

FALL 2016 COLLOQUIA SERIES

Date: Wednesday, November 2

Time: 3:15 – 5PM

Location: Social Sciences 1, room 261



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Shipwrecking Temporalities:

The European “refugee crisis” and the anti-crisis paradigm

Since the beginning of 2015, the large numbers of people crossing into Europe from various African and Middle Eastern countries have been used by the media and political actors to describe a crisis - the “refugee crisis” - that challenges the very core of European values and human rights principles. Calling this time such implies responding to it, on the one hand, with humanitarian gestures of saving lives, and, on the other, with stricter borders control. In this talk, I reflect on the various temporalities of the crisis, and the forms of experience that it simultaneously enables and disables. I argue that to operate under the banner of a “crisis” precludes us to experience other temporalities that are nonetheless urgent to grapple with. I draw from my work in Sicily, Italy, at ports of entry and at shelters for minors, and on the work of artists who have made installations in the Mediterranean on the “crisis” and its shadows. I propose to attend to the various images and stories that emerge from these different sites as ways to grapple with other temporalities and practices that cannot be translated into the grammar of the crisis.

Cristiana Giordano is Associate Professor of Anthropology at UC Davis. She works on foreign migration, mental health, and cultural translation in contemporary Italy. Her research addresses the politics of migration in Europe through the lens of ethno-psychiatry and its radical critique of psychiatric, legal, and moral categories of recognition of foreign others. She is the author of *Migrants in Translation. Caring and the Logics of Difference in Contemporary Italy* (University of California Press, 2014). Her current research focuses on issues of migrant health in Europe through the lenses of scientific research on the microbial flora of new comers aimed at monitoring selected cohorts of migrants to understand the health challenges they may go through during their integration in the European society. She is also engaged in finding new forms of ethnographic writing through theater devices. She is writing a play on the current “refugee crisis” and the different temporalities of an “emergency.”