

# Lajos Kossuth in America, 1851 - 1852

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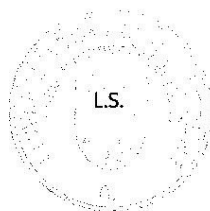
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## **ABSTRAKT**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá osobou Lajose Kossutha, maďarského právníka, novináře a politika, který se zasazoval o nezávislost Maďarska na Habsburské monarchii. Po nevydařené revoluci v letech 1848-1849 odjel do Velké Británie a Spojených států amerických, kde strávil zhruba 7 měsíců mezi lety 1851 a 1852 a pokoušel se získat podporu pro další revoluci. Výsledky jeho úsilí byly smíšené. Podařilo se mu získat finance, ale setkal se s odporem ve Spojených státech kvůli své politice “nevměšování se” do problémů s otroctvím, jenž v té době rozděloval americkou společnost.

Klíčová slova: Lajos Kossuth, Maďarsko, Evropa, Spojené státy americké, Velká Británie, nezávislost, přednášky

## **ABSTRACT**

This bachelor thesis deals with Lajos Kossuth, Hungarian-born lawyer, journalist and politician, who attempted to free Hungary from the Habsburg monarchy. After a failed revolution in 1848-1849, he travelled to the United Kingdom and the United States in 1851-1852, where he attempted to drum up support for another revolution. The results of his efforts were mixed. Yes, he raised funds, but he met resistance in the United States over his “nonintervention” on the issue of slavery, which was polarizing Americans at the time.

Keywords: Lajos Kossuth, Hungary, Europe, United States, Great Britain, autonomy, revolution

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I hereby declare that the print version of my bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

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## INTRODUCTION

Lajos Kossuth was an important personality in the field of international policy. He was a Hungarian-born lawyer, journalist and politician who was active and influential in international relations, especially during the revolutionary years of 1848-1849, when many countries within the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy sought autonomy. During these years, Kossuth tried to achieve Hungarian independence from the Habsburg monarchy and the absolute reign of Prince Metternich. Although he and his fellow revolutionaries succeeded in forming a new government, in which Kossuth served as governor-president, the revolution proved unsuccessful, crushed by Austrian and Russian intervention.<sup>1</sup> After describing Kossuth's visit to the United Kingdom in 1851, during which he tried to drum up support for another revolution in Hungary, this thesis focuses on Kossuth's visit to the United States in 1851-1852 and his actions and results while there. The political situation in the United States will be described, with special attention paid to the issues of social status and civil rights. Kossuth's public speeches and lectures will be discussed, along with Americans' responses to them. As this thesis documents, Kossuth was not well received in the U.S. South due to his attitude towards the slavery question. His decision to not intervene in U.S. domestic affairs, even though he was trying to convince the United States to intervene in Hungary, alienated him from some of his audiences. Ultimately, Americans donated to Kossuth's cause, but the United States adhered to the Monroe Doctrine and chose not to help Hungary. Thus, Kossuth's actual results were mixed, and Hungarian independence would not be achieved during his lifetime.

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<sup>1</sup> D. Webster, *Sketch of the Life of Louis Kossuth, Governor of Hungary: Together with the Declaration of Hungarian Independence, Kossuth's Address to the People of the United States, All His Great Speeches in England, and the Letter of Daniel Webster to Chevalier Hulsemann* (New York: Stringer and Townsend, 1851), 29.

## 1 A BIOGRAPHY OF LAJOS KOSSUTH, PRIOR TO HIS U.S. VISIT

Lajos Kossuth is considered one of the greatly influential persons of his era, especially in terms of international policy in association with the European revolution of 1848-1849 and beyond. These revolutionary events and actions had a great impact on Kossuth's life, as they led him to visit foreign countries after his forced escape from Hungary. Due to his life-long belief in the necessity of an independent Hungary, Kossuth persistently sought support from other countries and their representatives that, in his opinion, could help Hungary achieve liberty. As a respected speaker and philosopher, Kossuth dedicated his life to the fight for Hungarian independence which, however, was not achieved during his lifetime. In order to evaluate Kossuth's influence on international affairs, the stories of his life and career must be told.

Lajos (or Louis, as he was commonly referred to in the United States) Kossuth was born in 1802 in Monok, Hungary, the only child of Ladislav Kossuth and Caroline Weber. Kossuth's family belonged to a centuries-old nobility with a tradition of extraordinary minds and fighting for freedom. The Kossuth's were Protestant. Already in the early stages of his life, he was more interested in knowledge than in manual labor.<sup>2</sup> As a child, he attended the Calvinist College of Patak.<sup>3</sup> He then studied law and attended the district court of Emperies and the Royal court of Pest in 1819. After the completion of his studies in 1822, he returned to Monok to accept the position of county attorney, a position which he held for almost a decade.<sup>4</sup>

Kossuth became popular in 1831 with the outbreak of a cholera epidemic in Austria-Hungary. During the epidemic, the prevention included the treatment of water sources (wells). In the Slovak region, this act was largely considered an effort to poison the inhabitants.<sup>5</sup> In response, the Slovaks rioted, targeting the clergy, Jews and landlords. "Wherever the pestilence was most deadly or the fear greatest [Kossuth] appeared to urge measures of relief, address the people, and by his plain and earnest eloquence dispel their delusion, and calm the excitement."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> John W. Oliver, "Louis Kossuth's Appeal to the Middle West—1852," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 14, no. 4 (1928): 481.

<sup>3</sup> Webster, *Sketch of the Life of Louis Kossuth*, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Lajos Kossuth, *Authentic Life of ... Louis Kossuth ... With a Full Report of His Speeches Delivered in England ... To Which Is Added His Address to the People of the United States of America* (London: Bradbury and Evans, 1851), 17.

<sup>5</sup> Kossuth, *Authentic Life*, 17-18.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.

In 1832, Kossuth was named to attend the Diet (the governmental institution in Hungary), where he gave speeches and provided reports on the situation within his district. Moreover, Kossuth then reported on the happenings of the Diet in speeches and papers. The number of documents he produced grew rapidly, leading Kossuth to establish his own press.<sup>7</sup> The Austrian national body disapproved of this action, however, so Kossuth abandoned his press in favor of issuing a small newspaper on contemporary liberty issues that was read throughout Hungary. The newspaper targeted especially the actual political situation and potential aggression from the side of Hungary. In 1836, the Diet ended, as it was considered anti-monarchy, and several men involved were arrested, found guilty and imprisoned.

During 1836, Kossuth continued to issue his newspaper, which repeatedly urged monarchical reform. “The paper, thus, though then but in manuscript became a new power – the people felt it, the Imperial Court took fright, and in 1837 Kossuth was thrown into gaol,”<sup>8</sup> for a year without a trial. The Diet met again in 1839 and declared the imprisonment illegal. In May 1840, the Diet achieved the release of all political prisoners. In January 1841, Kossuth married Theresa Mezlenyi.<sup>9</sup>

In 1841, the Diet became a tentative governmental body, gradually relaxing Austrian-Hungarian policy. The press recovered, and Kossuth became the editor of a newly issued journal, *Pesti Hirlap* (Pest Journal), issued four times a week in the early months. The journal, with its increasing circulation, strengthened the union movement. In 1844, when the Imperialists took control of the Diet from the Liberals, Kossuth lost his position as a journal editor.<sup>10</sup>

## **1.1 Hungarian revolution and the increasing importance of Kossuth’s work**

Convinced of the need for actual reform, both at the regional and national levels, Kossuth, after leaving the editor’s position, started to act publicly. He established a new movement called *bedetgyle*, which focused on actions supporting the reform of the monarchy, with the goal of equalizing the position of Hungary within the monarchy.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 20.

The dominant tendency of the movement was the “emancipation of the serfs, and the enfranchisement of the trade of Hungary from the prohibition to import only Austrian manufacturers; and export no manufactured goods of Hungary to Austria.”<sup>12</sup> One of the actions was the boycott of Austrian goods until such time that the tariffs were reformed.

The era that made Kossuth important in terms of policy was the Hungarian revolution. At the end of the 1840s, tensions rose within the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy.<sup>13</sup> In order to preserve trade and in reaction to the attitudes of Hungarians, Austrian manufacturers moved their factories to Hungary. Moreover, the heads of counties in Hungary were replaced with imperialistic thinking persons by the Court of Vienna, an action which sped up the Hungarian reforms. In 1846 and 1847, reform leaders from every quarter of the kingdom met in Pest, where reform measures were discussed publicly.<sup>14</sup>

Due to Kossuth’s importance in terms of public speaking and his ability to express his opinions to a large audience, he was elected into the Diet in 1847. “Kossuth, as representative of the county of Pest, became, by his eloquence, the most popular man of the Diet, and, in the commencement of 1848, made his great speech on the liberties of Hungary.”<sup>15</sup>

A revolution broke out in March 1848, the goal of which was the overall independence of Hungary from the monarchy. A new parliament was established, led by Lajos Batthyány, and in his cabinet, Kossuth accepted the post of Minister of Finance in July 1848. The gradual creation of the Hungarian government enhanced the climate within the country, which further organized the military in order to achieve the stated goal of independence.<sup>16</sup>

On July 11, 1848, Kossuth gave a long speech on the need of soldier recruitment (“200,000 soldiers, and the necessary pecuniary grants”). As a result of this speech, recruiting into the Hungarian army began in September 1848. However, the armed conflict planned by the created Hungarian government against Austrian troops was disrupted by the Croatian army entering the country from the South.<sup>17</sup>

With the Croatian troops arriving in Pest, the revolution came to an end, and the newly created government was dismissed (Batthyány resigned). The executive power was

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 20-21.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Gábor Gángó, “1848–1849 in Hungary,” *Hungarian Studies* 15, no. 1 (2001): 39–49, doi:10.1556/hstud.15.2001.1.3

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

transferred to the National Defense Committee, and Kossuth, as the head of the board, became the supreme leader of Hungary. In December 1848, Franz Joseph I replaced Ferdinand V on the throne as Austrian Emperor and launched a sharp suppression of the Hungarian revolt.<sup>18</sup>

Military operations attempting to establish a new order in Upper Hungary took place in the winter of 1848-1849. During this period, the Hungarian government and Parliament had to resettle to Debrecen. Troops loyal to the Habsburg dynasty regained control over a great part of the land. In response, in the spring, the newly established Parliament “declared the Habsburg dynasty deposed and elected Kossuth as Governing President. A new government was formed on May 2.”<sup>19</sup>

As the situation for the monarchy became critical, Franz Joseph asked the Tsar of Russia, Nicolas I, to intervene in the conflict immediately. In May 1849, united Austro-Russian forces began to invade the land with great success, leading to the defeat of the revolutionary National Guard in August 1849, forcing Kossuth and his government to resign on August 13.<sup>20</sup>

Following this action, Kossuth and hundreds of Hungarian officers fled to Turkey. Those who did not manage to escape generally met a grim fate. On October 6, Count Bathyány and thirteen Hungarian generals were executed.<sup>21</sup>

The reestablishment of the Austrian domination of the land was supported by the absolutist administration of Alexander Bach, which initiated “strong restrictions on political and civil rights.”<sup>22</sup> In order to achieve better control, the Hungarian territory was divided into five districts. Nevertheless, the revolutionary years brought some results to the inhabitants, especially in the rise of a middle-class, and increased access to information, both of which had an increasing impact on the national happenings and development, and ultimately led, six decades later, to definitive Hungarian independence after World War I.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

After his compulsory departure from Hungary in 1849, Kossuth and “several members of the late government” stayed for two years in Turkey, where they started a diplomatic effort to gain the support of Hungarian independence abroad.<sup>23</sup>

Kossuth focused his attention on gaining recognition of an independent Hungary from the United Kingdom and the United States, and for this purpose, he decided to tour both.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Henry W. de Puy, *Kossuth and His Generals: With a Brief History of Hungary* (London: Forgotten Books, 2015), 288.

<sup>24</sup> W. Caleb McDaniel, "'Our Country Is the World': American Abolitionists, Louis Kossuth, and Philanthropic Revolutions," 2004 Annual Meeting of the Organization of American Historians, Boston, MA, March 25, 2004, <https://scholarship.rice.edu/bitstream/handle/1911/27609/mcdaniel2004oah.pdf;sequence=>.

## 2 KOSSUTH'S VISIT TO ENGLAND

Kossuth path for ensuring the support for Hungarian freedom and independence was predominantly targeted on the US nation. Nevertheless, on his journey from Turkey to the United States, he started his efforts already in England, where he launched the mission for support of his ideas. The actual actions of his stay in England are described in following subchapters.

### 2.1 Kossuth's journey to and arrival in England

Kossuth was considered a great hero among the English public even before his arrival. This aspect can be assigned to an important person that spread the word about Kossuth's actions throughout the nation. Prior to Kossuth's arrival, his representative, Ferenc Pulzsky, prepared the ground for him by creating a celebrated image of a hero that had sacrificed his life to gain the rights for his people.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, the actual acts of Kossuth within England supported this cult, and Kossuth was overall seen as a person of great importance for the history of the whole Europe in this country.

Kossuth's journey to England started on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1851 and lead through Spetzia, Marseilles and Lisbon to finally arrive in England on the 23<sup>th</sup> of October. The departure from the boat was made in Southampton docks, where Kossuth met (together with his wife and children recently left from the Hungarian prison) with Pulzsky and his family. At the occasion, Kossuth had the first opportunity to start his mission by providing a speech at the Mayor's official residence.<sup>26</sup>

The welcome on the England ground was very enthusiastic.<sup>27</sup> First speech that Kossuth gave in England was at this very place and concerned with the glorification of the British nation and its freedom that helped himself to get from the prison and gain freedom as well. Afterwards, Kossuth spent the day (accompanied by his family) with the journey around the city and gave another speech in the Town Hall of Southampton, where he received the Corporation and other addresses. On this behalf, Kossuth talked about the honor of being in England and at this point, his path for the seeking for free-Hungarian support began, as he started to describe the actions and events of Hungarian revolution 1848-1849. The actual

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<sup>25</sup> Zsuzsanna Lada, "The Invention of a Hero: Lajos Kossuth in England (1851)" *European History Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (2013): 5.

<sup>26</sup> Kossuth, *Authentic Life*, 30-35.

<sup>27</sup> J. B. Moore, "Kossuth: A Sketch of a Revolutionist. II." *Political Science Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1895): 272. doi:10.2307/2139732.

Kossuth's mission was established in Southampton and further grew during his visits to other English cities and then furthermore in America.<sup>28</sup>

## 2.2 Visits and lectures in England

Kossuth's journey through England comprised several large cities. "From Southampton Kossuth proceed to Winchester, from Winchester he went to London; from London to Birmingham, and from Birmingham to Manchester."<sup>29</sup> In all mentioned cities Kossuth gradually developed the aims and goals for his mission and created the principal of his speeches to either support the national feeling of the public which then after was concluded into the sense for the independence of his country.

After arrival in Winchester on 25<sup>th</sup> of October 1851, Kossuth dined with the Mayor of the city and provided a speech on the topic of the Hungarian nation, its history and position among other European nations. Kossuth explained the issues of Austrian power and the cooperation with the Russian Empire leading to the suppression of the revolution and minor nations within the monarchy themselves. Additionally, Kossuth highlighted the importance of British aristocracy and its position within the European landscape.<sup>30</sup>

A great deal of the speech given in the Winchester's Mayor residence was concerned with the issue of what the actual force leading to Hungarian independence should be. Kossuth pointed out two specific aspects of nationality that should be considered the first steps for the nation to be recognized comprising:<sup>31</sup>

- existence of the Parliament of Hungary,
- existence of the national institutions and organizations.

Kossuth than continued on the actual situation within the Habsburg monarchy and the position of the minor nations within that are still suppressed and encroached although they fight for their rights continuously by the means of law. The speech in Winchester was very long and containing, Kossuth supported his opinions and ideas with the actual statistics in the electoral actions that were not recognized by the superior nation.<sup>32</sup>

Kossuth left Winchester on 27<sup>th</sup> of October for London to see a doctor and then arrived again in Southampton for a banquet where he gave a speech describing the need for liberty and

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<sup>28</sup> Kossuth, *Authentic Life*, 35-39.

<sup>29</sup> J. B. Moore, "Kossuth: A Sketch of a Revolutionist. II." *Political Science Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1895): 273. doi:10.2307/2139732.

<sup>30</sup> Kossuth, *Authentic Life*, 40-42.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 42-44.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 42-53.



further the actions leading to the suppression of the revolution (cooperation of Austria and Russian Empire). The speech was predominantly targeted on the aspects of Russian power in Europe and firstly tended to persuade the audience to start to think about the forces that could ensure minimizations of this power. Russian Empire, according to Kossuth's opinion, presented an evil force that days that manipulate the international policy for its own purposes and profit. In addition to the great speech in Winchester, this one can be seen as the first actually challenging the British nation to openly stand out against the Russians and helped the other nations to gain their rights and privileges by enclosing the barrier for the force. The public speech also mentioned Kossuth's personal relationship to Austria and his disappointment in the cooperation of the two countries.<sup>33</sup>

From Southampton, Kossuth resettled to London on 30<sup>th</sup> of October 1851. He stayed in London till the 10<sup>th</sup> of November and gave several speeches and lectures from which the major ones were the speech at Guildhall and at Copenhagen-House. The speech in Guildhall was conducted on 30<sup>th</sup> of October and dealt with the highlighting of London and England in the international policy and their importance in the seeking for freedom of other European nations. The concept of the speech was predominantly targeted on the description of the position of London as the capital city of England and the center of the British policy gathering all the dominant institutions of the country. Kossuth largely focused on the city and its inhabitants and tried to engage their opinion on Hungary by presenting the struggle of the Hungarian nation as the effort to gain what London already reached. The target on specifically London (not the whole England) can be considered Kossuth's understanding of the inhabitants' nature, self-identification and pride for the city which was followed by the enthusiastic reaction of the public.<sup>34</sup>

Kossuth further continued within the speech with the topic of the sovereignty of a nation and the nationality itself to explain a great deal of what he is trying to achieve for Hungarians. By referring to several examples, Kossuth provided the specific aspect of the national stability and rights which he assigned to liberty in the decision even under superior reign. Kossuth pointed out also the aspects of absolutism that had spread throughout the Habsburg monarchy in the last couple of years that concerned especially the economics of the state and the further requests for obligations of the Hungarian nation. He explained that there are restrictions in the goods purchases that (in order to maintain the economics) force the

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 53-58.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 58-63.

Hungarians to keep disadvantageous regulations for marketing the goods and prohibit the international trading with other countries which is a bounding regulation that prevents the country to be developed and gain the independence. The speech in Guildhall was then after targeted on the aspects of international policy and ended with Kossuth's hope for joining the power of England and America in standing against the Habsburg absolutism and Russian Empire.<sup>35</sup>

The second speech in London in the Copenhagen-House was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> of November and dealt especially with the questions of social circumstances and the labor aspects. Kossuth spoke about the situation of the working class in Hungary and compared its conditions to the ones in England by setting the important differences that are caused by the nature of the situation. To support the idea, Kossuth largely spoke about other European nations (French, Poles, Germans and Italians) and explained the respective events that had caused the circumstances of their issues. Once again Kossuth returned to the topic of the Russian Empire and challenged the public to stand out against the Czar's power which should have been the dominant effort of his actions in London.<sup>36</sup>

After spending some days in London, Kossuth left on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November for Birmingham and Manchester. His welcome in Birmingham was very warm, he made several stops to greet the public and short speeches on the way. On 11<sup>th</sup> of November, Kossuth arrived in Manchester where he spoke in the Free Trade Hall. The speech was given in front of a large audience starting with the praise for the British nation and the topic of the importance of belief and Christianity. The concept of this speech aimed at the wide explanation of the fight-for-freedom and independence tendencies among the European nations. This specific speech was assembled very closely to describe Kossuth's efforts for gaining the support in providing the freedom for the Hungarian nation.<sup>37</sup>

In order to support the idea, Kossuth followed with the topic of free trade with a rich history and large pride in Manchester and emphasized the threats of interventions of the absolutism into the Hungarian industry and trade. With this topic, Kossuth tried to picture for the inhabitants of the city the poverty that was brought on the Hungarian nation although the actual agriculture and industry of the country was relatively prospering. Kossuth presented several examples of how economics is important for the nations' development and

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 63-70.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 70-80.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 80-87.

mentioned relevant historical facts. At the end of the speech, Kossuth challenged the people of Manchester to support his ideas by recognizing the differences between despotism and liberty arising from the prohibitions on free trade in Hungary.<sup>38</sup>

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of November, Kossuth gave another speech in Manchester dealing with the aspects of Russian power and their impact on the whole European international policy. Afterwards, he left for Birmingham again for a longer stay. In Birmingham, Kossuth spoke at a banquet on the topic of the Hungarian revolution and its consequences for the nation, as well as the circumstances of its suppression. The speech was composed largely as a historical discourse and aimed at the highlighting of the immorality of the monarchy in its actions. The main goal of the speech was once again the effort to challenge the public to request the intervention to international politics, this time on behalf of the remedy of lawlessness committed on the Hungarian nation.<sup>39</sup>

From Birmingham, Kossuth returned to London on 13<sup>th</sup> of November. There he gave another speech in the Hanover Square Rooms. This speech was the last one and Kossuth concluded within his joy of spending time in England and the warm welcome in all visited cities. During the speech, he returned to the aspects of the absolutism of Habsburg monarchy and the free trade issues, and the risk that are undertaken when the Russian Empire continuously maintained the position of power.<sup>40</sup>

With the last speech, Kossuth made his farewell to the British nation and started to prepare on his further mission overseas. He spent another few days in London and then on 24<sup>th</sup> of November 1851 he returned to Southampton to take his path for the next journey to the United States.<sup>41</sup>

### 2.3 Appraisal of Kossuth's visit to England

Kossuth's visit to England can be considered his first effort to launch his mission of support for Hungarian independence. Kossuth had learned to speak English just before he arrived in England (although he already spoke Latin, Czech, Slovak, French, German and Italian).<sup>42</sup> Despite this, he felt the need to try, because the English-speaking countries of England and America had the power to influence international policy.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 87-93.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 93-119.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 119-124.

<sup>41</sup> J. B. Moore, "Kossuth: A Sketch of a Revolutionist. II." *Political Science Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1895): 273. doi:10.2307/2139732.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 272.

The speeches Kossuth gave in England were a warm-up for his American tour. He developed specific topics and concepts of persuasion that he would use overseas. He also learned to target his speech topics to the specific audience. These topics included a description of the actual situation in Hungary, the events of revolution, highlighting the unlawful actions of Austria in the suppression of Hungary in cooperation with the Russian Empire, and the encroachment of Habsburg absolutism on the liberty and basic human rights of Hungarians. Such topics became the basis for Kossuth's mission aiming at convincing the United States to oppose Russia, thereby furthering the Hungarian cause.

### 3 THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE UNITED STATES IN THE PERIOD OF LOUIS KOSSUTH'S VISIT

Kossuth arrived in the United States on December 5, 1851. The political situation and the actual approach to immigrants were unsettled. The contemporary situation in the United States preceding and during the period of Louis Kossuth's visit is described in the following subchapters.

#### 3.1 The overall political situation in the United States

The political situation in the United States at the beginning of the 1850s was greatly influenced by the opposition of two dominant opinions, Northern and Southern, concerning black chattel slavery.<sup>43</sup>

In 1845, the United States annexed Texas (a state with highly developed slavery system). This annexation, and a subsequent dispute over the border between Texas and Mexico, led to the Mexican-American War, which ended in 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. With this treaty, territories comprising present day California, Utah, Nevada, and parts of Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, and Arizona, were added to the United States.<sup>44</sup> When gold was discovered in California in 1849, and the population of the territory boomed, California applied for statehood. The question was, would California be a slave state or a free state? The answer came with the Compromise of 1850, which allowed California to enter the union as a free state, while the status of the other territories gained from Mexico would be decided by popular sovereignty.<sup>45</sup>

At the beginning of the 1850s, a new movement, Young America, developed, expressing the belief that the "country had a distinctive mission to perform-the introduction of a new and better political order in the world."<sup>46</sup> The Young America movement became the dominant influence of the Republican's political strategy for the elections in 1852 and were in agreement with Kossuth's ideas and opinions expressed during his visit to the United States. The movement was ideologically based on the "energy and enthusiasm for free-market capitalism and expanded territorial boundaries."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> C. Berkin et al., *Making America: A History of the United States* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), 270.

<sup>25</sup> J Opatrný and S. Raková, *Stručná historie států USA* (Praha: Nakladatelství Libri, 2003), 114-116.

<sup>45</sup> Berkin et al., *Making America*, 271.

<sup>46</sup> M. E. Curti, "Young America," *American Historical Review* 32, no. 1 (1926): 34-55.

<sup>47</sup> Donald S. Spencer, *Louis Kossuth and Young America: A Study of Sectionalism and Foreign Policy, 1848-1852* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1977), 11-14.

### 3.2 Immigrants in the United States in the 1850s

Immigration in the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century was variable and coincided with various international events. From the beginning of the nineteenth century, various nationalities entered the United States on compulsory or purposeful bases. The dominant group of immigrants was comprised of African slaves brought to America to work on the plantations especially in the southern states.

The purposeful immigration to the New World in the nineteenth century came predominantly from Europe in waves coinciding with conflicts on the continent. The first important wave was associated with the Napoleonic Wars beginning in 1815. The main reasons for Europeans leaving for America were “economic, political, and religious.”<sup>48</sup>

The high point of immigration from Europe came in the 1840s and 1850s, stemming from the Irish potato famine and the Revolution of 1848. With such events, the Irish and German populations of America greatly increased.<sup>49</sup> These ethnic groups were joined by others, including Italians, Austro-Hungarians, English/British, Russians, and Scandinavians. Alongside with European groups, the United States was a target for Asian immigration as well, especially for Chinese and Japanese, who immigrated mostly to the West to work on the railroads and in mines.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Christina A. Ziegler-McPherson, *Selling America: Immigration Promotion and the Settlement of the American Continent, 1607-1914* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2017), 10.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

## 4 LECTURES AND TOURS OF LOUIS KOSSUTH IN 1851 AND 1852

During his visit, Lajos Kossuth spoke in several parts of the United States with various receptions, depending on the actual situation within the region. A detailed description of the lectures, their topics, and public perception are given in the following subchapters. The prime intention of Kossuth's visit to the United States was to seek support for the independence of a nation with an individual culture and identity, an independence which his nation, Hungary, failed to achieve during the 1848-1849 revolution. According to his opinion, nations with a history of fighting for independence, such as the United States, had to recognize his appeal as important and help him to oppose the absolutist structure of the monarchy that was suppressing the basic rights of common Hungarians. Kossuth's mission was not only to gain funding for another revolution in Hungary but to persuade the United States and its representatives to engage in foreign policy in Europe and create a balancing force to the absolutist Russian Empire. He sought a strong opponent that could help him to achieve democracy in Hungary. He would soon come to find out, however, that American domestic policy divided Americans and stood in his way.

### 4.1 Lajos Kossuth in New York City

New York City was where Kossuth began his tour of the United States. For the whole tour, he was accompanied by his wife. Kossuth reached Staten Island after a long voyage across the Atlantic during which he suffered from prostrating illness. His arrival was announced by signal guns. Within his arrival speech, Kossuth expressed his acknowledgment for the reception and hopes for freedom for Hungarians similar to that which Americans possessed.<sup>51</sup> His reception was reportedly enthusiastic.<sup>52</sup> The actual preparations for Kossuth's reception were made in a glorious spirit; the city was decorated with flags of the United States and Hungary. The next speech given by Kossuth took place the day after his arrival, on December 6, 1851, in New York City in Castle Gardens, where he was received by city officials and well-connected gentlemen. Afterwards, Kossuth left for Jersey City where he gave a speech to the "republican masses of the New World."<sup>53</sup> This speech claimed accordance with republican principles and ideology, which contrasted American freedom

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<sup>51</sup> P. C. Headley, *The Life of Louis Kossuth, Governor of Hungary* (New York: Miller, Orton and Mulligan, 1856), 245.

<sup>52</sup> Donald S. Spencer, "Louis Kossuth and Young America: A Study of Sectionalism and Foreign Policy, 1848-1852," *American Historical Review* 83, no. 2 (1978): 521.

<sup>53</sup> Headley, *The Life of Louis Kossuth*, 245-247.

and the conditions and circumstances of life in Hungary at that time. Within this speech, Kossuth shortly summarized his efforts and desires associated with Hungarian independence and highlighted the admiration for the state governing of the American people. Afterward, Kossuth asked for the Americans' sympathy, which should provide new hope for the Hungarian nation.<sup>54</sup>

The visit continued with a military parade, during which Kossuth's carriage was accompanied and followed by city's Hungarian immigrants. On Sunday, Kossuth did not receive any visitors but attended a Catholic mass with the mayor of the city. In the following days, Kossuth spent time individually with various important persons and officials of the city, and he gave several short topic-related speeches concerning religion, faith, economy or development.<sup>55</sup>

On December 16<sup>th</sup>, Kossuth addressed the military in a speech targeted especially on the necessity of this profession in seeking freedom. Within this speech, Kossuth highlighted the organization of the American military and compared his own experiences and the revolution in Hungary with the recent Mexican American War.<sup>56</sup>

The speech to the military was followed by another one in Brooklyn Plymouth Church, where Kossuth discussed religious liberty and liberty in the context of American history. This speech comprised a message of peace and its necessity in a human's life and was the second to last Kossuth gave in New York City before leaving for Philadelphia. His farewell speech took place in Tripler Hall and targeted the glorification of women.<sup>57</sup>

The overall perception of Kossuth's visit to New York City was warm, probably due to the high number of Hungarian exile immigrants in the city. His speeches were assembled accordingly to the opportunities, which made his visit highly appreciated by officials as well as the public.

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 247-258.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 258-263.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 263-274.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.



## 4.2 Lectures provided in Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington

Kossuth's reception in Philadelphia was similarly celebratory as in New York City,<sup>58</sup> however, the approach to his person was not as warm as among the Hungarian exile immigrants whose share in New York City was much greater. After the arrival in Philadelphia, Kossuth addressed in his speech associated with the acceptance of the Maltese cross the treachery of Napoleon III Bonaparte – then president of France.<sup>59</sup>

At the time he became president, Napoleon III swore to maintain the French Republic, but then he sought re-election, despite the fact that doing so was forbidden by the French constitution. Kossuth explained that he was disturbed by this and highlighted the need for maintaining the republic structure in order to protect the citizenry. Moreover, Kossuth strongly criticized Napoleon III for his apparent betrayal of the French nation.<sup>60</sup> Kossuth then described the Russian and other European powers efforts to destroy the newly gained French constitutional political system. He expressed the need for supporting democratic republicanism, which would be much more appreciable for him in his birth-country as well.<sup>61</sup> The speech in Philadelphia was focused especially on aspects of democracy, and how government power should be in the hands of the people, as the monarchs do not know precisely what the nation really needs. Kossuth instructed the American representatives not to be threatened by Russian power and to openly object to liberty-threatening actions.<sup>62</sup>

Next, in Baltimore, his speech targeted the lack of freedom in Hungary and the need for American expressions of support to be heard by Europeans. Kossuth lamented the great influence of European politics on the US nation and highlighted the risks of Russian oppression. He then expressed three propositions that should be accepted by Americans:<sup>63</sup>

- upholding the doctrine of non-interference, giving Hungary a fair chance,
- protection of the freedom of commerce “with all parts of the world, so that this commerce might not suffer at the will of despots who may be at war with their subjects or with each other,”<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> P. H. Skinner, *The Welcome of Louis Kossuth, Governor of Hungary, to Philadelphia, by the Youth* (Philadelphia: P. H. Skinner and Joseph M. Wilson, 1852), 183.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 274-277.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 277-282.

<sup>63</sup> Officer of the Hungarian Army, *The Life of Gov. Louis Kossuth: with His Public Speeches in the United States, and a Brief History of the Hungarian War of Independence* (New York: Nassau Street 128, 1852), 141.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

- recognition of the Hungarian Declaration of Independence as legitimate and the independent nation of Hungarians.

At the time, it was forbidden to do business with Hungarian citizens. Kossuth spoke on the topic of the financial support of American citizens and expressed the necessity of obeying the Austrian law, which did not allow him to accept any such help. Nevertheless, Kossuth proposed the possibility of material support, especially in the form of weaponry. Moreover, he highlighted the insurances of Philadelphians to fight for the independence of the Hungarian nation.<sup>65</sup>

Kossuth reached the American capital city - Washington D.C. – on December 30<sup>th</sup>, 1851, where he was formally greeted as the nation's guest. On December 31<sup>st</sup>, Kossuth met with President Millard Fillmore at the White House. They spoke a little about the current situation in Europe and the actual state of the nations under the Habsburg monarchy.<sup>66</sup>

A week later, Kossuth gave a speech in the banquet hall of the National Hotel. As with the speeches in Philadelphia and Baltimore, this one was also focused on the consequences associated with the election of Napoleon III in France and his effort to conquer the Empire, broadened to the general situation in Europe. Kossuth used parables from history to explain the sense of freedom and the need to struggle for it.<sup>67</sup>

Kossuth's overall goal in the east coast cities was informing his listeners about the actual and contemporary situation in Europe and explaining the necessity for supporting the efforts of oppressed nations to gain self-governing rights. By these means, Kossuth sought understanding and financial support, while simultaneously trying to persuade the American representatives to resist the Hapsburgs and the Czar by expressing their desire for the recognition of Hungarian independence.<sup>68</sup>

During his time in the American capital, Kossuth received a note informing him his mother died and his sisters were imprisoned in Austria. Saddened but undeterred, Kossuth departed from the east coast and headed inland. Before his departure, however, Kossuth addressed the Maryland state senate with a thankful speech and once again encouraged the representatives to openly speak their minds concerning European foreign policy and French events.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 141-142.

<sup>66</sup> Headley, *The Life of Louis Kossuth*, 282-285, 453-461.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 285-290.

### 4.3 Lajos Kossuth in Pennsylvania and the Midwest

After leaving Maryland and the capital, Kossuth spent three months traveling through the American Midwest, giving a series of lectures on various topics associated with the issue of freedom and liberty, and European nations' efforts to achieve them. First, however, he made several stops in Pennsylvania.<sup>70</sup>

Kossuth gave two speeches in Harrisburg, the state capital – to the legislature in city hall and at a great banquet. The first of the speeches, to politicians and civic leaders, was focused more on gratitude and a celebration of the American nation. It also emphasized the connection of both Americans and Europeans with the latest events in France, namely the undemocratic power grab by Napoleon III.<sup>71</sup>

The speech at the great banquet was broader and explanatory. Kossuth discussed the actual political, religious and social situations within the European states and his achievements during the revolutionary years. For public purposes, Kossuth described the needs and requirements of common Hungarians and the oppression they experienced after the unsuccessful revolution and the suppression from the side of Austrian representatives and Russian regiments. Further, Kossuth expressed the need and longing for the fall of the monarchy and the end of its absolutist reign.<sup>72</sup>

The dominant topic of his speeches was the development of sympathy and support among the American citizens, as he believed the great dangers for the whole of Europe were Russian power and the inability of people to unite in order to establish a republic. Kossuth saw weakness in the Austrian monarchy in its inability to unite and control the Hungarian army. For the potential success of a new revolution, once again, he emphasized the need for material support and challenged the audience to provide it and to feel sympathy for those who wanted to overthrow European monarchies.<sup>73</sup>

Kossuth then traveled west to Pittsburgh, where he spent 10 days in January 1852. His welcome in Pittsburgh and further towns and cities in the region was warm and kind. The lectures he gave in Pittsburgh resulted in several actions, as their topics correspond to the

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<sup>70</sup> Officer of the Hungarian Army, *The Life of Gov. Louis Kossuth*, 170.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 173-183.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

ones he gave on the east coast. One of the consequences was the establishment of *The Ladies Association for the Friends of Hungary*.<sup>74</sup>

On his journey, Kossuth was accompanied by his wife, who also influenced the women with whom they came into contact. In fact, the Kossuths influenced the formation of the women's rights movement in America.<sup>75</sup>

Kossuth's next stop was Cleveland, Ohio, where 6,000 people turned out to greet him at Melodeon Hall. The speech he gave there was structured similarly to his previous long lectures, with a focus on the current situation in Europe and an appeal on American support. He then moved on to the state capital, Columbus,<sup>76</sup> where he highlighted aspects of freedom and liberty and discussed the necessity to provide any people with the possibility to choose their own government and maintain their own cultural identity. Abraham Lincoln is said to have borrowed from Kossuth's speech in his 1863 Gettysburg Address.<sup>77</sup> Kossuth's final stop in Ohio was Cincinnati, where he spent two weeks during which he gave several speeches and lectures, including a speech on the occasion of George Washington's birthday. While Kossuth was still in Cincinnati, he attended a dinner with Governor Morehead of Kentucky. Kossuth was assured by him that no state would surpass Kentucky in welcoming him. In response, Kossuth visited Covington, Kentucky, on the opposite bank of the Ohio River from Cincinnati, where he was given money to purchase guns, powder and ammunition to rid his country of despotism and oppression. Kossuth was told that Kentucky would furnish 10,000 men to fight the despots, if needed. From there, Kossuth travelled down the Ohio River to Louisville, Kentucky, where he was received warmly. The reason for that is Kossuth's appearance in the Louisville Journal where he was enthusiastically described as a "champion of freedom" who was on a mission "as holy, as noble, and as glorious" as the one for which the Revolutionary fathers had fought 75 years previous.<sup>78</sup> He then moved on to St. Louis, Missouri, his westernmost stop, where he encouraged his audience to support Hungarians in their bid for independence.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Oliver, "Louis Kossuth's Appeal to the Middle West, 1852," 488.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 489.

<sup>77</sup> Peter R. Eisenstadt and Laura-Eve Moss, *The Encyclopedia of New York State* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2005), 846.

<sup>78</sup> Oliver, "Louis Kossuth's Appeal to the Middle West, 1852," 492-493.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 493-495.

#### 4.4 The Southern Leg of Kossuth's American Tour

From St. Louis, Kossuth travelled down the Mississippi River to New Orleans, which was to be his first stop on an extensive Southern leg of his tour. This leg, however, would prove largely unsuccessful. In comparison to his reception in the North, in the South the media labelled Kossuth as a demagogue. Thus, his visits to Southern cities, including New Orleans, Mobile, Montgomery, Augusta (Georgia), Wilmington, and Richmond, were short and largely unproductive.<sup>80</sup>

Kossuth was reserved during his visits in the South. He did not want Southerners against him and was afraid of losing them, so he distanced himself from the issue of slavery, and this despite the fact that Northerners expected him to criticize Southerners over the issue.<sup>81</sup> Instead, he proclaimed neutrality on the slavery question in the name of “nonintervention” in domestic politics, but this position failed to gain him the support of Southerners, who disbelieved him. Southerners knew that Kossuth had supported the emancipation of the serfs in Hungary in 1848, and thus they believed that he sympathized with the American emancipation movement.<sup>82</sup> At the same time, his “nonintervention” lost him the backing of many Northerners, who viewed him as “the champion of freedom” and expected him to support abolitionism. His duplicity then became apparent. He wanted freedom for Hungarians, but not for American blacks. So in the South, Kossuth suddenly found himself in a no-win situation, but according to Alabama senator Jeremiah Clemens, Kossuth did not even deserve pity, as he had brought this on himself.<sup>83</sup> U.S. representative Horace Mann, summed up Kossuth's Southern reception the best when he stated that “the avowed opposition [of the South against Kossuth] is based on the question of ‘intervention;’ but the real motive is slavery. While they demand that one fugitive shall be fettered and sent home, they cannot see another [Kossuth] fetted and honored.”<sup>84</sup> As a result, the legislatures of Alabama and Georgia condemned Kossuth's cause and stated that it was the duty of the United States, in compliance with the Monroe Doctrine, to not intervene in European affairs. Other southern legislatures either were not in session or ignored Kossuth.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> John. Bartholomew St. Leger, “Louis Kossuth in America, 1851-1852,” master's thesis, University of Richmond, 1961, 69-70.

<sup>81</sup> Manisha Sinha, *The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 366.

<sup>82</sup> Steven B. Várdy, “Louis Kossuth: A Celebrated, Disillusioned Hungarian Revolutionary's Visit to Pittsburgh in 1852,” *Western Pennsylvania History* 91, no. 1 (2008): 8.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> St. Leger, “Louis Kossuth in America, 1851-1852,” 71.

Kossuth believed that with the support of the Young America Movement, which was at its highest point during his visits, he would be able to sway Americans away from their long-held belief in isolationism, which originated in President George Washington's warning against entangling alliances.<sup>86</sup> This warning prevented Kossuth from gaining American support for Hungary's struggle for its independence.

#### 4.5 Kossuth Retreats to the North

In April 1852, Kossuth arrived in New Haven, Connecticut and gave a highly-attended speech starting with the admiration and recognition of the hospitality of the region of New England for the refugees from the old continent of Europe. Kossuth thanked New Englanders for the weaponry and financial contributions they donated to the cause of Hungarian independence.<sup>87</sup> His next visit was to Springfield, Massachusetts, where he gave a long speech about the American spirit of democracy and his wish that Hungarians could entertain the same.<sup>88</sup>

In conclusion, he expressed his hope for a new revolution in Europe. he then visited Northampton, Massachusetts, where he gave several shorter speeches and lectures on the topic of the situation in Europe and Hungary.<sup>89</sup>

On April 26<sup>th</sup>, 1852, Kossuth arrived in Worcester, Massachusetts, where he lectured Massachusetts representatives and other important persons. In comparison to previous speeches, this lecture was more religiously based and referred to the similarities between the histories of Massachusetts and Hungary.<sup>90</sup> Kossuth reminded them of President John Quincy Adams's interventionist foreign policy by saying that "the United States must take the counsel of her duties and interests in relation to the acts of the despots towards those states."<sup>91</sup> Kossuth then expressed his wish that all American citizens support the idea of intervention and recognize the right of each nation to be able to choose its own individual form of government, which should not be suppressed by any foreign country. Once again,

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Lajos Kossuth, *Kossuth in New England: A Full Account of the Hungarian Governor's Visit to Massachusetts; with Speeches, and the Addresses That Were Made to Him* (Boston: Jewett and Company, 1852), 16-20.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 20-34.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 34-60.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 60.

Kossuth spoke about the history of the Hungarian revolution and its consequences.<sup>92</sup> Among the audience were exiled refugees of the German nation, who admired his words, and with whom he sympathized.

The following day, Kossuth arrived in Boston, the capital of Massachusetts, which had originally invited him to visit in the fall of 1851.<sup>93</sup> There, he gave a short thankful speech underlining his fondness for the independent American nation. Kossuth then compared his effort as a second cross bearing and promised that, if given the chance, Hungarians would embrace the principles of freedom and liberty like Americans had.<sup>94</sup>

At Boston's famous and symbolically important Faneuil Hall, Kossuth spoke to an audience that included many women. In this lecture, Kossuth expressed the opinion that it was time for the rule of the aristocracy to give way to democratic governance. He also encouraged Americans to balance the world by taking action against Russian absolutism.<sup>95</sup> He broached the topic of slavery, but in a neutral tone, as he tried to diplomatically avoid involvement in internal political problems. By not wholeheartedly supporting abolitionism, however, he lost the support of his audience, which responded with a clearly lukewarm ovation at the end.<sup>96</sup>

His next speech was given at a legislative banquet and targeted the Russian monarch and absolutist regimes in Europe. Furthermore, Kossuth followed this with a history of Hungarian nationality, the importance of its maintenance and his endeavors within the revolution. The dominant idea of the speech was anchored in the legacy of Benjamin Franklin, Massachusetts's favorite son, and his philosophy and political approach.<sup>97</sup>

Kossuth then spoke at Bunker Hill, the location of an important battle during the American Revolutionary War. He compared what happened there with the unfinished Hungarian revolution.<sup>98</sup> He then left for Cambridge, where gave a short speech to the students of Harvard University.<sup>99</sup> In Lowell, Kossuth spoke to the Ladies Hungarian Association about trade, industry, agriculture, and the importance of work and employment.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 34-60.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 60-82.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 34-60.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 82-96.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 96-120.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 130-148.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 148-159.

At the beginning of May, Kossuth visited Lynn and Salem where he spoke on several occasions especially on the topics of European political development and the actual intent of his American visit, i.e., the request for support against absolutist monarchs. Then, back in Boston, he lectured German refugees on the struggles of seeking and fighting for national identity.<sup>101</sup> Later, in Roxbury, he talked of the need for philanthropy in the difficult time of minor nationalities' oppression.<sup>102</sup> He also visited the battlefield of Lexington and Concord and gave speeches in West Cambridge, Plymouth, and Fall River. For his last lecture in Massachusetts, he returned to Boston's Faneuil Hall, where he recapitulated his main topics: support for Hungarian nationalism and democracy, and the end of absolutism.<sup>103</sup>

#### 4.6 New York Tour and Return to Europe

Kossuth then spent five weeks in New York state, giving lectures and speeches in Albany, Buffalo, Syracuse, and Utica. In Albany, Kossuth spoke to young men, comparing the American Revolutionary War and the Hungarian revolution. He encouraged them to try to understand the position of common people in revolutionary actions. In Buffalo, he gave a speech on the topic of commerce and risks associated with excessive materialism, and the necessity of the education of young people in proper values. He then encouraged his listeners to become actively involved in European policy and to resist the Russian power. In Syracuse and Utica, he discussed the necessity of balancing the Russian power with an equally strong force.<sup>104</sup> He then travelled to New York City, but since he had already spoken there the previous year, he departed for Europe without delay.<sup>105</sup>

After Kossuth and his family returned to the United Kingdom, Kossuth started to work for a Scottish newspaper. He wrote about his disappointment in the United States, saying that he would invade Europe immediately if he had enough ships, men, guns and money. After a revolution in Milan and Lombardy in 1853, he begged Americans again to take an active position. Kossuth's disappointment continued after Bismarck's Austrian War, which led to the creation of a dual monarchy between Austria and Hungary. Kossuth spent the rest of his

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 185-200.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 200-212.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 212-285.

<sup>104</sup> Lajos Kossuth and Francis William Newman, *Select Speeches of Kossuth* (New York: C. S. Francis and Co., 1854), 373-378.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 87.



life in northern Italy, where he died on March 29, 1894. After his death, his body was transported to Budapest, where he was buried.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> St. Leger, "Louis Kossuth in America, 1851-1852," 90-91.

## **5 A COMPARISON OF KOSSUTH'S VISITS TO ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES**

Kossuth's mission aiming on gaining support for his thoughts and ideas in terms of Hungarian freedom and liberty was slightly different in both countries – England and the United States. In England, following the work of his associates, Kossuth was welcomed. The public listened attentively to him and cheered and accepted his efforts and goals. Kossuth was so successful because he targeted each speech and lecture towards the specific audience. He also gained stability in his ideas and approaches.

In the United States, Kossuth's welcome was more variable, as he attempted to visit a much greater area with various national identities. On the east coast and in the Midwest, the welcome was pleasant, as the national feelings in these parts of the country better corresponded with Kossuth's mission. Much less warm was the welcome in the South, where due to slavery, the ideas of freedom and liberty were not generally accepted as a categorical necessity.

The impact of Kossuth's visits, however, was similar in both countries. Although he repeatedly encouraged both the United Kingdom and the United States to support Hungarian liberty by opposing the Russian empire, neither were willing to do so. He raised public funds for a Hungarian revolution, and raised public awareness about the situation in Europe, but that was all. Yet, it might be said that Kossuth prepared the ground for the ultimate independence of Hungary, even if it was not achieved during his lifetime.

## CONCLUSION

Kossuth's journey through America lasted seven months, which in hindsight was probably too long. As his tour progressed, enthusiasm waned, and the response to his speeches was not as warm in the South as in the North and Midwest. In the North, Kossuth was generally considered a hero of "astonishing proportions," although some northern conservatives demurred, describing Kossuth's American supporters as infidels, radical abolitionists, socialists and scoundrels.<sup>107</sup> In the Midwest, Kossuth found support among abolitionists and free-soilers. In the slave-holding South, Kossuth struggled because Southerners did not accept freedom and liberty as a categorical necessity. Although Kossuth never publicly condemned slavery, his desire for freedom for all Hungarians rubbed caused many Southerners to feel threatened. Even so, Kossuth positively influenced the national women's rights movement through the establishment of the *Ladies Association for the Friends of Hungary*, which continued to promote liberty and equality for all, long after Kossuth's departure from the United States.<sup>108</sup>

As in the United Kingdom, in the United States Kossuth urged the government to enter European affairs and to stand up to the Russian empire. Both countries ultimately refused to do so. Kossuth ultimately failed in the United States because he could not break the bounds of isolationism that dominated American political life throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>109</sup> Even so, Kossuth succeeded in raising funds for another Hungarian revolution, and he increased awareness of the political situation in Europe. In doing so, he helped set the stage for the break-up of the Austrian Hungarian Empire and for Hungarian independence in 1918.

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<sup>107</sup> Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, and Eugene D. Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholders Worldview* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 57.

<sup>108</sup> Steven Béla Vardy, "Louis Kossuth and the Slavery Question in America," *East European Quarterly* 39, no. 4 (2006): 450.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

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