

MORPHING AMERICA

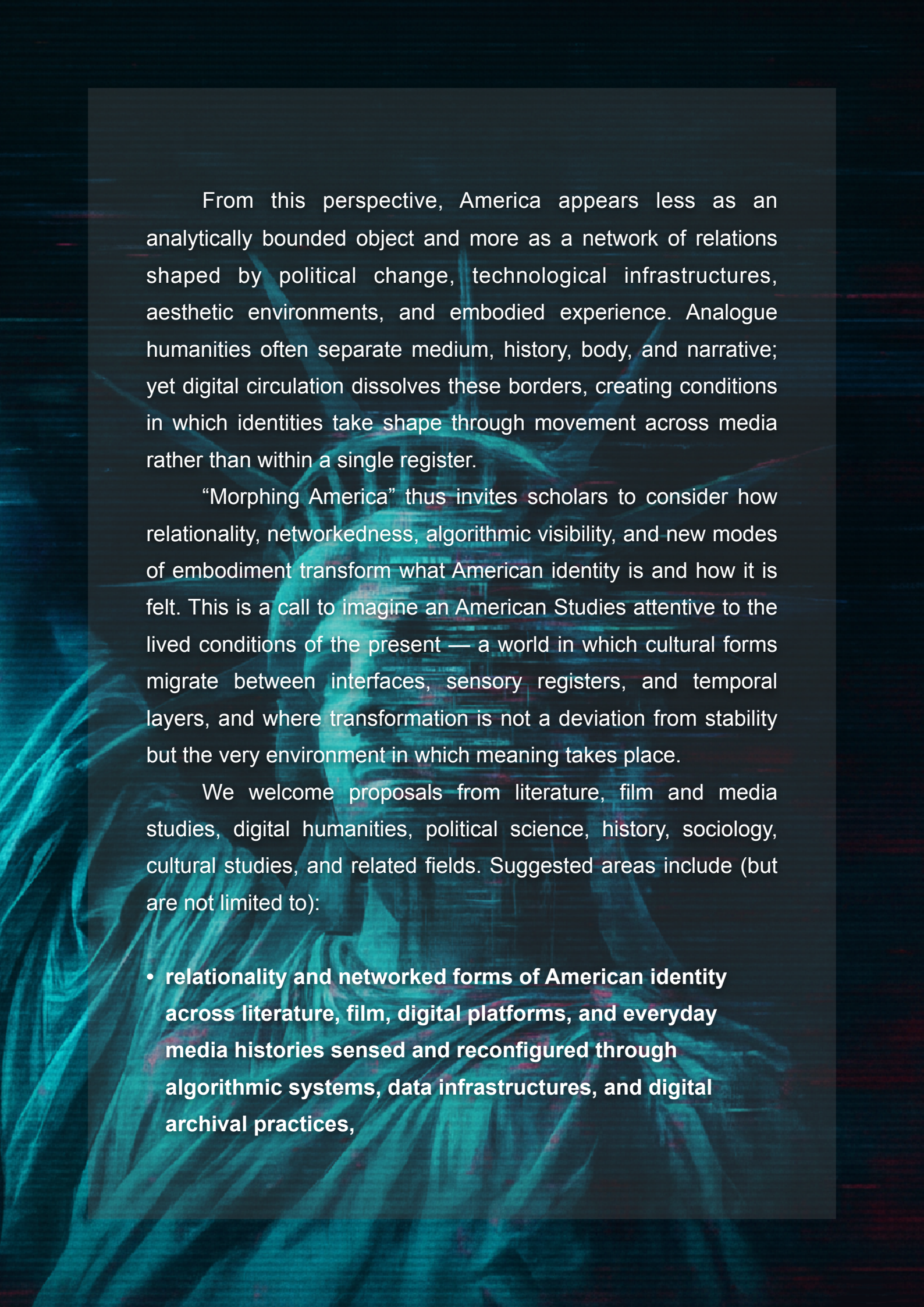
PAAS CONFERENCE

16-18 September 2026

University of Szczecin

“Meaning emerges in the encounter — in the relations between bodies, images, and the world,” wrote Vivian Sobchack in her *Carnal Thoughts* (68); and it is precisely these shifting relations that shape contemporary — digital — American identity. In the digital environment, such relations do not stabilise; they reconfigure themselves, recalibrate, and adjust across platforms, archives, sensors, and interfaces.

To inhabit this condition, the twenty-first century offers *morphing* as a conceptual tool for perceiving cultural forms that remain sensible not because remain unchanged, but keep moving. Originating in early digital image-processing and made culturally iconic by the liquid-metal T-1000 in *Terminator 2* (dir. James Cameron, 1991), morphing describes a process in which form emerges through transformation rather than through any singular outline. We suggest that this code-driven logic has become central to the circulation of contemporary American narratives, symbols, and histories — through digital and cross-platform flows that reconfigure how America is sensed, remembered, contested — and lived.



From this perspective, America appears less as an analytically bounded object and more as a network of relations shaped by political change, technological infrastructures, aesthetic environments, and embodied experience. Analogue humanities often separate medium, history, body, and narrative; yet digital circulation dissolves these borders, creating conditions in which identities take shape through movement across media rather than within a single register.

“Morphing America” thus invites scholars to consider how relationality, networkedness, algorithmic visibility, and new modes of embodiment transform what American identity is and how it is felt. This is a call to imagine an American Studies attentive to the lived conditions of the present — a world in which cultural forms migrate between interfaces, sensory registers, and temporal layers, and where transformation is not a deviation from stability but the very environment in which meaning takes place.

We welcome proposals from literature, film and media studies, digital humanities, political science, history, sociology, cultural studies, and related fields. Suggested areas include (but are not limited to):

- **relationality and networked forms of American identity across literature, film, digital platforms, and everyday media histories sensed and reconfigured through algorithmic systems, data infrastructures, and digital archival practices,**

- 
- **histories sensed and reconfigured through algorithmic systems, data infrastructures, and digital archival practices,**
 - **movement of American myths and narratives across evolving media environments and cultural interfaces,**
 - **affect, embodiment, and sensory experience in contemporary American culture shaped by digital mediation,**
 - **political, regional, and diasporic identities formed and negotiated within networked social environments,**
 - **emerging American mythologies (e.g., founding narratives, frontier imaginaries, heroic scripts) as they shift across platforms, images, and narrative habitats,**
 - **digital aesthetics and the reconfiguration of America's narrative landscapes in literature, visual culture, and audiovisual media,**
 - **marginalised and minoritised identities articulated through digital visibility, platformed publics, and new circuits of cultural circulation,**
 - **interdisciplinary approaches to identity as ongoing transformation across media studies, cultural studies, literary studies, film studies, and social sciences.**

We welcome propositions from outside the proposed range. Please send abstracts of approx. 300 words to morphing.paas.2026@gmail.com by **10th April**. Notifications of acceptance will be sent by **23rd April**.

Conference fees:

- 850zł/200EUR (full fee; includes coffee breaks, lunches, conference dinner);
- 700PLN/165EUR (basic fee; coffee breaks and lunches)
- doctoral students/unwaged participants are eligible for reduced fee — 600zł/140 EUR (includes ECR workshops, coffee breaks, lunches, conference dinner)

We look forward to welcoming you in Szczecin and to exploring together how America morphs across media, histories, and relations.

Best regards,

PAAS "Morphing America" Conference Committee

dr hab. Beata Zawadka, prof. US

dr Barbara Braid

dr Łukasz Muniowski

dr Antoni Górny

dr Renata Nowaczewska

mgr Magdalena Dziurzyńska

mgr Jacqueline Woroniec

mgr Anna Ronewicz

mgr Magdalena Skrzyńska

mgr Paweł Baran

mgr Jakub Sadowski



Polish Association
for American Studies



Morphing Culture(s)