



THE ROMANIAN ASSOCIATION FOR AMERICAN STUDIES
THE ROMANIAN-U.S. FULBRIGHT COMMISSION
ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA UNIVERSITY OF IAȘI

CALL FOR PAPERS

Journeys and Frontiers in American Literature and Culture

A *RAAS-Fulbright Conference, October 8-10, 2026*, organized by the [Romanian Association for American Studies](#) and the [Romanian-U.S. Fulbright Commission](#), at the Faculty of Letters at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

At a time when we celebrate 250 years of American independence, the RAAS-Fulbright conference on American studies seeks to strengthen the relationships among academics and doctoral students and continue to promote research in this field in Romania. This year's conference invites scholars from a wide range of disciplines to re-examine the multiple forms, meanings, and representations of journeys and frontiers in American culture. We invite various explorations of the ways in which physical, spiritual, psychological, or imaginative journeys intersect with the American culture and how the frontiers, borders or challenges encountered during those journeys continue to shape the symbolic geography of the United States. Thus, our conference welcomes papers and panels that engage with these themes, inviting participants to rethink American journeys and frontier spaces not only as stories of movement, but also as processes of encounter, exploration, adaptation, or transformation.

The journey motif has been part of the American imagination from the beginning, as stories of adventure, war, exploration and self-development have always stood at the core of American culture. America was born out of the imaginary journeys of those who thought that there were better places to settle outside the Old World and the real journey of those who actually took on the challenge and set for the New World. Since those beginnings, the American imagination relied on journeys towards real or imaginary frontiers. From the Puritan pilgrimages and the westward expansion to various types of narratives of captivity and escape, from sea journeys, explorations



of the vast plains or the Wild West, to modern narratives of departure and return, from optimistic to nightmarish stories of transformation, the journey has shaped the myths, literary works and cultural forms of the United States. The frontier, meanwhile, has evolved from a geographical and ideological boundary to a more fluid metaphor for the limits of the self, of knowledge, of technology, and of art. In the twenty-first century, both terms, journey and frontier, demand renewed critical attention, as global mobility, technological change and digital transformation continue to redefine the meanings of movement, borders, belonging and connection.

By rethinking journeys and frontiers as both physical and metaphorical spaces, the conference aims to illuminate how movement and boundaries have defined American imagination and how they continue to be reimagined in response to contemporary pressures, challenges and transformations.

Proposals for papers can relate, but are not limited to the following topics:

- The American journey as cultural narrative;
- Voyages and quests in American literature, journeys into the wilderness, sea journeys and the American imagination, road narratives, frontier stories, domestic frontiers, and travel writing;
- Journeys through time: memory, history, and the return to the past;
- Journeys of (self-)discovery, exploration, trail or renewal, from colonial exploration narratives, captivity stories, religious or conversion narratives to contemporary narratives of departure and resettlement;
- Urban crossings and journeys through the modern American city;
- Migration, memory, and belonging, an exploration of the emotional and cultural geographies of displacement, homecoming, and exile;
- Narratives and counter-narratives of space; environment, movement, and place in American imagination;
- Transnational journeys, America and the world beyond its borders;
- Imaginary journeys and speculative frontiers: utopias, dystopias, and the reinvention of space in science fiction and fantasy;
- Gothic terrains, haunted landscapes and nightmarish inner voyages;
- Posthuman and digital journeys, technological frontiers and digital mobilities in contemporary culture.



SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Please submit an abstract of 250 - 300 words for individual papers and a short (150-word) biographical note by accessing the [following registration form](#).

Submissions should be sent by **May 15th, 2026**. Notifications of acceptance and a provisional program will be sent by **June 15th, 2026**. Any changes to the program or special requests regarding the program should be sent by **July 15th, 2026**.

Contact email: raas.ro.usa@gmail.com

Selected papers may be considered for inclusion in an edited collection or a special journal issue following the conference.

FEES

- RAAS/ EAAS members – 300 RON / 60 EUR
- Non-RAAS/EAAS members – 400 RON/ 80 EUR (the extra 100 RON/10 EUR corresponds to the RAAS/EAAS membership for 2027)
- RAAS/EAAS member students – 150 RON / 30 EUR
- Non-RAAS member students – 200 EUR/ 40 EUR (the extra 50 RON/5 EUR corresponds to the RAAS membership for 2027)

Payment details will be provided upon acceptance of the paper.