

Department of English Language and Literature
ELIT 419: Turkish Travels
Spring 2023



Instructor: Dr. Angelina Del Balzo

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Office Location: G B18-1 (**basement level, down the main stairs on the left towards the café**)

Student Office Hours: Thursdays 10.30-12.20 and by appointment in person or via Zoom

Course Schedule: Tuesdays 13.30-15.20 and Fridays 9.30-10.20 (spare hour 8.30-9.20)

Course Description

This elective offers an introduction to travel writing as a literary genre, and to a selection of travel writing in English about the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. Students taking this course will examine some of the central critical conversations concerning both travel writing as a genre, and western literary and artistic representations of the East. Readings will range from the early seventeenth century to the twenty-first century, and will include authors famous for their work in other genres, such as Lord Byron and Mark Twain, as well as others best known for their travel writings, such as Mary Wortley Montagu and Freya Stark. Themes examined may include the Grand Tour; responses to Turkey's ancient, classical and Byzantine heritage; Orientalism, and strategies of othering; representations of Turkey's natural environment; aesthetic categories such as the picturesque, the beautiful and the sublime; women travelers, the representation of Turkish women, and the gendering of travel writing; Turkey's minority communities; travel writing as autobiography; the city and the country, and Turkey's various regions and cities; frontiers and borders; and the complex of relations in travel writing between fact and fiction, authority and veracity. *Credit units: 3 ECTS Credit units: 5.*

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- identify and describe the basic characteristics of travel writing as a literary genre and participate in the major critical conversations about the form.
- narrativize the changing geopolitical and cultural relationships between the Ottoman Empire/Turkey and England/Great Britain as seen through individual English travelers' experiences.
- write strong interpretive arguments about travelogues supported by primary textual evidence that incorporate both historical and theoretical contexts.

Course Texts

All readings will be provided in PDF on Moodle, which you must **PRINT. Hard (paper) copies of readings are required for this class.** Exceptions are made for laptops and e-readers (tablets, etc.) if they have note-taking capabilities, but **students cannot use phones to access texts in class.**

Course Requirements

More detailed instructions and rubrics will be provided and explained in class well before each deadline

Participation (10%): Students must regularly contribute to class discussion (at least once a week) to get an A in participation. To effectively participate, students must do the assigned reading listed on the syllabus before class meets, attend classes **WITH a copy of the text**, regularly contribute to discussion, and actively take notes on discussion during class. **Remember: you cannot participate in class if you do not attend class.**

Locations and Communities Tracking and Reflection (20%): Students will track one category of location or community through our three units and write a short **post** (approx. 250 words) to a collaborative document at the end of **Weeks 4, 10, and 14.** They will then submit a short **reflection** (approx. 500 words) in **Week 15.** Sign-ups will be done via the provided link on Moodle during **Week 2.**

Midterm Essay (20%): Students will write a midterm **essay** (approx. 1000-1200 words) in **Week 6.**

Creative Essay (20%): Students will write their own **travelogue** (approx. 1000-1200 words) in **Week 12.**

Final Essay (30%): Students will write a final **essay** (approx. 1200-1500 words) due during **Finals Week.**

Grading

A+: 96-100%

A: 90-95%

A-: 88-89%

B+: 86-87%

B: 80-85%

B-: 78-79%

C+: 76-77%

C: 70-75%

C-: 68-69%

D+: 66-67%

D: 50-65%

F: 0-49%

I am always happy to discuss your work in office hours. However, **grades are not negotiable.**

Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Per Bilkent policy, the grade **FZ** will appear on the transcript of those who miss more than **20%** of our scheduled meetings (8 hours of class time), regardless of reason. Late arrivals count toward the hourly total. **20% is the absolute maximum you can miss and still pass the class, not how much you are entitled to miss with no penalty.** You never know when you may need to miss class, so please plan accordingly. I recognize, however, that long-term issues sometimes happen during the semester that may affect your attendance. **Please get in touch via email if persistent obstacles arise.** I will do my best to be as flexible as I can be within university policies.

Communication: The best way to discuss your work is during my student hours, which will be **Thursdays 10.30-12.20** and **by email appointment**, either in-person or over Zoom. I need **at least 2 days' advance notice** to arrange a meeting. Make sure that you are following the syllabus, completing the readings on time, starting major assignments before the week they are due, and communicating your issues with me before any university deadlines. **A failure to plan on your part does not constitute an emergency on mine.**

Email and Feedback Protocol:

- I will respond to emails within a day during the week. Detailed feedback on writing may take longer.
- I will not answer email on the weekends.

- As a policy, I will read drafts **up to a paragraph**, but **I will not read full drafts**. I will offer feedback and suggestions, which you can then apply to the rest of your writing. For full draft feedback, please make an appointment at BilWrite well before the assignment is due: <http://bilwrite.bilkent.edu.tr/>
- **I will not respond to emails regarding assignments or grades sent to me 24 hours before the deadline or within 24 hours after graded feedback has been provided.**

Extensions: Extensions are given upon request, **no questions asked**. In other words, if you need/would like extra time to complete the assignment, you don't need to tell me the reason why you want one. Deadline extensions will be determined on a case-by-case basis, but usually range between one day to one week. **Please request extensions with as much advanced notice as possible.** It is better to turn in an assignment early if you end up not needing to use the extension than to send me a panicked email minutes before the deadline. **There is no grade penalty for approved extensions.**

Technology: Laptops and e-readers/tablets may be used for texts and note-taking purposes. Cell phones may be used for dictionaries during class (on silent) **but may not be used to view the course texts**. Please be aware of how your technology usage affects your engagement and the success of the class overall. Texting, web browsing, etc. not only inhibit your own learning but can also distract classmates around you.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the use of ideas or words of another without citation. The work you do for this course must be your own and produced for this course alone. Any instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Consequences will be determined on a case-by-case basis, but at a minimum plagiarism will result in a 0 on the assignment in question. Other consequences may include failing the course and possible expulsion from the university. For the university policy on plagiarism, see https://w3.bilkent.edu.tr/web/provost/SAIC_Students.pdf.

Academic integrity is essential to our teaching community and the global academic community we all are a part of. Good citational practices produce ethical teaching and scholarship, showing with whom we are in conversation with and whose scholarship we are building on in our work.

Course Schedule

All readings will be selections from the listed texts posted on Moodle

Week 1

Tues. 31 Jan. & Fri. 3 Feb.

Course introduction and the travel writing genre [readings provided in class]

Week 2: 1615-1789

Tues. 7 Feb. & Fri. 10 Feb.

George Sandys, *The Relation of a Journey...Containing a Description of the Turkish Empire* (1615)

Week 3: 1615-1789

Tues. 14 Feb. & Fri. 17 Feb.

Paul Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (1668)

Week 4: 1615-1789

Tues. 21 Feb. & Fri. 24 Feb.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters* (1716-18, pub. 1763)

Locations and Communities Post #1 due Fri. 24 Feb. at 23:59

Week 5: 1615-1789

Tues. 28 Feb. & Fri. 3 March

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters* (1716-18, pub. 1763)

Week 6: Spring Break

6 – 10 March **NO CLASS**

Midterm Essay due Fri. 10 March to Moodle at 23:59

Week 7: 1789-1918

Tues. 14 March & Fri. 17 March ***SPARE HOUR***

Elizabeth Craven, *A Journey Through the Crimea to Constantinople* (1789)

Week 8: 1789-1918

Tues. 21 March & Fri. 24 March ***SPARE HOUR***

Lord Byron, selected letters (1809-1824) and Henrietta Liston, *The Turkish Journals* (1812-1820)

Withdraw Deadline 22 Mar. at 17.30

Week 9: 1789-1918

Tues. 28 March & Fri. 31 March

Julia Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan and Domestic Manners of the Turks* (1837) and *The Beauties of the Bosphorus* (1838)

Week 10: 1789-1918

Tues. 4 April and Fri. 7 April

Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad* (1869)

Locations and Communities Post #2 due Fri. 7 April at 23:59

Week 11: 1918-2018

Tues. 11 April & Fri. 14 April ***SPARE HOUR***

Freya Stark, *Ionia: A Quest* (1954), *The Lycian Shore* (1956), *Alexander's Path* (1958), and *Gateways and Caravans: A Portrait of Turkey* (1971)

Week 12: Bayram

17 – 21 April **NO CLASS**

Creative Essay due Fri. 21 April to Moodle at 23:59

Week 13: 1918-2018

Tues. 25 April & Fri. 28 April

James Baldwin, *Another Country* (1962)

dir. Sedat Pakay, *James Baldwin: From Another Place* (1973) **[film shown in class]**

Magdalena J. Zaborowska, *James Baldwin's Turkish Decade: Erotics of Exile*

Week 14: 1918-2018

Tues. 2 May & Fri 5 May

Kapka Kassabova, *Border: A Journey to the Edge of Europe* (2017)

Locations and Communities Post #3 due Fri. 5 May at 23:59

Week 15: 1918-2018

Tues. 8 May & Fri. 12 May

Alev Scott, *Turkish Awakening* (2014) and *Ottoman Odyssey* (2018)

Locations and Communities Reflection due Fri. 12 May to Moodle at 23.59

Finals Period

Final Paper due Fri. 19 May to Moodle at 23.59