

Helena History Press Scholarship Application

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The Helena History Press Scholarship would greatly help with the costs associated with a research trip to the United States that I aim to conduct to acquire indispensable materials (unavailable in Hungary) for my current research project on Sándor Márai and Ernest Hemingway. The potential outcomes of this trip would include the publication of my first monograph as well as the establishment of international collaboration with American universities to pursue mutually beneficial tasks in the future.

This book manuscript emerges from my doctoral thesis (“Hemingway’s *In Our Time*: Masks, Silences, and Heroes”) which I completed at the University of Surrey in 2012. Since my defense, I have made significant revisions to the project, and the book manuscript now differs substantially from the thesis. The largest change comes in the topic and scope, and through these, the argument and purpose. The doctoral project was a study of the concept of Americanness emerging in Hemingway’s narrative manipulation. For the book, I have expanded and sharpened the focus on transnationality by juxtaposing Hemingway’s American and European experiences with those of Sándor Márai. I shall investigate in depth Márai’s works (particularly his memoir entitled *Amerika délibáb* and some of his poems) along with his American peer Hemingway’s short stories to explore their shared interest in the performative aspects of identity construction in America and whether minorities (such as Hungarians) could ever be treated as integral and representative parts of American society. This book delves into the expansive ways literature by immigrants negotiates diasporic spaces to create “imagined communities” where estrangement and engagement coexist. The works of the two main authors of my research mirror the misfortunes of their native societies in the twentieth century, hence their own expatriation. Interestingly, however, both authors also highlight their restlessness in their new “homes”. Hemingway (who moved from America to France) and Márai (who moved from Hungary to Italy and then America) depict living uncomfortably in a space between two worlds, one perhaps dead and the other struggling to be born. Such themes as ambiguity, assimilation, resistance to total immersion, nostalgia, sentimentality, homesickness, national schizophrenia, and divided loyalties appear in the texts under scrutiny. The complex way identity is negotiated by immigrants writing about their home abroad experience plays a central role in my study, as do tensions concerning language and belongingness in the struggle for home.

I am committed to interdisciplinary research: psychoanalysis, gender studies, social history, and literary theory form the basis of my arguments. This monograph would make an original contribution to existing knowledge by challenging essential tenets of the classics of transnational literary criticism. The Helena History Press Scholarship would undoubtedly provide a great opportunity to contribute to knowledge, increase my productivity, and most importantly advance my knowledge of Hungarian-American literature for the benefit of my students, my colleagues, and myself.