In the last decades of the 19th century began the immigration of large masses of ordinary citizens from Hungary to North America, at first mainly to the United States. The pre-1914 wave of these immigrants was by the largest but another wave came in the aftermath of the Second World War and still another arrived after the 1956 anti-Soviet revolution in Hungary. One of the largest communities of Hungarian immigrants to emerge as a result of these migrations was that of Cleveland, Ohio. In that city the Hungarian cultural presence continues to our days. Its survival is the subject of the third of our studies presented in our special issue.

Canada, unlike the United States, experienced four streams of Hungarian immigrations. In the USA these streams were the pre-1914 one, and the two post-1945 ones. Canada had a large influx of Hungarians in the second

half of the 1920s as well, when the so-called “Quota Laws” kept Hungarians from settling in the US. The newcomers of the 1920s at first settled in the Canadian West, but with the beginning of the Great Depression they began migrating to parts of Canada that were not hit as hard — or not hit as early — by the economic recession. One of these places was the city of Montreal where the full force of economic hard times was felt a little later than it was experienced in the Canadian West. In the fourth paper of our volume a document is presented that offers new insights into the lives of these immigrant trans-migrants in particular in Montreal of the early 1930s.

These papers are followed by two review articles. One of these deals with a book that documents Hungarian participants of the American Civil War and the other reviews a monograph that describes the “American career” of a radical leftist immigrant from Hungary.

While our present volume spans sixteen decades and deals with various subjects it still has an over-arching theme: the Hungarian presence in North America. Hopefully in the fifth decade of the life of our journal we will be able to re-visit this theme with still other special issues or volumes dealing with Hungarians on this continent or contacts between the US and/or Canada on the one hand and Hungary on the other.

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BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTES

Our most recent special issue dealing with Hungarians in North America is the 2011 volume of our journal. It is entitled *Hungary and North America: Links and Interactions, 1850-2010* and it contains articles by István Kornél Vida, Susan Glanz, Thomas Sakmyster, Myron Momryk, Katalin Pintz and Judith Galántha Hermann. In 2003 and 2004 we published two special volumes entitled *The United States and Hungary in the Twentieth Century Part I* and *Part II* (volumes 30 and 31 respectively). The 2003 volume contained articles by Tibor Frank, Judith Szapor, Kenneth McRobbie and others, while the 2004 volume featured papers by Tibor Glant, Gergely Romsics, Kálmán Dreisziger, Stephen Beszedits and others. The combined bulk of these three volumes was almost 500 pages. For earlier special volumes of our journal — as well as individual articles — dealing with similar themes see the index published in volume 26 (Spring-Fall, 1999, pp. 175-195) of the journal.