

## Human side of migration and Home Information sheet

The session has been inspired by the findings from the edited volume, *Thinking Home* and the play *Priority Seating* (2018) (part of the project Human Side of Migration)

*Thinking Home Interdisciplinary Dialogues* Editor(s): **Bojana Petric, Sanja Bahun**, Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.



*Thinking Home* challenges and extends the existing scholarship on the subject of 'home' in a period which has seen unprecedented levels of movement cross the globe. Sanja Bahun and Bojana Petric have collated essays that revisit existing ideas to introduce new ways of thinking on home, from the individual and local, through communal, to the international levels. While home informs our feelings of belonging and displacement, and our activities, such as migration, housing, and language learning, Bahun, Petric and contributors look to specific under-studied areas and encompass them within a major framework that allows for assessment through multiple disciplinary and expressive lenses. *Thinking Home* examines examples such as

temporary homes, homes on the road, new and emergent modes of home-making, and minority groups in home and housing debates.

### **Priority Seating (2017)**

#### **University of Essex and Arts Council England**

Some of the material for the script is taken from in-depth interviews with local migrant communities in the North-Essex region, including local Chinese, Polish, and Filipino communities. Community organizations, such as Colchester Chinese Association, Polish and Filipino communities at Saint James the Less and Saint Helen Catholic Church have helped and supported the project. Other outreach activities have involved workshops with University of Essex Graduates from the Drama degree.

This new play seeks to offer migrant communities the opportunity to voice their unheard stories. This is based on the premise that by giving voice to hidden stories and through humanising the history and reality of migrants, cultural and social barriers can be overcome

## **Characters**

**Saya-** Syrian woman; pregnant travelling on her own; she is the odd one-out as she has never lived in the UK; new migrant.

**Agusia:** Polish woman; she has lived for 10 years in the UK but she is really unhappy about her situation and she is also disabled (she has some physical disability)

**John Carlo:** Filipino, he works as a carer/nurse; he has lived over 10 years in the UK; he has three children and a wife

**Cheon:** Chinese elderly (in his 70s); he moved to the UK from Hong Kong in 1950s; he worked in NHS as a health assistant; he married an English woman and has children and grandchildren.

## **Setting and scenario**

### **Setting:**

Characters on an imaginary train back to the UK (possibly the Eurostar from France);

There is only one seat and a silent mannequin is sitting on it. They live in a society where only people who are allocated with a priority status.

### **Basic Plot**

The train is stalled and the characters cannot reach their destination; they start talking about their experiences as migrants. They debate why they cannot sit on the only seat, but as they begin to realise the train cannot go forward they start blaming one another.

Agusia thinks that Saya is the reason why they are not allowed back into the UK. The men try to defend Saya but they have problems of their own as they get more and more frustrated. Cheon tries to get rid of the mannequin but the train seemingly derails and they are left with very little light and no seat. John Carlo, also, gets increasingly upset and tells the story of how he has been discriminated. At the end, there is some sort of reconciliation between Agusia and Saya as she realizes that she has only projected her anger about the situation onto Saya. The play ends as the characters are left in a limbo, will they ever return to their homes?

Link to the reading of the full play

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOhhOt-p8F4&feature=youtu.be>