



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

HUMANITIES SEMINARS

“The Road is Made Upon Walking” Walking on the Iberian Peninsula, in Latin America, and in the US/Mexico Borderlands

Melissa Fitch
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
Fall 2025

Wanderer, your footsteps are the road, and nothing else; wanderer,
there is no road, the road is made by walking.
Antonio Machado (Spain, 1875-1939)

Why do people walk? There are numerous answers, including spiritual enlightenment, creative inspiration, health, to get to work, or flee war, economic strife, or persecution. In this 6-week lecture-based Humanities Seminar students will learn how authors and poets, city planners and architects, filmmakers, artists, composers, journalists, and activists have all approached this theme in three regions of the Spanish and Portuguese speaking world: Spain and Portugal, Latin America, and our US/Mexico Borderlands. We will examine fiction and non-fiction, films, journalism, podcasts, travel literature, classical and popular music, documentaries, murals, art installations, and aspects of the built environment. The course will include works by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, Antonio Machado, Pablo Neruda, Jorge Amado, Paulo Coelho, and local writers. We will look at the ancient the Camino de Santiago in Spain and Portugal, Afro-Brazilian spiritual pilgrimages in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, indigenous treks and Ecotourism on Inca Trail in Peru, and finally, walks related to our own Borderlands, those often done by migrants crossing into the United States through the Sonoran Desert.

The course will have some unusual components including optional walks which will serve to complement the course foci. There will be an optional self-guided walk through Tucson’s historic Barrio Viejo to examine the presence of the Virgen de Guadalupe, light a candle at the Tiradito Shrine, and see the way that local muralists have depicted the neighborhood’s vibrant Mexican and Chinese history, and optional participation in the All-Saints Procession on November 9. *The Road is Made Upon Walking* is a seminar that is global and local, cross-generational, and tied directly to our own community. The course embodies the land grant mission of the University of Arizona as well as that of the College of Humanities, in that it exemplifies “fearless and innovative humanistic inquiry” that “aims to make the world a more just, equitable and inclusive place.”

The course includes two Spotify playlists:

https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5DoV96hGRD0OcNtNm5jVWR?si=YvkMWpyyTOMdjyt1U6g9_A&pi=7LFBz6W8TuG5F

https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5DoV96hGRD0OcNtNm5jVWR?si=YvkMWpyyTOMdjyt1U6g9_A&pi=7LFBz6W8TuG5F

YouTube playlist: <https://www.youtube.com/@fitmelissa1> (SehaceelCamino)

COURSE OUTLINE (Six weeks)

(Students will have 1-2 materials to read/watch/hear each week, with additional optional materials)

PART I El Camino de Santiago: The Path of St. James in Spain and Portugal

Week 1 October 16, 2025 Introduction/Life as a journey. Rick Steves “Travel is a Political Act” Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. Penguin, 2000. 3-31 Video: “Want to be More Creative? Go for a Walk” Marily Opezzo TED talk. TedEx Stanford 2017.

Poetry/Music: Antonio de Machado “Traveler, there is no Road”/Music: Joao Manuel Serrat “Cantares”/ *Don Quijote de la Mancha*

Week 2 October 23, 2025 Spain (Suggested ancillary culinary experience, Basqueria Pintxos and Sangria Bar 350 E. Congress St <https://www.basqueriaaz.com/>)

The Way (dir. Emilio Estevez, 2010, film and sequel, if it has been released). VLog: Efrén Gonzáles. Paulo Coelho, *The Pilgrimage* (1987) and/or *The Alchemist* (1988). Music: *The Alchemist's Symphony* (1997) eight movements and five interludes, composer: Walter Taieb, 1997.

Optional Movie: *The Pilgrim – Story of Paulo Coelho* ([Nã Pare na Pista](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uj0K0K0K0K0), Spain/Brazil, 2015).

Optional Travel Writing: Jack Hitt *Off the Road: A Modern Day Walk Down the Pilgrim's Route Into Spain* (1994). Documentary *I'll Push You: A Camino Journey of 500 Miles* (Christopher Karcher, Terry Parish, dir. Emota, 2017)

PART II Latin America: Indigenous and Afro-Latin American Pilgrimages

Week 3 October 30, Peru. (Suggested ancillary culinary experience: Villa Peru 1745 E. River Rd # 165, <https://www.villaperutucson.com/>)

Pablo Neruda Poetry: “De las alturas de Machu Picchu” (From the Heights of Machu Picchu); Travel Writing: “Turn Right at Machu Picchu” by Mark Adams. The Inca Trail and Ecotourism.

Week 4 November 6 Brazil. (Suggested ancillary culinary experience: Churrasco de Brasil Brazilian Steakhouse 150 W. Wetmore, <https://churrascodebrasil.com/>)

Novel: Jorge Amado *Jubiabá* (1935, translated into English in 1989 by Margaret Neves). Afro-Brazilian spiritual pilgrimages to Salvador da Bahia and Catholic pilgrimages to Corcovado (Christ the Redeemer) in Rio de Janeiro.

PART III The Borderlands

OPTIONAL WALK I: All Saints' Procession Sunday, November 9

OPTIONAL WALK II: Self-Guided Tour of Tucson's Barrio Viejo to the Tiradito Shrine (Maps and candles provided) (Approximately 45 minutes with five art/history stops)

Week 5 November 13 (Suggested ancillary culinary experience: El Charro, 311 N. Court, <https://www.elcharrocafe.com/locations/downtown/>)

Margaret Reagan: Non-fiction Stories. *Crossing with the Virgin* (UA Press, 2010). Essay “The Grim Compassion of Searching for Missing Migrants in the Desert” *The New Yorker*. April 14, 2021.

Documentary: *Águilas/Eagles* (dirs. Kristy Guevara-Flanagan and Maite Zubiaurre, 2021). Non-fiction Narrative: *Solito A Memoir* by Javier Zamora (2022).

PART IV: Digital and Frozen Worlds

Week 6 November 20: (Suggested ancillary culinary experience: Penguin Stew recipe available upon request)

Conclusion. Part 1: Digital worlds. Part 2 Ernest Shackleton's remarkable journey in the South Atlantic and Antarctica; the heroic (and forgotten) Chilean captain who saved Shackleton's crew and the discovery of the *Endurance* in 2022. Mensun Bound *The Ship Beneath the Ice: The Discovery of Shackleton's Endurance*. MacMillan, 2022. 307-363.