**ENGL 445: Children’s Literature of the Former Yugoslavia**

**June 6-27, 2022**

Dr. Jennifer Miskec  
Grainger 204  
x2528

Course Description:

ENGLISH 445. Studies in Children’s Literature. Advanced study featuring a particular aspect of Children’s Literature, such as a time period, a genre, or a theoretical perspective. Prerequisite: completion of Goal 3 of the General Education requirements, and either one 300-level course in a literary period, or permission of instructor. 3 credits. WR and SP.

Course Texts:

1. *Croatian Tales of Long Ago* by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić: “How Quest Sought the Truth,” “Reygoch," and “Stribor’s Forest”

2. *World in Between: Based on a True Refugee Story* by Kenan Trebincevic and Susan Shapiro

3. *Bridge on the Drina* by Ivo Andrić (Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3)

4. *The Day of the Pelican* by Katherine Patterson

5. *Koko i Duhovi* (film) (watch while abroad - in Montenegro?)

6. “Defining Place” by Tim Creswell   
7. “Turning Fiction into Reality: The Making go Two Places Within Literary Geography” by Torunn Selberg and Nevena Skrbic Alempijevic

8. “Literature Despite the War - Children’s Books in Croatia” by Durda Mesić and Višnja Vlahović

Literature Despite the war?

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. analyze Croatian, Bosnian, and Serbian children’s texts using history and current events, visual analysis, cultural analysis, mindfulness practice, and place theory;

2. discover and synthesize the cultural narratives that emerge from and inform the children’s literature/children’s culture of the former Yugoslavia;

3. illustrate identified cultural narratives in various written and spoken forms.

Course Policies

• Students must possess their passports by March 2022;

• Students must sign the Rules of Conduct contract before leaving the United States;

• Students must have a minimum of a 75%/55-57pts/C average at the end of the pre-departure classes in order to be eligible to travel abroad with the class;

• Students must attend a risk session during one of the scheduled times.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Grading

Your final grade will be recorded using Longwood University’s Grading Scale: A+ 100-98; A 97-94; A- 93-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-84; B- 83-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-74; C- 73-70; D+ 69-67; D 66-64; D-63-60; F 59-0

1. Reading Posts (6x5pts each): 30pts
2. Travel Posts (4x5pts each): 20pts
3. Group Challenges (4x5pts each): 20pts
4. Final Presentation: Book Talk Remix: 10pts
5. Active and Appropriate Participation: 20pts

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| **WHAT** | **HOW LONG** | **WHEN** | **WHERE** | **HOW MUCH** |
| Reading Posts (6) | 200+ words each | During Pre-Departure Class | Canvas | 5pts each/  30pts total |
| Travel Posts (4) | 100 words each; 1-3 photos each | While Abroad | Instagram | 5pts each/  20pts total |
| Group Challenges (4) | 5-7 minutes each | While Abroad | Classroom (while abroad) | 5pts each/20pts total |
| Final Presentation: Book Talk Remix | 5-7 minutes | After We Return | Canvas | 15pts total |
| Active and Appropriate Participation | N/A | Pre-Departure and While Abroad | Canvas, Instagram, and Classrooms (at home and abroad) | 15pts total |

1. Reading Posts

Reading Posts are 200+ word Discussion Board posts, one for each assigned section of reading. You will be given a prompt to which you will respond. Your classmates and professors will respond to your ideas, and you should respond to our comments/feedback accordingly. As with all writing constructed for this class, you will be evaluated on the intersection of five basic criteria: understanding of concept (close, careful, and complete reading); application of your ideas using textual examples to support your claims; overall sense of course issues (reading the piece but thinking about it in the larger course context); choice of approach to assignment (style, tone, liveliness); quality of writing (style, clarity, and mechanics/editing). The degree to which you accomplish these five basic criteria will be reflected in your grade. You are expected to use our comments and critiques of your ideas and writing to strengthen future work.

2. Travel Posts

Your Instagram posts will take two different forms, a Daily Report and a Travel Post. Each student is responsible for one Daily Report and three Travel Posts; everyone has assigned days for each post (see the schedule, below), though the topic of each post is relative to our experiences while abroad.

The Daily Report is a short summary of the day’s events for anyone following our activities (family, friends, professors, Longwood PR, etc). The Daily Report serves a practical, informative purpose. Each Daily Report will begin with the heading “Day #, June #, 2022.” Each Report will be accompanied by a thoughtfully selected original photo that reflects, literally or symbolically, our group activities of that day. Each Report should be about 100 words. The schedule (below) has your due date for this assignment in yellow.

Although the schedule also dictates when you will take your turn posting your Travel Posts (find your name in three different pink squares), the topics you choose to write about are up to you. Your topics will emerge as we tour different locations throughout Serbia/Croatia/Montenegro/Bosnia. From our experiences and discussions, you will construct Travel Posts that highlight different aspects of Serbian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Bosnian foods, people, cultural practices, landscapes, etc, perhaps with a mind toward educating the average citizen back home who doesn’t know much about the former Yugoslavia, in a pithy and upbeat manner. Each Travel Post must include 1-3 photos. You should not duplicate another student’s topic, so communicate with the group and with me about your intended topics.

Although it is not required, you are encouraged to ask Coach Miller or me for feedback on a draft of your Instagram posts during our office hours.\* We will ask you to edit your work after it has been posted if there are errors, especially spelling and factual errors but also grammar and mechanics. Remember that every post is a representation of you as a writer AND the class as a whole, so do be sure to carefully edit your work.

\*Office hours TBD.

3. Group Challenges

We will be doing multiple group-based activities on this study abroad, including group challenges, presentations, and changing roommates with every new lodging. In whatever group you are in, your job is to contribute to group unity in the Longwood spirit, follow directions/rules, think creatively, pull your weight, take your turn, maintain a sense of humor, and work hard to not let anyone down.

4. Final Presentation: Book Talk Remix

In lieu of a formal final project, each student will take a turn presenting their thoughts on a course text that has new meaning after our real experiences while abroad. Each student should begin her discussion with a retelling of an experience from the trip that enlightened or complicated her understanding of a particular course text, one scene or the larger story. The goal is to have no repetition, so choose your scene/remix topic thoughtfully and creatively and communicate (without giving too much away before the presentation) your choice to others.

5. Active and Appropriate Participation  
Students are expected to be appropriately and actively engaged with all course related activities at all times, before and during our study abroad, in person and online. Class attendance and all excursions while abroad are required. Normal daily expectations are field notes, nightly debriefs, and engaging with people outside of our group when possible. Drinking in excess, drinking before a class activity, acting disinterested, complaining, causing drama or — in any distracting way — disrupting the course flow or positive vibe will cause your grade to suffer.

Itinerary Abroad

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| Tues. 5/11  Class Day 1 | Grainger 101, 8-5pm | Making Meaning: How Does Place Become Literature Become Place?  8:00-9:15 Introductions  9:15-9:30 Break  9:30-10:45 “Defining Place”  10:45-11:00 Break  11:00-12:15 *Bridge on the Drina*, Part 1  12:15-1:15 Lunch  1:15-2:30 *Croatian Tales...*  2:30-2:45 Break  2:45-4:00 “The Making of Two Places…”  4:00-4:15 Constructing Your Addendum  4:15-5:00 General Q&A | Posts Due on Canvas  by Midnight, Monday, May 11:  Post 1 (6pts):  Select *Croatian Tales of Long Ago*: “How Quest Sought the Truth,” “Reygoch," and “Stribor’s Forest”; “Defining Place”; and “Turning Fiction into Reality: The Making of Two Places Within Literary Geography” (pgs. X-X)    Post 2 (4pts): *Bridge on the Drina* (Part 1: pgs. X-X) |
| Wed.  5/12  Class Day 2 | Grainger 101, 8-5pm | Literature Despite the War: Creating a Coherent Literary Narrative from the Chaos  8:00-9:15 Travel Q&A and Buying Travel Insurance  9:15-9:30 Break  9:30-10:45 Talking About Trauma in Children’s Literature; the Hidden Adult and TCP-ness; Thinking About Content and Tone  10:45-11:00 Break  11:00-12:15 *World in Between*  12:15-1:15 Lunch  1:15-2:30 “Literature Despite the War - Children’s Books in Croatia”  2:30-2:45 Break  2:45-4:00 *Bridge on the Drina*, Part 2  4:00-4:30 Reading Your Peers; Constructing Your Addendum  4:30-5:00 General Q&A | Posts Due on Canvas  by Midnight, Tuesday, May 12:  Post 3 (5pts): *World in Between* and *“*Literature Despite the War - Children’s Books in Croatia  Post 4 (5pts): *Bridge on the Drina* (Part 2: pgs. X-X) |
| Thurs.  5/13  Class Day 3 | Grainger 101, 8-5pm | Insider and Outsider Writers: Whose Story Is It?  8:00-9:15 Conduct Contracts; Detailed Itinerary  9:15-9:30 Break  9:30-10:45 Whose Story is It?  10:45-11:00 Break  11:00-11:30 Responding to Your Peers’ Posts on *Day of the Pelican*  11:30-1:00 Lunch  1:00-2:15 *Day of the Pelican*  2:15-2:30 Break  2:30-4:00 *Bridge on the Drina*, Part 3  4:00-4:15 Break  4:15-5:00 Last Minute Q&A; Mindfulness, Externalities, Buddies, and Group Dynamics | Posts Due on Canvas  by Midnight, Wednesday, May 13:  Post 5 (5pts): *Day of the Pelican*  Post 6 (5pts): *Bridge on the Drina* (Part 3: pgs. X-X) |
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| Day 1  June 6 | Dulles to Belgrade, Serbia | Meet at Dulles at 7pm  Depart Dulles 10:30pm |  |
| Day 2  June 7 | Belgrade, Serbia | Arrive in Belgrade at 4:20pm  Transfer to Apartments. Mindfulness in action. |  |
| Day 3  June 8 | Belgrade, Serbia | Intercultural Scavenger Hunt and Intercultural Scavenger Hunt:  Group Presentation #1  Fortress and River Walk |  |
| Day 4  June 9 | Belgrade, Serbia | Novi Sad |  |
| Day 5  June 10 | Kostunići, Serbia | Food and Rakija and a Lake at Kostunići Resort |  |
| Day 6  June 11 | Zlatibor, Serbia | Caves and Waterfalls |  |
| Day 7  June 12 | Zlatibor, Serbia | Tara National Park and Kayaking and Bridge on the Drina |  |
| Day 8  June 13 | Zlatar, Serbia | Boat Cruise and Ice Cave  Planning Your Family’s Slava Celebration:  Group Presentation #2  Relics, Objective Correlatives, and Sense of Place: A Discussion About Iconography |  |
| Day 9  June 14 | Zabljak, Montenegro | Black Lake and Hike |  |
| Day 10  June 15 | Rajska Rijeka, Montenegro | White Water Rafting |  |
| Day 11  June 16 | Sarajevo, Bosnia | Discuss (and Claim) Final Project Topics |  |
| Day 12  June 17 | Sarajevo, Bosnia | War Child Museum |  |
| Day 13  June 18 | Dubrovnik, Croatia | Mostar and Lapad  What is the Iconography of Bosnia and Montenegro?   Postcards from Abroad:  Group Presentation #3 |  |
| Day 14 June 19 | Dubrovnik, Croatia | Old Town |  |
| Day 15  June 20 | Dubrovnik, Croatia | Lokrum Island and Old Town |  |
| Day 16  June 21 | Dubrovnik, Croatia | Plaža Pasjača and Srd Hill |  |
| Day 17  June 22 | Split, Croatia | Diocletian’s Palace |  |
| Day 18  June 23 | Split, Croatia | Blue Cave Tour |  |
| Day 19  June 24 | Plitvice, Croatia | Plitvice Lakes |  |
| Day 20  June 25 | Zagreb, Croatia | Ogulin Fairy Tale House |  |
| Day 21  June 26 | Zagreb, Croatia | Happy 10th Birthday, Željka!:  Group Presentation #4 |  |
| Day 22  June 27 | Zagreb, Croatia | Arrive Zagreb Airport at 12:00;  Depart Zagreb at 1:50pm  Arrive Dulles 7:30pm (same day) |  |

**Group Challenges**

Group Presentation #1: June 3, 2022

Serbia

**Intercultural Scavenger Hunt: Education**

Assignment:

We’re not in Virginia anymore! While Yugoslavia was a somewhat artificial nation (in the sense that the countries within it were unique religiously, culturally, and linguistically), Serbia is perhaps the closest country to the fantasy of Yugoslavia as a singular entity. This activity is designed to get you thinking about Serbia as it is today and how it is and isn’t Virginia or the USA. As a group you must gather information through a combination of strategies such as interviews with local residents, observations, signs and flyers, etc. You may not use the internet or non-local sources. You will want to ask multiple people the same question. As appropriate, collect artifacts (i.e., photos, menus, flyers, etc.) for your presentation of your findings. Be sure to jot down both your answer to the assigned questions and how your group learned the answers to each of the questions. You will present your findings as a group.

Group 1: Education in Serbia

1. How many schools are in Belgrade? Colleges and universities? Are there public and private schools?
2. How is the local education system structured? How do people decide what high school they go to?
3. What level of education do most people complete? Has that changed over time?
4. What foreign languages are taught in most schools? Are any required and to what degree of proficiency?
5. To what extent are parents involved in their children’s education?

Materials:

A pen or pencil and paper for taking notes. You may not use your phones for notes.

Evaluation:

This is about gathering of-the-people, informal knowledge, but it’s also about the *process* of gathering of-the-people, informal knowledge. Your grade will be based on how you gather your data: in the spirit of exploration and engagement and not as if there are “True” or definitive answers that you must find. The assignment counts for up to 5pts for each group member. Each group member will earn the same number of points, and the points will be assigned as a reflection of both the product and process of your scavenger hunt.

Group Presentation #1: June 3, 2022

Serbia

**Intercultural Scavenger Hunt: Working**

Assignment:

We’re not in Virginia anymore! While Yugoslavia was a somewhat artificial nation (in the sense that the countries within it were unique religiously, culturally, and linguistically), Serbia is perhaps the closest country to the fantasy of Yugoslavia as a singular entity. This activity is designed to get you thinking about Serbia as it is today and how it is and isn’t Virginia or the USA. As a group you must gather information through a combination of strategies such as interviews with local residents, observations, signs and flyers, etc. You may not use the internet or non-local sources. You will want to ask multiple people the same question. As appropriate, collect artifacts (i.e., photos, menus, flyers, etc.) for your presentation of your findings. Be sure to jot down both your answer to the assigned questions and how your group learned the answers to each of the questions. You will present your findings as a group.

Group 2: Working in Serbia

1. What are the major industries in Belgrade? In Serbia?
2. What time does the work day start and end?
3. To what extent is gender equality present within the workplace?
4. What are the most respected occupations?
5. Is economic globalization impacting the country? If so, in what ways (positive and negative)?

Materials:

A pen or pencil and paper for taking notes. You may not use your phones for notes.

Evaluation:

This is about gathering of-the-people, informal knowledge, but it’s also about the *process* of gathering of-the-people, informal knowledge. Your grade will be based on how you gather your data: in the spirit of exploration and engagement and not as if there are “True” or definitive answers that you must find. The assignment counts for up to 5pts for each group member. Each group member will earn the same number of points, and the points will be assigned as a reflection of both the product and process of your scavenger hunt.

Group Presentation #1: June 3, 2022

Serbia

**Intercultural Scavenger Hunt: Recreation and Entertainment**

Assignment:

We’re not in Virginia anymore! While Yugoslavia was a somewhat artificial nation (in the sense that the countries within it were unique religiously, culturally, and linguistically), Serbia is perhaps the closest country to the fantasy of Yugoslavia as a singular entity. This activity is designed to get you thinking about Serbia as it is today and how it is and isn’t Virginia or the USA. As a group you must gather information through a combination of strategies such as interviews with local residents, observations, signs and flyers, etc. You may not use the internet or non-local sources. You will want to ask multiple people the same question. As appropriate, collect artifacts (i.e., photos, menus, flyers, etc.) for your presentation of your findings. Be sure to jot down both your answer to the assigned questions and how your group learned the answers to each of the questions. You will present your findings as a group.

Group 3: Recreation and Entertainment in Belgrade

1. What do people do around here when they have free time? What are the most popular forms of entertainment for young people?
2. Do people attend sporting events? What kind? What are the most popular teams in the local community? Who are the rival teams?
3. What are the public recreation facilities (soccer fields, basketball courts, recreation centers, etc)? Are there organized community sports teams?
4. Are there dance clubs or bars? What hours do they operate? Is there a minimum drinking age?
5. Are there public parks? Recreational rivers or lakes? How are these places viewed by the local residents?

Materials:

A pen or pencil and paper for taking notes. You may not use your phones for notes.

Evaluation:

This is about gathering of-the-people, informal knowledge, but it’s also about the *process* of gathering of-the-people, informal knowledge. Your grade will be based on how you gather your data: in the spirit of exploration and engagement and not as if there are “True” or definitive answers that you must find. The assignment counts for up to 5pts for each group member. Each group member will earn the same number of points, and the points will be assigned as a reflection of both the product and process of your scavenger hunt.

Group Presentation #1: June 3, 2022

Serbia

**Intercultural Scavenger Hunt: Religion**

Assignment:

We’re not in Virginia anymore! While Yugoslavia was a somewhat artificial nation (in the sense that the countries within it were unique religiously, culturally, and linguistically), Serbia is perhaps the closest country to the fantasy of Yugoslavia as a singular entity. This activity is designed to get you thinking about Serbia as it is today and how it is and isn’t Virginia or the USA. As a group you must gather information through a combination of strategies such as interviews with local residents, observations, signs and flyers, etc. You may not use the internet or non-local sources. You will want to ask multiple people the same question. As appropriate, collect artifacts (i.e., photos, menus, flyers, etc.) for your presentation of your findings. Be sure to jot down both your answer to the assigned questions and how your group learned the answers to each of the questions. You will present your findings as a group.

Group 4: Religion in Serbia

1. What is the major religion in Serbia? Where is it headquartered?
2. Describe one or two major practices or beliefs common with that religion? What are the biggest holidays? When are they?
3. To what extent is general society influenced by religion? Are there certain ways of dress or behaviors that would be found offensive in the name of religion?
4. Would the average college student consider his or herself religious?

Materials:

A pen or pencil and paper for taking notes. You may not use your phones for notes.

Evaluation:

This is about gathering of-the-people, informal knowledge, but it’s also about the *process* of gathering of-the-people, informal knowledge. Your grade will be based on how you gather your data: in the spirit of exploration and engagement and not as if there are “True” or definitive answers that you must find. The assignment counts for up to 5pts for each group member. Each group member will earn the same number of points, and the points will be assigned as a reflection of both the product and process of your scavenger hunt.

Group Presentation #2: June 8, 2022  
Serbia

**Planning Your Family’s Slava Celebration**

Assignment:

You are in charge of organizing your family’s Slava celebration this year. As a group you must gather information about the Slava tradition through a combination of strategies such as interviews with local residents, observations, signs and flyers, etc. You may not use the internet or non-local sources. You will want to ask multiple people the same question. As appropriate, collect artifacts (i.e., photos, menus, flyers, etc.) for your presentation of your findings. Be sure to jot down both your answer to the assigned questions and how your group learned the answers to each of the questions. You will present your findings as a group.

1. What is a Slava? What is its history? What is its purpose?
2. When and where is a Slava traditionally held? Where will you hold yours?
3. Who is invited to a Slava? How many people will come to your Slava?
4. When is your Slava? Who is your patron saint?
5. What food and drink will you serve (include ritual foods and personal preferences)? What will be your main dishes? Who will make your food?
6. About how much is your food budget?
7. What does this tradition tell you about Serbian culture?

Materials:

A pen or pencil and paper for taking notes. You may not use your phones for notes.

Evaluation:

This is about gathering of-the-people, informal knowledge about a local custom. It’s also about using the most banal resources—like the grocery store—as a reference and a window into culture. Your grade will be based both on what your conclusions are and how you gather your data. Creativity (without breaking tradition) is also valued here. The assignment counts for up to 5pts for each group member. Each group member will earn the same number of points, and the points will be assigned as a reflection of both the product and process of your Slava celebration plan.

Group Presentation #3: June 13, 2022

Montenegro and Bosnia

**Postcards from Abroad**

Assignment:

As we move through Montenegro and Bosnia, you will surely take lots of photos. As you look back on the photos of the people, places, foods, rituals, clothing, behaviors, buildings, etc, that we encountered, ask yourself, how is my emotional and intellectual experiencedocumented in these photos? What does my unique and subjective experience nevertheless reveal about these countries’ cultures, values, assumptions, and beliefs?

As a group, select four photos from your Montenegro and Bosnia photo collections (two from each country) that best symbolize your group’s sense of place/your group’s emotional and intellectual experience. On the afternoon of June 13th, your group will be allowed to print four photos; those four photos will be the visual texts of your group’s postcards from abroad.

On the back of each of your group’s four postcards, you will write a different brief message to the imagined recipient. The message should describe what your postcard image literally portrays and how the image portrays your emotional and intellectual experience in Montenegro and Bosnia. Think carefully about what message you want to send to your imagined recipient. Your message should convey the abstract and not just the factual. For example, consider the following message: “This is the Drina River. The Drina is 346 km long and remains largely undeveloped even though it’s been used for trade and commerce for centuries. There are rapids on the river, which make it great for whitewater rafting. We had so much fun rafting (even though the water was cold)! We even had a picnic with traditional Montenegrin food and folktales, and our guide was simply adorable!” Now consider this next one: “This is the Drina River. If you ever have a chance to go whitewater rafting here, you’ll feel like the rapids take you to another place in time. You’ll be surrounded by untouched nature everywhere you look, and there are real moments when you feel like you might be the only people on earth. As our group devoured a picnic of traditional foods, our guides entertained us with Montenegrin folktales, and we felt connected to the past is ways that we had never felt before.” Both statements are true, but the first is merely factual. The second, even if just a little bit, speaks to preservation of nature and reverence for the past and tradition.

On the evening of June 13th, your group will present your postcards to the class, both reading aloud your written messages and describing how the process of creating souvenir postcards shaped your understanding of the host culture and its underlying values, assumptions, and beliefs. Indeed, you had a unique experience in these countries, but what is even more important is what that reveals to you about these countries’ cultures, values, assumptions, and beliefs.

Materials:

Your phone cameras and Dr. Miskec’s Polaroid Mint printer.

Evaluation:

You will not be graded on your ability to produce high quality works of art. Instead, your grade will be based on how your postcards, as well as your written and spoken reflections, demonstrate your informed thoughts about your intercultural learning. Originality is valued here. The assignment counts for up to 5pts for each group member. Each group member will earn the same number of points, and the points will be assigned as a reflection of the whole collection of postcards and their messages as well as the added information you provide during your presentation.

Group Presentation #4: June 21, 2022

Croatia

**Happy 10th Birthday, Željka!**

Assignment:

This activity is designed to get you thinking about Croatian children’s culture, especially how it is and isn’t like children’s culture in Virginia or the USA. As a group you must gather information about popular children’s themes and images to decide the way you will plan and decorate for little Željka’s birthday celebration. More importantly, you need to be able to plan a birthday party that is not just realistic for a Croatian kid, but that allows you to talk about what you are learning about Croatia. Much like your Postcards, this activity is asking you to think symbolically as well as literally.

1. What is the party’s theme? Why did you choose it?
2. What food will you serve? Will there be a birthday cake? How did you decide?
3. About how much will your food budget be? Be specific.
4. What books will Željka receive as a gift?
5. What toys will Željka receive as a gift?
6. What clothes will Željka receive as a gift?
7. What games will Željka receive as a gift?
8. How does this party’s theme speak to Croatia/Croatian culture more broadly?

Materials:

Your phones to take pictures and take notes. Artifacts or photos to act as a visual aid to your presentation.

Evaluation:

This is about gathering information through observation, connections, creativity, and deductive reasoning. Originality is valued here. The assignment counts for up to 5pts for each group member. Each group member will earn the same number of points, and the points will be assigned as a reflection of both the product and process of your birthday party planning.