



CALL FOR PAPERS

International Conference

Modern Languages and Classics, The University of Alabama - USA

In partnership with

The Research Laboratory 3LAM, Le Mans University - France

The Research Laboratory LAREFA, University of Abomey-Calavi - Benin

and

The Research Laboratory PHEEAC, Antilles University Campus of Shoelcher - Martinique

27 - 29th March 2025

"Africa, Caribbean, Americas: Liberating the Shadows of the Past, Discourses and fights for Dignity and Human Rights"

CONCEPT NOTE

The geography of the world is shaped by "routes," many of which were established by capitalism. The forced displacement of millions from the Global South has left both tangible and intangible marks. These material traces are revisited through the imagination of these populations, imprinted in memory through images and representations of traversed tropical forests, coastal forts, maritime passages, plantations, colonial buildings, and forced interactions with oppressors. The stories of displaced peoples are unique and traumatic, passed down through generations.

This discussion explores the concept of resistance among those who have been affected, drawing on the analyses, struggles, and theories of figures such as Sékou Touré, Haile Selassie, Frantz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, the Nardal sisters, Marcus Garvey, Walter Rodney, Felix Éboué, Toussaint Louverture, Cudjo Lewis, Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, Aimé Césaire, and others. It also engages with Édouard Glissant's notion of imaginary geography, which he describes as "progress

through traces" in composite countries like the Creole cultures of the Americas. Glissant notes that these populations arrived in the Americas "stripped of the artifacts of their original culture, their languages, beliefs, everyday objects, and customs."

The task at hand is to catalog and reflect on the "desolate savannas of memory" through their representation in literature and film. This aims to provide a nuanced understanding of resistance to injustice and exploitation, emphasizing the significant role of imagination. Have these elements led to various forms of resilience, and how have they manifested? The discussion will also focus on analyzing factual representations and imaginings from literary, historical, and linguistic perspectives.

The transition from reality to imagination, from forced acceptance to resistance, is a core aspect of Caribbean and American diasporic identities, studied through a comparative lens via works such as autobiographies, biographies, narratives, novels, reports, films, and museums. These works contribute to shaping the psyche of displaced communities and their descendants. Imaginary reminiscences and memories of resistance are varied across these geographies. This conference aims to connect these diverse memorial perceptions. Societal practices concerning the forced displacement of individuals from their native lands to the Caribbean and the Americas played a role in creating new living spaces, which sparked new imaginings and resistances. These places and elements influenced the survival conditions of displaced minority peoples and warrant a revisit to understand how they shaped both similar and distinct destinies depending on their destinations.

The conference seeks to recover all these memories to build a better future for community coexistence by analyzing sites of resistance and the role of imagination. It aims to develop a fresh perspective on the intersectional links between resistance, imagination, reparations, and new dynamism for the liberation of minority peoples' potentials, based on compelling texts from both sides of the Atlantic.

Scientific Committee:

Dr. Cheryl Toman, Professor, The University of Alabama University - USA

Dr. Benaouda Lebdaï, Professor, Le Mans University - France

Dr. Mahougnon Kakpo, Professor, University of Abomey-Calavi - Bénin

Dr. Maxime Vignon, Assistant Professor, The University of Alabama University - USA

Dr. David Tezil, Assistant Professor, The University of Alabama University - USA

Dr. Sylvie Servoise, Professor, Le Mans University - France

Dr. Redouane Abouddahab, Professor, Le Mans University - France

Dr. Myriam Moïse, Associate Professor, PHEEAC, University of Antilles - Martinique

Dr. Leonard Wantchekon, Professor, African School of Economics, Princeton University - USA

Suggested topics 1

- Postcolonial resistance literature and diasporic voices in crafting memory and reinterpreting the past.
- Liberation poetry, historical fiction, Afro-descendant engaged literature, and challenges to critical literary theories.
- Identity and narration, historical and counter-narratives, with a focus on oppression narratives and trauma representation.
- Marginalized voices, subalternity, and historical trauma in the continuous quest for social justice and identity reconstruction in the Global South

Suggested topics 2

- Linguistic representations, multilingualism, linguistic heritage, language emancipation and oral tradition in language and power.
- Influence of African and minority languages on phonetics, morphology, semantics, and syntax in language contact.
- Sociolinguistic factors, technology, social media, and digital platforms' role in language choice, code-switching, language mixing and preservation.
- Postcolonialism, resistance discourses, linguistic decolonization, educational strategies and language policies.

Suggested topics 3

- Endogenous religions, Vodou, intangible heritage, identities and cultural practices, social representations, resistance, and resilience against systemic structural discrimination.
- Classical humanities, self-referentiality, cultural heritage, belief systems, liberation rituals, and indigenous cosmologies in the context of collective memory.
- Slavery, colonialism, anti-colonial resistance, struggles for decolonization and civil rights, postcolonial nationalisms, and liberation movements.
- Critical anthropology and historiography in the context of historical reparations related to colonial legacy, racial segregation, forced migrations, and colonial violence, focusing on the construction of alterity and the interplay between power and culture.

SUBMISSION AND ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

ABSTRACTS: NO MORE THAN 350 WORDS (WORD OR PDF DOCUMENT - ENGLISH & FRENCH VERSIONS)

BIO: NO MORE THAN 150 WORDS

IMPORTANT DATES:

- **SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 20TH DECEMBER 2024**
- **ACCEPTANCE NOTIFICATION: 15TH JANUARY 2025**
- **CONFERENCE FEES DEADLINE: 15TH FEBRUARY 2025**
 - **\$60 FOR STUDENTS**
 - **\$100 FOR OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

SUBMISSION:

- **Proposals for communications (in English or French) to be sent to the following addresses:**
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