

## Call for Papers

### **Narrating Conflict and Human Rights: Literature as Witness, Archive, and Agent of Change** *European Journal of English Studies*, volume 31 (2027)

**Guest editors:** Tomasz Kalaga (Kujawy and Pomorze University in Bydgoszcz), Tiziana Ingravallo (University of Foggia), Loredana Salis (University of Sassari)

The realities of conflict, including violations of human rights and the struggle for peace, provide rich thematic material for literary works. Literature can serve as a powerful tool for social change by denouncing injustices, fostering empathy, and engaging with injustices via its negotiation of the concepts of truth, reconciliation, and transitional justice. Writers can challenge official narratives surrounding conflict by giving voice to marginalised perspectives, exposing human rights abuses to a wider audience, and making invisible suffering visible. Literature, as an advocate for social change and human rights, raises awareness of ongoing conflicts and offers alternative understandings of historical events and their consequences. Operating through its innate symbolic quality and the power of telling and retelling myths, it can be approached as a dynamic arena capable of unsettling dominant epistemologies, reconfiguring what could be collectively claimed as justice. As a counter-discourse to official histories, literature has the potential to offer new ways of restoring a sense of humanity and shared responsibility by condemning all forms of imperialism and totalitarianism.

This issue will reflect on and explore ways in which conflict can be narrated and the extent to which texts of literature contribute to defending or violating human rights. It also reflects on how language can justify and/or ignore human rights transgressions. The issue takes an interest in articles that investigate the ability of literary texts to interrogate and explore the legacies of political and civil conflict around the world as well as creating and (unwittingly) reinforcing hegemonic narratives. We welcome essays on a wide range of genres, including fiction, poetry, drama, memoir, testimony, speculative and activist writing, as well as works in translation, adaptation, journalism, and visual or digital storytelling.

Although articles can address any topic related to literature and human rights, we are keen to receive proposals on five interrelated areas of literary engagement: a) literary depictions of experiences of war, displacement, surveillance, disenfranchisement, or environmental destruction; b) the role of literature in defining and articulating the concept of justice, documenting abuses, bearing witness to trauma, and narrating resistance and reconciliation; c) literary negotiations of power dynamics in conflict settings, including propaganda literature, translation and adaptation of conflict narratives, portrayals of nationalism and resistance movements, and the symbolic language of conflict and resolution; d) the concept of literature as *magistra vitae* in which historical insight is intertwined with visions of a more just future; e) narrative forms shaped by conflict, including fragmented storytelling and genre innovation, as

well as activist literature addressing the intersections of human rights, environmental destruction, and the more-than-human world.

Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

- Activist literature: from human rights violations to environmental destruction
- Activist role of literature: models for socio-cultural transformations, inclusive societies, transnational belongings
- Beyond the anthropocentric: rights of species, rivers, forests
- Censorship and dissent: literature as subversion and alternative standpoint
- Entanglements of ecology and power: resource wars, extractivism, forced displacement
- Individual freedom and human dignity vs human rights violations, surveillance, oppression, disenfranchisement
- Journalism, conflict and human rights
- Literature and justice: shaping and reshaping the notion of what is or can be just
- Literary depictions of ecological trauma and conflict: decolonial and indigenous perspectives,
- Literature as an archive of environmental injustice: resistance narratives, testimonies and speculative fiction and non-fiction.
- *Magistra vitae*: when history and hope rhyme
- Narrating nationalism, nationalists and nationalist causes
- Postcolonial and decolonial perspectives: alternative epistemologies of justice, restitution, and ecological interconnectedness
- Post-traumatic memory
- Propaganda literature
- The language of conflict and conflict resolution: myths and symbols retold
- The role of human rights in research on law and literature
- Translation and adaptation

Detailed proposals (up to 1,000 words) for full essays (6,000-8,000 words) as well as a short biography (max. 100 words) should be sent to the editors by **15 January 2026**: Tomasz Kalaga ([t.kalaga@kpsw.edu.pl](mailto:t.kalaga@kpsw.edu.pl)), Tiziana Ingravallo ([tiziana.ingravallo@unifg.it](mailto:tiziana.ingravallo@unifg.it)), and Loredana Salis ([lsalis@uniss.it](mailto:lsalis@uniss.it)).

Selected authors should be able to submit a full-length draft by the end of May 2026, and a final version by mid-September. This issue will be part of **volume 31 (2027)**. All inquiries regarding this issue can be sent to the three guest editors.

## Procedure

EJES operates in a three-stage review process:

1. Contributors are invited to submit proposals by **15 January 2026**. The guest editors make a selection of proposals in consultation with the editorial board and invite shortlisted authors to **submit a full-length version by 31 May 2026**.
2. The contributors' full-length drafts are reviewed by the special issue editors, who may ask for revisions, and retain the right to reject an article if it does not meet the standards of the journal. Contributors are expected to **submit a revised text by 15 September 2026**.
3. The revised articles are subject to a double-blind peer review (carried out on ScholarOne, the Taylor & Francis platform). On the basis of the peer review, the editors will formulate a final advice (accept, minor revisions, major revisions, reject). In case revisions are called for, authors should be able to **provide their final, fully revised version by 15 January 2027**, for publication in the same year.

EJES employs Chicago Style ([T&F Chicago AD](#)) and British English conventions for spelling. For more information about EJES, see: <http://www.essenglish.org/ejes.html> and <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/neje20>.