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Research outline

The 1920s brought about major changes in Central and Eastern European immigration to North America, primarily due to the introduction of the US quota regulations in 1921 and 1924. These quotas had both inter-American and transatlantic repercussions: people from CEE continued to look for opportunities for emigration (especially in the wake of the Treaty of Trianon) and as the United States allowed just a fraction of the previous number of immigrants to enter the country, many of them, including Hungarians, looked for alternatives. Canada became a primary destination and saw an unprecedented number of Hungarians arriving. Thus the US regulations had a direct impact on Canadian immigration as well as the Hungarian emigration trajectory, which I study in my research on this topic using an inter-American approach to migration studies.

When it comes to Hungarian immigration to North America, most scholarly attention has been paid to the decades of New Immigration between the 1870s and First World War or the post Second World War era with special regard to 1956. In my research I focus on a brief but truly interesting period, the 1920s, studying immigration trends, the changing perceptions of the US and Canada in Hungary, the altering immigration and emigration regulations on both sides of the Atlantic, focusing also on questions related to so far little-studied illegal immigration of Hungarians on the Canada-US border, deportations, the changing perception of Hungarians, the reactions of the Hungarian government, etc.

In my research I focus on a great variety of issues but due to the inter-American and transatlantic nature of the topic (the links between US and Canadian immigration regulations, reactions, etc.) it requires archival research in both North America (the US and Canada) and Hungary (and also neighboring countries). My research is also part of a bigger project supported by the National Research Development and Innovation Office of Hungary (OTKA, Young Researchers' Excellence Award) which provides partial funding for my overall scholarly plans. My research has already started in Hungarian archives (Budapest, Debrecen, Sáropatak, etc.) and I am planning a longer (5-6 week) research trip to the United States and Canada which also includes conference presentations (including a presentation at the AHEA Conference). Although I have some funding for this, it is with the HHP scholarship that I would be able to implement these plans and conduct the necessary archival research while also establishing more extensive scholarly links for future collaboration (for joint publications, organizing international conferences, programs).

With this scholarship I would be able to complete my research in the countries that are involved in the project and thus it would contribute to the writing of various publications, including my monograph on Hungarian immigration to North America in the 1920s, an era that has received less critical attention so far and that contributes to the better understanding of both Hungarian and American (both US and Canadian) history.