Narratives of Displacement

The Aesthetics of Exile and Trauma in Global Literature and Cinema

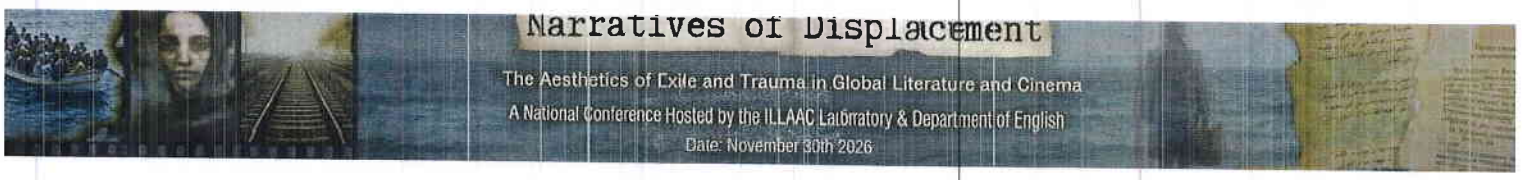
A National Conference Hosted by the ILLAAC Laboratory & Department of English

Date: November 30th 2026

جامعة عباس لغرور خنشلة
ABBES LAGHROUR UNIVERSITY KHENCHELA

INTERDISCIPLINARITÉ DES LETTRES, LANGUES, ART ET AIRES CULTURELLES.

Faculty of Letters and Languages



Narratives of Displacement: The Aesthetics of Exile and Trauma in Global Literature and Cinema

A National Conference hosted by : ILLAAC Laboratory at Abbas Laghrour University

On November 30th 2026

* Honorary Chair:
Pr. Abdelouahed Chala, Rector of the University of Khenchela

* General Supervision :
Pr. Belaifa Rachid, Dean of the Faculty of Letters and Languages

* Conference Chair:
Dr. Walid Kefali, Department of English

* Scientific Committee Chair:
Dr. Khaled Chouana, Department of English



Call for Papers

The modern era is inextricably defined by the realities of movement, rupture, and relocation. Whether driven by geopolitical conflict, ideological persecution, economic necessity, or ecological collapse, the condition of displacement fundamentally alters the human relationship to space, identity, and memory. In his seminal reflections on exile, Edward Said famously characterized it as a "discontinuous state of being"—an unhealable rift forced between a human being and their native place. It is within this profound fracture that new, complex narratives emerge.

This national conference, hosted by the ILLAAC Laboratory and the Department of English, seeks to interrogate the profound intersections of displacement, trauma, and artistic representation. We aim to explore how global literature and cinema do not merely document the refugee or exilic experience, but actively construct an aesthetics of displacement. How do authors and filmmakers translate the unspeakable nature of trauma.

Visual media and written narratives carry unique capacities to challenge dominant ideologies of borders and belonging. Cinematic framing, montage, and documentary realism offer visceral encounters with forced migration, while literary forms navigate the psychological landscapes of Homi K. Bhabha's "unhomely" , where the boundaries between the domestic and the foreign collapse. We are particularly interested in how these mediums resist the propaganda of exclusion and offer counter-narratives that restore agency to displaced subjects.

From the enduring impacts of settler colonialism to the emergence of environmental refugees, the global scope of displacement requires a rigorously interdisciplinary approach. We invite scholars, researchers, and practitioners to submit original papers that critically examine the poetics and politics of exile. By placing canonical postcolonial theory in conversation with contemporary digital media, global south perspectives, and cinematic studies, this conference endeavors to chart the evolving aesthetic strategies used to articulate the profound traumas—and the resilient survival—of displaced peoples worldwide.

Key Research Gaps to Address in this conference:

While the study of exile and trauma is well-established, this conference seeks to address several critical blind spots in contemporary scholarship. We particularly encourage submissions that tackle the following research gaps:

- **The Weaponization of the Displaced Image:** There is a pressing need to analyze how state media, political rhetoric, and cinematic propaganda manipulate the visual representation of refugees to engineer public opinion, either by framing them as a threat or reducing them to voiceless victims.
- **South-South Displacement Narratives:** Much of the existing literature focuses on the Global South-to-North migration trajectory. A significant gap remains in examining the aesthetics of displacement occurring *within* the Global South, requiring theoretical frameworks that de-center Eurocentric models of trauma and reception.
- **The Algorithmic and Digital Exile:** As borders become increasingly digitized, scholarship must investigate how surveillance technology, algorithms, and artificial intelligence both police displaced bodies and serve as new, virtual archives for diasporic memory and narrative resistance.
- **Eco-Trauma and the Loss of Topography:** While environmental refugeeism is a growing field, the specific *aesthetic* and *psychological* trauma of losing one's native ecology—how literature and cinema capture the "mourning of the earth"—requires deeper interdisciplinary exploration.
- **The Pedagogy of Displacement:** How are narratives of exile integrated into academic curricula and language teaching? There is a gap in understanding how to ethically teach traumatic literature and cinema without commodifying the suffering of the displaced

Conference Tracks

Track 1: Cinematic Cartographies, Media, and Propaganda

- **Documentary Truth vs. Fictionalized Trauma:** The ethical boundaries of representing forced migration on screen.

- **The Propaganda of Borders:** Cinematic and media analysis of how xenophobia and border policies are visually engineered to sway public opinion.
- **Counter-Gaze Cinema:** Filmmaking by refugees and exiles that subverts dominant media narratives and reclaims agency.
- **Archival Silences:** The use of found footage, fragmented archives, and historical film to reconstruct erased histories of displacement.

Track 2: The Literature of Trauma and the "Unclaimed Experience"

- **Narrating the Unspeakable:** Literary techniques (fragmentation, non-linear timelines, polyphony) used to capture the belatedness and shock of trauma.
- **The Linguistic Burden of Exile:** The politics of translation, the loss of the mother tongue, and adopting the colonizer's/host's language to tell the exilic story.
- **The *Unheimlich* in Diasporic Fiction:** The collapse of domestic safety and the psychological rendering of the "unhomely" space in contemporary novels and poetry.
- **Post-Memory and Generational Trauma:** How the children of exiles narrate a displacement they inherited but did not physically experience.

Track 3: Digital Diasporas and Technological Borders

- **Social Media as the New Archive:** How displaced individuals use digital platforms to narrate their journeys in real-time.
- **Surveillance and the Digital Body:** The intersection of biometric borders, data extraction, and the refugee experience in speculative fiction and film.
- **Open Source Memory:** The role of digital humanities, FOSS tools, and collaborative databases in mapping and preserving indigenous and exilic histories.

Track 4: Decoloniality and Global South Perspectives

- **De-centering the Western Gaze:** Critiques of the "white savior" complex in global literature and humanitarian cinema.
- **Indigenous Dispossession:** Settler-colonialism as a form of enforced exile on native land, and indigenous aesthetic resistance.

- **Transnational Solidarities:** Comparative studies of displacement narratives across African, Middle Eastern, Latin American, and Asian contexts.

Track 5: Bodies, Ecology, and Space

- **The Eco-Gothic and Climate Refugees:** The aesthetics of environmental collapse, resource extraction, and the resulting forced migrations in fiction and film.
- **Gender, Sexuality, and the Border:** How displacement uniquely traumatizes and polices marginalized bodies, and the queer narratives of exile.
- **The Architecture of Containment:** The representation of refugee camps, detention centers, and transitional spaces in visual culture.

Conference Chairman

Dr.Walid Kefali, Associate Professor of Cinema Studies, Public Opinion and American Studies , Department of English – Abbas Laghrour University

Conference Scientific Committee Chair

Dr.Khaled Chouana, Associate Professor, Department of English – Abbas Laghrour University

Organizing Committee Chair

Dr.Rachid Khelaifi , Associate Professor , Department of Arabic – Abbas Laghrour University

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❋ Djamila Ayadi	❋ Khenchela University

Important dates

Deadline for the receipt of abstracts:	November 21st 2026
Notification of acceptance:	November 22nd 2026
Full paper submission deadline:	November 25th 2026
Conference date:	November 30th 2026

Guidelines for Submission

- ❋ The proposals are to be sent to the conference email address: conf2021film@gmail.com
- ❋ Submissions will be evaluated by a peer-review committee.
- ❋ The conference language is English / French/ Arabic
- ❋ Conference Mode: On-site Presentations (no online sessions)

Conference Fees

- ❋ For all categories: 1000DZD

APPLICATION FORM

Personal and Professional Information:

First Name

Last Name

Degree(s) / Academic Title(s)

Profession (s)

Institution(s)

Country

Email Address(es)

Phone Number(s)

Selected / Sub-track Track

Title of the Paper

Keywords (5-7 Keywords)

Abstract (No more than 300 words):

