

PREFACE

The first Hungarian ever to set foot on the soil of the New World was a sixteenth century humanist and Protestant scholar, Stephanus Parmenius Budaeus. He accompanied Sir Humphrey Gilbert to Newfoundland in 1583 to acquire "any remote, barbarous and heathen lands" by the command of Queen Elizabeth of England. Parmenius was born in the fortified capital of Hungary, Buda, then in Turkish hands. Seeking education abroad, like many other Hungarian youths, he went to Oxford and to London, where the famous collector of autographs, Master Hakluyt, introduced him to Sir Humphrey. Upon his arrival in Newfoundland, Parmenius wrote to Hakluyt, but this was the last word heard from him, as he was shipwrecked on the return voyage. Among those who were lost, wrote Captain Haie, "was drowned a learned man, a Hungarian, born in the city of Buda, called thereof Budaeus, who in piety and zeal to good attempts, adventured in this action, minding to record in the Latin tongue, the gesta and things worthy of remembrance, happening in this discovery, to the honor of our nation.(1)

Stephanus Parmenius Budaeus wished to report to the European nations an unknown, new world, about which contemporary Hungarians knew hardly more than that it had been discovered "for the great glory of Christianity."(2) After the passage of

1 Quoted in Dominic G. Kosáry, *A History of Hungary* (Cleveland and New York: Benjamin Franklin Bibliophile Society, 1941), p. xvi.

2 Istvánffy (1583—1615), *Historia Regni Hungarici*, p. 16, quoted in Kosáry, *Ibid.*

centuries, however, the situation of that unknown, new world has undergone a tremendous change. The United States of America embracing half of the North American continent from coast to coast, has become one of the great powers of the world and has become involved in the affairs of remote countries. This study, the result of the author's research in the Library of Congress and in the National Archives of the United States, is concerned with her involvement in Hungary's political, cultural, and economic life between the world wars.

Examining this period of Hungary's history, however, one comes across problems that were correlated with specific conditions pertaining to the whole of East Central Europe. Therefore it was necessary, for the sake of better understanding, to draw the reader's attention to the aspects not only of Hungary's problems, but also of those of East Central Europe, during the period mentioned above.

The key to the understanding of the Hungarian policy after World War I is Hungary's attitude toward the Treaty of Trianon. This treaty, imposed on Hungary at the close of World War I, in effect destroyed the historic Hungarian state. Although ethnically not homogeneous, for a thousand years Hungary had occupied the whole Carpathian Basin. In 1920, the North of this area was assigned to the state of Czechoslovakia, the South to the Serb-Croat-Slovene Kingdom, the East to Rumania, and a strip along the western frontier to the Republic of Austria. Even Poland and Italy received fragments of former Hungarian territory. This dismemberment of Hungary was carried out in the name of national self-determination, yet many concessions were made to the strategic and economic interests of the successor states. As a result, these states acquired no less than three and a half million persons, listed in the Hungarian census of 1910 as Hungarians by their mother tongue. As a result of this, the whole Hungarian nation was united in its conviction that the Trianon Treaty was unacceptable and the chief aspiration of Hungarian foreign policy was treaty revision. Therefore, Hungarian foreign policy

followed with great attention how America and Americans—as well as the other nations—reacted to this desire, and neither cultural nor economic relations between the two countries were entirely free from the wish to gain American help for the purpose of treaty revision.

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