

9 September 2015 ♦ 12:00 pm ♦ German House Seminar Room, 172 College Avenue

Stage Flight

Lunchtime talk by Dr. Evelyn Annuss

Fall 2015 Max Kade Scholar in Residence / Charlotte M. Craig Research Scholar

Rutgers Department of Germanic, Russian, & East European Languages & Literatures



Eva Leitolf, "Postcards from Europe"

Guitgia, Lampedusa, Italy 2012

About two hundred refugees from Eritrea and Somalia were picked up by the Italian coastguard off the island of Lampedusa on 6 May 2009. They were immediately deported to Libya on the basis of a bilateral agreement, without receiving any opportunity to apply for asylum.

The Italian Refugee Council located twenty-four of them and took their cases to court. On 23 February 2012 the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the deportations had violated the European Convention on Human Rights, and ordered the Italian state to pay €15,000 in compensation to each of the twenty-two surviving applicants on the grounds that they had been exposed to the risk of inhumane treatment and torture in Libya and their countries of origin. The Court noted that more than 471 refugees had been deported to Libya under similar circumstances between 6 and 10 May 2009.

According to Amnesty International the verdict represented a turning-point for the protection of migrants on the high seas.

European Court of Human Rights, press release ECHR 075, 23 February 2012; Spiegel Online, 23 February 2012; Tagesschau, 23 February 2012; Deutschlandradio, 24 February 2012.

Due to the lethal effects of European border politics the question of refuge has become one of the main concerns dealt with in contemporary German theater. However, staging flight has not only a current political reference. It also reflects theatrical spacialization and corresponds with the act of appearing on stage. Exposing the element of movement it counters the dispositive of dramatic representation, brings the stage as a transitory zone into sight and queries the relation between the theatrical space and the public sphere. From Aeschylus' *The Suppliants* to contemporary theater, performance and activist art Evelyn Annuss' paper discusses the politics of aesthetic forms against the backdrop of today's political catastrophes.



Evelyn Annuss is the Fall 2015 Max Kade Scholar in Residence/ Charlotte M. Craig Research Scholar. She works at the intersection of theater studies and German literature. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Erfurt, where her dissertation focused on *Elfriede Jelinek's Theater of Afterlife*. She completed a postdoctoral thesis (Habilitation) on Nazi Mass Stagings and Media Dispositives in Bochum and is co-editor of a special issue on National-socialism and Gender for the German-speaking journal *Feministische Studien*. Her current work deals with 1) the relation of masking and marking in the history of literature, theater, and pop culture; 2) stagings of refuge.

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