



# DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENTS: CENTRAL EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES

A SYMPOSIUM CELEBRATING THE  
SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL OF THE USA  
ANDRÁSSY UNIVERSITÄT BUDAPEST

7 - 9 MAY 2026

Research on the relations between the United States and Central Europe has mostly dealt with periods when the region was part of a larger political system, especially the Hapsburg Monarchy and the Communist Bloc, to which most of the Central European nations belonged. Scholarship has also focused on bilateral relationships between the United States and individual Central European countries.

From the Russian invasion of Ukraine to the second presidency of Donald Trump, the fundamental „geopolitical“ changes in the first half of the 2020s demand a renewed transatlantic perspective on Central Europe as a region. This symposium will address this demand in two ways: on the one hand, a comparative focus on the individual relationships between the various Central European countries and the United States, which will result in a wider perspective on the region as a whole; on the other hand, an overall analysis of transatlantic relations from a Central European point of view, which will complement the present dominant focus on the relationship between the European Union and the United States. These approaches will be further enriched by explorations of the historical relationship between the region and the US, including concepts, models and political projects developed in the past, which need to be considered and re-evaluated for our time.

The „Democratic Experiments“ of the symposium’s title were formulated by the US-American „Poet of Democracy“ Walt Whitman, whose work was and continues to be widely read in Central European countries. Throughout the history of the relationship between the United States and the region, democracy was a key issue, and Whitman’s notion of Democracy as experiment, as not a simple and obvious given but a political system needing permanent revision and re-examination, is particularly relevant today.

This interdisciplinary symposium invites interested contributors from the Humanities, Law/Legal Studies, Social Studies, Business and Economics, as well as other areas. Presentations should include a focus connecting Central Europe and the United States.

An abstract of a maximum of 250 words in either of the languages of the conference, English or German, should be submitted by 1 October 2025 to [walter.gruenzweig@aub.eu](mailto:walter.gruenzweig@aub.eu). For further informationen, please contact this address.

[www.aub.eu](http://www.aub.eu)



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