

"Trends and Growth Rates of Hungarian Farmland Crops between 1869 and 1913", respectively). The philosopher L. Mátrai concentrated on "Common Features of the History of Culture in Austria and Hungary" with paying special attention to the influence of the irrational philosophy of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche in neighbouring Austria and Hungary, respectively, at the turn of the 20th century.

His main conclusion is that while the growth of general existential uncertainties which provided an historical basis for the advance of Nietzschean irrational philosophy in Central Europe, was an element common to both Austria and Hungary, the two societies, for historical reasons, nonetheless responded differently in the sphere of philosophy. In Austria, after the old absolute truths had been lost, the irrational urge towards religion, irrationalism, expressionism, existentialism, etc., was only partly successful in filling the void. For this reason the best thinkers had to look for certainties in disciplines of exactitude such as the natural sciences and mathematics. In this respect the Vienna Circle was instrumental. In Hungary, the search for modern, absolute truths was also linked to research in mathematics and logic, but not to that in the natural sciences. Instead, leading figures of the avant-garde (Kassák) or philosophy (Lukács) were sooner or later to give a rather social, or even social-democratic, impetus to all the aesthetic novelties, or to the critique of old traditions originally brought about by irrational philosophy.

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**Kivándorló magyarok az Egyesült Államokban 1880–1940**  
(Emigrant Hungarians in the United States 1880–1940)

Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982. 639 pp.

Julianna Puskás has provided a major contribution to American studies by exploring Hungarian emigration to the United States from the end of the 19th century to the Second World War. Considering that there has been no comparable study to date, and certainly not one on this scale, the book is all the more to be welcomed. Based on statistics, archival records, personal interviews, newspapers and other periodicals, the author presents us with a definitive account of an extremely complex and dramatic social-historical process.

Her main concern is the mass emigration which started in the 1880s. The process picked up in the last two decades of the 19th century and one of its main features was its multinational character. "From no other European country," the author points out, "not even from Czarist Russia, did such a medley of nationalities arrive to the USA from Hungary. At Ellis Island more than two-thirds of them declared themselves to be non-Magyars. The ratio of non-Magyars among the emigrants was proportionally higher than their share in the country's total population, and though the figures varied from one ethnic group to the other, this was true of all nationalities, not only the Slovaks, but the Germans as well."

Puskás gives a detailed breakdown of the sociological features of Hungarian emigrants. The majority of them were in their most productive years between 1905 and 1907; 61.5% of these who left were between 20 and 40, and many were under 20 (23.2%). The ratio between men and women varied between a mere 28% of women in 1907 and a maximum of 53.8% in 1913. The typical pioneers came from rural Hungary: village artisans, shopkeepers and craftsmen left in ever increasing numbers, particularly from the Magyar section of the population. Landed peasants and wage earners were mostly Croats and Slovaks. The literacy rate of The actual number of emigrants varied year by year according to economic changes within the United States: the American depressions of the mid-1880s and of 1907–1908 caused immediate breaks in the process. Some parts of the country produced many more emigrants than others and these "emigration

regions" had certain features in common. They were all remote from and impervious to the attraction of the principal industrial center of the country, Budapest, and had traditions of migration of some sort. Emigration was most intensive from those areas where there was an adequate channel of information.

The migration of over two million Hungarians resulted in a total population loss of 886,176 people in the thirty years between 1880 and 1910. The greater part of the people involved made several journeys to and from the United States and some 40% of the post-1908 emigrants returned to the country. Returners usually came back after three to five years with considerable savings which they used to build houses and buy land.

Hungarian government policy on emigration is amply discussed by the author. She describes this policy as inconsistent in the steps which were actually taken and notes that it was attacked from a number of quarters including the United States government, which accused the Hungarian government of conscious efforts to rid itself of the "superfluous" population of the country. The explicit anti-emigration propaganda of the Hungarian government coincided with a price war which led to a drastic lowering of the cost of travelling overseas. Legal restrictions were not significantly more stringent than those in other European countries such as Sweden or Italy.

United States policy did not substantially change as regards the relatively unrestricted influx of immigrants until the early 1920s. Certain sections of the middle classes felt that the "quality" of American society was threatened, while organized labor considered the unchecked invasion for extremely cheap labor a potential danger for the position of workers in America. It was the introduction of the quota-system that put an end to the mass immigration of "undesirables" from Hungary. Figures fell drastically: there were only some 100,000 people who left Hungary for the United States throughout the whole period of 1920-1945.

The second chapter of Puskás' book discusses the settlement, lifestyle and organizations of the Hungarian immigrants in the era before the First World War. It is interesting to learn that it was the intellectuals, merchants, journeymen and tradesmen, who were attracted by big cities like New York, Chicago and Cleveland while peasants headed for smaller industrial centers and mining camps and tried to stay together. Hungarian immigrants constituted a highly mobile group, the author points out. They went from one job to the other, particularly when a big firm opened up a new plant or a new mining site. The new-born Hungarian communities were founded not so much on the basis of a shared past in the same village, but rather on the more general community of the land of origin, language and a common sense of the future. Most of them were recruited by firms that badly needed unskilled manpower: steel mills, iron foundries and mines. Having arrived from industrially underdeveloped areas, it was most difficult for the immigrants to become accustomed to the physically and psychologically demanding lifestyle in big industry. Many of them lived in small groups of 8-10 in boarding houses. "It was a form of social organization that had its roots in the itinerant lifestyle of back home," Dr. Puskás argues; "it was economical, went some way toward being a family substitute, and was a flexible form of adaptation to the mobility dictated by a geographically expansive industry".

Working-class America looked at the newcomers with contempt and even indignation. Often used as strikebreakers, Hungarians shared the common lot of all new immigrants of having to fight a desperate struggle with the native-born. They also had to battle for higher wages, particularly after 1905, and Puskás has made some important findings here. To defend their rights in American society, local Hungarian organizations mushroomed; by 1911 some 1,339 of them were established. They belonged to three basically different kinds: *church societies* established to support a particular church or parish, *patriotic societies* of a secular character which had no definite political orientation and *fraternal organizations* set up for mutual aid, for companionship and the propagation of socialist ideals. All of them provided shelter in an alien environment, and some endeavoured to assert the numerical strength and significance of the Hungarian immigrant community, particularly at election times. They provided channels for the spread of literacy and culture as well as a chance for relaxation and entertainment. Hungarian-American culture can be best studied through the programs these organizations put on for the members.

Apart from Hungarian organizations, parishes played an important role in Hungarian community life. The author places special emphasis on their role and the basic differences between Hungarian American religious communities and those left at home. "The Hungarian American churches became centers of the immigrant community's social life as well: it was there that the parishioners and their children kept in touch with their native language, and with the 'national' traditions of the old country; it was there that they could turn when they had problems at work, or simply with adjusting themselves to the demands of the new environment. From the 1890s onward, the churches provided the framework for the Protestant 'Hungarian schools' in the form of Sunday schools and summer schools; some larger Roman Catholic parishes even had Hungarian day schools of their own." Lay participation was considerable in Hungarian American parishes and in this respect the differences between the old country and the new were again significant. Lay interference in church affairs, however, was something quite new for many Hungarian parishioners and occasionally gave rise to heated arguments. It is also interesting to note that quite a number of communities lacked an immigrant parish as such, leaving the fraternal organizations as the only forums for the social life of the immigrants.

One of the most interesting areas of Hungarian American community life that the author extensively reveals is the press. Puskás counts more than 200 Hungarian newspapers that were launched, most of them, however, without lasting success. Nevertheless, three papers could boast of an almost "nationwide" circulation, *Szabadság*, *Amerikai Magyar Népszava* and the Socialist *Előre*. The Hungarian papers were "the chief instigators of the setting up of communal buildings, the raisers of group consciousness, and the sources of information on the American environment and how to cope with it. Everything that appeared in print or involved the written word was the concern of the newspaper's editorial room: they printed and marketed books, functioned as a labour exchange, mediated the social services, provided legal counselling, and kept the immigrants in touch with their native culture." The author deals with the literary contents of the Hungarian papers as well, considering them important sources on the way of life of Hungarian immigrants at the turn of the century. Except for the Socialist papers, all the papers were nationalist and all took an oppositional stance towards the situation in Hungary.

In her concluding chapter Puskás dealt with the delicate issues of assimilation and the associated problems during the period 1920-1940. It was the First World War that served as a watershed between two distinct phases of Hungarian immigrant life in America. Almost until the United States entered the war it was relatively easy to act as a Hungarian American. Loyalties, however, became very much divided after 1917: America demanded assimilation at a time when a large portion of the immigrants still had their families at home in enemy Hungary. After the war even Hungarian immigrant organizations started to advocate Americanization; business interests rather than community life came to the foreground. In contrast, Hungarian organizations in the United States tried to render assistance, both political and material, to a Hungary partitioned by the peace treaty of Trianon.

Hungarian American institutions flourished throughout the 1920s. The Hungarian community seemed stable and self-conscious, with a relatively significant left-wing influence. Puskás is right, however, to point out that from the 1920s onwards it became increasingly clear that the social, cultural, and political differences among Hungarian immigrant communities were irreconcilable. "One of the issues on which consensus was out of question," she argues, "was the immigrants' attitude to Hungary. With the passing of time, the old 'peasant' immigrants tended to forget the injuries they had suffered at home; nostalgia for their youth coloured all their memories. The 'old Hungarian Americans' were unable to entertain this natural affection for their native land and at the same time repudiate the country's given system of government. The Communists and the Socialists, on the other hand, internationalists in their outlook, had absolutely no use for ethnic identification of any sort, especially not for the outward signs of such identification so typical of the Hungarian immigrant communities. They could not understand how important these had been in the process of their adjustment to life in the United States. Another cause of their impatience with such separation, of course, was their anxiety to quickly integrate in the American working-class movement so as to be able to help chart its course as soon as possible."

The severe economic problems at the end of the 1920s and in the early 1930s made it extremely difficult for Hungarian American communities to maintain their institutions. Accelerated Americanization was the answer offered by all parties, including the churches, which themselves became bilingual. Many of the Hungarian Americans were gravely affected by the Depression since they worked in the iron and steel industries. Consequently, they became staunch supporters of F. D. Roosevelt and the New Deal. It is to this period that the Democratic leanings of many Hungarian Americans can be traced back.

Generation problems began to appear at around the same time. Hungarian Americans born in the United States had very little to do with the ethnic links of their parents' generation. Puskás duly emphasizes the unfavourable climate surrounding children who "heard nothing but negative reflections on Hungarians both at school and in the streets. Hungary's 20th century political history still further alienated any sympathy a child growing up in a bourgeois democracy might have had for the land of his forefathers." The author goes on by way of conclusion: "Most of the second-generation Hungarian immigrants were prone to disown their past, and even changed their names in the attempt to show that they were Americans." It is consequently not surprising that the author found much higher social mobility in the second generation.

Puskás' excellent study is extremely richly documented: more than 200 pages of interviews, bibliographical and statistical data are attached. The book as a whole presents a basic critical reappraisal of the history of Hungarian emigration, arranging the vast material in a systematic and most convincing way. Dr. Puskás' genuine findings include the actual demographic loss Hungary suffered during the process, the geographical and ethnic distribution of regional emigration centers and the typical adaptation problems of immigrant Hungarians. One of the most important contributions to the study of emigration is the detailed analysis of Hungarian American organizations and the ways and means by which they sought to aid adaptation. The historiographical analysis at the beginning of the study gives a balanced view of methods and theories on emigration. All in all, Puskás has rendered very important services to the study of *Americanization*, the particular process whereby citizens of the United States established a national identity.

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### Ráckeve '83

International Workshop Seminar for Students of Architecture

Editor: Polinszky, Károly

Budapest, Műszaki Egyetem, [1984], 192 pp., ill.

According to a widely held view the architecture of our days is going through a crisis: the essence of this crisis can be defined so that the principles advocated by modernism half a century ago have mostly failed in reality. The shaping of the environment has entirely changed, unfortunately in an undesirable direction, consequently the historical and aesthetic values of the environment and the traditions of the settlement structure have been lost, as a result of which the settlements have become characterless, monotonous, and alienation has increased. The greatest ambition of the organizers of the Ráckeve workshop seminar, in all probability, was to offer the architects of the future something more than included in the curriculum of the faculty, to call their attention to values other than the ones they had been familiar with until then, to make the students reach a better understanding of the role and mission of architects.

If—on the basis of the program—we take into consideration the values that can be set the students as an example today (among whom there were foreigners as well), it is mostly the creations of the past that can be pointed out besides the contemporary works of art that created new value from the traditions. If we follow the excursions there is a scale of values taking shape that is by no means complete, but doubtlessly has a