

IMMIGRANT CLUSTER COMMUNITIES: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

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There are a handful of “cluster” immigrant communities throughout the United States that blossomed during the immigration influx of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Exploring “cluster genealogy”—the process of researching those relatives, friends, and neighbors who lived near an ancestor—can often break down brick walls in the search for individual family lines and help to place our ancestors’ lives in historical context. For those descendants who’ve moved away from such traditional immigrant enclaves, 21st-century technology can be used to rebuild “cluster communities” in the virtual world.

Overview

- How to identify chain migrations and cluster communities by utilizing census and immigration records, and other resources with examples
- Ways to work beyond your own family tree to share and collaborate with other researchers
- The shift to “virtual” cluster communities (benefits, pitfalls, and obstacles)
- Using tools such as social networking sites, wikis, and Second Life to connect with other researchers, and build community or village-based online genealogical communities

Introduction

- Immigration influx of 19th and 20th centuries
- Immigrants often traveled together
- Put down roots among relatives, friends, or neighbors from their native land
- Immigrants often settled in enclaves within cities and towns
- Many would cluster in specific regions in the United States
- These cluster communities offered a place where the immigrants could transplant and preserve their culture, lifestyle, and traditions in new surroundings
- Immigrant groups frequently founded their own churches, schools, boarding houses
- Many formed their own academic, athletic, or charitable groups, and fraternal, occupational, and social organizations, ethnic presses (newspapers, etc.)
- Work (coal mines, steel mills, etc.)
- Followed relatives, friends, neighbors

Importance of Cluster Communities in Genealogy

- Go beyond your own family
- Connecting with others
- Gives historical perspective
- May provide valuable contacts/clues for research

Sample Cluster Community: Bradenville, Pennsylvania

Key Tools for Identifying a “Cluster Community”

- 1930 Census
- Other Census records
- 1990 Census Supplementary Data
- Historical Census Browser, University of Virginia Library
<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus>
- Networking w/ fellow researchers
- Church records
- Immigration records (Ellis Island)
- Steven Morse Search Tool for EIDB www.stevemorse.org New “Gold” form that supplants former “Gray” and “Blue” forms

Steve Morse: Searching the Ellis Island Database in One Step

- Mines the Ellis Island Database
- Enables more specific searches
- Ability to do “town” search (exact, “sounds like”)
- Step #1: Find immigrants who came from Milpos (or variation on town name)
- Step #2: Go to the Ellis Island Database and look at the actual manifest to identify the number of immigrants listing “Bradenville” as their destination in U.S.
- Step #3: Compare names to names in St. Mary’s Church Records, cemetery, and U.S. Census (1930) for Bradenville and surrounding areas.

U.S. Census (1930) for Bradenville and surrounding areas.

- Step #4: Prepare spreadsheets (using Microsoft Excel)
- Step #5: Make contact with descendants
- Repeat Steps 1-5 for other villages (Hanigovce, Olejnikov, L’utina, etc.)

Sample pages of immigrants to from Milpos (or Honig Milpos, etc.)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Residence</u>	<u>Arrived</u>	<u>Age</u>
1	Antal,Andras	Milpos	1901	25
2	Antal,Pal	Milpos	1900	18
3	Banas,Josef	Milpos	1900	25
4	Banjasz,Jstvan	Milpos	1905	18
5	Banyasz,Gyorgy	Milpos	1902	26
6	Csckan,Andras	Honig Milpos, Hungary	1910	24
7	Csekan,Erzsebet	Hring Milpos	1906	19
8	Csekan,Gyorgy	Milpos, Hungary	1901	24

9	Czekan, Janos	K. Milpos, Hungary	1907	18
10	Darsyatz, Andro	Milpos	1902	17
11	Drabiscsak, Zsuzsi	H. Milpos	1904	16
12	Figura, Jan	Homigmilpos, Hungary	1908	19
13	Figura, Jozsef	Konigmilpos	1900	27
14	Georg, Anton	Milpos	1902	30
15	Gulas, Verona	Honig Milpos	1904	16
16	Gulassa, Janos	K. Milpos, Hungary	1907	23
17	Gulassa, Peter	K. Milpos, Hungary	1907	17
18	Hrabcsak, John	Milpos	1902	32
19	Hrabcsak, Mihaly	Milpos	1899	35
20	Hrabczak, Georg	Milposz, Hungary	1907	33
21	Kandracs, Janos	Milpos, Hungary	1911	31
22	Kondratsch, Janos	Milpos	1905	24
23	Krabcsak, Gyorgy	Milpos	1901	27
24	Krehlik, Jan	Homigmilpos, Hungary	1908	25
25	Matvia, Zuza	Milpos	1904	22
26	Mizerak, Alisebeta	Milpos, Tchecho Slov.	1920	37
27	Mizerak, Andras	Milpos	1901	23
28	Mizerak, Andrasa	Milpos, Hungary	1906	25
29	Mizerak, Anna	Homg Milpos	1905	8
30	Mizerak, Erzsebet	Homg Milpos	1905	35

Sample data extracted by using the Morse “Gray” form—searching by town using “sounds like” option for “Milpos.” After reviewing the passenger records, noted 14 out of the first 30 results showed “Bradenville” as final destination in U.S.

Immigrant “Cluster Communities in the 21st Century

- Descendants of immigrants move away
- Find different venue: The Internet: “Virtual” communities
- Example: www.avillagecluster.com

Example: Saris (Saros) County “Cousins” Web Site (See sample Web page on following page)

- Village-based Web site: Myfamily.com www.myfamily.com
- Co-Administrators: Lisa Alzo, John Matviya
- “Invitation-only” site (private, password-protected)
- Site (w/ over 30 members)
- The Web site serves as a central place to:
 - Correspond
 - Post family trees and photographs
 - Share research data

Milpos Lutina Hanigovce Family Home Page powered by MyFamily.com™

My Site | MyFamily.com | Ancestry.com | People Finder | Create a new family website

Lisa Alzo | E-mail | Edit Account | Log Out | Help

Front Page | Addresses | Calendar | Chat | Family Tree | File Cabinet | History | What's New | Members | News | Photos | Polls | Recipes | Utilities

It's great to see so many members logging on to this web site... but don't forget to leave a message while you Welcome Descendants of Milpoš, Hanigovce, Olejnikov, L'utina and nearby villages. We hope that you will find this web page a great way for us to share our research. If you have any questions contact Lisa or John.

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- Dec 24 - [Vesele Vianoce-Merry Christmas](#), Lisa Alzo
- Apr 29 - [RE: Catharina Soltesz Lokaj](#), Diane Hassan
- Apr 29 - [RE\(2\): Catharina Soltesz Lokaj](#), Ken Soltesz
- Apr 28 - [RE: Catharina Soltesz Lokaj](#), John Matviya
- Dec 28 - [RE: Lubo and Presov U](#), Vince Stankay
- Dec 26 - [Lubo and Presov U](#), John Matviya
- Dec 02 - [Maggie & Zeke's Wedding](#), John Matviya
- Nov 04 - [Lisa Alzo - Book Seller](#), John Matviya
- Oct 13 - [Announcement: 2008 FEEFHS Conference, August 1-3,](#)

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Member	Last Visit	Postings
Lisa Alzo	9:10 PM	View
John Matviya	3/19	View
Pam Savel	3/11	View
James Kraber	3/6	View
Phyllis Nordstrom	3/3	View
Denise Lockman	3/2	View

Collaborative Research Projects

- Producing a single, all-encompassing "family" tree based on common surnames
- Extraction of immigration data from the Ellis Island Database
- Transcription of LDS microfilm records of the key villages
- Transcription of church records from Bradenville's St. Mary's Greek Catholic Church
- Evaluating Bridgeport, CT, as another cluster community

No matter what ethnic group you belong to, you can follow the above example to create your own "virtual" cluster communities for your ancestral town or village.

Your Genealogy “Cloud”

- Web 2.0 (the "second generation" of online technology)
- Blogs www.blogger.com; www.wordpress.com, etc.
- Social Networking Sites (see below)
- Wikis (user-contributed sites) www.genealogywiki.org
- You Tube www.youtube.com

Social Networking Web Sites

- Facebook www.facebook.com
- MySpace www.myspace.com
- Second Life www.secondlife.com
- Twitter www.twitter.com

Genealogy-Specific

Store and Share Trees

- FamilyLink www.familylink.com
- Findmypast.com www.findmypast.com
- LivingGenealogy.com www.livinggenealogy.com
- SharedTree www.sharedtree.com
- We Relate www.werelate.org

Pedigree Databases with Social Networking Enhancements

- Genes Reunited www.genesreunited.com
- NokTree.com www.noktree.com

Family Sharing Sites

- Amiglia.com www.amiglia.com
- Footnote www.footnote.com
- Geni www.geni.com
- Myfamily.com www.myfamily.com

Multi-tasking Sites

- Ancestry.com Member Trees www.ancestry.com
- MyHeritage www.myheritage.com
- Zoof: The Family Network www.zoof.com

Preserving Your Ethnic Heritage: What Can You Do?

- Strengthen family bonds/meet new cousins
- Keep traditions alive
- Honor your ancestors and keep the sense of community they built alive
- Pass on to future generations

Conclusion

Researching cluster communities in the U.S. helps to further personal research and provides a foundation for building a mutually beneficial community-based research protocol with genealogists with like surnames or ties to the same ancestral village(s).