

The Hungarians in Canada



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Hungarians, like most other ethnic groups in Canada, have tried to legitimize their status in their adoptive land by pointing to their long Canadian lineage. They speculate that a Hungarian may have been a member of Leif Ericson's expedition to Vineland around 1000, and point with pride to the Hungarian poet, Stephen Parmenius of Buda, who accompanied Sir Humphrey Gilbert on his voyage to Newfoundland in 1583. Significant migration from Hungary to Canada, however, did not begin until the late nineteenth century, when the wave of transatlantic migration that began in northwestern Europe earlier in the century, reached eastern Europe.

Located in the central Danubian basin, Hungary then formed part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Hungary's population was multiethnic: Hungarians, or Magyars, comprised only about half the population, the remainder was made up of Rumanians, Germans, Slovaks, Serbs, Ruthenians and Croats. The country's inhabitants were also divided along religious lines. About 60% of them were Catholics – a majority of the Roman rite and a substantial minority of Greek Catholics. The Protestants, who comprised about a quarter of the population, were divided into Calvinists, the largest group, Lutherans, and small groups of Unitarians and Baptists. The Jews, about 5% of the population, considered themselves Hungarian, and were classified that way in the census, but exclusivist Hungarian nationalists recognized only Christians as genuine Hungarians.

I. The First Wave, 1885-1918

Between 1870 and 1913 about two million people from Hungary crossed the Atlantic ocean. Their ranks included almost every occupational group, but the largest category by far were from the agricultural sector, mostly landless farm hands and day labourers. As the dominance of agriculturalists among those departing suggests, the major reason for emigration were the chronic problems of Hungarian agriculture.

Between the mid-nineteenth century and the outbreak of the First World War, the population of Hungary increased by 54.5 per cent. Largely because of the inequitable pattern of land tenure, the agrarian sector, which on the eve of the war still employed more than half of the nation's labour, was incapable of absorbing this rapidly increasing population. More than half of the land under cultivation was made up of large and medium sized estates, which remained outside the reach of the peasantry. Accordingly, the burden of the growing populace fell on less than half of the agricultural land – the area made up of peasant holdings. Under the combined pressure of an expanding population and a system of partible inheritance, these holdings were increasingly subdivided, often becoming within two generations too small to support a family.

Because of these unfavourable conditions, not only landless labourers but even peasants with small holdings were forced to work for others. Yet employment opportunities within the agrarian sector were limited. Not only did the seasonal nature of agriculture make underemployment endemic, but precisely at the time of the upsurge in the ranks of agricultural workers, increased mechanization on large estates decreased the need for rural labour. Having a large surplus of workers at their disposal, landowners were able to dictate the terms of employment. They reduced wages, and in some instances expected workers to perform some tasks without payment. To hold a hoeing contract, for example, required working in the landlord's vineyard for nothing. Employers could easily replace those who protested with more pliable labourers.

Since the agrarian sector could not accommodate them, large numbers of agriculturalists sought work in the industrial and service

sectors, but opportunities there were also limited. Despite rapid growth in the decades before the First World War, the industrial sector remained altogether too small to absorb the surplus of rural workers. The number of emigrants from Hungary during the forty years before 1914 was four times as large as the total number of industrial workers within the country. Furthermore, rural labourers lacked the skills necessary for many jobs in heavy industry, which comprised a significant portion of the nation's industrial sector. Ironically, therefore, even while there were large numbers of unemployed and underemployed in Hungary, skilled people were coming from the more industrialized regions of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Brickworks, food processing plants, distilleries, and lumber mills, which required unskilled labour, offered only seasonal or temporary employment. Jobs in these industries, as well as in public works projects and domestic service, were generally badly paid.

While problems of unemployment and underemployment beset Hungary, North American employers and immigration agents were turning to eastern and southern Europe in search of immigrants. As a result of large scale emigration earlier in the century and a second wave of domestic industrialization at the century's end, transatlantic migration from traditional northwestern European sources began to subside. Since the American agricultural frontier was closing by the end of the century, the Canadian West became the main destination of rural settlers. But both countries required large numbers of immigrant labourers to sustain industrial and urban growth occasioned by the rise of mass production.

Precisely because transatlantic migration was so well established by the time Hungarians joined the flow, news of prospects in America spread rapidly even to the most remote villagers in Hungary. Literature promoting emigration was widely disseminated and dozens of agents representing competing companies travelled through the countryside to recruit migrants. Undoubtedly the most influential sources of information about America, however, were the letters and remittances sent by migrants to their friends and relatives at home, and the accounts of those who returned from across the ocean. In some villages these letters, recounting the possibility of earning fabulously high wages in America, were read ceremoniously in the presence of the assembled villagers, while the photographs that

accompanied them, depicting the writers dressed in fine suits, passed from hand to hand. Such pictures, the lands and machinery purchased and the homes built with remittances, combined to convince Hungarians of the opportunities in America.

Yet prospective migrants could have had few illusions about “easy money” in America. Remigrants, out of bitterness or bravado, emphasized how difficult and dangerous was the work performed there by immigrant labourers, and the emphasis on loneliness, the crushing burden of work, low wages, and industrial accidents in folk-songs from every part of Hungary suggests that such tales penetrated the popular imagination. Each village in the regions of emigration also harboured victims of transatlantic migration: remigrants maimed by industrial accidents, others who returned empty handed; the broken families of men who deserted their wives and children, and of wives who committed adultery while their husbands were in America. Villagers also knew of migrants ruined abroad by drink and gambling.

That such large numbers of Hungarians decided to cross the Ocean despite knowledge of the dangers inherent in transatlantic migration suggests that in their world of limited opportunities, working in America was widely seen as the only way to improve one’s lot. The majority of those who embarked on this journey were sojourners: roughly $\frac{2}{3}$ were young men under the age of 50, who hoped to return to their native villages after a few years abroad and to invest their savings in land there. That most of them viewed land-acquisition as the only way to better their lives reflected the deep gulf that separated Hungarian rural from urban society. Men and women from other social groups either viewed the peasantry with disdain, automatically adding the adjective “stinking” to the noun “peasant”, or, gingerly ignoring the misery of most agriculturalists, romanticized the peasants as the pure, uncorrupted carriers of the nation’s spirit. Neither perception had fostered much concern for improving the condition of the rural poor, who were themselves denied a political voice by a narrow franchise and minimal education.

Given that they wanted to earn money quickly, not surprisingly the mature economy of the United States attracted most Hungarian migrants. Migration to Canada began as an off-shoot of mass migration to the United States. Indeed, the first Hungarian settlers to the

Canadian west arrived from the Pennsylvania coal fields, in Hun's Valley near Minnedosa, Manitoba, in 1885, and in Kaposvar, near Whitewood, in the district of Assiniboia, North-West Territories, in 1886. Their leader, Count Paul Esterhazy, who claimed descent from one of Hungary's most illustrious aristocratic families, was in the employ of the Canadian government. The intervention of immigration agents such as Esterhazy was required at this time to recruit settlers in Europe and the United States, because Canada generally competed unsuccessfully with the United States for immigrant settlers. Esterhazy's Hungarians settlers, regarded as well-suited for colonizing prairie lands, received financial aid from the Canadian Pacific Railway. They were thus able to build homes and purchase tools and animals right away. Despite this assistance, however, severe cold and prairie fires nearly defeated this first group of pioneers. Many of them left the land to work in coalmines near Medicine Hat or to return to the United States. Kaposvar was saved only by the arrival of new settlers directly from Hungary. Once the railway reached it in 1903, the settlement assumed the name of its founder, Esterhazy.

The Reverend János Kovács, founder of the first Hungarian Reformed Church of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, also directed Hungarian migrants from the United States to Canada. Convinced that agricultural colonization in Canada offered a healthy alternative to the difficult lives of immigrant labourers in urban, industrial America, Kovács led some of his parishioners in the mid-1890s to found Otthon, in the district of Assiniboia.

News of Kaposvar and Otthon attracted more immigrants from the US and Hungary. Thousands of copies of the 1902 pamphlet *The Hungarian Colony of Esterhazy, Assiniboia, North-West Territories, Canada*, compiled by Esterhazy and containing testimonials of successful settlers, were disseminated in the United States and Hungary. Reverend Kovács published articles about Otthon in Hungarian-American newspapers. Letters from the colonists as well as occasional return visits to their native villages were even more effective, however, in spreading news of free homesteads in Canada.

Those who responded to this news, unlike most migrants from Hungary, came with the intention of settling in Canada, and hence many of them sold their lands and belongings in Hungary before

embarking. Religion and local ties from Hungary were crucial in determining where Hungarians settled. The early settlers of Bekevar, for example, came, starting in 1902, from villages on the banks of the Tisza river in Bereg and Szabolcs counties, and most of them were Protestant. Most settlers around Kaposvar were Roman Catholic. Eagerness to be near other Hungarian Roman Catholics explains why many of these newcomers settled near Stockholm, north-west of Kaposvar, despite being informed that lands there were unsuitable for wheat farming. By World War I there were half a dozen Hungarian colonies in western Canada, mostly in Saskatchewan. Hungarians also took up lands in ethnically mixed areas, where their numbers were insufficient to influence community development.

Migration between the United States and Canada by transient labourers also contributed to the growth of Hungarian-Canadian communities. The international boundary meant little to sojourners intent only on earning money fast so they could return to Hungary with savings. They did not hesitate to abandon American mines and factories in favour of what promised to be steadier or better-paid jobs on railway, road and other construction projects, in mines on Cape Breton Island, in Alberta and B.C., or in factories in southern Ontario. While many of these sojourners eventually returned to the United States and to Hungary, others stayed, and gradually small Hungarian communities emerged throughout Canada.

It is impossible to provide an accurate statistical overview of Hungarian settlement in Canada in 1914, when the outbreak of World War I brought migration from Hungary to a halt. Census data prior to the war were based on place of birth rather than ethnicity, and consequently figures of immigration from Hungary included Germans, Slovaks and other minorities, as well as Magyars. A large number of itinerant labourers, moreover, probably eluded census takers. But figures from the 1920 census, compiled by "racial", or what we would describe today as ethnic, origin provide an idea of the size and patterns of this first wave of immigrants. By 1920 there were 13,181 Hungarians in Canada. Most of them were concentrated in the prairie provinces, especially in Saskatchewan, but Ontario also had Hungarian communities, and there were small nuclei of Hungarians in B.C. and Nova Scotia as well. Rural inhabitants outnumbered urban dwellers among them, but there were notable Hungarian

colonies in Winnipeg, Regina, Brantford, Welland and Hamilton. The balanced gender distribution and the presence of children among these immigrants suggests that they were settlers rather than sojourners.

Unfortunately, we know very little about the communities they established. Only the oldest rural colonies have been studied extensively. We do know that churches were among the first institutions they established. The first to minister to their spiritual needs were clerics from the United States. Ironically, their reasons for embarking on missionary journeys to Canada and for drawing the attention of Canadian Church authorities to the presence of Hungarian immigrants within their jurisdictions, were in some ways antithetical to the establishment of Hungarian communities in Canada. Some of these clerics shared the concerns of the Hungarian government that Hungarians would be outnumbered by ethnic minorities and lose their hegemony at home. Consequently, they hoped to ensure the return of the migrants to Hungary by preventing their assimilation in North America. More importantly, however, these clerics feared losing their coreligionists to rival churches, since Hungarians belonged to a number of Christian denominations. Only in western Canada, however, did Canadian Churches deem the number of Hungarians sufficient to establish national parishes among them. The Presbyterian Church brought Ministers from Hungary to work in Hungarian Protestant congregations in Winnipeg (est. 1905) and in Bekevar (est. 1907), while by 1911 there were three Hungarian Roman Catholic priests in western Canada, although with the exception of Esterhazy-Kaposvar, Hungarian Roman Catholic immigrants were too poor and disorganized to maintain independent parishes prior to World War I.

More practical considerations motivated the establishment of mutual aid societies, the other principal type of organization formed by Hungarians in this early period. The provision of financial aid for members and their families in case of illness or death was of great importance before the introduction of state-run social insurance schemes. Sick benefit and funeral societies were established in Lethbridge (1901), Winnipeg (1904), Hamilton (1907), and Wakaw (1908). Since poor agriculturalists were not familiar with such organizations, having been excluded from associational life in Hungary by their poverty and lack of education, it is likely that the impetus for their establishment came from skilled workers and migrants who

became familiar with voluntary organizations in the United States. Complaints about “strong socialist elements” among Hungarian miners in Lethbridge in the late nineteenth century suggest that some of these immigrant labourers drew on political radicalism in their attempts to improve their lot in Canada through collective action.

In addition to providing social security such organizations were also frequently committed to the preservation of Hungarian culture. Language maintenance was also an important function of the two Hungarian-language newspapers, *Kanadai Magyarság* and *Canadai Magyar Farmer*, that appeared in western Canada before World War I. The immigrant group proved to be too small and fragmented, however, to sustain nation-wide Hungarian-Canadian organizations. The Canadian Hungarian Association (established 1908) and the Canadian Hungarian Fraternal Association (established 1910), both failed.

Interestingly, although Hungarian immigrants established schools in areas where they constituted the majority of ratepayers, they did not necessarily view public schools as agencies of ethnic preservation. Even in schools bearing Hungarian names, such as the Kossuth School in Bekevar, English was the language of instruction. Only two bilingual, Hungarian-English schools were established, in Wakaw and Howell, in present-day Saskatchewan. The shortage of qualified Hungarian teachers was only partly responsible for this. Immigrant parents hired Anglo-Canadian teachers because they wanted to ensure that their children learned English properly.

The outbreak of World War I disrupted the development of Hungarian-Canadian communities. It brought immigration from Hungary to a halt, and revealed that despite their attempts at integration, Hungarian immigrants were far from fully accepted in their new land. As subjects of Austria-Hungary, non-naturalized Hungarians were declared enemy aliens and instructed to report to local authorities. Some were even placed in internment camps. But even naturalized Hungarian-Canadians were viewed with suspicion by their neighbours, few of whom protested when, along with other immigrants who arrived from enemy countries after 1902, Hungarians were disenfranchised in 1917. The intensification of nativism during the war led to the closing of some Hungarian-Canadian associations and to the departure of some community leaders to the still-neutral

United States. Community life was revitalized only by the arrival of new immigrants in the 1920s.

II. The Second Wave: 1918-1945

After the war thousands of Hungarians eagerly awaited the reopening of Canada's gates to immigrants. When the outbreak of war had abruptly cut it off, emigration from Hungary had not yet reached what scholars describe as the "regression stage": neither the numbers who left for America, nor the remittances that they sent home, sufficed to eliminate compelling reasons for transatlantic migration. But emigration during the interwar years was not simply a resurgence of prewar migration. The war itself, the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the ensuing struggle over territory between Hungary and its neighbours, and the Treaty of Trianon, the punitive peace settlement imposed on Hungary on 4 June 1920, created new causes for emigration by aggravating domestic economic problems and creating political upheaval.

Of the political developments in Hungary following the war, three were of the greatest significance for Hungarians in Canada and elsewhere outside Hungary: the reign of the Hungarian Soviet Republic between March 21 and August 1, 1919; the punitive terms of the Treaty of Trianon; and the conservative and irredentist character of Admiral Nicholas Horthy's reign. The Soviet Republic's radical educational, cultural and social welfare reforms garnered it only minority support, mostly among urban workers and intellectuals. Many propertied people and peasants, by contrast, were alienated by the nationalization of industry, large estates, banks, transportation and rental housing, the forced requisitioning, the assault on religion and the failure to distribute land to the landless. The excessive zeal with which the communists attempted to impose unpopular policies led many Hungarians to view their brief reign as the period of Red Terror. It was followed by the White Terror, during which counter-revolutionaries executed about five thousands people and interned tens of thousands more. Their victims, not just radicals but also their liberal allies, included a disproportionate number of Jews. The traditionally anti-semitic Hungarian Right rationalized its latest attacks on

the Jews by emphasizing their prominence among the Soviet Republic's leaders. In the wake of the White Terror, thousands of radicals fled Hungary, some of them to become the new leaders of Hungarian radicals abroad.

Fear of communism combined with outrage at the Treaty of Trianon to legitimize the conservative nationalism of the Horthy regime among Hungarians at home and abroad. Throughout the interwar period, the loss under the Treaty's terms of approximately two-thirds of Hungary's pre-war territory and three-fifths of its pre-war population to neighbouring Romania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, overshadowed older causes of the country's social and economic problems such as inequitable land distribution. Irredentism, the desire to regain these lost territories, formed the focus of Hungarian interwar nationalism.

Although most prospective emigrants to Canada, who belonged to the lowest strata of Hungarian rural society, were not engaged in the ideological battles between left and right, the conservatism of the Horthy regime had significant implications for them. In the absence of meaningful land reform, their economic conditions grew ever more precarious. While the numbers of those forced to seek wage labour grew, employment opportunities in agriculture and in other sectors of the economy actually declined. Not surprisingly, the proportion of agriculturalists, most of them landless labourers, among interwar emigrants, increased to over 80 per cent. Agriculturalists predominated among ethnic Hungarians who came to Canada from Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia as well. The ranks of the immigrants also included some liberal professionals, merchants, craftsmen and industrial workers. The interwar years were especially difficult for civil servants, as public employees who lost their jobs when Hungarian rule ended in Slovakia, Transylvania and Northern Yugoslavia, competed for scarce public service positions in Hungary. Like many of their pre-war counterparts, interwar migrants were sojourners – men of prime working age far outnumbered women and children among them.

Canada became the chief, albeit reluctant, host to these migrants following the imposition of strict quotas on immigration by the United States. Most of the approximately 30,000 Hungarians who

came to Canada between the two world wars entered the country under the terms of the Railway Agreement, which placed Canada's two transcontinental railway companies in charge of recruiting immigrants in central and eastern Europe. They were supposedly recruiting agriculturalists to settle on the land or work on farms, especially in western Canada. As railway officials and many Canadian employers well knew, however, Canadian agriculture was incapable of absorbing these immigrants. By the interwar years, most of the good homestead lands were settled and most agricultural work was seasonal. Canada needed labourers from eastern and southern Europe – classified as “non-preferred” immigrants to distinguish them from “preferred” British and northern Europeans – to take seasonal jobs not only in agriculture, but also in construction, mining and lumbering. Native-born Canadians and “preferred” immigrants spurned these jobs because they were temporary, badly paid, isolated and dangerous. Hungarian women were brought to Canada under the Railway Agreement to work as domestics. Native-born, white women spurned paid domestic labour not only because it was poorly paid and entailed long hours and a lack of privacy, but also because they saw it as servile.

Only a few new Hungarian colonies were founded after World War I, and few new immigrants settled on the land in previously established ones. Most new immigrants obtained seasonal employment in agriculture, and once the agricultural season ended, joined the ranks of thousands of other immigrant workers who criss-crossed the country, from the mines of Nova Scotia to the lumber mills of British Columbia, in search of employment. Discrimination, as well as their unfamiliarity with industrial work and inability to speak English, kept most of them in temporary, dead-end jobs, for eastern and southern European workers were seen as racially inferior to “white” workers, and thus suited only for the lowliest jobs. The costs of travelling between jobs and frequent interludes without work – described by the immigrants as “forced vagabondage” – fell entirely on their shoulders. This was especially agonizing for migrants intent on saving money so that they could return to Hungary.

Increasingly they gravitated to central Canada, where expanding industries held out the prospect of more secure employment. Southern Ontario, where fruit, tobacco and other farms surrounded

industrial centres, offering seasonal agricultural work in case of layoffs from local factories, attracted many of the immigrants. By the 1930s sizeable Hungarian communities emerged in Hamilton, Toronto, Welland, Windsor and Montreal and in the surrounding rural areas. By 1941 Hungarians in central Canada outnumbered those in the prairie provinces.

Once it became clear that the accumulation of savings would take longer than Hungarian sojourners had anticipated, some wives, children, and fiancées joined them in Canada. Besides satisfying emotional needs, the establishment or reunification of families made economic sense as well. Despite high unemployment during the Depression, women and adolescents became secondary, at times even primary wage-earners. The running of boarding houses by immigrant women was an especially important source of livelihood for their families. In urban areas some women and adolescents found employment in low-wage sectors of manufacturing such as textiles, clothing and food processing. More commonly they worked as domestics or took seasonal jobs in agriculture.

In larger urban centres, the growth in the numbers and concentration of Hungarian immigrants led to the establishment of such businesses as grocery stores, restaurants, steamship agencies, and newspapers, catering specifically to their needs. These enterprises provided livelihood to the handful of educated people among the immigrants, as well as opening avenues of upward mobility to working-class immigrants. Some educated Hungarians took the opportunity offered by Canadian Protestant churches seeking Hungarian-speaking missionaries to retrain as clergy.

The clergy, business people, liberal professionals, skilled workers, and some of the immigrants who came to Canada after having spent some years in the US, formed the group's elite. They were distinguished from the majority of Hungarian immigrants by their education, familiarity with English, and greater experience with politics and associational life. Precisely because most of the immigrants had been excluded from associational life in Hungary by their poverty and limited education, the foundations of Hungarian-Canadian associations were laid and their ideological substance fashioned by members of the elite.

Newly established or revitalized immigrant churches, mutual aid societies, and social clubs attempted to meet the immigrants economic, social and cultural needs by offering sick and funeral benefits, organizing cultural and recreational events and providing educational opportunities. A number of Hungarian-language newspapers also appeared during these years, the most successful being the *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, which began publication in Winnipeg in 1924, and the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, first published in Hamilton in 1929, and later in Toronto. Immigrant businesses and organizations together lent a measure of coherence and stability to Hungarian communities in Canada. Yet the sense of community among the immigrants should not be overstated. The most significant feature of community life among Hungarians during the interwar years was its division into two opposing camps.

Differences among members of the community's elite help to explain its segmentation. A few immigrant leaders explained the predicament of Hungarian immigrants from a socialist or communist perspective. They blamed both the conservative Horthy regime, which had forced Hungarians to emigrate by perpetuating class inequalities, and the capitalist system in Canada, which they held responsible for the exploitation of immigrant workers. Consequently, they believed that only the radical reorganization of the social and economic order in Hungary and Canada under the leadership of the Communist Party would ameliorate the condition of immigrant workers. Radical leaders attempted to rally immigrant workers behind the Communist Party by recruiting them into communist-led unions and organizations.

Many more members of the group's elite, however, were first and foremost patriotic Hungarians, concerned above all with the injustice of their homeland's dismemberment by the Treaty of Trianon. Since they blamed the Treaty for social and economic problems in their homeland, including forced migration of thousands of Hungarians to Canada, the desire for its revision influenced all their plans. They gave uncritical support to the Horthy regime chiefly because of its commitment to revising the Treaty, and believed the main task of Hungarians abroad to be to obtain international support for regaining the territories Hungary lost. The radicals were undermining the patriots' goals. Their anti-clericalism and

insistence on class antagonism challenged national unity, and their internationalism denied Hungary's irredentist claims. Their radicalism and anti-clericalism, moreover, threatened international support for Hungary's claim by discrediting all Hungarians in the eyes of Canadians. According to patriotic leaders accommodation to prevailing conditions was the appropriate way to adapt in Canada. Their revisionism diverted their attention from the inequities of the situation of their compatriots in Canada.

Patriots and radicals alike relied on activities within ethnic organizations and on the ethnic press to transmit their views to rank and file immigrants. Lectures, discussions, theatrical performances, poetry recitals and singing were all vehicles through which conflicting ideas of what it meant to be Hungarian in Canada took hold within the immigrant group.

The initiatives of the immigrant elite, however, do not by themselves explain the division of the immigrant group into two antagonistic camps. The involvement of three outside forces, the Hungarian government, the Communist Party and Canadian church authorities contributed to the group's polarization.

The Hungarian government became directly involved with Hungarian immigrants in Canada in the early 1920s, when Canada became the chief destination of migrants from Hungary. The main motive behind this involvement was the desire to mobilize Hungarians abroad to influence international opinion in favour of revising the Treaty of Trianon. Aware of the intentions of most Hungarian emigrants to return to Hungary, Hungarian officials were also intent on discrediting the radicalism among them. Indeed, they were so concerned about the politics of Hungarians abroad that they monitored the activities of known radicals among them through informers, intercepted their letters to Hungary, and denounced them to Canadian authorities.

In its efforts to rally Hungarians abroad behind its partisan objectives the Hungarian government relied on three main avenues: it established an Immigrant Aid Bureau in Winnipeg to help Hungarian immigrants in their dealings with Hungarian authorities and the host society; it subsidized the *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, the

most widely read newspaper among Hungarian immigrants in Canada; and it supplied patriotic organizations in Canada with novels, plays, poetry books, books on Hungarian history and geography, readers for children, sheet music, embroidery books, dance manuals, periodicals, flags, posters, maps and even films. These materials were carefully selected with a view to convey the Horthy regime's irredentism and its conservative, Christian-nationalist ideology to the immigrants. Because the associations that received cultural materials from Hungary depended on them for recreational reading, entertainment and the education of their children in Hungarian, this was a very effective way to influence the development of a Hungarian identity in Canada.

The chief agents of radicalization within the immigrant group were Communist Party activists from the United States. Like Hungarian government officials, by the mid-1920s Hungarian communist leaders realized that Canada had become the chief destination of Hungarian emigrants, and they saw a unique opportunity for gaining adherents among them. The Party sent some of its highest-ranking and most capable Hungarian activists, men who had fled to the U.S. following the defeat of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, to organize immigrants in Canada. They edited the Hungarian-Canadian communist paper *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, acted as intermediaries between the Hungarian movement and the Central Committee of the Canadian Communist Party, and laid the foundations for a network of mutual aid and cultural clubs.

Purposeful politicization, through agitational and propaganda techniques developed by the Communist Party internationally to instill its ideology among the masses, characterized all activities within these organizations. In keeping with the communist practice of "agitprop", using drama to arouse popular support for communist ideology, for example, amateur theatre performances in the radical camp were seen as weapons in the class struggle. The "worker correspondents" on whom the *Munkás* relied for news from various Hungarian Canadian settlements, were not random contributors, but the members of groups organized within workers' clubs for the purpose of transmitting communist ideology to ordinary immigrants through teaching them to write for publication.

Perhaps the clearest example of the pervasiveness of communist efforts to instill class consciousness among Hungarian immigrants was the “proletarian funeral”, during which a Communist Party activist replaced the priest by the grave and delivered the funeral oration. This unintentional parody of church ritual was used to drive home with unparalleled intensity the central tenets of communism. This ceremony also helps to explain why the communist campaign to radicalize the immigrants was all-encompassing. Even if by the interwar years Hungarian peasants were no longer all deeply religious, the traditional rites that marked the most important occasions in their lives – birth, marriages, and deaths – still tied them to the church, generally a conservative, anti-communist force among the immigrants. An all-out campaign was necessary to convince the immigrants to abandon such rituals, symbols and other sources of traditional authority.

The United, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and to a lesser extent the Baptist and Lutheran, Churches played an important role in organizational development among Hungarian immigrants by importing or educating Hungarian-speaking clerics to work among them, and by paying the salaries of these men, who became influential leaders within the group. They frequently also provided or helped to pay for facilities that served not only as religious but also as worldly community centres. Competition among Canadian churches for adherents among the immigrants was one reason for their involvement in community life. They also wanted to hasten the immigrants’ assimilation. Ironically, by providing a relatively solid base for community life, the churches contributed greatly to the emergence of a distinct Hungarian identity in Canada. They also reinforced ideological divisions among the immigrants, for Canadian church authorities, whose goals were threatened by the secularism and anti-clericalism of the radicals, shared the anti-Communism of the patriotic leaders.

No matter how assiduously leading figures within the immigrant group and the representatives of outside forces tried to disseminate conflicting views of what it meant to be Hungarian in Canada, they could not have succeeded in infusing group consciousness with political content had their ideologies, and the institutions they established and supported, not responded to the needs of immigrants. Immigrant associations were such effective agencies for the transmission of

political ideologies because they satisfied important economic, social and psychological needs.

Amidst the exceptional hardship and deprivation that prevailed among immigrant workers during the interwar years, the modest benefits offered by mutual aid societies, for instance, were of tremendous economic importance. Building and maintaining Hungarian-Canadian associations, and participating in social and cultural activities within them, moreover, allowed Hungarian men and women who encountered prejudice and discrimination in Canada to reassert their humanity and dignity. In patriotic associations the immigrants could derive comfort from traditional Hungarian symbols and rituals and from participating in efforts to undo the injustice inflicted on their homeland by pushing for the revision of the Treaty of Trianon. Communist-led organizations offered immigrants a radical new diagnosis of their plight in Hungary and Canada and hope for a better future through radical social and economic change. Communist-led unions made inroads among Hungarians in large part because mainstream unions were frequently hostile to immigrant workers.

The importance of these associations and ideologies grew during the Great Depression. As unemployment spread, many employers gave preference to native-born or naturalized Canadians. Immigrants, including thousands of Hungarians who were just beginning to make their way in Canadian society, were frequently the first to be dismissed. The Hungarian Consul General in Montreal estimated that in 1930 about 65 per cent of Hungarians in Canada were unemployed. Itinerant and non-naturalized, most of them did not qualify for state aid.

World War II marked a watershed in the condition of Hungarians, and indeed all European immigrants in Canada. Ironically, despite the fact that their native land was allied with Canada's enemies during the war, the war years ended the marginalization of Hungarian immigrants which had forced them to rely almost exclusively on ideologies and institutions within their own communities. Full employment during the war provided economic security, for most of them for the first time since their arrival in Canada. Many of them would use money saved during the war to purchase homes away from impoverished foreign quarters. The

introduction of state-run unemployment insurance in 1940 meant that they no longer needed to rely exclusively on ethnic mutual aid organizations, while the recognition of collective bargaining rights in 1944, and the incorporation of immigrant workers into labour unions, decreased their vulnerability to discrimination. The course of their growing integration into Canadian society, however, still reflected the polarization within the immigrant group.

Hungarian-Canadians gave considerable evidence of their loyalty to Canada. Over 1000 Hungarian-speaking persons enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces and many more subscribed to war loans and supported the efforts of the Red Cross. The political loyalties of each camp within the ethnic group, however, created serious tensions for its members. Between 1939 and 1941, while the Nazi-Soviet Pact was in effect, those in the radical camp were told that the war being fought by Canada and its allies was an imperialist conflict that should not be supported by working people. Hungary's alliance with the Axis powers in 1940 created a similar conflict of loyalties for patriotic Hungarians. The return of Transylvania to Hungary, an important goal of patriotic Hungarians in Canada, was accomplished thanks to an alliance between their homeland and the enemies of their adopted land.

Once Germany attacked Russia, however, radical organizations threw themselves wholeheartedly behind the war effort. But while they discouraged strikes, for fear that they would slow-down war production, they were the chief promoters of labour unions among Hungarian immigrants. The *Munkás*, which enjoyed its largest readership during the war years, publicized union drives and radical activists signed up new members. Their efforts were successful because all Hungarian workers regardless of their ideological leanings had become convinced that unions would end discrimination against "foreign" workers and help all their members to secure higher wages and greater job security.

The nationalists were more active in state-sponsored programs to rally ethnic minorities of European origin behind the war effort. In 1941 the Department of War Services created the Nationalities Branch to communicate official information in minority languages, to convey the views and concerns of ethnic minorities to the authorities, and to promote both Canadianization of the immigrants and understanding

between ethnic minorities and other Canadians. Among the Hungarians the chief promoters of this program were Béla Eisner of Montreal and Nicholas Hornyanszky of Toronto. Eisner also travelled to Hungarian communities throughout Canada in an attempt to mobilize them behind the war effort. Despite claims that they were appealing to all Hungarians, regardless of political affiliation, both men excluded radical organizations from their efforts to unite Hungarian Canadians.

III. 1945-1956: The Displaced Persons (DPs)

At the insistence of Canadian officials, ideological divisions were briefly transcended immediately after the war. All Hungarian-Canadian associations co-operated in sending relief to war-torn Hungary. Solicitude for their native land and its inhabitants, however, did not ensure harmony within the ethnic group for long. Conceptions among its members about how best to rebuild Hungary differed too radically. Whereas the nationalists were distressed by the presence of the Red Army on Hungarian soil and the prospect of communist ascendancy there, the radicals looked forward to the establishment of a communist regime in Hungary. Believing collectivization to be the ideal corrective to the great injustices that had prevailed in the Hungarian countryside before the war, radical Hungarian organizations sent red flags bearing their insignia to celebrate the establishment of collective farms in their native villages in the early 1950s. Dozens of radicals even returned to communist Hungary. Tragically, these dedicated men and women were persecuted during the Stalinist reign of Mátyás Rákosi. Their years of hard labour in Canada made them suspect as “imperialist agents”. Those who managed to return with savings were branded “kulaks”, deprived of possessions and sometimes jailed.

Meanwhile, the patriots watched with alarm as the Communists, backed by the Soviets, eliminated political pluralism and by 1948 asserted full control over Hungary. The public humiliation of Hungary’s Roman Catholic spiritual leader Cardinal Mindszenty through a show trial in 1949, the most dramatic expression of the new regime’s vehement anti-clericalism, particularly angered many of the patriots.

The question of displaced persons of Hungarian origin exacerbated tensions within Hungarian-Canadian communities. The nationalists, viewing them as the victims of political turmoil and persecution, campaigned for their admission to Canada, which the radicals, in turn, opposed. Following the Soviet line, the radicals argued that those displaced persons who were innocent of war crimes were free to return to Hungary, that those who refused to do so were collaborators who had supported not only the Horthy regime, but also the puppet government of Ferenc Szálasi's Hungarian Arrow Cross, which was placed in power by the Germans in late 1944, following Horthy's attempts to negotiate a separate peace, and even the activities of the Nazis in Hungary.

In fact, the roughly 12,000 immigrants who were admitted to Canada between 1946 and 1956 were a far more diverse group than either of these positions would suggest. Their motives for leaving Hungary were closely linked to the oscillations in Hungary's fate during and after World War II. Because it had joined the axis powers, Hungary was not occupied by the Germans until March 1944. Arrests and deportations of large numbers of Jews and some anti-Nazis followed. When the war ended, some of these persons did not wish to return to Hungary. They waited in Europe, frequently in displaced persons camps, to find new homes abroad. When allied victory seemed certain, their ranks were augmented by persons who had collaborated with the Germans and with the Arrow Cross. Some of them were active supporters of the Arrow Cross's racist and murderous policies. Others were public servants and army officers who remained at their posts even after the Arrow Cross assumed power. Many Jews who had survived the war in Hungary also fled. The institution of anti-Jewish laws in Hungary even before World War II, and the Jewish experience during the war years, convinced them that Jews would never be accepted as Hungarians. The communists' persecution and elimination of their opponents and the abolition of private property convinced upper and middle class people of all denominations to leave Hungary. According to one count by the International Refugee Organization, more than half of the Hungarian DPs belonged to middle-class occupations. The immigrants also included the families of Hungarians in Canada who had been prevented from joining them earlier by the Depression and the war. This flow of immigrants declined to a trickle after 1952, however, when

most Displaced Persons had been resettled and when the communists, having attained full control, sealed Hungary's borders.

Despite the large numbers of educated and skilled people among them, most of the Hungarian DPs gained admission to Canada to perform hard physical labour in those sectors of the economy that had traditionally depended on immigrant workers: lumbering, mining, agriculture and domestic service. Under the Sponsored Labour Scheme, the refugees contracted to work for specific employers in these sectors for at least a year. Only upon completion of their contracts were those with dependents in Europe permitted to bring them to Canada. The long separation from their families exacerbated the suffering of immigrants unaccustomed to physical labour. As soon as they fulfilled their contracts, therefore, most of them moved to urban areas, especially in Ontario, where they sought work more in keeping with their education and experience.

In such centres Hungarian Canadian individuals and organizations, especially churches, helped the DPs to adapt to life in Canada. The churches in turn benefitted greatly from the influx of new adherents, including refugee priests and ministers. Such assistance was especially welcome since the DPs encountered considerable prejudice. Although by the 1950s organized labour mounted a campaign to end discrimination against immigrant workers, "DP" nevertheless became a pejorative term, expressing the continuing fear and hostility of many Canadians toward "foreign" immigrants.

But while shared ethnicity was clearly the main impetus behind the assistance offered the DPs, their arrival created new class and religiously based tensions within the ethnic group. Sharing the contempt toward peasants that was widespread in Hungarian urban society, many of the DPs looked down upon their Hungarian-Canadian benefactors. They were not sufficiently aware or respectful of the accomplishments of these peasant immigrants in Canada. Prewar immigrants of peasant background in their turn frequently mistrusted the more privileged members of Hungarian society. Having had to perform hard physical labour all their lives, moreover, they could not readily empathize with the experience of DPs having to undertake such work for the first time. They also resented what they saw as attempts by the DPs to wrest control over Hungarian-Canadian communities.

Differences in outlook and class background led to the establishment of distinct organizations by the DPs. Many of the new arrivals viewed their stay in this country as a temporary exile. Their focus thus remained largely on developments in their homeland. The *Kanadai Magyarorság*, the newspaper that one of them began publishing in Toronto in 1951, initially gave more attention to developments in Europe and among Hungarians emigres abroad than to Canadian and Canadian-Hungarian affairs, and it kept alive old-world animosities. Anti-Semitic references, including a statement of support for Ferenc Szálasi, the leader of the Arrow Cross, appeared in its early numbers. DP organizations such as the Hungarian Veterans' Association, the Royal Hungarian Gendarmerie Veterans' Association, and the Hungarians Scouts Association, were branches of international émigré associations first established in European refugee camps. Even if some of these organizations shared with earlier immigrants the desire to preserve and promote the cultural and historical heritage of the Hungarian nation, many of the activities they sponsored were alien to immigrants of peasant origin, who would definitely have felt out of place, for instance, at the annual debutante balls held by the Hungarian Helicon Society, established in Toronto in 1952 and destined to become one of the most important Hungarian-Canadian cultural organizations. Reflecting the greater presence of educated persons among the DPs than among earlier immigrants, the Helicon Society, as well as two organizations established by former officers of the Royal Hungary Army, the Rákóczi Association of Toronto and the Szechenyi Society of Calgary, invested considerable efforts in introducing Hungarian studies in Canada, by establishing Hungarian credit courses and by disseminating books about Hungary to Canadian educational institutions.

Despite these differences, the commitment to cultural preservation and a shared hostility to the Communist regime in Hungary, allowed for the establishment in 1951 of the Hungarian Canadian Federation, an umbrella organization that represented both prewar patriotic organizations and the newer ones formed by the DPs. During the years of the Cold War, when radical organizations became increasingly marginal, the Federation assumed the role of speaking for Hungarian-Canadians in the host society.

IV. 1956 and Beyond

The uprising of Hungarians against the Soviet-dominated Communist regime in October 1956 led to the arrival of the last and largest group of Hungarian immigrants to Canada. When the uprising was crushed by Russian tanks, 200,000 people fled the country in less than 12 weeks, most of them to Austria. This was the largest wave of refugees since the end of World War II and international organizations called upon the nations of the world to help them. Canada responded to their plight swiftly and generously. J. W. Pickersgill, the minister of Citizenship and Immigration, announced that priority would be given to applications from Hungarian refugees. To speed up the process of resettlement a special section of the Immigration Branch was established, medical examinations were simplified, and security clearance was waived. Within 10 months, 37,500 refugees were admitted to Canada. The federal government bore the cost of transporting them, set up centres to receive them in collaboration with provincial governments, and assumed responsibility for them until they could become self-supporting, or up to the end of their first year in Canada.

Non-governmental organizations and individual Canadians also responded to the refugees with exceptional generosity. Much support, of course, came from Hungarian-Canadians. Most of them responded to the uprising with enthusiasm. Almost immediately they organized public demonstrations to express their solidarity, and sent messages and delegations to the federal government and to international organizations urging them to support the uprising. They collected funds for medical aid, donated blood for the "freedom fighters," and some even began to organize a fighting unit of volunteers. With the defeat of the revolution, Hungarian-Canadians attempted to help the refugees. They offered food, clothing, and temporary homes, helped them to find jobs, and in other practical ways aided their establishment in Canadian communities.

But Canadians from outside the ethnic group also provided much assistance. Before the government announced its policy, they sent letters, briefs and telegrams urging it to help the refugees. They contributed generously to the support fund established by the Red

Cross, and took many refugees into their homes free of charge. Thanks to the efforts of the Catholic Immigrant Aid Society, for example, 13,000 Catholic families agreed to take refugees into their homes. Canadian universities and student organizations offered hundreds of scholarships to refugee students.

Canadians who had reservations about the refugees were a minority. The RCMP objected to the lifting of security regulations, pointing out that many of the refugees had been members of the Communist Party. The labour movement, while not opposed to the admission of the refugees, feared that they would be exploited and used to lower the wages of Canadian workers. Canadians living around reception centres were alarmed by what they saw as the slow absorption of the refugees. In an era before socialized health care in Canada, others objected to the free hospitalization and medical treatment offered to refugees. Within the ethnic group itself, opposition came from the Left. Although some Hungarian radicals who saw the uprising as proof of deep dissatisfaction within the Soviet bloc and who were appalled by the ruthless suppression of the uprising, severed all ties with the Communist party, others accepted the Party line that counterrevolutionaries instigated the uprising and that a large proportion of the refugees were criminals released from prisons by these "fascists". All these critical voices faded away, however, as the "fifty-sixers" adapted successfully to Canadian society. Nearly half of them settled in Ontario, but substantial numbers went to Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta, and a few to Manitoba and Saskatchewan. By the end of 1958 fewer than 1000 of the refugees relied on government assistance.

The Cold War atmosphere of the 1950s goes a long way toward explaining the unprecedented enthusiasm that greeted this particular group of Hungarians. Canadians admired the courage of the people who dared to defy the Soviet Union and were outraged by the ruthless repression of the uprising. For the Liberals in Ottawa, rescuing the refugees provided an opportunity to demonstrate not only the superiority of the "free world" over oppressive communism, but also Canada's new status as a middle power on the international stage.

The group's make-up also helps to explain why its members were welcomed with enthusiasm. Most of them were young, and

many were highly educated and skilled. They included engineers, physicians and surgeons, teachers and professors, nurses, laboratory technicians, architects, draughtsmen, mechanics, machinists, cabinet makers and a large number of university students. The students and professors of the Sopron School of Forestry emigrated as a group to Vancouver, where they were attached to the University of British Columbia. A group of mining engineering students and professors, as well as engineering students who came individually, went to the University of Toronto.

Amidst the ideologically charged atmosphere of the Cold War, the plight of refugees from the Soviet bloc obscured the complexity of the group's ideological make-up. While many of them were unquestionably committed to democratic freedoms, some of the "freedom fighters" were actually Communists, possibly even members of the notorious secret police, who left in the early days of the revolution because of their association with Stalinist oppression. Others were extremists of the right, including a few members of the pro-Nazi Arrow Cross. While the proportion of Catholics and Protestants among the refugees was roughly commensurate with the proportion of these denominations within the population of Hungary, Jews were overrepresented. Some members of this last group fled because of bitter disappointment with communism – unaware of Stalin's reign of terror in the 1930s, they had joined the Communist Party after the war because they believed that it would eradicate anti-semitism in Hungary.

The press and associational life of the refugees reflected their diversity. Like the immigrants who arrived after World War II, some of the refugees established émigré associations. The most notable among them, the Freedom Fighters' Federation of Canada, was a member of the World Federation of Freedom Fighters whose main goal was the liberation of Hungary from communism. The number of liberal professionals among the refugees was large enough to support a number of new professional organizations. The most active among these were the Hungarian Canadian Engineers' Association and the Hungarian Canadian Authors' Association. Some of the Jewish refugees formed the Association of Hungarian Jews and, for the first time, a Hungarian-language Jewish newspaper, *Menorah*, appeared in Canada. The arrival of the refugees made Toronto such an important

centre of Hungarian life that the *Magyar Élet*, a Hungarian-language newspaper, relocated there from Argentina, in 1957.

But the refugees also joined existing Hungarian-Canadian organizations. Taking advantage of the freedom of religious observance in Canada, many joined Hungarian-Canadian churches. Their presence invigorated the language schools, youth groups, sports clubs and social organizations that operated within Hungarian-Canadian parishes and congregations. The similarity in educational and social background meant that some of the refugees were also drawn to the secular associations established by the Displaced Persons. So many of them joined the Helicon Society that in 1958 it established a special youth association to accommodate them.

The presence of large concentrations of Hungarian-speaking men, women and children gave rise to a new kind of cultural life in larger centres such as Toronto and Montreal. Whereas earlier, cultural activities in Hungarian-Canadian communities depended on amateurs, the refugees included professional actors, musicians and dancers who were eager to carry on their cultural work. In 1957, for example, refugee actors founded a Hungarian-language theatre group in Toronto. While they had to support themselves by working as cab drivers, porters and waiters by day, they could at least count on enough of an audience to allow them to perform Hungarian plays regularly for years.

The establishment of university-level Hungarian studies programs and the publication of an English-language Hungarian studies journal were also largely the work of post-war, educated immigrants. Plans for university programs were made as early as the 1950s, but a course in Hungarian history was first offered in the 1960s, at Loyola College in Montreal. A community-funded, English-language journal of Hungarian studies first appeared in 1974, and in 1978 a Chair of Hungarian Studies was established at the University of Toronto. Hungarian Canadians, under the leadership of the Szechenyi Society of Calgary, raised half of the funding for the chair, and half was provided by the federal government as part of its program to encourage ethnic studies at Canadian universities. In 1980, the journal of Hungarian studies affiliated with the Hungarian Chair and assumed the name *Hungarian Studies Review*.

But while community activists were justly proud of their cultural accomplishments, the future of Hungarian ethnic culture in Canada seems far from certain. The Chair of Hungarian Studies attracts few students and census returns indicate that the Hungarian language is not being transmitted by members of the ethnic group in informal settings: the use of Hungarian in the home is declining. The number of those identifying their ethnic origin as Hungarian has also declined during the decade between 1981 and 1991. This suggests that the establishment of distinct Hungarian-Canadian communities may well have been the transitional responses of immigrants adapting to a new land rather than indicators of long-term ethnic persistence.

While in the past the arrival of waves of new immigrants repeatedly revived aspects of Hungarian culture in Canada, few Hungarians have come here since the influx of the "fifty-sixers." Following the suppression of the uprising, leaving Hungary for the west became exceedingly difficult. Only a few Hungarians managed to come to Canada under family reunification plans, while some others – both from Hungary and from neighbouring countries – who succeeded in leaving the Soviet bloc, gained admission as refugees. Although emigration from Hungary became possible once again with gradual liberalization in the 1970s, and the return of political pluralism in 1989, the number of immigrants from Hungary remains small.

V. A Comparative Perspective

The experience of Hungarian immigrants before World War II may be most usefully compared to that of other groups of peasant immigrants from Europe and Asia. Because of the endurance of their settlements, the attention of scholars was first drawn to the minority of Hungarian peasant immigrants who, like their counterparts among Ukrainians and Poles, arrived in Canada with the intention of settling permanently in the Canadian west. Like most Italian, Polish, Chinese and Japanese agriculturalists, most Hungarians who came to Canada were sojourners, intending to work here for a few years in order to better their lives in their native villages. Their origin in economically underdeveloped areas, where employment was scarce and wages low, and their sojourning intentions, help to explain what made them

so appealing to Canadian employers: their willingness to put up with low wages, and with poor working and living conditions in Canada. Looking at these peasant immigrants from a comparative perspective underlines the inadequacy of focusing on strategies and skills of individuals to explain the fate of immigrants. The structures of the Canadian labour market, together with racist views that held some ethnic groups or "races" to be inherently inferior to others, severely limited the range of work opportunities open to these peasant immigrants. But while informal discrimination, as well as limited skills and education, kept most southern and eastern European peasant immigrants like the Hungarians at the bottom of the occupational ladder, Asian immigrants were excluded from some occupations altogether by racist laws. When their intentions shifted from sojourning to settlement, the former could bring their families to Canada, whereas Asian immigrants were kept by law from doing so. Marginalized to a greater or lesser extent in Canadian society, all these peasant immigrants employed collectivist strategies of adaptation. To cope with the difficulties of their lives as workers and newcomers in Canadian society, they relied on informal ethnically-based social support networks and voluntary organizations.

The bitter ideological divisions within Hungarian-Canadian communities before World War II most closely resembled those in the Finnish, Ukrainian, and Jewish communities in Canada. Significantly, the homelands of each of these groups had been similarly fractured along political lines. These parallels between Old-World and New-World political divisions suggest that Old-World politics provide a key to explaining the intensity of political life in the new world. But the politics of these immigrant communities were not simply transplanted. Immigrants from rural areas of eastern Europe, such as most of the Ukrainian and Hungarian immigrants, had been excluded from political and associational life in their homelands by poverty, minimal education and voting restrictions. They became politicized only in Canada because of their experiences as immigrant labourers, and under the leadership of the more educated among them. A shared sense of exclusion from the host society, as well as a common language, brought immigrants from different social backgrounds together.

Broadening the scope of historical analysis from the history of Hungarian immigrants to that of eastern and southern Europeans

underscores the great significance of the welfare state in integrating immigrant workers into Canadian society. Beginning with the war years, a series of state policies reduced the dependence of immigrant workers on ethnically-based collective strategies to make their way in Canadian society. State-supported insurance schemes lessened the need to rely on mutual aid within ethnic communities. Membership in labour unions, whose right to represent workers was recognized after the war, lessened the vulnerability of formerly marginalized immigrant workers. The great need for immigrant labour during the war also brought policies designed specifically to protect the rights of ethnic minorities. But state programs to enhance understanding among ethnic groups and eliminate employment discrimination in war production did not extend to all minorities. They made no attempt to lessen intense prejudice and discrimination against Japanese Canadians.

The greater heterogeneity of the economic and social background of immigrants to Canada after World War II narrows the basis of comparison between Hungarians and other immigrant groups. Their experiences most closely resembled those of eastern Europeans such as the Poles, Ukrainians and Lithuanians, whose homelands fell within the Soviet orbit. Many of these post-war immigrants were political émigrés, fleeing communism. Their ranks included a far larger number of educated, middle-class people, than those of European immigrants before the war. Although nativism did not disappear in Canada after the war, by virtue of their education and social standing, these immigrants found readier acceptance in Canadian society than prewar peasant immigrants. They also benefitted from the development of a social-safety network in postwar Canada. Although the history of these groups is not yet well known, it appears that many of their members could choose individualist rather than collectivist strategies of adaptation to their new land. When post-war immigrants from eastern-Europe did decide to join their respective ethnic communities in Canada, however, class differences between them and prewar immigrants, frequently led to tension and conflicts. Greater political experience and confidence stemming from their more educated and privileged European background allowed post-war immigrants quickly to assume positions of leadership and to direct community energies to political lobbying and publicity efforts intended to free their home countries from communism.

So far students of European groups such as the Hungarians have concentrated on the migration and adaptation of the immigrants themselves to Canadian society. They have not yet examined the situations of the children and grandchildren of immigrants. Discussion of the fate of ethnic groups is generally limited to general observations about the extent of ethnic persistence derived from quantitative analyses of residential concentration, endogamy, and language use. Yet such measures conceal as much as they reveal, especially since the ranks of many groups, like the Hungarians, include successive waves of immigrants, and the behaviour of recent arrivals differs from that of Canadian-born, or more established members of the group. Comparing the history of European immigrant groups then suggests both the danger of allowing the analysis of each new wave of immigrants to overshadow the history of other group members, and the need, now that Canada receives relatively few immigrants from Europe, to turn our attention from the history of European immigrants to that of European ethnic communities.

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Suggestions for further reading

Probably because they constitute a small ethnic group in Canada, Hungarian-Canadians have not received much attention from historians. The most comprehensive bibliography of studies on Hungarians in Canada is John Miska, *Canadian Studies on Hungarians, 1886-1996* (Regina, 1987). The *Hungarian Studies Review* (formerly *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies*) contains numerous articles on the history of Hungarians in Canada. N. F. Dreisziger et al., *Struggle and Hope: The Hungarian-Canadian Experience*, commissioned by the Citizenship Branch of the Secretary of State as part of the Generations Series, offers an overview of Hungarian history in Canada. (It is also available in French under the title *Lutte et espoir: L'expérience des Canadiens hongrois*.) Bennett Kovrig provides a chapter on the history of Hungary and the Hungarian people, Paul Body examines emigration from Hungary between 1880 and 1956, Martin Kovacs looks at immigration and settlement in western Canada before World War I, and N. F. Dreisziger covers all subsequent waves of immigrants and their adjustment in Canada. Students wishing to learn more about the history of Hungary will find Peter Sugar, ed., *A History of Hungary* very useful (Bloomington, 1990). Julianna Puskás's *Emigration from Hungary to the United States before 1914* (Budapest, 1975) provides the best English-language study of the causes of mass emigration from Hungary.

The predominance of Hungarian settlement in western Canada prior to World War I is reflected in the focus of historical studies on this earliest wave of Hungarian immigration. The leading student of this period is Martin Kovacs of the University of Saskatchewan, who analyzes Hungarian settlement in the prairie west. His *Esterhazy and Early Hungarian Immigration to Canada* (Regina, 1974) looks at the promotion of Hungarian immigration through the Esterhazy immigration pamphlet, while *Peace and Strife: Some Facets of the History of an Early Prairie Community* examines Hungarian settlement in Kipling, Saskatchewan, formerly known as Bekevar. Kovacs has also published numerous articles on Hungarians in the rural west, a number of them in the *Hungarian Studies Review*. Howard and Tamara Palmer discuss the history of Hungarians in Alberta prior to World

War I in "The Hungarian Experience in Alberta," *Hungarian Studies Review*, 8 (Fall 1981). Students interested in the development of Hungarian rural settlements in western Canada will also find useful *Bekevar: Working Papers on a Canadian Prairie Community*, (Ottawa 1979) Robert Blumstock, ed., (Ottawa, 1979), a collection of ethnographic studies.

Commentators on Hungarians in Canada have shown the greatest interest in the period between the two world wars. N. F. Dreisziger has written extensively, often in the *Hungarian Studies Review*, on various aspects of this period. His work pays close attention to the conservative, nationalist segment of Hungarian-Canadian communities and has relatively little to say about the radicals. Carmela Patrias's *Patriots and Proletarians* analyzes the political polarization of Hungarian communities during the same period in central Canada. John Kosa's *Land of Choice: The Hungarians in Canada* (Toronto 1957), and Linda Degh's study of Hungarian tobacco farmers in Ontario, *People in the Tobacco Belt: Four Lives* (Ottawa, 1975), are two ethnographic studies which deal largely with immigrants who came to Canada between the wars.

Apart from the relevant section of *Struggle and Hope*, very little has been written about Hungarian DPs in Canada. Several very short pieces in the bulletin of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, *Polyphony*, (1979-80), touch on this wave of immigrants and point to some of the relevant archival sources collected by the Society.

The 1956 refugees, by contrast, have attracted considerable attention. T. Cnossen, "Integration of Refugees: Some Observations on Hungarians in Canada," *International Migration*, Vol II, 1 (1964), E.K. Koranyi, A. Kerényi, and G.J. Sarwer-Foner, "On Adaptive Difficulties of Some Hungarian Immigrants: A Sociopsychiatric Study," *Medical Services Journal* XIV, 6 (June 1958), Nicholas Pfeiffer, "The Integration of Hungarian Refugees," *Migration News* (May-June 1959), and Klaus Weiermair, "The Economic Adjustment of Hungarian Refugees in Toronto," *Migration News* 83 (1972) indicate the scholarly interest in the adaptation of refugees from behind the Iron Curtain to the "Free World". Gerald Dirk's *Canada's Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunity* (Montreal, 1977) contains an excellent overview of the Canadian response to Hungarian refugees. *Breaking Ground: The*

1956 Hungarian Refugee Movement to Canada (North York, 1993), papers presented at a symposium marking the thirtieth anniversary of the 1956 Revolution, include historical studies of the refugee movement, as well as contributions from Canadian officials who were involved in resettling the refugees. The issue of *Polyphony* on Hungarians in Ontario contains a number of short pieces on the arrival and settlement of the refugees in Ontario. The experience of the Sopron foresters is examined in Laszlo Adamovich and Oszkar Sziklai, *Foresters in Exile: The Sopron Forestry School in Canada* (Vancouver, 1970).

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