# Review

# Book prospectus: “Hungary May Even Be Grateful One Day” – Hungarian Jewish Students in Exile, 1920-1938

**by Ágnes Katalin Kelemen**

*June 2021*

Dear Ágnes,

Many thanks for allowing me to review and learn about your book prospectus. I enjoyed reading it and found it generally compelling and well written, giving a publisher a good idea of the book and of the quality of your writing, but it does require some more focus and more detailed background and explanation, both for the editor and general reader.

**General remarks:**

— depending on the publisher, be consistent with UK or US spelling (*percent* or *per cent*), full stops, Oxford commas, etc.

—the language is overall clear, some tics of language such as *in fact* often not necessary

—the order of the contents needs to be adjusted – the opening abstract should be followed by a brief discursive biography of yourself that focuses on your current position and works published on the topic. This should be followed by the section surveying other literature in the field before the annotated TOC.

—Your academic CV should be submitted separately, as a supplement to the discursive, topical biography in the prospectus

—you will need to send the prospectus with a cover letter. Please find a general suggested outline for one.

—consider adding a bibliography to the prospectus, even a partial one.

**Section 1**

— the initial quote is interesting, but it is left a bit unfocused: see comment. More background is needed. It points to the *arrival* of emigrants, but not necessarily to the reasons for *departure*. This needs to be more directly tied to the topic.

—The opening needs to present clearly what the content and the aim of the book are.

— the book is about these numerous clausus exiles; state it more clearly from the outset. Also distinguish from the outset the import of these laws preceding the Nazi racial laws.

— as explained, one needs to see more clearly how the Hungarian case stands out within the European interwar landscape. You do it later on p. 3, but it deserves mention and clarity. This will immediately help justify its relevance to the editor.

—the intention to return: specify the relation of these emigrants to Hungary and Hungarian culture. The quote p. 1 seems to indicate some nostalgia and longing.

—the tension between well-known intellectuals and the broader historical sociology of thousands of emigrant students, as you write p. 2. I would like to hear more about your methods, sources, and ways to build such a historical sociology, even most briefly. Sources are only mentioned in the context of the structure of the PhD thesis and the refocused book structure. Your database is mentioned only in passing, and should be expanded upon and brought up sooner in the abstract.

—in this context, clarify the place of the Holocaust once for all. The latter appears here and there, repeatedly — survival, anti-Jewish legislations, etc. — but position yourself and the book within the debates.

**SUGGESTION: set up the existing literature before the annotated table of contents**

— the first paragraph is quite confusing: see comments

—it is too short and too narrowly focused for an editor. To be sure, it depends on the degree of specialisation of the press, but virtually all need to have more historiographical background. One way to look at it could be — just brainstorming — transnational history; movements of students and political culture during the interwar period; the pre-history of the Shoah —and your positioning of these emigrants in the context of WW2, that is, their fates under persecution and not merely discrimination as in your case; ethno-nationalism after WW1; nationalist policies and processes of deglobalization — I suggested Tara Zahra as one example. I am sure that all of this appears in the book and the PhD thesis, but it must be stressed much more here as well. Footnotes 3 and 4 go in that direction, but this belongs to the historiographical debates.

— One must understand better how your book extends and goes beyond these two cited and specialised books, see comments

**Annotated table of contents:**

— the strongest section of the prospectus; see individual comments

—Chapter IV: see the questions about the sample, justify and explain

**I wish you all the best with this fascinating project and remain available for further discussion.**

Yours truly,

Jan Burzlaff