

**34<sup>th</sup> Conference on British and American Studies**

**Timișoara, Romania – 14-16 May 2026, on site**

**Deadline for proposals: 15 February 2026**

The English Department of the Faculty of Letters, History, Philosophy and Theology, West University of Timișoara, is pleased to announce its 34<sup>th</sup> international conference on **British and American Studies**, on the theme “Reconfiguring Borders and Boundaries in/through the Lens of Literature, Language and Culture,” which will be held on **14-16 May 2026**.

**Confirmed Plenary Speakers:**

**Prof. Robert Asen, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

*Prospects for Democracy in an Authoritarian Age – A Rhetorical Approach*

**Prof. Steven Conn, Miami University**

*Landscapes of Loss*

**Prof. Elisabetta Marino, University of Rome Tor Vergata**

*Crossing Borders, Defying Boundaries: Women Travel Writers in the Victorian Age*

**Prof. Ruxandra Vișan, University of Bucharest**

*Rethinking Linguistic Boundaries: Representations of Gender-Inclusive Language*

Recent times have seen the creation of new borders and boundaries, such as those between humans and artificial intelligence, as well as the re-emergence of old ones, especially along nationalist, racial, ethnic, gender, class and religious divides. Such dynamics are connected to contemporary sociopolitical, cultural and technological transformations and crises, among which the wide reach of mis- and disinformation, the dissolution of trust in science and institutions, the rise of ethnonationalist populism and authoritarianism, the mainstreaming of exclusionary rhetoric, armed conflicts, environmental disasters and large movements of populations, to name but a few. At the same time, the duality of borders and boundaries, erected not only to separate, exclude or divide, but also to protect and cognitively map social reality (Tanulku & Pekelsma, 2024), prompts reflection on the potential contained therein for bridging and crossing over.

Borders are physical and territorial, while boundaries are symbolic, sociocultural and moral, productive of differentiation and hierarchization through practices of inclusion/exclusion and ordering (Lamont & Molnár, 2002; Tanulku & Pekelsma, 2024). Many scholars, however, consider them interrelated and mutually constitutive, or even use them interchangeably, depending on the context (Fischer, Achermann & Dahinden, 2020; Tanulku & Pekelsma, 2024; Yuval-Davis, Wemyss & Cassidy, 2019). The currently dominant approach to the study of borders and boundaries conceptualizes them as multiscalar, relational, processual and performative spaces and constructs, constantly made and remade, (re)produced but also challenged, in top-down and bottom-up practices, experiences and discourses, as sites of both governance and agency formation (Brambilla et al., 2015; Fischer, Achermann & Dahinden, 2020; Paasi, 2013; Tanulku & Pekelsma, 2024; Yuval-Davis, Wemyss & Cassidy, 2019). To bring these aspects into relief, the concepts of ‘bordering,’ ‘boundary making’ or ‘boundary work’ have been introduced and used alongside, and even instead of, the more static ‘borders’ and ‘boundaries.’ In a broad sense, bordering and boundary work involve, beyond



nation-states and their transformation in a global world, other types of space (global cities, rural areas, frontiers, peripheries, public/private), identification practices (belonging, otherness, intersectionality), time (past/present/future), politics (ideological boundaries), disciplines, and so on.

A non-comprehensive list of the theoretical insights that inform the study of borders and boundaries encompasses the following: the socially constructed nature of space and its embeddedness in power relations (Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 1994; Soja, 1996) and struggles across global, regional and local scales (Brenner, 2001; Jessop, 2002; Mahler & Pessar, 2003); the fragmentation, fluidity, hybridization and performativity of identities (Bhabha, 1994; Butler, 1990; Hall, 1997); the articulation of belonging and citizenship across transnational networks and flows through physical, virtual, imaginary and affective co-presence, but also simultaneous inclusion in one space and exclusion from another (Ahmed, 2003; Baldassar, 2008; Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004; Vertovec, 2009; Yuval-Davis, 2011); the formation of inequality and oppression across multiple, intersecting axes (Crenshaw, 1989); the global (im)mobilities of people, objects, communication technologies, information, images and money (Urry, 2007); governmentality, biopolitics (Foucault, 1977-1979) and necropolitics (Mbembe, 2006). Due to the complexity of bordering and boundary making, their research has fostered inter- and transdisciplinary dialogue, with contributions from the humanities gaining increasing weight over time (Brambilla et al., 2015; Paasi, 2013; Wilson & Hastings, 2012). Borders and boundaries are symbolically construed, (re)produced, negotiated, performed, mediated in literary and cultural discourses, in social and public imaginaries and narratives, in artistic creations and installations, in multilingual encounters, translations, linguistic change, discursive stances, positionings and interactions.

We therefore invite papers in literature, language and culture addressing, but not limited to, the reconfiguration of borders and boundaries in/through:

- representations, narratives, identities and stances in discourse (literary, media, cultural)
- imaginaries and ideologies in discourse (literary, media, cultural)
- cognitive metaphors, schemas and cultural models
- linguistic interaction practices
- translation and multilingual practices
- academic writing practices
- language and discourse change in contemporary cultural and sociopolitical contexts (inclusive, nonviolent, discriminatory/exclusionary, polarized language and discourse)
- theoretical and analytical approaches to the study of borders and boundaries in the humanities
- critical approaches
- interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary intersections in theory and methodology

Presentations (20 min) are invited in the following sections:

- Language Studies
- Translation Studies
- Discourse and Rhetorical Studies
- British and Commonwealth Literature
- American Literature
- Cultural Studies



- Gender Studies
- English Language Teaching

## ROUND TABLE

### CRISIS IN THE HUMANITIES/ HUMANITIES IN CRISIS

This roundtable addresses the ongoing crisis in the humanities, influenced by events and systemic issues such as political polarization, the rise of illiberal social movements and regimes, and decreasing academic freedom. Such crises are reflected in shrinking support for the humanities and higher education in general. We invite discussion on how literary, artistic, media, and institutional discourses, as well as the pedagogical strategies and community engagement of public humanities, work and think through crisis to foster social coherence, critical reflection, resilience, and resistance. How can the humanities reclaim and preserve relevance in times of crisis? The panelists will address such generic and specific concerns mainly from the perspective of American Studies as a field of study and research, but perspectives from other angles are also welcome.

**Convener(s): CSAM – The American Studies Center, West University of Timișoara**

## WORKSHOP

### RETHINKING TOOLS FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN LEGAL TRANSLATION

The workshop seeks to examine the application of a quality analysis tool developed to evaluate nouns and noun collocations through a graded classification distinguishing between absolute and partial correspondences. It aims to address several key questions: How can this analytical grid contribute to the identification and comparison of translation challenges specific to legal texts? What insights can it provide into issues of linguistic precision, coherence, and terminological consistency? Furthermore, how might the tool be effectively incorporated into university-level translation pedagogy? Participants will have the opportunity to engage hands-on with the tool and to discuss its potential pedagogical value as an instrument for enhancing quality assessment practices in specialised translation.

**Convener(s): Dr. Luminița Frențiu, Dr. Denisa Ungurean (West University of Timișoara)**

### Note:

Participants should indicate whether they would like to attend the round table and/ or the workshop.

### Abstract submission

Please submit 150-word abstracts, which will be included in the conference programme:

- to our registration form: <https://forms.gle/sKZTKuZJkR4rH41A9>
- or to Dr Reghina Dascăl, [reghina\\_dascal@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:reghina_dascal@yahoo.co.uk); [reghina.dascal@e-uvt.ro](mailto:reghina.dascal@e-uvt.ro)

**Deadline: 15 February 2026**



**Conference participation fee**

The conference registration fee is EUR 150 or RON 750.

The fee does not include the conference dinner and outing.

**Conference website:** <https://bas.events.uvt.ro/>

**Event website:** [lift.uvt.ro/event/34th-conference-on-british-and-american-studies14-16-may-2026/](http://lift.uvt.ro/event/34th-conference-on-british-and-american-studies14-16-may-2026/)

**For additional information, please contact:**

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