

“‘Our Country is the World’: American Abolitionists,  
Louis Kossuth, and Philanthropic Revolutions”

W. Caleb McDaniel  
The Johns Hopkins University  
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On December 4, 1851, Hungarian revolutionary Louis Kossuth arrived in the United States to fanfare and fame. His reputation preceded him. Three years before, Kossuth had become an international celebrity for his leading role in the Hungarian revolution, one of many revolts in 1848 that unsettled the Europe organized by the Congress of Vienna. Invoking the American revolution, Kossuth’s comrades declared Hungary’s independence from Hapsburg rule in 1848. They very nearly succeeded in winning it. Imperial troops from Austria invaded Hungary late in 1848 but were repulsed by rebel armies. Early in 1849, however, the Hapsburgs appealed to Nicholas I of Russia for support. Russian armies poured over the eastern border of Hungary’s fledgling state, crushing Kossuth’s movement and forcing him into exile in Turkey. Throughout liberal Europe, Kossuth became a symbol of freedom. His sympathizers also multiplied in America, leading the Fillmore administration to send a naval steamer in 1851 to escort Kossuth from Turkey to the United States.<sup>1</sup>

His entry into New York City was triumphal. Whisked from one lavish banquet to another, Kossuth spoke to packed halls of cheering admirers. Parades and official welcoming committees greeted his party at every turn. By December 12, just one week after his arrival, diarist George Templeton Strong began his daily entry by noting that “Magyar-mania [was] epidemic” in the city. The mania became pandemic as Kossuth

continued his speaking tour to New England, the Midwest, and the South. Journalists praised Kossuth's exotic eloquence, costume, and heroism, while entrepreneurs sold faddish "Kossuth hats" to his admirers. The reasons for this infatuation were multiple and complex. By inviting Kossuth to its shores, the United States defied the wishes of Austria, gratifying a growing nationalistic movement known as "Young America." There was also, as Templeton Strong perceptively noticed, "a strong undercurrent of No-Popery feeling" – the contemporary term for nativist anti-Catholicism – "mixed up with the legitimate Hungary enthusiasm." Still other Americans saw Kossuth as the heir to their own revolutionary legacy; many called him Hungary's George Washington. Previous historians have thus attributed "Magyar-mania" to broad cultural, social and political currents in antebellum America.<sup>2</sup>

In this paper, however, I want to focus on "Magyar-mania" in the context of the debate over slavery, which was surely the most salient national issue in the antebellum period. Specifically, this paper deals with how abolitionists used "Magyar-mania" and Kossuth's image in antislavery discourse. In doing so, this paper is both an example of "transnational history" and a history of transnationalism. It is "transnational" because it deals with an encounter across borders between American reformers and a Hungarian revolutionary, an encounter that ran both ways. Kossuth's Atlantic crossing informed certain debates in abolitionism, but abolitionism also forced Kossuth to respond to the slavery debate, even if he did so very obliquely. We therefore need constant reminders that the slavery debate was not merely national, but transnational, and that it included both interlocutors and ideas that crossed political borders. But my talk is also a foray into the history of transnationalism, a story about how abolitionists articulated cosmopolitan

and transnational ideals. As we will see, abolitionists used Kossuth and the symbols that surrounded him to distinguish a nationalistic ethic of “patriotism” from a transnational ethos that they most often called “philanthropy.” In exploring this distinction between “patriotism” and “philanthropy,” we will see that Kossuth’s trip was not just a case of the border-crossing that transnational scholars have rightly tried to move to the center of American history. The Kossuth affair was also an episode that helped abolitionists to think about and evaluate borders themselves. A truly transnational history will thus pay attention not only to how borders were crossed, but also to how borders were conceived. Both issues will be dealt with here.<sup>3</sup>

At first, even abolitionists were not immune to the Kossuth fever that blanketed America in the winter of 1851 to 1852.<sup>4</sup> Abolitionists thought they recognized an ally in Kossuth, whose odes to liberty resonated with their own romantic ideas about freedom. In fact, Kossuth had tried to build support for his independence movement by abolishing Hungarian serfdom. Here was a fellow liberator, thought abolitionists, a coworker in the cause of universal emancipation. But these hopes were quickly disappointed. Within a week of his arrival, Kossuth had publicly declared that he would “not meddle with any domestic concerns of the United States.” Garrisonians, who were particularly radical abolitionists, reacted with special vehemence to this statement of neutrality, which they viewed as a capitulation to slavery. “The die is cast,” wrote William Lloyd Garrison after Kossuth washed his hands of abolitionism. “All speculation is now at an end, as to the position KOSSUTH means to maintain on the slavery question. ... He means to be deaf, dumb, and blind, in regard to it!” Edmund Quincy likewise concluded that Kossuth’s “visit to this country was a fatal blunder.” He had “sold himself” to doughfaces and

slaveholders, bowed before the national idol of slavery, and “stooped to kiss the feet of American women-whippers ... and slave-catchers,” compared to whom Hapsburgs and Russians were like angels of light.<sup>5</sup>

Most historians regard this over-the-top rhetoric as just what one would expect from the Garrisonians. One scholar has characterized the abolitionists’ “defection” from their “erstwhile hero” as typically extreme and contemptuous.<sup>6</sup> But this implies that we can learn nothing new about abolitionists from the Kossuth affair. It lets us believe that Kossuth was simply no different from the numerous other public figures who earned the scorn of radical abolitionists. Lucretia Mott herself observed, after Kossuth returned to England, “How faithful has W. L. G. ever been to the short-comers!”<sup>7</sup> However, if we take the abolitionists’ anger as merely more proof that they were radical or easily vexed, we risk missing the particular reasons why they quarreled with Kossuth. True, Garrison was hard on all “short-comers,” but what were Kossuth’s particular short-comings? The answer to that question, in the terms used by abolitionists, was that Kossuth was a mere “patriot,” while abolitionists were true “philanthropists.” In antislavery writings, Kossuth helped to crystallize an important debate about the relative value of patriotism, an inherently nationalistic ideal, and philanthropy, which many abolitionists considered to be a higher, more transnational value.<sup>8</sup>

To understand this debate better, we first need to set the Kossuth episode in two larger contexts. First, Kossuth’s visit coincided with the aftershocks produced by the Fugitive Slave Law and the Compromise of 1850. The Law made it easier for Southern masters to pursue runaway slaves in the North, and it imposed stiff penalties on Northern citizens for assisting fugitives. Infuriated by this encroachment on their own liberties and

soil, abolitionists made assertive and militant challenges to the Law. They formed vigilance committees organized for the rescue of captured slaves and lobbied for local “personal liberty laws” that would legalize giving aid to fugitives. In 1851, the year in which Kossuth arrived, four high-profile incidents pushed the issue of fugitive slaves to the center of antislavery agendas. In February, a fugitive slave known as Shadrach had been rescued from custody by a group of black abolitionists in Boston. In April, the Boston Vigilance Committee tried unsuccessfully to rescue fugitive Thomas Sims, who was carried back to Georgia. In September, a riot broke out in Christiana, Pennsylvania, when armed black and white abolitionists exchanged fire with a federal posse. In October, abolitionists in Syracuse, New York, stormed the cell of a fugitive slave and engineered his escape, marking what became known in abolitionist lore as the “Jerry Rescue.” In December, Kossuth arrived.<sup>9</sup>

A second context for Kossuth’s arrival was the fact that two other foreign visitors occupied the abolitionists’ attention in 1851. The first was Father Theobald Mathew, an Irish Catholic temperance reformer who toured the United States for two years beginning in 1849. Mathew, much like Kossuth, disappointed the abolitionists. In 1842, he had joined Daniel O’Connell as a signatory of the Irish Appeal, a document urging Irish Americans to oppose slavery. But upon his arrival in the United States, Mathew refused to jeopardize his temperance mission by aligning with the abolitionists. Garrisonians denounced him as a turncoat.<sup>10</sup> They also juxtaposed Mathew with British abolitionist George Thompson, who was also in America during 1851. Thompson was a long-time Garrisonian. On his previous speaking tour in the United States, he had been greeted throughout the North by violent mobs who opposed his “foreign interference.” In fact,

the famous Boston mob of 1835 that ended up leading Garrison through the streets by a noose was originally formed in search of Thompson.<sup>11</sup> Thompson was clearly a foreign visitor who did not refuse to meddle in domestic affairs, but who spoke the truth about slavery, whatever the cost. He left in the summer of 1851. Father Mathew left in November. In December, Kossuth arrived.

Both of these contexts illuminate why Kossuth mattered so much to abolitionists. The fugitive slave crisis made the country's "Magyar-mania" especially hypocritical. While politicians were toasting Kossuth and mouthing platitudes about freedom from tyranny, they were kowtowing to the tyranny of the "Slave Power" and imprisoning abolitionists who sought to free fugitive slaves. The irony was heightened by the fact that, in the eyes of abolitionists, Kossuth himself was a fugitive. As the National Anti-Slavery Standard put it, "the escape of Jerry from the United States government at Syracuse is an event as much to be rejoiced at as the escape of Kossuth from Austrian despotism."<sup>12</sup> Other abolitionists referred to fugitive slaves as "American Hungarians" and drew comparisons between Kossuth and former slaves like Frederick Douglass and Ellen Crafts. In Philadelphia, a group of free blacks passed a typical antislavery resolution that pledged to "hold up to the scorn of the civilized world that hypocrisy which welcomes to our shores the refugees from Austrian tyranny, and at the same time would send the refugees from American Slavery back to a doom, compared with which, Austrian tyranny is mercy."<sup>13</sup>

Abolitionists thus used Kossuth as metaphorical grist in their mill, which explains why they were so disappointed when Kossuth did not live up to his figurative role as a fugitive slave. But abolitionists also weighed Kossuth in the balance with foreigners like

Father Mathew and George Thompson. The “Slave Power” had always pressured such visitors to seal their lips on the subject of slavery. In 1852, Edmund Quincy reminded abolitionists that “Father Mathew had to undergo this ordeal, and we all know how he stood it. ... Kossuth is the most signal, as he is the latest, example of the application of this national test.” As Kossuth toured the country in “one continual Festival,” Quincy continued, he “shuts his eyes to the skeleton that sits at the board alongside him.” How different was the example of Thompson, who dragged America’s skeletons out of the closet. In fact, during his tour, as the United States prepared to bring Kossuth out of exile in Turkey, Thompson had explicitly condemned the hypocrisy of sending a naval steamer to bring Kossuth to America while many Americans supported using the same means to send free blacks back to Africa.<sup>14</sup>

Both of these arguments about Kossuth – that he was himself a fugitive, and that he was too much like Father Mathew – were folded into a larger critique of Kossuth: that he was too much of a patriot. Abolitionists blamed Kossuth’s reticence about slavery on his love of country. After all, his primary objective while in the United States was to ask for military aid against Austria. This patriotic concern, abolitionists believed, obscured his larger duty to all oppressed people. This criticism of Kossuth was made long before he arrived. In 1849, Garrison published an editorial contrasting the patriotism of Kossuth with the broader vision of Jesus Christ. “Kossuth is, unquestionably, a sublime specimen of what the world calls ‘patriotism,’” Garrison said. But this made Kossuth little more than “a Hungarian, as Washington was an American. His country is bounded by a few degrees of latitude and longitude. ... He is strictly local, territorial, national.” Jesus, by way of contrast, “was neither local nor national in his feelings or designs. ... His soul was

expansive as the universe, his love for the human race impartial, his country the world.” Here Garrison alluded suggestively to the motto that he always affixed to the Liberator’s masthead: “Our Country is the World – Our Countrymen are All Mankind.” He implied that abolitionists, like Jesus, embraced the entire globe. But the feelings of patriots like Kossuth were confined by borders.<sup>15</sup>

Two years later, Garrison continued to argue against the narrow and geographical grounds of patriotism. In a speech delivered one month after Kossuth’s arrival, Garrison said, “He is here for Hungary – that is number one, and the whole number.” Americans, Garrison noted, suffered from the same single-mindedness. They excused silence on slavery by rallying under the flag and praising the benefits of Union. Abolitionists, on the other hand, were not constrained to love any particular nation. Their country was the world. If Kossuth was local and territorial, if his loyalties were governed by degrees of longitude and latitude, abolitionists considered themselves to be global and cosmopolitan in their designs: “The abolitionists have, from the beginning, based their movement on universal principles. It is as wide as the world.”<sup>16</sup>

It was not only Garrisonian abolitionists who pointed to Kossuth’s patriotism as the source of his shortcomings. Gerrit Smith, a political abolitionist who disagreed with Garrison about a great deal, spotted the same chink in Kossuth’s armor. In a letter to Frederick Douglass, he conceded that to be a patriot was praiseworthy as far as it went. But, he said, “it is the philanthropist, who is the highest style of man. His country is the world. His countrymen mankind.” Echoing Garrison’s editorial on Kossuth and Jesus, Smith continued, “reason forbids the repression of our sympathies out of respect to geographical and national lines. It is only for convenience sake, that such lines may be



drawn across the human brotherhood. It is true, that they bound the flow of patriotism. But philanthropy is paramount to patriotism.” Smith lamented that no revolution had yet ascended to these heights. Even the American revolution, he argued, was motivated by patriotism. But truly philanthropic revolutions would one day take place, and “then mere patriotism will be counted as a very poor thing.”<sup>17</sup> Such arguments pervaded antislavery discourse. Throughout the antebellum decades, many abolitionists, including Frederick Douglass, Wendell Phillips, William Allen, and Charles Follen, critiqued “patriotism” as intrinsically inferior to “philanthropy.”<sup>18</sup>

Arguments about “philanthropy” were made across the antislavery spectrum, but it was clearly the Garrisonians who placed the greatest emphasis on the Liberator’s motto, “Our Country is the World.” On the one hand, it should not surprise us that radical Garrisonians were especially critical of “patriotism.” After all, many of them rejected political participation of any kind and believed that all human governments were by nature corrupt and coercive. As historian Lewis Perry has shown in his classic work on antislavery anarchism, many Garrisonians, and even radical constituents in the Liberty Party, argued that human states were always subordinate to the “government of God.” The radical abolitionists’ millennial expectations included the hope that all governments and states would ultimately dissolve into societies based on mutual love and respect for individual freedom.<sup>19</sup>

Yet the transnational connotations of “philanthropy” add another layer to this Garrisonian critique of American government. The arguments over Kossuth’s narrow patriotism reveal that Garrisonians critiqued nation-states not just because they were states, and thus necessarily sinful, but also because they were nations. Nations, and

particularly nations that had been created by patriotic revolutions, were necessarily bound by geographical and political borders that stemmed the tide of global philanthropy. If patriotism was local, this was because nations were essentially local. By calling the world their country, abolitionists were therefore trying to imagine a space that was not so constrained by national borders. It thus needs to be stressed that the “government of God” was superior in part because it was transnational. It embodied the literal meaning of a utopia; by being “nowhere” in particular, it could extend its boundaries to include everywhere in general.

Once we see the transnational currents in the distinction between philanthropy and patriotism, we can even appreciate that the Fugitive Slave Law was criticized in part because of its geographical narrowness. The Law underlined a new border within the borders of the American nation-state, between a free North and a slave South, and tried to turn a line of latitude into a marker of morality. This was precisely the kind of thing that “philanthropy” opposed, both in the case of the Fugitive Slave Law and in the tour of the Hungarian “fugitive,” Louis Kossuth. Each episode wrongly circumscribed areas of freedom with cartographical borders. As George Thompson, the abolitionists’ English hero put it, during his 1851 visit to America, “Man’s right to liberty is the same in every latitude and every longitude. Man’s great moral duties are the same on every rood of God’s territory.” Both the Fugitive Slave Law and Kossuth’s neutrality violated that truth. Both implied liberty and morality could be mapped.<sup>20</sup>

All of these arguments were distilled and summarized in Garrison’s 112-page pamphlet, the Letter to Louis Kossuth, published in 1852.<sup>21</sup> The pamphlet was first a fierce indictment of the Fugitive Slave Law, and it pointed Kossuth’s attention to the fact

that he too was “a fugitive from Austrian vengeance.” It also compared Kossuth and Father Mathew unfavorably with George Thompson. Garrison concluded that Kossuth was “selfish,” “a Hungarian for Hungarians, and nothing for mankind.” In the final analysis, he said, “local patriotism, courageous and self-sacrificing to the last extremity, is no anomaly in human history. To prove that it is neither selfish nor exclusive, a world-wide test must be applied to it.”<sup>22</sup> To abolitionists like Garrison, Kossuth had failed this world-wide test. He had crossed borders without going beyond them. The encounter with this transnational visitor thus helped Garrisonians to think through their own views about a different, transnational identity.

The ranking of world-wide philanthropy over “local patriotism” was a crucial plank in the abolitionists’ platform. Yet it was also controversial, even for abolitionists. Not all reformers were as critical of Kossuth as the Garrisonians were, and many political abolitionists and “new-organization” Tappanites publicly defended his patriotism.<sup>23</sup> Even before Kossuth’s tour, others had questioned the emphasis that Garrisonians placed on “philanthropy.” Henry Highland Garnet, for example, believed that white abolitionists talked a great deal about “generalities [and] universalities,” but that these abstractions often overlooked the more urgent and local needs of the African American community. Writing under a pseudonym for the Colored American in 1841, Garnet said, “we have no sympathy with that cosmopoliting disposition which tramples upon all nationality, which encircles the universe, but at the same time theorizes away the most needed blessings, and blights the dearest hopes of a people.” Other militant black abolitionists embraced Kossuth’s example as a model for insurrection and used the revolutions of 1848 to defend the right of American slaves to revolt.<sup>24</sup>

The abolitionists' idea that their country was the world was therefore a site of contest within the movement. It was also a site of contest between abolitionists and their Southern enemies, who keenly saw that the rejection of patriotism was a cornerstone of much antislavery thought. In 1850, a writer for the proslavery United States Magazine and Democratic Review derisively described the Garrisonians as “fanatics [who] recognize no country, no friends, no kindred. They are the friends of the entire human race, and nothing less than the circumference of the world can set bounds to their philanthropy. ... They desert their duties to their country, their kindred, and their friends, to go wandering about the world.”<sup>25</sup>

This criticism of the abolitionists reveals that a rich debate was going on in antebellum America about the relative values of patriotism and philanthropy, and indeed about whether the “bounds” of philanthropy mapped onto the “bounds” of nation-states.<sup>26</sup> The Kossuth episode thus was not merely a knee-jerk attack on a celebrity; it serves instead as a window onto serious debates about transnationalism. These debates are worth recovering in our narratives of American antislavery, because they were axes along which conflict within and without the movement took place. Garrison knew full well that some abolitionists disagreed with his position on the Kossuth debates. But “this is useful,” he said, for “it enables us to know ourselves.” Likewise, the Kossuth affair is useful to historians in enabling us to know the abolitionists better. In particular, it shows us that fully knowing the abolitionists requires not only paying attention to transnational narratives of antislavery, but also attending to how abolitionists articulated their own alternative transnationalism.<sup>27</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For surveys of the Hungarian revolution, see Miklós Molnar, A Concise History of Hungary, trans. Anna Magyar (Cambridge, Eng., 2001), ch. 4; Paul Lendvai, The Hungarians: A Thousand Years of Victory in Defeat (London, 2003), 206-59; Peter N. Stearns, 1848: The Revolutionary Tide in Europe (New York, 1974); Charles Breunig, The Age of Revolution and Reaction, 1789-1850 (New York, 1977), 268-272; Priscilla Robertson, Revolutions of 1848: A Social History (Princeton, 1952). On the diplomatic history of U.S.-Austrian relations in the aftermath of the revolution, including the events leading up to Kossuth's trip to America, see especially Merle Curti, "Austria and the United States 1848-1852: A Study in Diplomatic Relations," Smith College Studies in History 9, no. 3 (April 1926), 141-206; Kenneth E. Shewmaker and Kenneth R. Stevens, eds., The Papers of Daniel Webster, part 3: Diplomatic Papers, vol. 2 (Hanover, NH, 1987), 31-105; Maurice G. Baxter, One and Inseparable: Daniel Webster and the Union (Cambridge, Mass., 1984), 463-67.

<sup>2</sup> Allan Nevins and Milton Halsey Thomas, eds., The Diary of George Templeton Strong, vol. 2 (New York, 1974), 76. See Michael A. Morrison, "American Reaction to European Revolutions, 1848-1852: Sectionalism, Memory, and the Revolutionary Heritage," Civil War History 49, no. 2 (2003), 111-132; Steven Béla Várdy, "Kossuth's Effort to Enlist America into the Hungarian Cause," Hungarian Studies 16, no. 2 (2002): 237-52; Larry J. Reynolds, European Revolutions and the American Literary Renaissance (New Haven, 1988), ch. 8; Donald S. Spencer, Louis Kossuth and Young America: A Study of Sectionalism and Foreign Policy, 1848-1852 (Columbia, MO, 1977); Herbert

Alan Johnson, "Magyar-Mania in New York City: Louis Kossuth and American Politics," The New-York Historical Society Quarterly 48, no. 3 (July 1964), 237-249; Arthur James May, Contemporary American Opinion of the Mid-Century Revolutions in Central Europe (Philadelphia, 1927); Ronald Zarychta, "Louis Kossuth and the United States, 1848-1852" (D.A. thesis, Carnegie-Mellon University, 1976).

<sup>3</sup> For recent essays calling for a transnational American history, see Thomas Bender, ed., Rethinking American History in a Global Age (Berkeley, CA, 2002). I am arguing that "transnational" history should embrace both senses of the word's prefix – "trans-national" because it works "across or beyond" borders (as in the word "trans-Atlantic" or "trans-continental"), but also "trans-national" because it deals with how national ideas "changed" (as in the words "trans-fer" and "trans-form").

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, "Kossuth," in The Complete Poetical Works of John Greenleaf Whittier (Boston, 1892), 189-90; and "Kossuth," in The Complete Poetical Works of James Russell Lowell (Boston, 1897), 100.

<sup>5</sup> William Lloyd Garrison, "Kossuth Fallen!", Liberator, 19 December 1851; Edmund Quincy, "The Mistakes of the Magyar," National Anti-Slavery Standard [NASS], 22 January 1852 ("fatal blunder"); Edmund Quincy, "Kossuth," NASS, 11 December 1851 ("sold himself," "stooped to kiss"). For the fullest account of the Garrisonians' assessments of Kossuth, see Wendell P. Garrison and Francis J. Garrison, William Lloyd Garrison, 1805-1879: The Story of His Life Told by His Children (4 vols., Boston, 1889), 3:339-377. See also R. J. M. Blackett, Building an Antislavery Wall: Black Americans in the Atlantic Abolitionist Movement, 1830-1860 (Baton Rouge,

1983), 10-11; Ronald G. Walters, The Antislavery Appeal: American Abolitionism after 1830 (Baltimore, 1978), 140-41; Betty Fladeland, Men and Brothers: Anglo-American Antislavery Cooperation (Urbana, Ill., 1972), 349-50. One of Kossuth's lengthiest responses to the abolitionists' charges was made in a speech in Faneuil Hall during his tour of New England, when he described "being charged from one side with being in the hands of abolitionists, and from the other side with being in the hands of the slaveholders." Kossuth excused himself from running into the arms of either group: "And O, my God, have I not enough sorrows and cares to bear on these poor shoulders?" See Kossuth in New England: A Full Account of the Hungarian Governor's Visit to Massachusetts ... (Boston, 1852), 92-93.

<sup>6</sup> See Spencer, "The Abolitionist Defection," ch. 5 in Louis Kossuth, 65-81.

<sup>7</sup> Mott to John Ketcham and Rebecca Ketcham, 30 August 1852, in Selected Letters of Lucretia Coffin Mott, ed. Beverly Wilson Palmer (Urbana, Ill., 2002), 221.

<sup>8</sup> For antebellum Americans, philanthropy had a transnational connotation that has largely been lost today, now that it refers mainly to the benevolent giving of funds. The primary sense of "philanthropy" in the early 1800s was the love of all humanity, regardless of nationality. Webster's 1828 dictionary defined it as "the love of mankind; benevolence towards the whole human family; universal good will." See "Philanthropy" in Noah Webster, An American Dictionary of the English Language ..., vol. 2 (New York: S. Converse, 1828).

<sup>9</sup> See James Brewer Stewart, Holy Warriors: The Abolitionists and American Slavery, rev. ed. (New York, 1997), 157-62; Garrison & Garrison, Garrison, 3:325-338;

Henry Mayer, All on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery (New York, 1998), 406-417; Albert J. Von Frank, The Trials of Anthony Burns: Freedom and Slavery in Emerson's Boston (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), 21-30; James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, Black Bostonians: Family Life and Community Struggle in the Antebellum North, rev. ed. (New York, 1999), 106-124; Thomas P. Slaughter, Bloody Dawn: the Christiana Riot and Racial Violence in the Antebellum North (New York, 1991); Don E. Fehrenbacher, The Slaveholding Republic: An Account of the United States Government's Relations to Slavery (New York, 2001), 231-251.

<sup>10</sup> See John F. Quinn, Father Mathew's Crusade: Temperance in Nineteenth-Century Ireland and Irish America (Amherst, 2002), 158-64.

<sup>11</sup> Mayer, All on Fire, 197-207. On Thompson's tours in the United States, see Howard Temperley, British Antislavery, 1833-1870 (London, 1972), 23-29, 238.

<sup>12</sup> "Preaching in Syracuse," NASS, 23 October 1851.

<sup>13</sup> The comparisons drawn between fugitive slaves and Kossuth appeared not just among Garrisonians, but across the antislavery spectrum, including Western abolitionists, political abolitionists, and both white and black reformers. See, e.g., "Exchange between H. Ford Douglas and William Howard Day at the Second Baptist Church," in C. Peter Ripley, Roy E. Finkenbine, Michael F. Embree, and Donald Yacovone, eds., The Black Abolitionist Papers [BAP] (5 vols., Chapel Hill, 1991), 4:74 ("American Hungarian"); "Resolutions by a Committee of Philadelphia Blacks," BAP, 4:69 ("hold up to the scorn"); "The Fugitive Kossuth," Liberator, 14 November 1851; James Russell Lowell, "Turkish Tyranny and American," NASS, 13 December 1849; K. Arvine, Our Duty to



the Fugitive Slave: A Discourse (Boston, 1850), 9-10; “Letter of Horace Mann to the Ohio Convention of Colored Freemen,” National Era, 22 April 1852; Octavius Brooks Frothingham, Theodore Parker: A Biography (Boston, 1874), 411; Wendell Phillips, “Review of Daniel Webster’s Speech,” NASS, 28 March 1850 (Kossuth compared to Ellen Crafts, Douglass and William Wells Brown); “Speech of Frederick Douglass, at the Tabernacle,” NASS, 23 May 1850 (“My case was the case of hundreds of fugitives. I am a fugitive, and I glory in the name. Kossuth was a fugitive, you know – another half-brother of mine.”); “Speech of Wendell Phillips,” NASS, 25 July 1850; Walter Farrington, “Slavery – Patriotism – Law,” NASS, 9 October 1851; Richard D. Webb, “From Our Dublin Correspondent,” NASS, 11 December 1851; Edmund Quincy, “Kossuth and Slavery,” NASS, 18 December 1851; Sharpstick (pseud.), “Bloodhounds Turning Spaniels,” Liberator, 19 December 1851; “Mr. Mann and Mr. Webster – A hard hit,” National Era, 20 June 1850. Even some proslavery journalists saw the force of the comparison between Kossuth and fugitives, and consequently opposed inviting him to the United States. See “The Annual Message of the President ... to ... Congress,” Brownson’s Quarterly Review 6 (January 1852), 132-139 (“If the European radical may conspire to overthrow the government of his country for what he calls liberty, why may not the Free-Soiler conspire to resist your Fugitive Slave Law, and to prevent a poor runaway negro from being sent back to slavery? Why shall the former here in this country be greeted with a national salute, and the latter with a halter?”)

<sup>14</sup> Edmund Quincy, “Policy of M. Kossuth,” NASS, 1 January 1852; George Thompson, “Anti-Slavery Convention at Rochester, New York,” NASS, 3 April 1851.

Black opponents of colonizationism also expanded on the contradiction between supporting the self-autonomy of Hungarians and supporting the expatriation of native-born African Americans. See, for example, “Resolutions by a Meeting of New Bedford Blacks ... 16 February 1852,” BAP, 4:114; “Address of the Coloured People to Kossuth,” NASS, 18 December 1851, signed by James McCune Smith among others.

<sup>15</sup> William Lloyd Garrison, “Patriotism and Christianity – Kossuth and Jesus,” Liberator, 31 August 1849.

<sup>16</sup> “Kossuth: Speech of William Lloyd Garrison, at the Melodeon, Thursday evening, Jan. 29, 1852,” Liberator, 5 March 1852.

<sup>17</sup> Smith’s letter to Kossuth was published as a four-page broadside pamphlet. I’ve taken the quotes from the copy available at the Kroch Library, Cornell University. A slightly different version is reprinted in Ronald K. Huch, “Patriotism vs. Philanthropy,” New York History 49, no. 3 (1968), 327-335. There is more complexity to this letter than I can convey briefly here. Smith’s criticism of Kossuth was somewhat more lenient than Garrison’s. He argued that while Kossuth was a patriot, rather than a true philanthropist, this did not make him worthy of “unmitigated condemnation.” Nonetheless, his overall argument about “philanthropy,” and particularly his conception of national borders as merely convenient rather than essential, bears great and revealing similarity to Garrison’s arguments. In my future work, however, the difference between the transnationalism of Garrisonian and political abolitionists will receive more attention.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Philip S. Foner, ed., The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass (4 vols., New York, 1950), 1:126-127, 207-229; Paul Giles, “Narrative

Reversals and Power Exchanges: Frederick Douglass and British Culture,” Virtual Americas: Transnational Fictions and the Transatlantic Imaginary (Durham, N.C., 2002), 34-35; “Kossuth: Speech of Wendell Phillips, at the Anti-Slavery Bazaar ... December 27, 1851,” Liberator, 2 January 1852; Eliza Lee Follen, comp., The Works of Charles Follen, with a Memoir of His Life (5 vols., Boston, 1841), 1:627-633; Edmund Spevack, Charles Follen’s Search for Nationality and Freedom: Germany and America, 1796-1840 (Cambridge, Mass., 1997), 212. Black abolitionist William G. Allen believed reformers could not be “circumscribed by national lines,” and criticized Kossuth for being more Patriot than Philanthropist. See Blackett, Building an Anti-Slavery Wall, 11.

<sup>19</sup> Lewis Perry, Radical Abolitionism: Anarchy and the Government of God in Antislavery Thought (Ithaca, 1973).

<sup>20</sup> “Meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society, at Syracuse, Continued,” NASS, 22 May 1851. For a similar argument, made in a non-Garrisonian journal, see “European Correspondence,” National Era, 21 March 1850. Referring to Lewis Cass’s support of the Hungarian revolution and to his simultaneous support of the Compromise measures, the Era’s correspondent chastised Cass by saying, “Degrees of longitude cannot change morality.”

<sup>21</sup> The pamphlet is reprinted in its entirety in Walter M. Merrill and Louis Ruchames, eds., The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison (6 vols., Cambridge, Mass., 1971-81), 4:97-199. Quotes are taken from this reprint. It is a measure of Kossuth’s importance to the Garrisonians that Garrison’s sons, in their filial biography, called the Letter to Louis Kossuth as one of the two volumes that “may properly be called the

‘Works of Garrison,’” along with Thoughts on Colonization. They also compared the pamphlet in importance to Theodore Dwight Weld’s American Slavery As It Is and Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin. See Garrison & Garrison, Garrison, 3:353.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 101-2, 152.

<sup>23</sup> See n. 17 above. Lewis Tappan and the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society sent a delegation to meet with Kossuth and presented him an address that seemed to absolve him from having to comment on slavery. Garrisonians seized on the address as proof that the Tappanites were lukewarm, and a series of exchanges occurred in which Tappan defended the address. Garrisonians remained unconvinced. For an introduction to the controversy, see “Kossuth at the Irving House,” NASS, 18 December 1851; “Movements of Kossuth,” National Era, 25 December 1851; Lewis Tappan, “Kossuth and the Anti-Slavery Committee,” National Era, 1 January 1852; “The Abolitionists and Kossuth,” National Era, 1 January 1852; “The American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society and Kossuth,” NASS, 1 January 1852. For reactions of political abolitionists to Kossuth, see Speech of Hon. Charles Sumner of Massachusetts for Welcome of Louis Kossuth, made in the Senate of the United States, December 10, 1851 (Washington, D.C., 1851); Richard H. Sewell, Ballots for Freedom: Antislavery Politics in the United States, 1837-1860 (New York, 1976), 235.

<sup>24</sup> “Essay by ‘Sidney’,” BAP, 3:359. (The editors of the BAP identify “Sidney” as “most likely Henry Highland Garnet.”) The essay was printed in Colored American, 6 March 1841. Mitch Kachun has also recently argued that many black abolitionists’ interest in European revolutionaries like Kossuth helps put into better perspective their

own diasporic identities as African Americans by revealing the transracial implications of their ideas about human progress and liberty. See Kachun, “‘Our Platform is as Broad as Humanity’: Transatlantic Freedom Movements and the Idea of Progress in Nineteenth-Century African American Thought and Activism,” Slavery and Abolition 24, no. 3 (December 2003): 1-23.

<sup>25</sup> “The Conspiracy of Fanaticism,” The United States Magazine, and Democratic Review 26 (May 1850), 392. A similar piece from the same magazine was reprinted as “The Parricides of the Republic,” NASS, 10 July 1851. Compare, also, Ralph Waldo Emerson’s criticism of abolitionism in “Self-Reliance,” when Emerson advises an imaginary abolitionist to “never varnish your hard, uncharitable ambition with this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off. Thy love afar is spite at home.” Interestingly, Emerson identifies abolitionism in this passage with “philanthropy,” perhaps alluding to its world-embracing connotations. This may add some meaning to Emerson’s polemical conclusion, “I tell thee ... foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the dollar, the dime, the cent I give to such men as do not belong to me and to whom I do not belong.” See Emerson, “Self-Reliance (1841),” in David A. Hollinger and Charles Capper, eds., The American Intellectual Tradition, 3rd ed., vol. 1 (New York, 1997), 304.

<sup>26</sup> In many ways, this is a debate that continues today. Political theorists still argue about the plausibility of “world citizenship,” and critics of cosmopolitanism have often made arguments very similar to those advanced by Garnet and the United States Magazine – that cosmopolitans are rootless people who neglect duties they owe to fellow citizens who are close at hand. Critics of patriotism, on the other hand, echo the

abolitionists' contention that geographical boundaries are social fictions, and that moral responsibility is not bounded by nation-states. See, e.g., Daniele Archibugi, ed., Debating Cosmopolitics (London, 2003); April Carter, The Political Theory of Global Citizenship (London, 2001); Martha Nussbaum, et al., For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism (Boston, 1996); Richard Rorty, Achieving our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America (Cambridge, Mass., 1998); Richard Rorty, "The Unpatriotic Academy," New York Times, 13 February 1994, p. E15. Similar debates about the grounds of patriotism were also carried on by late nineteenth-century reformers and early twentieth-century radicals, some of whom were the intellectual descendants of Northern antislavery figures. See Jonathan M. Hansen, The Lost Promise of Patriotism: Debating American Identity, 1890-1920 (Chicago, 2003).

<sup>27</sup> "Kossuth: Speech of William Lloyd Garrison."