

New Jersey Institute of Technology

HSS 404 | 006

History Seminar: Movement of Migrants and Refugees in the Eastern Mediterranean

Spring 2024

FMH 409 | TR: 1:00pm -2:20pm

Professor Elektra Kostopoulou

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**Please email me via Canvas*

Office: #323 Cullimore Hall

Office Hours: online and in person by appointment

(Fridays: 11:00am-2:00pm)

Webex Personal Room:

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Course Description:

The magnitude of migration flows in the early 21st century invites growing attention. In today's globalized context, population movements have various implications not only for those affected directly by them, but also for the world.

Mobility and displacement are experienced in different ways by different groups and actors. Trafficking, trauma, academic debates, international or localized politics, global solidarity networks, anti-migration rhetoric, grassroots or institutional interventions form a matrix of diverse realities continually reclaimed, reimagined, or contested. In this sense, migration is an implication and driver of systemic change.

This course will explore migration from a critical perspective, with a particular focus on Eastern Mediterranean routes. The sharp increase in the number of refugees and migrants trying to enter Europe through Turkey and Greece since the year 2014 has inspired many to describe these movements as a "humanitarian crisis." This course attempts to move beyond normative terminology and away from treating mobility as an anomaly. We will contextualize 21st displacement as a manifestation of specific historical contingency and violent international reconfigurations. At the same time, we will address the various taxonomies of migration in the Eastern Mediterranean via a comparative examination of past and present continuities and ruptures.

Course Objectives:

By taking this course, you will be able to:

- Contextualize current refugee/migrant phenomena by reference to the historical trajectories/ legal frameworks that have shaped population movements in the Eastern Mediterranean.
- Assess the strengths and constraints of different theoretical approaches to the reality of displacement.
- Engage actively with realities on the Greek-Turkish frontier by communicating directly with activists, NGOs, and refugees/migrants themselves.
- Discuss how gender, class, age, ethnic origin, or religion influence the experience of displacement/ reactions in potential host countries.
- Explore the interdisciplinary possibilities of the course in coming up with new strategies to improve experiences on the ground.

Course Requirements:

1. **Attend all classes prepared for a critical discussion and do the weekly readings.**
2. **Complete the weekly assignments.**
3. **Submit a research paper on migration/displacement, focusing on the topic/era/geography of your choice. Oral History projects are highly encouraged.**
4. **Submit a group draft grant application for an interdisciplinary project that addresses displacement.**

The paper should be 15 pages in length (not including a cover page and references). You should use at least 6 peer-reviewed publications and 2 primary sources (Chicago style for review articles).

Details will be explained in class.

Grading:

1. Class participation: 20%
2. Weekly Assignments: 20%
3. Group Grant Proposal: 20%
4. Research paper: 40%

90-100%: Excellent Work (A) | 85-89%: Very Good (B+) | 80-84%: Good (B) | 75-79% | Satisfactory Plus (C+) | 70-74%: Satisfactory (C)

Academic Integrity:

Plagiarism is passing off someone else's work as your own and will not be tolerated. Students are expected to write their own original work and to give credit in the form of footnotes (i.e. citations) for any material that is not their own. Plagiarized papers will be given an automatic "F" with no possibility of a rewrite. This may result in a failing grade for the entire course. Violations will be brought to the immediate attention of the Dean of Students and adjudicated in accordance with the NJIT Honor Code. A copy of the Honor Code is available at www.njit.edu/academics/honorcode.php

As we are trying to make this course relevant to your interests and unfolding developments that may resonate with the main topic, some of the readings and assignments might change accordingly.

Week One

Introduction

- Discussion of the course syllabus, objectives, requirements.

Week Two & Three

The Worst Humanitarian ‘Crisis’ of the 21st Century and the Press

- Pulitzer Center, “Flight from Syria: Refugee Stories.”
- Greussing, Esther, and Hajo G Boomgaarden. “Shifting the Refugee Narrative? An Automated Frame Analysis of Europe’s 2015 Refugee Crisis.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.
- Tsitselikis (2019). *Refugees in Greece: Facing a Multifaceted Labyrinth. International Migration*, 57(2), 158–175.
- Theodora Dragostinova, *Refugees or Immigrants? The Migration Crisis in Europe in Historical Perspective*.
 - Screening *The Swimmers* (2022).

Week Four

The Hell of Good Intentions: A Turning Point in US Foreign Policy

- Walt, Stephen. *The Hell of Good Intentions: America's Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of US Primacy*, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2018, New York, USA.
 - Discussion of Final Projects
 - IR and History

Week Five

Displacement and Exclusion: A Multifaceted Experience

- Speer, Jessie. “Subalternity as Displacement: Memoirs of Homelessness and the Struggle to Be Heard.” *Environment & Planning D: Society & Space* 39, no. 4 (2021): 627–645.
 - Discussion of Final Projects
 - Anthropology, Sociology, and History

Week Six & Seven

(De) Constructing the Middle East: Empire, Colonialism, and the Nation-State

- Khalidi, Rashid I. "Historical Landmarks in the Hundred Years' War on Palestine." *Journal of Palestine studies* 47, no. 1 (2017): 6–17.
 - Gani, Jasmine K. "Racial Militarism and Civilizational Anxiety at the Imperial Encounter: From Metropole to the Postcolonial State." *Security dialogue* 52, no. 6 (2021): 546–566.
- Case Studies: The Syrian Civil War/ Israel and Palestine.

Week Eight & Nine

WWI and the 1923 Population Exchange between Turkey and Greece

- Renée Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: The Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998), introduction.
 - Leyla Neyzi, "Remembering Smyrna/Izmir: Shared History, Shared Trauma," *History & Memory* 20, no. 2 (2008): 106–27.
- Screening *Twice A Stranger* (2012).
 - Perspectives in Oral History.

Week Ten & Eleven

Humanism, Humanitarianism, and Humans

- Iğsız, Aslı. *Humanism in Ruins: Entangled Legacies of the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018.
 - Graeber, David. "Dead Zones of the Imagination." *HAU journal of ethnographic theory* 2, no. 2 (2012): 105–128.
- Screening *Poverty, Inc* (2014).

Additional Sources: Crossing Borders, Crossing Literatures
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Gazment Kaplani, "Short Border Handbook."

Petros Markaris, "Green Card."

Kossi Komla Ebri, "Nevla, a Novel."

Thanassis Valtinos, "The Book of Andreas Kordopatis."

Sotiris Dimitriou, "God Tells Them All."
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Rawi Hage, “Cocroaroach.”

Additional Sources: Useful References

- <https://www.iom.int/glossary-migration-2019>
- <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/forced-migration-or-displacement>
- <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates15.asp>
- <http://www.internal-displacement.org/database>
- <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CMW.aspx>
- [https://undocs.org/A/RES/217\(III\)](https://undocs.org/A/RES/217(III))
- https://www.ecfr.eu/specials/mapping_migration
- <https://www.ioha.org/sites-about-oral-history/>
- <https://oral.history.ufl.edu/ottoman-greeks-of-the-united-states-ogus/>
- <https://archive.org/details/recordsofproceed00confuoft/page/n7>