

SLOVAK/ENGLIT 0380 – Slovak Transatlantic Cultures

Class number 20228/20227

Meets A & S general education requirements:

- International/Foreign Culture — regional
- History
- 2nd Course in Literature, the Arts, or Creative Expression
- Writing

Fall 2015, Tu, Th 2:30 – 3:45; 237 CL

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1417 CL

Office hours:

Tu 4:00-5:30, We 5:00-5:30

WEEK 1. CENTRAL EUROPE, INTRODUCTION, THE PRESENT IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Geography, history of habitation, consequences for past and modern ethnic and linguistic makeup.

Literature–Theory: Franke, “Theories and Practice of Stereotyping in Literature”.

Historical Change, Literary History: Petro, “Medieval Literature”, Špiesz “The Arrival of the Magyars” and “The Era of Dualism”; Kirschbaum, 23-38, 136-154.

WEEK 2. CENTRAL EUROPE, THE DISTANT OTHERS IN ANGLO-SAXON PERSPECTIVES: Scottish and English travelogues through the Slovak counties from the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries; the Turks in a Slovak market song from the 16th century.

Literature–Theory: Hunter, “The Self in the World: History, Biography, and Travel Books” from *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction*.

Literature–Pre-Texts: passages from Brown, *A Brief Account of Travels in Diverse Parts of Europe...* 1673; Townson, *Travels in Hungary...* 1793; Paget, *Hungary and Transylvania, with Remarks...* 1835, Anonymous, “Siládi and Haďmáži” 1560.

Historical Change, Literary History: Petro, “The Renaissance” and “Baroque”.

Writing: Gatlin, “Losing control and liking it: Journals in Victorian Literature,” from Fulwiler, *The Journal Book*; Assignment – a 3-page evaluative summary of the covered material with references to the sources.

the 3rd week.

WEEK 3. CENTRAL EUROPE AND AMERICAN INFLUENCES IN THE 19TH CENTURY: Everyday life in the Kingdom in the late 19th century, impact of American plant imports on food production, society, social and personal pro’s and con’s of emigration.

Literature–Fiction: Timrava, “That Alluring Land”.

Historical Change, Literary History: Petro, “Classicism” and “Romanticism”, Špiesz, Kirschbaum, “The Struggle for Nationhood” 125-144.

Writing: Assignment – a 3-page academic practice sample (topic: ‘before emigration’) with complete citations from at least one of each: a book, a section of an edited volume, an academic article, and a web page.

WEEK 4. LEAVING CENTRAL EUROPE BEFORE WORLD WAR I: Migration and emigration, administrative conditions for departure and arrival, departure and arrival ports, Castle Garden and Ellis Island, tracing Slovak, Central European ancestry today.

Literature-Fiction: Kafka, “The Stoker” from *Amerika*, Bell, Chapters.

Historical Change: Grygier, “From Eastern Europe to Pennsylvania”, Kirschbaum, Handout, “Genealogy web resources”.

Writing: Handout/PowerPoint by Alzo, “Tips for writing family history”.

WEEK 5. AMERICAN IMAGES OF THE NEW SLOVAK, CENTRAL EUROPEAN IMMIGRANTS: The desirable melting pot, pressure to Anglicize in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, new and uncertain immigrant identities.

Literature-Drama: Zangwill, *The Melting Pot*, Act III, poem – Lazarus, “The New Colossus.”

Historical Change, Literary History: Petro, “Realism”, Alexander, “Hyphenates and Patriots: An Ethnic Perspective on the Great War”.

Writing: Assignment – a 3-page academic practice sample (topic: ‘immigrant, ethnic demographics’) with the inclusion of and references to statistics and tables from at least three original published demographic sources and three reliable demographic web sources.

WEEK 6. EARLY CENTRAL EUROPEAN ARRIVALS AND DESTINATIONS: The farmers and the laborers, the role of women

Literature-Fiction: Cather, *My Ántonia*, Book I, chapters 3-10.

Literature-Juvenile non-fiction: Stolarik, “Arriving in the New World” and “Ordinary Days and Holidays”.

Historical Change: Grygier, “The Women’s Experience”.

Writing: Marius, “Modes of Historical Writing – Narrative,” part of chapter 3, “Gathering Information – Doing Research,” part of chapter 4, and “Taking Notes and Writing Drafts,” chapter 5, 58-63, 88-98, 99-119.

WEEK 7. MIDTERM PAPER, RESEARCH AND WRITING: Finding, reading, and quoting original sources; composing a satisfactory conclusion, discussions of themes culled from the assigned archival materials and their utilization.

Research: Hillman Library Archives.

Writing:

MIDTERM PAPER – SUBMISSION AND REVISION DEADLINES: You must submit the first draft of your midterm paper electronically by 5 PM, Monday, the 8th week. You will receive your assignments with suggestions for revisions by 5 PM, Thursday, the 8th week. You must submit your revised assignments by 5 PM, Monday, the 9th week.

MIDTERM PAPER – assignment:

Your paper will have at least 10 and no more than 12 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font). The length of every published research paper is limited, the ability to deselect information is an integral part of academic writing skills.

Do not imagine that you are “talking to me (M.V.)” in this paper. Your assumed audience will be people who know little or nothing about Central Europe. However, you are also writing for an appreciative audience — people who will choose to read and find it easy to understand sophisticated, well documented information and arguments with references to a variety of aspects of American culture. Cross-cultural comparisons enhance understanding, an effective paper should include them.

Your paper will begin with a review of those aspects of Slovak and Central European cultural and political-social history that will help the reader understand your subsequent discussion. You may therefore find it useful to start writing the body of your paper and return to the introduction after it becomes clearer to you what the reader needs to learn first. The way you balance the length of this and any other section in your paper is part of how it will be evaluated. You do not want to make a historical treatise out of it, but you also understand by now that the broader social context, which includes history, is part of what influences individual decisions including major decisions like emigration, and what shapes how immigrant groups and the cultures they enter perceive and receive each other.

The body of your paper will be a discussion of any of the aspects of Slovak, Central European emigration and immigration that have been covered in this course so far. You must cite references to your sources and may quote liberally, but you also need to make sure that your paper, and any quotations in it, form an integrated text. One of the most common shortcomings is that a paper is segmented and the segments do not gel together. The most common shortcoming is a lack of a comprehensive, compelling conclusion that brings the issues discussed in the body of the paper together, sums up and highlights the main goal of the discussion, and so wraps it up in a manner satisfactory to the uninitiated reader.

WEEK 8. SLOVAK, CENTRAL EUROPEAN CULTURES IN PITTSBURGH: Pittsburgh’s ethnic past and present , pre-1880 Irishmen, Germans, African-Americans, push and pull effect, settlement patterns, Great Migration – Slovaks and Central Europeans, Slovak Johnstown – flood.

Literature-Fiction: Bell, “Kracha” 14-117.

Historical Change: Demarest, *Out Of This Furnace: A Walking Tour of Thomas Bell’s Novel* (Video), Handout: Pittsburgh geography and settlement, Slovak neighborhoods.

Writing: Discussions of the first drafts of the midterm papers and their revision.

WEEK 9. SLOVAK, CENTRAL EUROPEAN IMMIGRANT ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: The Pittsburgh Pact of 1918, petitioning the White House, the Woodrow Wilson doctrine, creation of Czecho-Slovakia, fragmentation of Central Europe, cross-ethnic and cross-national tensions.

Literature-Memoir: Rovnianek, “1918,” a chapter from *Notes from One Buried Alive* (translated for the course materials).

Historical Change: Ference, “The Cleveland Agreement and the Pittsburgh Pact”, Alexander, “Unfinished Business: The Homeland, National Identity, and Americanization”.

Writing: Discussion of the revised midterm papers.

WEEK 10. RE-IMMIGRATION, ARRIVAL OF AMERICAN CULTURE IN SLOVAKIA: Early film and filmmaking in Slovakia, Slovak-American film production in Slovakia after the First World War, social role of the *Amerikáns*.

Literature–Poetry: Botto, “The Death of Jánošík”.

Historical Change, Literary History: Petro, “Modern Literature”, Špiesz, Kirschbaum, “The First Czechoslovak Republic” 155-169, Votruba, “History of filmmaking in Slovakia”, Votruba, “The Jánošík motif in Slovak culture”.

Feature film: Siakel', dir. *Jánošík*, 1921

Writing: Marius, “Writing Conventions,” chapter 7 from *A Short Guide to Writing About History* 144-168.

WEEK 11. YOUNG SLOVAK-AMERICANS, INTEGRATION IN AMERICAN SOCIETY:

Literature–Theory: Franke, “Investigating immigrants,” from *Keys to Controversies: Stereotypes in Modern American Novels*, 123-149.

Literature–Biography: Alzo, *Three Slovak Women*.

Historical Change: Alexander, “Maintaining an Ethnic Image: Fashioning Nationality Days for Local Youths” 114-131, Grygier, “Immigrant Children at Work” 65-83.

Documentary film: Plicka, dir. *Tracing Slovaks from New York to the Mississippi*, 1937.

Writing: Assignment – a 3-page academic practice sample (topic: ‘immigrant, ethnic Pittsburgh) with the inclusion of at least three relevant images, your own photographs, drawings, or images from other sources with full references and citations.

WEEK 12. MODERN SLOVAK AND SLOVAK-AMERICAN VIEWS OF MIGRANT LIVES: The first and subsequent American-born generations, emigration under communism, ethnic and non-ethnic experiences.

Literature–Short Story: Hykisch, “Landing in Australia”, Kulka, “A Fly in the Ointment”, Meehl, “The Linden Snow”, Blažková, “Circe”, Kovacovic, “Ma’s Dictionary”.

Historical Change: Alexander, “Beyond the Generations: Ethnic Activism and Class Interest in the 1930s” 160-191, Kirschbaum, 225-250, Grygier, “East European Industrial Workers” 10-33.

WEEK 13. YOUNG SLOVAK-AMERICANS, INTEGRATION IN AMERICAN SOCIETY:

Literature–Essay: Kovacovic, “Working at the U.” 233-248 from Dews, *This Fine Place So Far from Home*, Mlodzinski, “Coming to Terms with My Heritage” 20-28 and Kindler, “The Family History of a Fourth Generation Pole” 29-36 from Dublin, *Becoming American, Becoming Ethnic: College Students Explore Their Roots*.

Historical Change: Kirschbaum, 251-310.

Writing: Assignment – a 3-page essay (topic: ethnicity, social class in academia); contrast this assignment with the style of academic papers that is practiced throughout this

course, use no more than two quotations, or none, do not refer to sources unless a reference is critical for your argument, if you do, include only minimal citations, write your paper as a personal opinion piece that might be published in *Pitt News*.

WEEK 14. BEYOND THE CULTURE CLASH, REVERSAL AND SATIRE: Cross-Atlantic and intra-Central European cultural issues after the collapse of communism.

Literature–Novel: Viličkovský, *Ever Green Is...*

Historical Change, Literary History: Chitinis, 30-34, 37-38, Petro, 143-156.

Feature film: Jakubisko, *It's Better to Be Rich and Healthy Than Poor and Ill*, 1992.

Writing: Marius, “Sample Student Research Paper,” appendix A, and “Shorter Essays (and Examinations),” appendix B from *A Short Guide to Writing About History*.

REVISION DEADLINES: While your final paper is due at the beginning of the last class next week (the 15th week, the finals week) you have the option to submit a substantial draft (at least 9 full pages) of your final paper by Friday, 5 PM, this week. If you do, you will receive your draft with suggestions for revisions by 5 PM, Monday, the 15th week. You must then submit your revised final paper no later than 24 hours after its regular deadline (see week 15).

WEEK 15. REVIEW:

Historical Change, Literary History: Review of immigration, literature, history of culture, and national history.

Writing: Discussions concerning the final paper.

FINAL PAPER: Your paper will have between 12 and 14 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font).

You must choose a topic stemming from your readings, discussions and research in this course and give your paper a title. You must write an academic research paper. It may and should include your interpretations and opinions, but it must not be an essay without references. Copious and correct citations and references to your sources are essential. You may use material from your revised assignments and midterm paper, but at least half of your final paper must be new text. You must include references to any secondary sources you use or quote. You need to choose a topic that will enable you to include all of the following in your paper, in any order, but your paper need not be limited to those topics, nor does any of them need to be your main topic:

- a comparison of American and Central European cultures
- a historical perspective on immigration from Central Europe
- comments on ethnic issues in Pittsburgh
- the social and political context in which emigration and immigration took place
- comments on American-born children with immigrant-ethnic backgrounds

Beyond these conditions, you are free to focus your final paper on any aspect or aspects of the material covered in this course and elaborate your own perspective.

DEADLINE: The day of the last class, 5 PM.

REVISION DEADLINE: Only if you meet the condition described in ‘Week 14 – Writing,’ (see above).

C.3 PAPERS/PROJECTS (*NUMBER, TYPE, LENGTH, AND DEADLINES*)

Altogether, the students write, submit for comments, and revise at least 25 double-spaced pages during the course with the option of receiving comments on and revising up to 41 pages.

- a. The students must submit their midterm papers (10-12 pages) for suggestions and revise them. THE DEADLINE is 5 PM, Monday, the 8th week. You will receive your assignments with suggestions for revisions by 5 PM, Thursday, the 8th week. You must submit your revised assignments by 5 PM, Monday, the 9th week.
- b. Additionally, the students have the option to submit for suggestions and revise their final paper 12-14 pages; see the details in weeks 14 and 15. THE DEADLINE is the day of the last class, week 15, 5 PM.
- c. All the assignments and papers must be submitted electronically.