“A Journey That Never Ends” - Undocumented Workers and Asylum Seekers in Films by Costa-Gavras, Nicolas Klotz, and Fernand Melgar

Undocumented migrants and asylum seekers have often been ignored or represented as a threat to national security and prosperity. However, as my analyses of Costa-Gavras’ Eden à l’ouest, Klotz’s La Blessure, and Melgar’s Vol spécial document, films focusing on migrants have the potential to shape our understanding of the encampment of Europe and offer an important examination of issues such as the unrelenting tension between workers and sans-papiers, police brutality during border crossing, housing and living conditions of the sans-papiers—issues that French-speaking cinema has very seldom dared to tackle. In addition to analyzing and contextualizing these three films both formally and thematically, I examine their contributions to or departures from a sub-genre of contemporary French cinema that could be termed “cinéma mythologique.”