

Hungarian Contributions on American History, Literature and Culture (2023-2024)  
edited and compiled by Réka M. Cristian

Abstract: Following the publication of the *2020-2022 Hungarian Contributions on American History, Literature and Culture* in Vol. 19 (2023) of the *Americana e-Journal of American Studies in Hungary*, this present compilation aims to survey the evolution of Hungarian research in the wide field of American Studies by mapping the most pertaining articles, books and texts published digitally and print in 2023 and 2024 by our academic colleagues.

Keywords: Hungarian-American, bibliography, U.S. history and culture

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## American Studies Bibliography: Hungarian Contributions Between 2023 and 2024

Réka M. Cristian

Following the publication of the *2020-2022 Hungarian Contributions on American History, Literature and Culture* in Vol. 19 (2023) of the *Americana e-Journal of American Studies in Hungary*, this present compilation aims to survey the evolution of Hungarian research in the wide field of American Studies by mapping the most pertaining articles, books and texts published digitally and print in 2023 and 2024 by our academic colleagues.

The material was collected primarily through the network of the Hungarian Association for American Studies (HAAS) and the Hungarian Society for the study of English (HUSSE) and reflects a bird's eye view of the state of the field in Hungary in its current form. The majority of the articles and books are in English and there are also some that were published in Hungarian language. Regarding the topic, American Studies publications also include, as in the previous bibliographical collection edited by Ágnes Zsófia Kovács and Lívia Szélpál, works related to Inter-American Studies, as well as Hungarian-American relations now enriched with a new addition, that of Linguistics pertaining to this field.

The present compilation is a representative scholarly resource primarily intended for people interested in finding pertinent works in the field of American and Inter-American Studies by providing a basic record of the published output as an annotated bibliography that functions as an indicator of ongoing researches in the Hungarian academic realm. This material can serve as an entry point for broader researches in interregional, continental or global studies on the US and the Americas; it can also be used for further readings in a given topic of interest, as an aid in locating someone's work within the larger field of American Studies and as a resource in researching and teaching certain topics, in exploring the perennial question of what American Studies is in a given region, country and continent.

It is always a challenging task to bring a great variety of texts into a meaningful order and we offer this bibliography so as not to foreclose other types of configurations by maintaining the forthcoming bibliographies' flexibility. The arrangement of this bibliography is in thematic clusters, with larger entries based on subjects related, in order of their presentation, to literature and literary theory, history, American-Hungarian relations, Inter-American Studies, ethnic, race and gender studies, visual culture and linguistics, rather than placing records into more detailed subcategories of the previously mentioned fields. Moreover, each author's work is grouped in separate paragraphs, placed in chronological order.

Stanley Bailis claimed in "The Social Sciences in American Studies: An Integrative Conception" (*American Quarterly* 26/3 [1974]: 202-224) that American Studies "has been both eclectic and pluralistic," a field "highly responsible to the fluxion of its historical surroundings," making it "an arena of interdisciplinary encounter and staging ground for topical pursuits." As gatherer and editor of the sources published in 2023 and 2024, I fully subscribe to Bailis's fitting view, which stood the test of time. In view of this, I have used the eclecticism of the material in its flux of geo-historical surrounding to present the 2023-2024 Hungarian staging ground for wider American Studies pursuits below.

A. Literature

The essay “Ginsberg, a nélkülözhetetlen” (“Ginsberg the unavoidable”) (*Múlt és jövő* 2023, 1 [2023]:19-25) by Enikő Bollobás blends personal memories of encounters with Allen Ginsberg and reflections on his impact in Hungary. It revisits his Budapest readings, examines the new Hungarian edition of *The Essential Allen Ginsberg*, and considers how his spiritual, political, and poetic identities shaped both his self-mythologizing and his reception in Hungarian literary culture. Also about American poetry, “A valós pumpálása: Charles Olson lélegzés-fordulatáról” (“The Pumping of the Real’: on Charles Olson’s Breath Turn”) (*Alföld* 76, 4 [2023]: 74-86) by Enikő Bollobás examines Charles Olson’s radical redefinition of breath as a physical, non-metaphorical force that shapes both poetic perception and prosody. Through close readings, it shows how Olson’s breath-based poetics replaces the lyrical ego with somatic immediacy, making the poem an energy-transfer process in which rhythm, syntax, and embodiment converge. In the study “Charlotte Perkins Gilman Magyarországon és ami mögötte van” (“Charlotte Perkins Gilman in Hungary and what lies behind”), pp. 43-57 in Anna Kérchy and Irén Annus, eds., *So far so Good: Festschrift in Honour of Erzsébet Batrát/Tanulmányok Barát Erzsébet köszöntésére* (Szeged: SZTE BTK TNT Kutatócsoport, 2023), Enikő Bollobás explores Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s Hungarian reception, focusing on her visits to Budapest in 1905 and 1913 and her impact on early feminist debates through Rózsa Bédy-Schwimmer and *A nő és a társadalom* (“Woman and Society”). Gilman’s participation in the 1913 International Woman Suffrage Alliance Congress placed Budapest within global feminist networks. Yet her thought embodied deep contradictions—between emancipation and exclusion, progress and prejudice. The essay examines how Hungarian intellectuals adapted her ideas, situating them within the broader tensions of modernity and the moral ambiguities of early twentieth-century feminism. Tracing the development of non-lyric traditions in American poetry, Enikő Bollobás investigates in “Self and Form: The Radicalization of American Poetry from Emily Dickinson to Charles Bernstein” (*Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* 30, 2 [2023]: 449-480) ways the poet disappears from the poem while poetic form is seriously destabilized. Two fundamental “alternatives to the ego-position,” as Charles Olson writes, are identified, the poetics of attention on the one hand and concrete poetry and language writing on the other. Conducting close prosodic and grammatical readings, the author demonstrates that in all these poetries—whether attention is directed on the world or on the word—the elimination of the lyrical self goes hand in hand with the disruption of regular poetic form. This essay “Énmegvonás és nyelvbe zártság: az amerikai költészet radikalizálódása Emily Dickinsontól Charles Bernsteining” (“The Self withdrawn and Locked in Language: The Radicalization of American Poetry from Emily Dickinson to Charles Bernstein”) (*Irodalmi Jelen* 24, 5 [2024]: 104-146) traces a radical tradition in American poetry, characterized by the systematic withholding of the “I.” The author argues that these poetries supplant the lyrical subject with language itself, thereby transforming the poetic “I” into a destabilized, syntactic, and materially loaded entity.

Mária Kurdi’s „Az istenhit, a vallás és az ateizmus kérdései Philip Roth két késői regényében” [Questions of Faith in God, Religion and Atheism in Two Late Novels by Philip Roth] (*Vigília* 88, 10 [2023]: 899-905) was published in the year when Philip Roth would have been ninety. Throughout his career he was struggling with the issue of faith versus atheism, ever since the publication of his early short story, *Defender of the Faith*, which provoked vicious criticism from most Jewish readers. The protagonists in his novels are not religious, yet questions of faith regularly appear in the texts. Focusing on this aspect, the essay briefly analyzes two of the writer’s late novels, *Indignation* (2008) and *Nemesis* (2010). In both, the protagonists meet their fate early in life: Marcus Messner in *Indignation* gets expelled from college and dies in the Korean War, and Bucky Cantor in *Nemesis* becomes infected by polio and remains a cripple. The essay discusses the philosophical embedding of the tragic events and the relation between the lack or questioning of faith and tragic fate in the two novels. “Philip Roth kapcsolatai az ír kultúrával és

irodalommal” [Philip Roth’s Relations with Irish Culture and Literature] (*Múlt és jövő* 35, 3 [2024]: 51-62) is another Hungarian-language essay by Mária Kurdi. Among recent studies about the fiction of Philip Roth there are several comparative works, reinforcing assumptions about Roth’s cosmopolitanism and textual connections with the writers of other cultures. A major literary friend of his was the Irish Catholic Edna O’Brien (1930-2024), whose influence, along with that of James Joyce, can be seen in a great number of cultural parallels, paratextual borrowings, intertextual elements and resonances throughout Roth’s oeuvre. Kurdi’s essay refers to several of these and analyzes the ways in which they contribute to the meaning making process characteristic of the relevant pieces of fiction including *Goodbye, Columbus* (1959), *Zuckerman Unbound* (1981), *Sabbath’s Theater* (1995), *The Dying Animal* (2001) and *The Humbling* (2009).

In “‘Able Zombies:’ Enduring Bodies Subverting the Biblical Tradition in M. R. Carey’s *The Girl with All the Gifts* and Daryl Gregory’s *Raising Stony Mayhall*,” pp. 229–240 in Simon Bacon, ed., *Faith and the Zombie: Critical Essays on the End of the World and Beyond* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2023), Ildikó Limpár explores a paradigm shift in zombie fiction, demonstrating that a newly emerged “able zombie” not only refuses to fully embody the collapse of civilization but also carries the hope of saving civilization, so much so that the zombie protagonist in Gregory’s work is turned into a Messiah character for the zombie society, which eventually will help him become the savior of mankind. Ildikó Limpár’s chapter, “The Environmental Context for Hope and Heroism in Suzanne Collins’ *The Hunger Games* Trilogy and M. R. Carey’s *The Girl with All the Gifts*,” pp. 254-267 in Simon Bacon ed., *Heroic Girls as Figures of Resistance and Futurity in Popular Culture*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2024), talks about two types of arenas to discuss variations on the concept of last hope embodied by female teenagers arguing that in both works humanity’s detachment from nature calls for heroism to end an era of inhumanity but emphasizes Collins’ anthropocentric vision (a general tendency in YA fiction) that is in stark contrast with Carey’s paradigm shift, which presents a post-anthropocentric re-vision of the ecosystem instead. A juxtaposition of arenas is discussed in Limpár’s “Szörnyűséges játékterek Az éhezők viadalában és a Westworld filmsorozatban” [Monstrous Play-Fields in *The Hunger Games* and in the TV Series *Westworld*], pp. 179-191, in Ildikó Limpár ed., *Tér-Iszony: Szörnyűséges terek a populáris kultúrában* [Space Horror: Terrifying Spaces in Popular Culture] (Barót: Tortoma Kiadó, 2024). As Limpár demonstrates, both examined works highlight an artificially created and surveilled space, which divides society into victims and victimizers. The analysis uses Giorgio Agamben’s *homo sacer* concept and discusses the arena as a theme park and metaphor for American society, in which a return to one of the US’s nostalgic historical eras—that of the colonies and that of the wild west, respectively—is subverted. In another publication, Limpár explores the use of fungi as the expression of colonization and domestic oppression. Her “Mexican Gothic (Silvia Moreno-Garcia, 2020) – Death as Mycological Rebirth,” pp. 151-157, in Katarzyna Bronk-Bacon and Simon Bacon eds., *Death in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Companion* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2024) sees Moreno-Garcia’s neo-Gothic narrative as a work which features of zombie-fiction on the domestic scale contributing to the interpretation of the patriarch character, a fungus-human hybrid, as a death god standing for a domestic patriarch and colonizer. In discussing Patrick Ness’s YA science fiction, Limpár focuses on the anxieties concerning the use of modern technology and its consequences in her “*Chaos Walking Trilogy* (Patrick Ness, 2008– 2010) – Rejecting the Anthropocene,” pp. 277-282 in Simon Bacon ed., *Aliens: A Companion* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2024). By using the theoretical framework of Monster Studies and posthumanism, this essay focuses on how various attitudes to the ecosystem problematize anthropocentrism and the Anthropocene and how these themes are linked with anxieties concerning information processing, surveillance, war, ecological disaster, religious fundamentalism, and an oppressive system based on race and gender bias, and trauma.

In an essay on “Szörnyű utópiák: A posztumán táj szerepe a posztapokaliptikus szövegekben” [Monstrous Utopias: the Role of the Posthuman Landscape in (Post)apocalyptic Narratives], pp. 47-56 in Ildikó Limpár, ed., *Tér-Iszony : Szörnyűséges terek a populáris kultúrában*

[Space Horror: Terrifying Spaces in Popular Culture] (Barót, Romania: Tortoma, 2024), Vera Benczik explores the possibility of a utopian future in a post-apocalyptic setting by focusing on narratives where the human dystopia clashes with a utopian future for its posthuman inhabitants.

In his latest monograph on *Paul Auster's Early Works and The Fallacy of Critical Reception* (Szeged: AMERICANA eBooks, 2024), Pál Hegyi surveys the early poetry, plays, and pulp fiction of a young Paul Auster, mapping out poetics driven by a *sui generis* impulse within postmodern American fiction—one that resists the playfulness of free-floating signifiers and instead redirects the reader's attention toward the chaotic vortex at the heart of inquiries into identity, the nature of aleatoric and traumatic reality, the radical absence within presence, and the potential for possibility within ultimate impossibility. In his article on “A műalkotásként értett munkafolyamat: aleatorikus zeneiség Paul Auster műveiben” [Aleatoric Musicality in Paul Auster's Work-in-Progress] (*Magyar Tudomány* 185, 9 [2024]: 1126-1137), Pál Hegyi compares the improvisational, aleatoric approach in contemporary music to the Austerean twists and turns of plot lines, which are often the result of chance events within the narratives. His research questions examine how asymmetrical logical paradoxes link Auster's poetics: epistemologically to patterns of ordered disorder; aesthetically to the quality of the sublime emerging from harmony; narratologically to the mirroring textual levels of virtuality; and ontologically to the possibility of the infinite.

“Fear of Living Dolls in Ira Levin's *The Stepford Wives*,” pp. 58-67 in Kérchy Anna, Csetényi Korinna, Szélpál Lívia eds., *New Horizons in English and American Studies: Papers from the Doctoral Program* (Szeged: SZTE BTK Angol-Amerikai Intézet, 2024) is an essay in which Korinna Csetényi discusses Ira Levin's *The Stepford Wives*, which has not garnered a lot of critical attention as a horror text, with scholars tending to focus more on its indebtedness to second wave feminism (it is usually interpreted as an ironic backlash against the movement). Csetényi concentrates upon the book's place within the horror genre: the familiar tropes of the mad scientist, the misuse of technology, fear of living dolls/automata and doppelgängers all appear in one form or another in the novel. As usual with horror texts, under the guise of a fantastic scenario, Levin was aiming at revealing some of the most pressing problems and concerns of contemporary society (the situation of women in patriarchal society). In addition to topical issues, there are various elements in the book which address timeless fears and anxieties independent of the given social era (such as fear of alienation or fear of animated machines). In “What's Behind the Door? Aesthetic Considerations in the Horror Genre through Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*,” pp. 155-167 in Gáll Edit, Péri-Nagy Zsuzsanna, Adorján Mária, eds., *Myth, Image, Narrative: Critical Studies* (Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó, Károli Gáspár Református Egyetem, 2024), Korinna Csetényi examines the horror genre, notorious for the shocking imagery it employs in the service of achieving its desired effects in readers. However, there are certain writers who opt out of the use of such images while firmly belonging to this genre. After mapping the aesthetic considerations lying behind such authorial decisions, she focuses on Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*, noted for its high scare potential in spite of its scant use of horrifying images. There is a particular scene in the novel where mysterious sounds are heard from the other side of a door, and Jackson has been often praised for her steadfast refusal to “open the door” to reveal the source of the menacing noise, thus subverting common readerly expectations. Following the categorization set up by Tzvetan Todorov, Jackson's text can be considered an example for the pure fantastic, since the feeling of ambiguity surrounding Hill House and the protagonist is never resolved and both supernatural and natural explanations can be entertained by readers.

Réka M. Cristian's “Inter-American destiny in Guillermo Verdecchia's *Fronteras Americanas*”. (*Acta Hispanica* 28 [2023]: 119-130), scrutinizes the issue of inter-American destiny in the dramatic world of the Argentinian-born Guillermo Verdecchia (b. 1962), whose work was awarded with the prestigious Governor General's Literary Award (est. 1937) in Canada. Verdecchia deals with a subjective cultural history that shapes various destinies through an

inter-American space and given time periods. The thespian plot of his *Fronteras Americanas* (1993) is an idiosyncratic story that does not count communal dates or anniversaries but, instead, focuses on the lived experience and the destiny of the individual. Verdecchia's play, in Cristian's reading, has a peculiar political relevance in being conceived as a subjective inter-American history lesson on the issue of Latin diaspora in North America and, as such, presents an idiosyncratic history of a Canadian Latinx, created as a monologue reminding of the oral storytelling in a destiny that is intricately interwoven into the historical web of the Americas. In the chapter on "Plays About Babies: Offspring in Edward Albee's Family Dramas" pp. 42-60 in Zsófia Tóth and Zoltán Vajda, eds. *Further Critical, Theoretical and Analytical Explorations of U.S. Culture, Literature and History*, Vol. SZESAS 3, Szeged: Americana E-Books, 2023), Réka M. Cristian explores the dramas of Edward Albee through the motif of the child in a series of plays including the grown-up mourning child in *The Sandbox* (1960), the twin brother of a sold baby *The American Dream* (1961), the dead child in *A Delicate Balance* (1966), the maturing son of a single mother in *Finding the Sun* (1983), the autobiographical figure of a son in distress in *Three Tall Women* (1991), alongside that of the central figure in *The Play About the Baby* (1998), and the children of *The Goat or Who is Sylvia?* (2002), all different figures participating in making the complex character difficult to grasp in only one drama. The article on "Thornton Wilder's Un-Aristotelian Warning: *The Skin of Our Teeth* as Climate Play" pp-55-66 by Réka M. Cristian in Nicole Haring, Roberta Maierhofer and Eva Bauer, eds. *Entanglements, Narratives, and the Environment: Inter-American Perspectives* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books/Rowman and Littlefield, 2024) focuses on a drama written and produced at the beginning of the 1940s, which presents, along with its absurdist stance on war and human conflicts in history, relevant climate issues that are still at bay today. In the North American context, more precisely in the United States, there have been few dramatic works on the topic of climate change until the twenty-first century and the chapter sheds light on Thornton Wilder's apocalyptic, frighteningly prescient farce, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, which premiered in 1942 in New York and has since been produced on various stages in the world, most recently revived also on Broadway. The discussion maps Chantal Bilodeau's un-Aristotelian model of drama and theater in tandem with Una Chadhuri's fifth wall climate change dramaturgy on Wilder's dramatic world.

## B. History

In “Puritán apokaliptika: amerikai küldetésstudat és történelemszemlélet” [Puritan Apocalyptic History and American Exceptionalism] (*AXIS* 4, 1 [2023]: 129–143), Beatrix Balogh examines the eschatological impulses that shaped early American historical consciousness and national identity. Focusing on the period between 1630 and 1760, her study analyzes how Puritans interpreted historical events through theological frameworks of divine mission and cosmic struggle. The article identifies four key paradigms—Errand into the Wilderness, City on a Hill, Apocalyptic Frontier, and New World Order—through which Puritans reimagined their role in response to political shifts, indigenous relations, and imperial rivalries. Balogh demonstrates how these narratives laid the groundwork for later expressions of American exceptionalism. Also by Beatrix Balogh, “A 2024-es amerikai választások és a Puerto Rico voks” [The 2024 Puerto Rico Vote] (*Folia Humanistica et Socialia* 2/1 [2024]: 41-62) write about the evolving dynamics of Puerto Rican electoral participation ahead of the 2024 U.S. elections. The study contrasts the disenfranchised status of island residents with the growing political influence of mainland Puerto Ricans, particularly the increasingly middle-class communities in Florida. While their political leanings remain mixed, the island’s constitutional status—especially the push for statehood—continues to drive voter intensity. Balogh analyzes recent voting trends, candidate perceptions, party messaging on economic and social issues, and the implications of a new referendum offering three decolonization options. The article also reflects on the symbolic significance of Puerto Rico’s first presidential straw poll.

In her article titled “American Exceptionalism and Exemptionalism in Presidential Rhetoric: George W. Bush and Barack Obama on Guantánamo Bay” (*Pro & Contra* 7, 1 [2023]: 23-42), Olga Kajtár-Pinjung talks about the complexity of American exceptionalism in the rhetoric of US presidents Bush and Obama. The work analyzes the tendency of the United States to exempt itself from complying with international laws and agreements, with a special focus on instances related to the War on Terror and Guantánamo Bay. “Foglyokból ellenség: A Bush-kormány külpolitikája és jogalkotása 9/11 után” [From Detainees to Enemies: Post-9/11 Foreign Policy and Legislation of the Bush Administration] (*AETAS* 39/1 [2024]: 141-157) is another article by Olga Kajtár-Pinjung, which addresses the foreign policy and legislative measures of the Bush Administration aimed at Guantánamo Bay detainees. The article analyzes how the post-9/11 reactionary politics applied by the US government contributed to the enemy image construction of prisoners of the War on Terror held at Guantánamo Bay. In her essay on “From Bush to Biden: Presidential Attitudes towards Guantánamo,” pp. 153-171 in Kérchy Anna, Csetényi Korinna, and Szélpál Lívía Klára, eds., *New Horizons in English and American Studies: Papers from the Doctoral Program* (Szeged, SZTE BTK IEAS Papers in English and American Studies, 2024), Olga Kajtár-Pinjung investigates the presidential rhetoric and legislative measures of the Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden Administrations related to the Guantánamo Bay naval base and provides a critical overview of the changes and similarities of the four leaders of the United States, particularly their approaches to Guantánamo detainees.

In the study “At the Mercy of History: The Cultural Misappropriations of Christopher Columbus in the US,” pp. 141-152 in Anna Kérchy, Korinna Csetényi, and Lívía Szélpál, eds., *New Horizons in English and American Studies: Papers from the Doctoral Program* (Szeged: SZTE BTK Angol-Amerikai Intézet, 2024), Irén Annus writes about the evolving cultural presence of Christopher Columbus in the US, reviewing key periods in American history during which his symbolic figure was either fully celebrated or highly criticized arguing that Columbus’ figure has been repeatedly appropriated on the basis of particular values and traits associated with different aspects of his identity. Ultimately, the study proposes that American historical memory needs to come to terms with the complexities of Columbus as a historical figure through acknowledging the nuanced historical contexts and specific political formations that have shaped and exploited his legacy in US history.

Éva Eszter Szabó's "American Immigration History and Racial Discrimination, 1880s-1920s," pp. 143-168 in Balázs Venkovits and Gábor Pusztai, eds., *(Hi)stories of Migration, Mobility, and Travel: Crossing Literary, Linguistic, and Historical Boundaries* (Debrecen: Debrecen University Press, 2024) explores the decades between the 1880s and the 1920s, when the unprecedented volume of immigration, the new national composition of immigrant groups, and the sense of internal insecurity at a time of transition reinforced nativist and restrictionist claims in Congress. The paper adds to all these factors the significance of the gradually developing, but finally shared restrictionist interests of the East and the West Coasts represented in Congress. This new constellation of historical circumstances and regional political interests launched an era of new guiding principles for immigrant admissions based on racial bias.

In "[The Jesus Highway: A Case Study of American Indian Migration to Chicago and the Role of Christian Churches](#)," pp. 169-187 in Balázs Venkovits and Gábor Pusztai, eds., *(Hi)stories of Migration, Mobility, and Travel: Crossing Literary, Linguistic, and Historical Boundaries* (Debrecen: Debrecen University Press, 2024), Judit Szathmári scrutinizes American Indian mass movement from reservations to urban areas during the 1950s and 1960s. Similarly, to immigrants from across the Atlantic and the Pacific, from the Northern and Southern borders of the US, Indian people also crossed borders/ boundaries between Indian Country and their "modern," urban lives. Many relocatees experienced difficulties similar to those whose lives were "processed" upon entering Ellis Island; for them, crucial and invaluable assistance was provided by various churches. The paper offers a case study of how in Chicago American Indian residents and various denominations cooperated in hope of a better adjustment in the urban environment.

In his essay "[Republican Environmental Politics In The Reagan-Bush Era and The Growing Importance of Multilateral Environmental Agreements](#)," pp. 232-248 in Dósa, Attila; Magnuczné Godó, Ágnes; Schaffer, Anett; Nagano Lee, Robin, eds., *Space, Identity and Discourse in Anglophone Studies: Crossing Boundaries* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2024), Sándor Kiss highlights the 1980s and early 1990s as a pivotal moment in American and global environmental politics, when decisive action could have slowed or even prevented catastrophic climate change through international cooperation. Yet, instead of leading, the United States under the Reagan and Bush administrations resisted binding environmental agreements, leaving the world community both surprised and frustrated. The research examines the political climate of this era, with particular focus on Republican skepticism and communication strategies that framed environmental protections as threats to economic growth and national sovereignty. It also explores how Democrats sought to counter these narratives, often with limited success in shifting policy outcomes. In "Az utolsó lehetőségek évei – Amerikai érdekek válaszára az 1990-es évek klímakonferenciáin" [The Final Window of Opportunity – U.S. Interests at the Crossroads of 1990s Climate Conferences], pp. 251-261 in Ajtay-Horváth, Magda; Tukacs, Tamás, eds., *Kereszt/eződések: Válaszutak és metszéspontok a kultúrában és a történelemben* [Crossroads/Intersections: Crossroads and Intersections in Culture and History] (Nyíregyháza: Nyíregyházi Egyetem, 2023), Sándor Kiss argues that the late 1980s and 1990s marked what many saw as the last real opportunities to halt the growing threat of climate change through international cooperation. After the success of the Montreal Protocol, which remains a model for effective environmental governance, the scientific community hoped similar frameworks could regulate carbon dioxide emissions, the most significant greenhouse gas. Yet these expectations were disappointed, as the Noordwijk Conference, the Rio Earth Summit, and the Kyoto Protocol all fell short of their ambitions. What makes this trajectory particularly intriguing is that each agreement was negotiated under U.S. presidents with different environmental outlooks: the Montreal Protocol under Reagan, who largely sidelined environmental issues; Noordwijk and Rio under George H. W. Bush, who sought a "green turn" but failed to deliver; and Kyoto under Bill Clinton, who publicly embraced environmental rhetoric yet presided over what became a textbook example of an unworkable international treaty. "Julia Butterfly Hill és a környezetvédelmi radikalizmus útja a médiatér

felé” [Julia Butterfly Hill and the Path of Environmental Radicalism Toward the Media Sphere], pp. 99-111 in Magda Ajtay-Horváth and Tamás Tukacs eds., *Kimozdulások* [Displacements] (Nyíregyháza: Nyíregyházi Egyetem, 2024) by Sándor Kiss traces how Julia Butterfly Hill became a central figure in American media in 1997, when her two-year tree-sit to protect the California redwood “Luna” transformed her from an unknown waitress into the face of radical environmental activism. Her protest not only captured public attention but also signaled a shift in the toolkit of green radicalism, making its methods more relatable and accessible to wider audiences compared to earlier forms rooted in the 1960s. Hill’s action marked the beginning of a new radical green communication framework whose influence continues to shape contemporary activism. The research combines a historical overview of environmental radicalism with an analysis of its media representations over the past three decades.

Károly Pintér’s “American Civil Religion After Trump: Twilight or Rebirth?” pp. 31-69 in Paulina Napierała, ed, *Religion and American Politics: Domestic and International Contexts* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2024), examines the state of American civil religion in the 2010s, with special focus on Donald Trump’s first presidency. The essay delves into the fluctuating significance of idea of American civil religion since the 1970s, the transformation of the political and cultural context in the past 40 years, the new attempts to utilize the integrative potential of civil religion in the 2010s, as well as the special relationship of the cult to the nation’s president, the putative “high priest” of civil religion. The last part of the essay examines Trump’s first presidency and his wholesale rejection of the symbolic and unifying role traditionally played by American presidents.

In his essay on “Thomas Jefferson on the Generational Aspect of Modernizing Native Americans” pp. 132-141 in Zsófia Anna Tóth and Zoltán Vajda, eds. *Further Critical, Theoretical and Analytical Explorations of US Culture, Literature and History. Szeged Series in American Studies (SZESAS 3)*, (Szeged: AMERICANA e-Books. 2023), Zoltán Vajda looks into Thomas Jefferson’s plans about the assimilation of Native Americans from perspective of modernity, arguing that Jefferson’s concern with transgenerational issues had a bearing upon his attitude toward Native American cultures as well as his desire to integrate them into Euro-American society. Also by Zoltán Vajda is the essay on “[T]he Greatest of All Gamblers is the Farmer:’ Thomas Jefferson’s Republican Conception of White Poverty in the Early Republic” (*Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 132/2 [2024]: 75-106), where Vajda discusses Jefferson’s understanding of poverty in the American context. Although commonly believed to downplay the importance of poverty in the Early Republic, he was, in fact, concerned with it as a threat to republican social order, mainly jeopardizing farmers. In an implicit manner, he identified poverty with the lack of republican independence. In his vision, the problem of poverty was therefore intricately entangled with that of republican independence. Poor relief with its burden on local government also was of interest to Jefferson, identifying himself as a farmer, who also needed financial aim toward the end of his life. Vajda’s other study, “Thomas Jefferson and the Poor in France: A Transnational View” pp. 212-231 in Attila Dósa, Ágnes Maguczné Godó, Anett Schäffer and Robin Lee Nagano, eds. *Space, Identity and Discourse in Anglophone Studies: Crossing Boundaries* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2024), writes about Jefferson’s views on poverty in France. Before visiting the country, Jefferson believed the poverty of the peasants in France to be tackled through providing them with land to survive on. However, after his travel in the countryside, he found poverty even in places where people would cultivate land on account of their inability to do so without the help of their families, which Jefferson deemed a sign of dependence and poverty.

C. American-Hungarian Relations

In “Nicholas Roosevelt in Hungary, 1930–1933: Expectations and Illusions” (*Hungarian Studies*, Vol. 37, Issue 2, [December 2023]: 337–351), Zoltán Peterecz concentrates on one of the five American ministers in Hungary in the interwar period. As the article uncovers, just because his family name was well-known, and despite the high expectations many Hungarians had for the United States regarding an imagined revision, the early phase of the Great Depression was the worst possible time for such illusions. Furthermore, another article by the same author on “George F. Kennan and Hungary: A Cold War Visionary and a ‘Remarkable People with Rich Civilizational Qualities’” (*Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies (HJEAS)*, Vol. 30, No. 1. [2024]: 180–202), introduces George F. Kennan’s worldview and career, by describing various times and events in a time when Kennan was in close relationship with Hungary; the specific dates are 1938, 1943, 1956, and 1986, various milestone years in the turbulent decades between the 1930s and the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe. A Hungarian version of Peterecz’s *HJEAS* article appeared titled “George F. Kennan és Magyarország: egy Szovjetunió-szakértő gondolatai és megfigyelései hazánkról a huszadik században” [“George F. Kennan and Hungary: A Soviet Expert’s Thoughts and Observations about Hungary in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century”] in *Aetas*, 39/1 [2024]: 49–68.

*A Coat of Many Colours: Max Kranzthor, His Family and His Plays About Herod and Spartacus* by Nikos Kokkinos, Henry MacAdam, Thomas Sayers (Szeged: AMERICANA eBooks, 2023) is a biography of a European Jewish family, the Kranzthors, who migrated from Hungary to the USA near the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. The e-book, which can be also ordered in print, presents a fully-referenced narrative of Kranzthor family’s history, accompanied by genealogical trees, charts, photographs, and correspondence and including a reconstruction of an unpublished Holocaust letter. The book examines the lives of most of the members, four brothers (Max, Jacob, Alexander, Samuel) and three sisters (Katie, Fanny, Jenni), and their descendants to the third generation in order to reflect interrelations and interactions. This publication includes the full text of two historical plays with commentaries as well. After fascinating adventures through various American states (such as New York, Illinois, and primarily Texas of the silver rush period) and Mexico (of the gold rush period to the time of the 1910 revolution), a senior member of the family, Max Kranzthor (1853-1934), settled in Los Angeles just before World War I. There in the 1920s, after a change of direction to his career, from previously being a dry-good businessman to a real estate agent, and in his mid-70s, he wrote two plays aimed at the then embryonic ‘sound’ cinema in Hollywood: the first was about the famous gladiator-rebel Spartacus, while the second about the famous (or infamous) King Herod. Although privately and fleetingly published, they have never been discussed or produced to this point in time.

Another e-book is *Hungarian Roots & American Dreams: Tracing Personal History*, which was also published in print and was edited by Anna Fenyvesi and Réka Bakos (Szeged: AMERICANA eBooks, 2024). This volume charts a multivocal journey of discovery by following the stories of forty-eight Hungarian immigrants who ventured to America in search of a better life. Through heartfelt narratives and photographs from family photo albums, this book of oral histories captures stories of the Hungarian immigrants’ journeys, the challenges they faced, and the lives they built for themselves and their families in the United States of America. The book focuses on how these dedicated people maintained their cultural heritage and left an indelible mark on their descendants, creating a tapestry of history that connects past and present on both sides of the ocean.

In the chapter “Transnational Movements, Postnational Identities: Conceptualisations of Home and Belonging among American Expats in Szeged, Hungary” pp. 57-77, in Réka M. Cristian, ed., *Nomadisms: Essays Mapping the Manitoba-Szeged Partnership* (Szeged: AMERICANA eBooks, 2024), Irén Annus investigates understandings of “home” among a small group of

American expatriates permanently settled in Szeged, Hungary. The study explores the complexities and contradictions in how these Americans construct notions of home in relation to their identities, particularly as shaped by their sense of belonging and transnational experience and concludes that the participants exemplify what Yasemin Soysa defines as the post-national form of identification.

D. Inter-American Studies

In her study on “Not in My Backyard: US Interventions in Latin America, 1945-1989” (*Hungarian Review* 14, 4 [2023]: 67-76), Éva Eszter Szabó explains how US strategic interests in Latin America and the Caribbean were heightened amidst the Cold War climate and how the avoidance of a second Cuba in the Western Hemisphere determined U.S. foreign relations in the region. With the Good Neighbor policy of the interwar period increasingly compromised in the fight against the spread of communism, and the Johnson Doctrine leading to a wave of interventionism well into the 1980s.

Ágnes Zsófia Kovács’s “Reinscribing Malinche in Contemporary Visual Art: Metaphors of Malinche at the Denver Art Museum exhibition ‘Traitor, Survivor, Icon: The Legacy of la Malinche’” (*Acta Hispanica* 28 [2023]: 131-147), analyzes the way the Denver Art Museum represented cultural metaphors of Malinche in visual culture in its 2022 show titled “Traitor, Survivor, Icon: The Legacy of La Malinche.” La Malinche was an indigenous slave woman who helped Hernan Cortés communicate with and understand native chiefs during the conquest of Mexico. The exhibition distinguishes five key metaphors in the reception of La Malinche from the sixteenth century on, while the paper highlights the theme of La Malinche as the mother of the colonized nation based on her contrasting appearances in visual culture. The paper surveys the ways in which images of motherhood interact in the museum space, triggering various responses.

Mária Dornbach’s e-book *Csodás? Való! A létezés labirintusa: Kalandozások a latin-amerikai irodalomban* [Wonderful? Indeed! The Labyrinth of Existence: Adventures in Latin American Literature] (Szeged: AMERICANA eBooks, 2024) is a collection of essays in Hungarian language on a series of 20th century Latin American literature works, which underwent an aesthetic paradigm shift by gaining a unique identity on the global literary scene. To this day, Latin American works are often mistakenly seen as belonging to the genre and style of magical realism. But the book defies this viewpoint and Dornbach’s work displays studies by presenting the ethnographic background of the “wonderful reality” of Latin American novels’ style of unique symbiosis and explores this theme through works from the Caribbean region, Cuba, Venezuela and Paraguay. Latin American literature has been marked by the exploitation of the colonial era and hence the sense of hopelessness felt by the descendants of the indigenous peoples and those of the colonizers alike, along with the question of loneliness. These features become prominent in the contemporary narrative art of the region and the narratives of individual authors show, in this context, rather an accurate social reality with an impressive diversity. Moreover, in Dornbach’s view, Latin American writers did not look to Europe or align themselves with European trends. On the contrary, their thinking was rather focused on the problems of their continent and their homeland, formulating universal messages based on this stance. The authors Dornbach talks about consciously embraced and represented the cultural and social values of their environment, the stark contradictions of their reality, the existing feudal capitalism, and the dramatic paradoxes of mulattoization. This is how, for example, the characteristic Latin American indigenism and the negritude of the Antilles came into being. Mária Dornbach’s last volume is a significant contribution to the Hungarian reception of the 20th and 21st-century Latin American narratives by breaking free from the contextual spell of magical realism and by showing works with a new, more nuanced light.

*Segítség! Gyermekrablás-, kereskedelem és átnevelés a 20-21. században* [Help! Child Abduction, Trafficking, and Reeducation in the 20th and 21st Centuries], a book edited by the authorial pair of Mária Dornbach and András Lénárt (Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 2024), is a collection of studies on state-led atrocities against children, with special focus on abuses in the United States, Canada and various countries of Latin America. Government-imposed reeducation and the separation of children from their parents usually hit indigenous communities and political opponents and the book puts a special emphasis on this theme. AS

part of this book, in “[“Öld meg az indiánt, és mentsd meg az embert!”: Amerikai őslakos bentlakásos iskolák](#)” [Kill the Indian, Save the Man!]: American Indian Boarding Schools], pp. 99-119 in Mária Dornbach and Lénárt András eds., [Segítség! Gyermekrablás, -kereskedelem és átnevelés a 20-21. században](#) [Help! Child Abduction, Trafficking, and Reeducation in the 20th and 21st Centuries] (Budapest: Gondolat, 2024), Judit Szathmári explores how recent discoveries of hitherto unknown student burial sites on former Native American boarding school campuses have brought public attention to the assimilationist policies of the United States directed at its Indigenous population. The initiative to establish a federal *Truth and Healing* committee indicates that the intergenerational trauma induced by the institutions has yet to be reconciled. The chapter introduces the historical and ideological background of the establishment of the institutions supervised by various Christian denominations under the auspices of the state, and examines how their daily operation was directed at the assimilation of Indigenous children into mainstream American society.

In the chapter on “Jamaica Kincaid’s *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalayas* as a Black Pastoral,” pp. 187-208 in Shubhanku Kochar and Neepa Sarkar, eds., *Pastoral and Anti-Pastoral* (Hannover and Stuttgart: Ibidem Press, 2024), Dorottya Mózes examines Caribbean American writer Jamaica Kincaid’s seed-collecting journey in the Himalayas. Drawing on Black feminist practices of conjoining beauty and joy against the incessant and insistent pull of racialized violence, stress, trauma, and terror, Mózes explores the radical potential of Black gardening, journeying, hiking, and seed collecting. She argues that in Kincaid’s 2005 travelogue, the Black pastoral emerges as a way of experiencing and narrating a beautiful and experimental “outside” to Black ecologies. As with Black ecologies (Roane and Hosbey) and geographies (McKittrick), the epithet Black indicates the experimental ways in which the Black pastoral interrogates and reimagines the traditional pastoral’s engagement with the environment. Ultimately, Kincaid’s *Among Flowers* articulates an alternative landscape and proposes new ways of relating to, inhabiting, and moving through that landscape.

“Healing Processes in Aurora Levins Morales’s Remedios and Medicine Stories” (*Polish Journal for American Studies* 18/1 [2024]: 69-81) by Réka M. Cristian maps the curative processes contained in Aurora Levins Morales’s two works, *Remedios* and *Medicine Stories*, in which Levins Morales combines life narratives, history, botany, autobiography and fiction in a synergic way. Levins Morales considers life as a net of ecosystems, where the writer works as an “organic intellectual” by creating stories that have a certain power, including a healing potential for which she uses medicinal history and history in general “to cure the wounds of a deeply colonized sense of ourselves” by charting a mosaic of histories with a microhistorical strategy that deconstruct compounds of mainstream history and replace them with the untold, idiosyncratic histories of generations of women. Besides texts, the process of this deconstruction, too, holds a curative power that can heal even transgenerational traumas. Réka M. Cristian’s “Watching to Learn and Learning to Watch:” Mapping Trajectories of American Studies in Music Video Clips” pp-7-24 in Mónika Fodor, Nicole Haring, David Livingstone and Bea Amon Tomšič eds. *Voices of Diversity: Inclusion and Exclusion in Inter-American Literature, Culture, and History: Working Papers from the CEEPUS Inter-American Studies Network* (Graz: Zentrum für Inter-Amerikanische Studien der Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, 2024) zooms into a selection of music and music video clips produced between 1960 (some of them recorded performances that now function as music video clips) and 2010s, which are explicitly (or implicitly) related to (re)definitions of America(s) performed by Simon and Garfunkel, The Beach Boys, Chuck Berry, James Brown, Neil Diamond, Don McLean, Bruce Springsteen, Miley Cyrus, Joni Mitchell, Lynard Skynyrd, Sugarcult, Jay-Z and Alicia Keys, Sting, Leningrad Cowboys, Hugh Laurie, Rammstein, Green Day, Gloria and Emilio Estefan, Luis Fonsi, Luis Miguel, Shakira, among many others. The chapter is based on George Lipsitz’s theoretical emphasis of pop cultural artifacts and their relation to culture production and charts the correlations between the major paradigm shifts in American Studies from its early stages of development – essentialist, exceptionalist, adopting the ideas of the myth and symbol school –

through the comparative and internationalist (Jane C. Desmond and Virginia R. Dominguez) stages to the post-nationalist (John Carlos Rowe), inter-American and transnational (Shelley Fisher Fishkin) turns, which shape today this discipline in continuous construction, part of contemporary definition(s) of American Studies.

E. Ethnic, Race and Gender Studies

The essay entitled “Tradwomen on the Rise: The Expansion of the American Culture Wars,” pp. 4-26 in Zsófia Anna Tóth and Zoltán Vajda, eds., *Further Critical, Theoretical and Analytical Explorations of U.S. Culture, Literature and History* (Szeged: AMERICANA eBooks, 2023) by Irén Annus reviews the current state of traditional womanhood in the US, with a focus on its cultural characteristics and political positioning arguing that tradwomen who embrace traditional gender roles are often, like their male relatives, angry and disappointed, and strong supporters of the Republican Party and Donald Trump. In addition, some also identify with alt-right and white supremacist groups, seeking alternatives to mainstream parties, political practices and representatives. Irén Annus in her chapter “A Nation Still Divided: Approaches to Race/Ethnicity in the United States,” pp. 27-41 in Zsófia Anna Tóth and Zoltán Vajda, eds., *Further Critical, Theoretical and Analytical Explorations of U.S. Culture, Literature and History* (Szeged: AMERICANA eBooks, 2023) explores recent key academic theories on race and ethnicity in the US, alongside with various proposals intended to overcome racial divisions. The text contends that racial and ethnic tensions in the US have not only persisted but have intensified and become increasingly complex. As such, the challenge of building a nation no longer divided along racial and ethnic lines remains a pressing issue for the future.

In her paper “The Perils of Embracing Respectability Politics: Maternal Conformity and Normativity in Alice Walker’s ‘The Abortion’ and Nafissa Thompson-Spires’s ‘Belles Lettres,’” pp. 153-168 in Andrea O'Reilly, ed., *Normative Motherhood: Regulations, Representations, and Reclamations* (Coe Hill, Canada: Demeter Press, 2023), Zsuzsanna Lénárt-Muszka examines the representations of normative motherhood and respectability politics *vis-à-vis* Black American motherhood in the two stories. The chapter establishes the historical context of Black American mothers’ social position and contextualizes it within the discourses of normative motherhood and respectability politics. Then Lénárt-Muszka talks about how the stories affirm or subvert four tenets of normative motherhood and how the three textual mothers are influenced by the racialized aspects of their motherhoods. She also discusses the narrative ramifications of prioritizing the figure of the ideal mother and reflects on the personal and social implications of adopting or resisting the strategy and imperatives of respectability politics in the texts. Zsuzsanna Lénárt-Muszka’s chapter on “The Weather and the Wake: Maternal Embodiment and Peril in Jesmyn Ward’s *Salvage the Bones*,” pp. 125-140 in Arin Keeble, Sheri-Marie Harrison, and Maria Elena Torres-Quevedo, eds., *Jesmyn Ward: New Critical Essays* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2023) argues that in the novel, the literal meaning of the wake of hurricane Katrina intersects with its metaphorical meaning as understood by Afropessimist and Black feminist theoretician Christina Sharpe. The chapter demonstrates that while the protagonist’s pregnancy is a significant plotline, it is decentered through the novel’s narrative design; instead, several other mother figures are foregrounded and utilized as catalysts that foster Esch’s understanding of her motherhood on the one hand, and throw into sharp relief her position as a single, poor, Black teenager in a masculinized environment on the other. In her monograph on *Lehetetlen választások : Kortárs afroamerikai anyaszövegek és a rabszolgaság utóélete* [Im/possible Choices: Contemporary Black American Mothertexts and the Afterlife of Slavery] (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2024), Zsuzsanna Lénárt-Muszka highlights the importance of the reverberations of enslavement on early maternal embodiment in a corpus of novels and short stories published since the 1980s and analyzes the ways in which the so-called mothertexts such as “The Abortion” (1982) by Alice Walker, *Dessa Rose* (1986) by Sherley Anne Williams, *Push* (1996) by Sapphire, *Conception* (2008) by Kalisha Buckhanon, “Harvest” (2010) by Danielle Evans, and *Salvage the Bones* (2011) by Jesmyn Ward, foreground the dual nature of maternal possibilities and impossibilities, reflecting on the im/possibility of Black motherhood. The article entitled “Holding the Pen: Visions and Revisions of the American South in Sherley Anne Williams’s *Dessa Rose*” (*Critique – Studies in Contemporary Fiction* 65, 2 [2024]: 346-357) by Zsuzsanna Lénárt-Muszka traces the trope of partitioning and de-partitioning in Sherley Anne Williams’s neo-

slave narrative *Dessa Rose* (1986) to argue that the richly structured, polyvocal narrative reveals a political impetus: it privileges the protagonist's voice and vision in order to comment on the representational paradigm endemic to mainstream cultural representations of the American South. *Dessa Rose* challenges those well-known, white-authored representations of the South that either emit or distort the Black perspective. Its structure, especially its initial reliance on the monocular, fragmenting white gaze and its subsequent disruption of this mode of seeing ultimately allow Dessa to emerge as the only reliable narrator, thus amplifying – what is more, enabling – the eventual catharsis while producing a complexly fragmented vision of the South. In “Haunting as Retaliation in ‘The Old Doctor’s Story,’” pp. 25-38 in Nuria Torres López and Carmen García Navarro, eds., *Identity, Violence and Resilience in 21st Century Black British and American Women's Fiction* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2024), Zsuzsanna Lénárt-Muszka interrogates various types of anti-Black, misogynistic violence as they relate to the ghost trope in the short story “The Old Doctor’s Story, or The Haunting of Mill Creek Medical Facility” (2021) by African American author Nafissa Thompson-Spires. After briefly placing the story in the context of the corpus of Black women’s fiction that focuses on supernatural occurrences, the chapter argues that “The Old Doctor’s Story” (to borrow Henry Louis Gates Jr.’s term) Signifies on both the fictional representations of violence historically committed against Black women and on the trope of haunting prevalent in contemporary Black women’s writing.

*African American Masculinities in Ann Petry’s Works* by Hogar Najm Abdullah (Szeged: AMERICANA eBooks, 2024) is an e-volume, which brings an important addition to the currently developing criticism on Ann Petry’s works by enriching the interpretation of her oeuvre through a complex, intersectional reading, contributing to the global reception of this American author. Hogar Najm Abdullah has successfully shown that through a black woman author’s perspective, Petry’s African American male characters can escape essentialist categorization(s) and build fluid identities; what is more, through an intersectional reading the characters also display a considerable potential in raising awareness about the pitfalls of categorical thinking. Petry’s legacy, as the author proved with his original contribution, lies thus in the progressive aesthetics represented by the ingenious identity-capacity of her complex black male characters, a strategy with which Petry successfully transgresses the confinement of the protest genre category.

In “Breaking Barriers: Sarah Edwards’s and Sarah Osborn’s Extraordinary Journey in The First Great Awakening” (*The AnaChronist* 22 [2024]: 1–19), Emőke Ágoston explores Sarah Pierpont Edwards and Sarah Osborn’s contributions to the eighteenth-century Great Awakening. Edwards’s influence was often overshadowed by her husband, Jonathan Edwards, and Osborn's significance has only recently been recognized. Nevertheless, both women played crucial roles in shaping religious discourse in the US during The First Great Awakening. Their diaries and memoirs demonstrate how women of faith challenged gender norms and paved the way for female participation in religious discourse.

F. Visual Culture

“In the Service of Indoctrination: Humor in Antebellum American Genre Painting (*AMERICANA E-Journal of American Studies in Hungary* 19/1 [2023]: 1-15) is a study by Irén Annus in which the author examines how humor—originally a defining feature of European genre painting employed for pointed social critique—was adopted in American genre painting, which played a distinct role in the US during the Jacksonian period, shaping the cultural narrative of the young American nation as both harmonious and cultured, peaceful and unified. Annus claims that humor was employed in exceptional cases to highlight specific examples diverting from the norms and expectations of the up-and-coming middle-class, recognized as the model for American propriety and respectability. Also by Irén Annus, the article “‘The National Eye of Conscience:’ Dorothea Lange’s Images of the Japanese Internment,” pp. 11-22 in Anna Kérchy and Irén Annus, eds., “*So Far So Good*” *Festschrift in Honour of Erzsébet Barát / Tanulmányok Barát Erzsébet köszöntésére* (Szeged: SZTE BTK TNT Kutatócsoport, 2023) investigates a selection of images by Dorothea Lange taken during the initial stage of the Japanese internment in the US in 1942. Annus writes that Lange was suspended from her assignment early on because she refused to provide images suitable for governmental propaganda and instead took pictures that shaped a sophisticated counter-narrative, which challenged the logic of the federal policy and the justification for the official governmental position on the matter.

In “Life and Humor According to *Seinfeld*: Sociocultural Aspects of a Classic Sitcom in the US and Beyond” (*AMERICANA E-Journal of American Studies in Hungary* 19/1 [2023]), András Lénárt talks about the enduring social and cultural impact of the iconic American sitcom *Seinfeld* in the United States and beyond by focusing primarily on the elements that find the humor factor in reactions to everyday life. Additionally, András Lénárt writes in “Approaches to Crime and Punishment in a Historical Context: Roman Polanski’s *Death and the Maiden*” (*Studies in Eastern European Cinema*, 14/3 [2023]: 267-279) about issues of identity, crime, and punishment in Roman Polanski’s films focusing on the tragedies the director experienced in Europe and the United States and also on those of on Latin America’s historical memory through cinema. In his book on *Mozgóképes múlt: Közelítések a film és a történelem kapcsolatához* [The Past in Motion Pictures. Approaches to the Relationship between Film and History] (Pécs: Kronosz Kiadó, 2024), András Lénárt explores the multifaceted relationship between film and history, laying special emphasis on the role of film in shaping historical memory and on the film policies of democracies and dictatorships providing a multitude of examples from the United States and also from Latin America. Another essay, “Donald Duck Goes South: Walt Disney and the Inter-American Relations” (*Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media* 27 [2024]: 24-36) also by András Lénárt examines Walt Disney’s role in shaping inter-American relations in the 1940s, in the context of his tour of Latin America on behalf of the US government. The main goal of Disney’s trip and the resulting films was to improve relations between the United States and Latin America as part of the Good Neighbor Policy.

“Family in the Woods: Countercultural Utopia in *Captain Fantastic* (2016).” (*Pázmány Papers*: 1/1 [2023]: 270-291) by Károly Pintér discusses a 2016 American indie movie about a family of six children, who abandoned modern civilization and moved into the vast forests of the Pacific Northwest in an attempt to establish an intentional community, which can also be examined as part of the rich American utopian tradition. *Captain Fantastic* is an independent drama (written and directed by Matt Ross in 2016, and starring Viggo Mortensen), which addresses several themes that are central to utopian studies: the viability of an intentional community removed from mainstream civilization, the possibility of living in harmony with nature, as well as the ambition to inculcate alternative cultural values by a radical educational program. After the mother’s death, the father is forced to confront the past and his potential mistaken decisions about his wife and his family. The movie is rich in utopian themes and plot elements: the decision to leave modern civilization and survive on one’s own resources echoes a

classic American text, Thoreau's *Walden* (1854), while the children's innocent confrontations with everyday American realities provides ample opportunities for satire and cultural criticism. Yet the film's ultimate conclusion can be described as a compromise between the father's left-wing idealism and the children's need for social integration. Pintér's essay interprets the movie in the context of the American utopian tradition, particularly its individualist variety exemplified by the myth of the American Adam and the ideas of Thoreau's *Walden* (1854) and concludes that *Captain Fantastic* fulfils a crucial generic criterion by skillfully satirizing some of the characteristic features and attitudes of mainstream American culture through the eyes of the children who experience it for the first time, subjecting the conventional 'American utopia' to a trenchant criticism. At the same time, it also questions the possibility of radical alterity and namely: can a single family defy society by re-enacting a mythical American pattern and abandoning civilization to raise their kids in the woods? Do parents have the right to experiment on their children after their utopian hopes of opposing American capitalist society have been dashed? The clash of utopias is ultimately resolved by Ben's decision to admit his responsibility for his wife's mental illness and death and to give up the backwoods utopia and settle on a farm, conforming to another fundamental American symbol: the pastoral ideal of the garden.

In "The Flâneuserie of *In Treatment*'s Laila Green: Waywardness, Willfulness, and the Blackqueer Art of Failure" (*Journal of English Studies* 22 [2024]: 219-250), Dorottya Mózes introduces the concept of the Blackqueer *flâneuse*, highlighting the radical imagination's role in maneuvering through heavily surveilled and controlled spaces. By weaving together intersecting theories of waywardness (Hartman) and willfulness (Ahmed), she examines Black *flâneuserie* — both as an imaginative and tangible mode of mobility— that ingeniously subverts or sidesteps the violence of capture. Focusing on Laila Green, from the series *In Treatment* (2021), Mózes article unveils her outlaw imagination, her yearning for liberation, and her everyday practices of wandering as alternative expressions of *flâneuserie*. Employing the concept of queer failure (Halberstam), the analysis frames Laila's persistent attempts at escape alongside her history of facing setbacks as a practice of *flâneuserie*; with the help of critical geography (de Certeau, Tuan, Cosgrove, Cosgrove and Dora) and Jungian theory, the text conceptualizes Laila's passion for high places and mountains and ultimately the realization of her passion as evidence of her individuation. Akin to the paradoxes of traditional white male *flânerie*, Black *flâneuserie* in Laila's case unfolds as a paradoxical journey of self-discovery, complicated by her privilege and the entanglements of her wanderings within the logic of racial capitalism.

Ildikó Limpár's analysis of the apocalypse and the fundamental values of humanity in "Matters of the Heart When the Brain is Attacked: Zombification and Its Consequences in HBO's *The Last of Us*," pp. 229-239, in Simon Bacon ed., *Zombie Futures in Literature, Media and Culture: Pandemics, Society and the Evolution of the Undead in the 21st Century* (London: Bloomsbury, 2024) focuses on the various metaphorical representations of enclosures that suggest the difficulty in forming intimate or larger communities in the times of apocalypse and shows how interpersonal relationships and the power of empathy are re-considered when survival is at risk. With regard to the same primary source, Limpár's "Elkerített emberiség és emberség: A zombifikálódó világ a *The Last of Us* filmsorozatban" [Enclosed Humanity and Humaneness: The Zombification of the World in the TV Series *The Last of Us*] (*Apertúra* 19, 2 [2024]: 1-19) investigates the variations of human communities in the postapocalyptic world, highlighting how the end of the world may liberate people from their earlier constraints in the best and the worst manners alike. Highlighted examples are the utopian and dystopian community endeavors in the series, as well as individual liberations, such as Bill's sexual liberation that also liberates the character from his misanthropy in the episode "Long, Long Time" (a positive example) or the cannibal David's fully-grown monstrosity (a negative example).

In "A Quest for the 'Missing People:' Posthuman Affect in *Where the Water Tastes Like Wine*" (*Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* 29, 2, [2023]: 343-362) Imola Bülgözdi analyzes the narrative-adventure video game described as "a bleak American folk tale about traveling, sharing stories, and surviving manifest destiny," whose objective is to introduce the

player to voices formerly overshadowed or muted by the mainstream myth of the American dream. The article demonstrates that the player's non-linear, rhizomic wandering and interaction with marginalized characters results in a more accurate affective cartography of the USA, aligning with the objectives of Rosi Braidotti's critical posthumanism: the game facilitates a different, more democratic future achieved by actualizing as political subjects of knowledge the "missing people," who did not qualify as fully human according to the humanist idea of "man."

In her chapter on "Black Maternal Bodies on the Screen: Shondaland and the New Representational Paradigm of Black Motherhood," pp. 65-76 in Anna Weinstein, ed., *The Works of Shonda Rhimes* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2024), Zsuzsanna Lénárt-Muszka explores the aesthetics and politics of a variety of scenes from television shows created by media mogul Shonda Rhimes featuring Black women navigating the embodied aspects of new motherhood. Apart from exploring why these representations might be considered groundbreaking, the chapter also comments on their historical and contemporary social context and the changing landscape of media representations that have arisen in no small part thanks to the work of Shonda Rhimes.

Written in a dual authorship by Dávid Szóke and Sándor Kiss, "[Environmental Action in Opposite Directions: Extinction \(2019\) and Guardians of Life \(2020\)](#)" (*Film International* 2:18 [2024]: 1), analyzes how Extinction Rebellion (XR) and its affiliated films, *Extinction* (2019) and *Guardians of Life* (2020), navigate the tension between their declared commitment to "nonviolent open rebellion" and the disruptive tactics they employ. While XR positions itself as a grassroots movement urging urgent action against climate change, its methods by blocking roads, defacing artwork, and other guerrilla-style protests, often clash with the ideals of peaceful activism. The films leverage satire, celebrity participation, and emotionally charged narratives to amplify their message, yet they risk turning environmental issues into spectacles that spotlight celebrities rather than solutions. The article situates XR within a lineage of radical environmental groups, noting their media-savvy strategies and shift toward accessible forms of protest. However, it questions whether the celebrity-driven campaigns truly advance environmental consciousness or merely distort public understanding.

In "Sisu(datu), the Funny Female Dragon of the Disney Universe" (*AMERICANA E-Journal of American Studies in Hungary, Special Issue on American Humor*, Volume 19/ 1, 2023), Zsófia Anna Tóth argues that Sisu is a unique character as she is a merger of both the West and the East constituting a bridge and playing a major role in cultural diplomacy while being one of the first female Disney characters who actively produces humor throughout its animated film. Even if Sisu is not the first positive dragon character in a Western animated film, she stands out as a complex figure, who is sacred with her dragon abilities and magical status while being sacrilegious with her humor use and occasional clumsiness. At the height of the tension between the USA and China due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the movie was a regenerative gesture of cultural diplomacy and a positive point of reference for Asian Americans especially since Sisu was also voiced by Awkwafina. The paper's aim is to examine the humor use in this animated film from various points of view such as Asian-American identity, Asian and American cultural differences as well as the questions of women's humor and to shed light on how the Disney Company is rethinking its humor strategies in this context. Zsófia Anna Tóth's "The Filmic Representations of *Femmes Fatales* within Information Society" pp. 132-141 in Zsófia Anna Tóth and Zoltán Vajda, eds. *Further Critical, Theoretical and Analytical Explorations of US Culture, Literature and History. Szeged Series in American Studies (SZESAS 3)*, (Szeged: AMERICANA e-Books. 2023) discusses the ways in which information society affected the representation of *femmes fatales* in American visual culture. The focus is on the discrepancy between the modes of communication and the techniques of exchanging or withholding information the 'early and recent' *femme fatale* figures employ as well as on how their intellectual/physical/technical (cap)abilities to access and handle information changed. The comparison of the types of *femmes fatales* before and after the emergence of information society is illuminating since it had an

immense impact (besides other cultural, political and economic factors) on the great changes in the representation of such women figures in the American film. Tóth's other essay in the same book, entitled "Changes in the Representation of Female Aggression in the Various Versions of Maurine Dallas Watkins's *Chicago*" pp. 109-131 in Zsófia Anna Tóth and Zoltán Vajda, eds. *Further Critical, Theoretical and Analytical Explorations of US Culture, Literature and History. Szeged Series in American Studies (SZESAS 3)*, (Szeged: AMERICANA e-Books. 2023) is a study on various representations of violent or unruly women in a selection of American films, with a special focus on the theatrical and textual versions of *Chicago*. This story started out as a series of newspaper articles that evolved into dramatic form in 1927 and was then first adapted to film in 1927. Its second adaptation was in 1942; then the story "went back to stage" in 1975, and "landed" again on screen in 2002. Through these different versions of *Chicago*, the author discusses also different stages in the representation of the *femme fatale* imagery in American culture in the twentieth century. Tóth's another essay in the previously mentioned book is "Emily Dickinson's Death Poetry Reinterpreted through the Lens of Humor and Catachresis," pp. 71-108. This study discusses Emily Dickinson's work with the help of humor and catachresis (both of which work with the logic of defamiliarization/refamiliarization) and is a study which reinterprets death as experience, as a state of being or as an entity arguing that Dickinson refused to be intimidated by the traditional concepts of death and she consciously approached it with humor as well as through catachresis to shake our notions and force us to see the whole issue from a new perspective. For Dickinson, death was never a final destination, it was always a door and a new avenue for greater knowledge, wisdom and exciting adventures. The paper analyzes some of her most unorthodox well-known poems about death and dying to support these claims after overviewing the scholarly research on the poetess' death poetry as well as pertinent theoretical arguments about the workings of humor, catachresis and on the relationship between women and humor. Zsófia Anna Tóth's other study is "Cinderella Revisited. An Examination of the Postmodern Comic Approach in *Cinderella* (2021)" (*Detinjstvo L /4*, 2024), which explores how Cinderella's story was turned into a postmodern comic rendering the 2021 film version. The comic reinterpretation of this classic fairy tale changed the representation of the protagonist, affecting the entire arch of the narrative. Due to this comic approach, Cinderella was transformed into an independent woman with agency, standing up for herself and refusing to be victimized. The author of the essay argues that the rather unfavorable reception of the film might be due to this comic take as viewers are typically accustomed to the traditional concept of Cinderella as a victim. This film is a radical departure from the traditional approach to the Cinderella story, showing that humor empowers not only the protagonist but also other female characters as well.

"Jabberwocky and Transmediation," pp. 17–26 in Björn Sundmark, Anna Kérchy, and Kit Kelen, eds., *A Companion to Jabberwocky in Translation* (Malmö: Malmö University Press, 2024), by Anna Kérchy is an essay on the ways in which Lewis Carroll's nonsense poem thrives through crosscultural, transnational, and intermedial adaptations, especially in American popular culture. By analyzing Disney's animation, Burton's film, Henry's horror novel, Moore and Gebbie's comics, and Stewart's picturebook, the essay shows how the fictional monster Jabberwock is reimaged as a comic, grotesque, traumatic, or playful representative of unspeakability, revealing how U.S. media reshapes a British children's classic to negotiate themes of trauma, violence, sexuality, and consumer entertainment.

Réka M. Cristian's "Nomadisms and Middle-Worlders in Steven Spielberg's *Terminal* and *Catch Me If You Can*" pp. 140-150 in Cristian Réka M. ed. *Nomadisms: Essays Mapping the Manitoba-Szeged Partnership* (Szeged, AMERICANA eBooks, 2024) centers on a selection of figures, which fit into the category of the "Middle Worlders" by mapping their practices of "nomadic thinking," as defined by South-African writer and activist Breyten Breytenbach, in tandem with their semblance to Hakim Bey's concept of the "temporary/permanent autonomous zone," alongside Jean-François Lyotard's "adrift" concept. Examples in this regard are from the filmic corpus of Steven Spielberg, with special regard to *Terminal* (2004) and *Catch Me If You Can* (2002), because

both movies emphasize the idea of nomads, nomadism and Middle Worlders, all caught through the transitory realm of airports as places of contemporary nomadism.

G. Linguistics

Sándor Czeglédi's "Language Policies During the Reconstruction Era (1865-77) from a Federal Perspective," pp. 193-217 in Enikő Maior, Borbála Bökös, Antonia Pop and Julianna Borbély, eds., *Language and Literature Across Borders—Perspectives on British and American Studies* (Oradea and Veszprém: Partium Press, 2023), compares and contrasts orientations towards languages and linguistic diversity on the basis of presidential and congressional documents, in a time period between the assassination of Abraham Lincoln (April 15, 1865) and the inauguration of Rutherford B. Hayes on March 5, 1877, following the Compromise of 1877. The findings reveal that the most characteristic domestic language policy initiatives in the examined period were related to the issue of English literacy, either as a voting prerequisite or as an inevitable precondition to permanent Civil Service employment. Foreign languages were increasingly seen from a resource-type of perspective as the nation was seeking a global role, which also required significant improvements in the foreign language proficiency of its diplomatic corps. Meanwhile, the U.S. was embarking on a soft power campaign to attract immigrants predominantly from Europe by publishing in the target languages the opportunities that the country offered in the Gilded Age. In "Attitudes of the Hungarian-American Diaspora to the Officialization of English in the United States" (*ELOPE: English Language Overseas Perspectives and Enquiries* 21, 1 [2024]: 45-61), Sándor Czeglédi examines attitudes and opinions of the representatives of Hungarian-American communities in the United States regarding the officialization of English at federal level. The corpus of the analysis contains websites of Hungarian-American organizations in the United States, the legislative database of the US Federal Congress and the digitized versions of the printed newspapers and magazines published in Hungarian in the United States. The results indicate that while Hungarian-Americans had mostly been trying to maintain their first language in the private domain, they had also embraced English, while willingly assimilating into American society, resenting the alleged ethnolinguistic separatism of Hispanic Americans and their demands for special minority-language accommodations. In their study titled "Legislative Attitudes Towards Immigrant Minority Languages During the First 100 Years of the American Nation-Building Experience (1774-1875)," pp. 112-143 in Balázs Venkovits and Gábor Pusztai, eds., *(Hi)stories of Migration, Mobility, and Travel: Crossing Literary, Linguistic, and Historical Boundaries* (Debrecen: Debrecen University Press, 2024), Sándor Czeglédi and Dominik Németh investigate the treatment of immigrant minority languages in the U.S. national legislation from 1774 to 1875, divided into five periods to reflect distinctive phases in U.S. history. Although the United States is often described as a "nation of immigrants," the history of immigration and language policy revealed a rather complex interplay between official support and restrictive, nativist attitudes toward foreign(ized) languages.