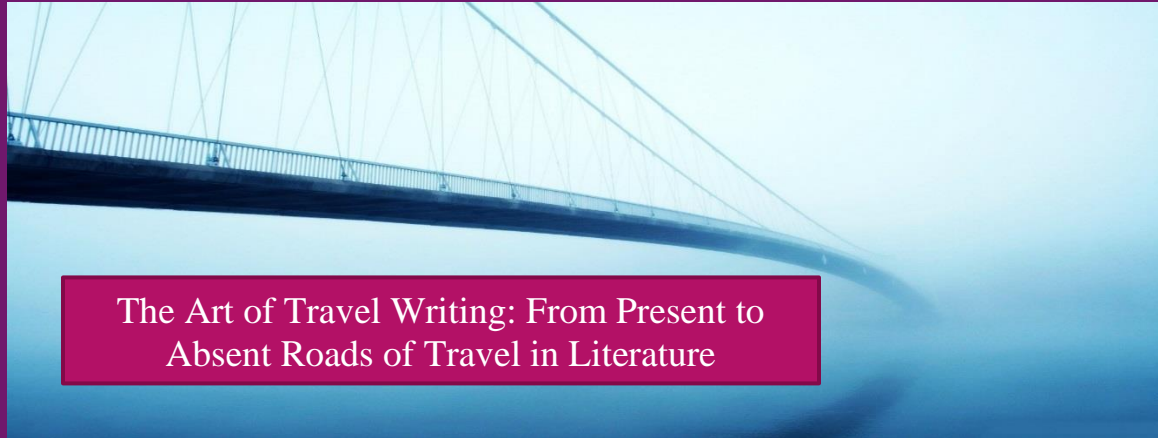


COMPLIT.372



Winter 2018

Dr. Maral Aktokmakyan

T/Th 11:30 am -1:00 pm

Credits 3

What is the relation between selfhood and travel writing?

Is it possible not to travel or get to other side?

How can we think of someone who cannot travel?

Come and learn more about the politics and ethics of travel literature!

Course description: This course explores the construction of selfhood through the literary genre of travel writing. The two questions we will explore in the course are: 'what is the experience of travel?' and 'how can we think of travel writing as a genre and an experience?' We will examine the relation between becoming a traveler and constructing a self. In the first part, we will mainly do close readings of travel writing from Western and non-Western literatures. These texts will help us formulate the idea that every travel is constructed with a sense of return. Then in the second part, we will challenge the idea of return hidden behind the ancient Greek pattern of odyssey, and look for alternative answers for reconstructing the act of travel, the traveler and his/her writing. Focusing on particular texts from a number of Armenian writers, we will think about the 'borderlines' where some travelers might end up. By exploring these literary texts and films, we will focus not only on the aesthetic, political and ethical dynamics within the experience of traveling, but also on the way these works generate the concept of non-travel and its subject.

Course Requirements: Evaluation will be based on regular attendance, participation in class discussion, a midterm assignment and a final paper.