

The South in the Age of Obama

The topic of the summer school 2010 focuses on the changes in the American South brought about by the presidency of Barack Obama and its global repercussions. The election of Obama as the first non-White American in the White House strengthened the belief in a renewal of politics and the possibility of radical change in political and cultural thought, especially among young people. "Yes we can" and "change" have become transnational impulses for action in all fields. In contrast to the South Carolinian Jesse Jackson's earlier efforts to run for president, Obama's election campaign led to clear changes in the way people voted, undermining former voting patterns in the "solid South" and creating new constellations by activating African-American voters in hitherto unknown numbers.

In spite of the present difficulties in Obama's politics at the beginning of his second year in office, the altered consciousness and a new cultural understanding in the South cannot be overlooked and are supposedly irreversible. This region traditionally influenced by racism now seems to be leading the way to the formation of a multiethnic society – a development of creolization (Edouard Glissant) which can be observed worldwide. Contrary to common beliefs, the population of the Southern states has developed a potential for mutual tolerance and the acceptance of difference – as reflected in Obama's own multiethnic biography.

Cultural and artistic forms of expression popular in the South, which were regarded as backward once and were based on oral tradition, can be interpreted as postmodern performance today, corresponding to Obama's alliance with popular culture artists in his campaign and the inauguration ceremonies). The new acceptance of the so-called New South at home and abroad seems to be Obama's credit. After the painful years of the Bush administration, the world community relates Obama's apparently African American status to the region of the USA which has hitherto been portrayed and perceived as racist in the media. In a reversal of former opinions, Obama's presidency stands for the renewal of the country and the acceptance of a multiethnic, interreligious, pluralistic, and transnational American nation, which seems to have been the basis of the New South in the past few years.

Homepage:

<http://www.amerikanistik.uni-mainz.de/summerschoolatlanta>

Contact Information

Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung
Department of English and Linguistics
American Studies
Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz
Jakob-Welder-Weg 18
55099 Mainz
Email: hornung@uni-mainz.de
Phone: +49.6131.39.22146

Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheiding
Department of English and Linguistics
American Studies
Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz
Jakob-Welder-Weg 18
55099 Mainz
Email: scheiding@uni-mainz.de
Phone: +49.6131.39.22357

Prof. Reiner Smolinski
Department of English
Georgia State University
P.O. Box 3970
Atlanta, GA 30302-3970
Email: rsmolinski@gsu.edu
Phone: 404.413.5861

Prof. Zhao Baisheng
Institute of World Literature
School of Foreign Languages
Peking University
Beijing, China 100871
Email: bszhao@pku.edu.cn
Phone: +86.10.82626451

SUMMER SCHOOL

July 3 - 17, 2010 Atlanta



The South in the Age of Obama



Program

Saturday 7/3/10 ARRIVAL IN ATLANTA
Pickup by Dr. Reiner Smolinski, Check into GSU dorms, "The Commons"

Sunday 7/4/10 FOURTH OF JULY
3 p.m. Barbecue at Caldwell-Smolinski Residence

Monday 7/5/10 OPENING SESSION PLUS STONE MOUNTAIN LASER SHOW!
10 a.m. Lecture by Dr. Alfred Hornung, Dr. Zhao Baisheng
2 p.m. Visit to Stone Mountain Park

Tuesday 7/6/10 WALKING TOUR OF CAMPUS & DOWNTOWN ATLANTA
9 a.m. Walking tour with Dr. Cliff Kuhn, GSU campus & Atlanta Race Riot Sites
10 a.m. From Rich's, walk to Capitol and tour with Dr. Tim Crimmins
12 a.m. Bus ride to Piedmont Park, Fox Theater. Lunch at Varsity.
2 p.m. Talk by Dr. Jacquelyn Rouse on Women in the Civil Rights Movement
5 p.m. Talk by Dr. John Burrison on Edgefield Pottery
7 p.m. Opening Reception at Art Gallery of Dr. Teresa Bramlette Reeves and Ben Goldman

Wednesday 7/7/10 ATLANTA HISTORY CENTER
10 a.m. Dr. Burrison guided tour of Folklife exhibit
11 a.m. Don Rooney guided tour of Metropolitan Frontiers exhibit
12-1 Lunch at Coach House, Chick-fil-a, Whole Foods, or sack in gardens
1-2:30 Tour of Swann House or Tully Smith Farm
2:30-3:30 Lecture by Dr. Wendy Venet on Civil War and Reconstruction in Atlanta
3:30-5 p.m. Guided tour by Dr. Gordon Jones of Turning Point exhibit

Program

Thursday 7/8/10 WALKING TOUR OF AUBURN AVENUE
9 a.m. Tour of Ebenezer Baptist Church, King Birth Home, gravesite. NPS center
11. a.m. Discussion about King Site held 2nd Story of Fire House
12 p.m. Lunch in restaurants on campus and Fairley Poplar District
2 p.m. Dr. James C. Cobb, UGA, "The South and the Election of Obama"

Friday 7/9/10 BUS TOUR OF WESTEND
9 a.m. See WEB Du Bois Office, Stone Hall, old AU/Morris Brown College
9:30 a.m. Tour Herndon Home
10:30 a.m. Tour Wren's Nest
12 lunch Soul food at the Busy Bee Café, MLKing Jr. Avenue
1 p.m. Afternoon off to work on projects.

Saturday 7/10/10 LITERARY FIELD TRIP to Milledgeville, Eatonton, Madison
8 a.m. Depart for Milledgeville see Governor's Mansion, Old Capitol Flannery O'Connor's Andalusia
12 lunch: Eatonton, see Joel Chandler Harris & Uncle Remus Museum
Turnwold Plantation, Alice Walker's Ward's Chapel & Cemetery, Stop by Plainview Baptist Church of Raymond Andrews
4 p.m. Madison Morgan Cultural Center Museum of Georgia Piedmont
Supper in Madison hosted by Eskew before late return to Atlanta

Sunday 7/11/10 FREE DAY
High Museum of Art, CNN Center, Georgia Aquarium

Monday 7/12/10 CARTER CENTER TOUR
9 a.m. Tour of the Carter Center Presidential Library
12 p.m. Lunch in Little Five Points
2 p.m. Dr. Teresa Bramlett Reeves and Ben Goldman, Gallery Talk "Southern Art"
7 p.m. Brennan Collins, DVD Presidential Campaigning in Georgia

Program

Tuesday 7/13/10 RACE AND LITERATURE
9 a.m. Tour of Hammonds House
12 p.m. Lunch on campus
2 p.m. Dr. Pearl McHaney, "Race, Rights, and Resistance in American Literature"

Wednesday 7/14/10 TROY MOORE LIBRARY DAY
9 a.m. Dr. Elizabeth West, "From David Walker to President Obama--Tropes of the Founding Fathers in African American Discourses of Democracy."
12 p.m. Lunch
1 p.m. Student Presentations

Thursday 7/15/10 TROY MOORE LIBRARY DAY
9 a.m. Student Presentations
Farewell Dinner at Mary Mac's on Ponce—Southern (Comfort) Food

Friday 7/16/10 ALABAMA BLACK BELT TOUR
8a.m. Depart for Tuskegee, see Airmen Site, Tuskegee University (lunch)
12 p.m. Montgomery see Civil Rights Memorial, Alabama Capitol
4 p.m. White Hall, see NPS Visitor's Center
5 p.m. Selma, see Edmund Pettus Bridge, Brown's Chapel AME Church
8 p.m. Arrive Birmingham. Dinner in Five Points South. Stay Redmont Hotel

Saturday 7/17/10 BIRMINGHAM TOUR
(then on to Oxford, Mississippi in afternoon)
9 a.m. Sloss Furnaces; Kelly Ingram Park
10 a.m. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, 16th Street Baptist Church
12 p.m. Lunch in the Birmingham Museum of Art

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Guided tour of Atlanta's Victorian neighborhood, Inman Park, led by Prof. Richard Laub, Director of the Georgia State University Heritage Preservation Program in the Department of History, either Mon, Tue, or Wed, June 12, 13, or 14, early evening (say 6 p.m. with supper in one of the area's restaurants).

Attend a Braves Baseball Game: either 4 p.m. on July 3, 5 p.m. on July 4, or 7 p.m. on July 15. This will require an adjustment in the schedule: f.ex. by moving Mary Mac's to Wed. and freeing up Thurs. evening.