

**AUB**  
**ENGLISH 220: TRAVEL WRITING**

**SYRINE C. HOUT**

**Course Description:**

The course will expose the heterogeneity of travel literature by identifying its overlaps with kindred literary (sub)genres, such as autobiography, letters, memoirs, the picaresque novel, and the Bildungsroman, as well as with scientific discourse, notably ethnography.

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. To categorize and distinguish the different kinds and styles of travel writing which make up this heterogeneous genre.
2. To challenge and question the criteria used by travelers, whether real or fictional, in their view of and interaction with cultural others.
3. To appreciate how travel may be used as a topos or a trope in subgenres such as 'travel logs', 'travel poetry', 'cross-cultural/diasporic novels', and short stories about itinerant characters.
4. To evaluate the relationship between the motives for traveling and the final literary product.
5. To differentiate between similar but not identical 'states' of moving and being, such as exile, diaspora, expatriation, escapism, and immigration.

**Grade Distribution:**

Attendance: 5%  
Oral Participation: 10%  
Oral Report: 20%  
Midterm: 30%  
Final Exam: 35%

**Course Policy:**

Attendance is required. More than 7 unexcused absences result in automatic withdrawal from the course. Students are responsible for any materials covered during their absence. Cheating and plagiarism result in automatic failure on the assigned task.

**Weekly Readings:**

**September:**

M: 30 General Introduction

**October:**

Tu: 1 Introduction to the Genre

Th: 3 Introduction to the Genre

M: 7 *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*

Tu: 8 *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*

Th: 10 *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*

M: 14 Voltaire, *Candide*

Tu: 15 *Candide*

Th: 17 *Candide*

M: 21 William Kinglake, *Eothen*

Tu: 22 *Eothen*

Th: 24 *Eothen*

M: 28 André Gide, *The Immoralist*

Tu: 29 *The Immoralist*

Th: 31 *The Immoralist*

**November:**

M: 4 Freya Stark, *The Southern Gates of Arabia*

Tu : 5 *The Southern Gates of Arabia*

Th: 7 *The Southern Gates of Arabia*

M: 11 *The Southern Gates of Arabia*

Tu: 12 Paul Bowles, *The Sheltering Sky*

Th: 14 *The Sheltering Sky*

M: 18 *The Sheltering Sky*

Tu: 19 *The Sheltering Sky* (the movie)

Th: 21 **MIDTERM**

M: 25 Emily Nasrallah, *Flight Against Time*

Tu: 26 *Flight Against Time*

Th: 28 *Flight Against Time*

**December:**

M: 2 *Flight Against Time*

Tu: 3 Id Al-Fitr

Th: 5 Id Al-Fitr

M: 9 Italo Calvino, *The Non-Existent Knight*

Tu: 10 *The Non-Existent Knight*

Th: 12 *The Non-Existent Knight*

M: 16 Bharati Mukherjee, *Jasmine*

Tu: 17 *Jasmine*

Th: 19 *Jasmine*

M: 23 *Jasmine*

**January:**

Th: 2 Gabriel García Márquez, *Strange Pilgrims: "Bon Voyage, Mr. President"*

M: 6 "Seventeen Poisoned Englishmen"

Tu: 7 "The Trail of Your Blood in the Snow"

Th: 9 Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken"

M: 13 William Stafford, "Traveling Through the Dark"

Tu : 14 Adrienne Rich, "Transit"

Th: 16 Revision

**FINAL EXAM**