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Fulbright Scholar Arrives

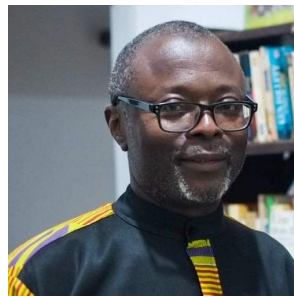
This academic year, the History Department is hosting Dr. Dieudonné Gnamankou, a Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence from Benin. Dr. Gnamankou is a professor at Benin National University at Abomey-Calavi and studies the African diaspora, Africa, and Europe.

He is one of the leading experts on Russian playwright Alexander Pushkin and his African roots, and his current research focuses on Africans in European cultural history and on African kings who fought against the slave trade. His 2000 book, *Abraham Hanibal, L'Aieul Noir de Puochkine*, has been described by Columbia University's Theimer Nepomnyashchy as a "bombshell," which has "ushered in a new era in the study of Pushkin's African ancestry."

Dr. Gnamankou also works with the International Museum for the Memory of Slavery, currently in development, in Ouidah, Benin. One exhibit in the museum will recreate the cabin of Cudjo Lewis in Africatown and discuss the Clotilda captives and their descendants.

At South this semester, Dr. Gnamankou has guest lectured to students in International Studies, African American Studies, Museum Studies, French, and

History classes. He also gave two lectures in the Honors College in October, entitled "The African Presence in Europe from Rome



Dr. Dieudonné Gnamankou

to the European Renaissance" and "Two Famous African Dynasties in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Europe: The Hanibals and the Dumas." In the Spring, Dr. Gnamankou will teach two classes in the History Department, *Africa Since 1500* (HY 362) and *Studies in European History: The African Diaspora in Europe* (HY 457/557).

Dr. Gnamankou has also met with residents in Africatown and with the Clotilda Descendants Association. Several events with these communities will be planned.

Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Program

The Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Program enhances the internationalization efforts of U.S. colleges and universities by helping host institutions bring an international scholar to their campus for a semester or full academic year to teach, guest lecture, assist with curriculum development, and engage in community outreach. The S-I-R Program seeks to promote cultural and intellectual diversity for the institution and wider community.

A team of faculty and staff in the Office of International Education, the Honors College, and several departments in the College of Arts and Sciences (including History; African American Studies; Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work; and International Studies) developed South's S-I-R application in 2021. We received notice that South had been selected as a Host Institution in April 2022 and have worked with many departments on campus and with off-campus communities to welcome Dr. Gnamankou and his family to Mobile.

Dr. Gnamankou is South's first Scholar-in-Residence and we hope he will not be the last!

New Faculty: Dr. Clayton Vaughn-Roberson



Dr. Clayton Vaughn-Roberson

The History Department is very happy to be joined by Dr. Clayton Vaughn-Roberson, who will be teaching American History, with a specialty in African-American History.

A native of Norman, Oklahoma, Dr. Vaughn-Roberson earned his B.A. in 2010 from the University of Oklahoma in both History and sociology. While at college, he became interested in social movements, and so he continued into OU's History M.A. program, where he began focusing on Black internationalism and global history. After getting his feet wet in teaching at Oklahoma City Community College, Dr.

Vaughn-Roberson entered the Ph.D. program at Carnegie-Mellon University and defended his dissertation in 2019.

Coming to South this fall after temporary jobs at CMU and at Miami University, Dr. Vaughn-Roberson has been teaching modern US History as well as an advanced course on African American Experiences. In the spring he will again offer modern US History and also teach a colloquium, The Civil Rights Movement and the World (HY 401).

Dr. Vaughn-Roberson has revised his dissertation into a book, *Fighting Jim Crow Fascism: The National Negro*

Congress and the Struggle for Social Democracy, which is now under contract at the University of North Carolina Press, for its Justice, Power, and Politics series. It details the centrality of African-Americans to the antifascist movement of the 1930s and 40s.

Dr. Vaughn-Roberson enjoys films and basketball and has taken to downtown Mobile and the Oakleigh neighborhood, where he can often be seen walking his dogs. The Department is fortunate to have such an avid teacher and groundbreaking historian.

History Society Visits New Orleans

BY ABIGAIL BERGDOLT AND SKYLER OLIVEIRA-KHAN

During October break, the USA History Society spent three days in the Crescent City. We lodged in a trendy hostel on Canal Street, located within walking distance of NOLA's historic downtown. We first spent a whole day learning the many facets of WWII at the National World War II Museum. Afterwards, our group dined on classic Creole cuisine at the Gumbo House.

The next day, the History Society embarked on a guided walking tour, which helped us appreciate the colorful history of the French Quarter. After our tour came to a close, we spent the afternoon enjoying

the ambiance of Downtown and explored the many shops located around the Quarter. That night, we ventured on another walking tour, which showcased the darker side of New Orleans history.

On our last day, we toured Jackson Square, where we visited the Cabildo and Presbytere, St Louis Basilica, and the 1850's House. We enjoyed lunch at Willie's and took a streetcar down to the Riverwalk. From there, we boarded the famous paddle-wheeler, the Creole Queen. We sailed down the Mississippi River, enjoying views of the New Orleans skyline and learning of the historical significance of the river and the role it played in the founda-

tion and success of New Orleans as an early trading port. The paddle-wheeler docked at the Chalmette Battlefield, where we disembarked and explored the site on which the Battle of New Orleans was fought.

Upon returning to the Riverwalk dock, we simply could not leave New Orleans without visiting the most important site... the nationally renowned Cafe Du Monde! There, we finished off our trip with the warm, sugary, softness of fresh beignets and rich hot chocolate. As we drove home, we reflected on our wonderful experience with fond memories, new friends, and a new-found appreciation for the gem of the South, New Orleans.



Left to right: Abigail Bergdolt, Skyler Oliveira-Khan, Anastasia Fetau, Olivia McIlwain, and Dr. Rebecca Williams

Stallworth Lecture Examines Civil War Refugee Camps

The fourteenth annual N. Jack Stallworth Lecture in Southern History took place in the MacQueen Ballroom on October 27. Dr. Thavolia Glymph of Duke University delivered an enthralling talk entitled “‘I have done his washing and cooking’: The Political Vocabulary of a Free People.” Over fifty students, professors, and people from the community attended.

Presenting the findings of her recent book, *The Woman’s Fight: The Civil War’s Battles for Home, Freedom, and Nation*, Dr. Glymph described the prejudice faced by ex-slave women and their children after they crossed Union lines. Union military officers and civilian abolitionists, instead of cheering the former slaves’ flight to freedom, were panicked by it. Pronouncing the newly free to be “dirty, filthy, and debauched,” Union authorities herded them into refugee camps, obsessed with imposing order upon them through “surveillance and containment,” as well as by means of corporal punishment, incarceration, and denial of rations. In one example highlighted by Dr. Glymph, a group of women

who refused to be sent to pick cotton on an abandoned plantation were ordered by the inflexible camp commandant to be beaten and



Dr. Thavolia Glymph

locked up. In such a repressive environment, Dr. Glymph concluded, “the line between freedom and slavery became imperceptible.”

Long after the war, government agents remained closedminded to what they called the freedwomen’s “outrageous claims to freedom and citizenship.” When one Black soldier’s widow was denied her pension, the bureaucrat reviewing her case could not believe that the man to whom she rented a room was anything other than a paramour. It was inconceivable to the official that the woman was capable of establishing business relationships and acquiring and managing property. “I have done his washing and cooking” was the woman’s insistence as to the blamelessness of her conduct.

After Dr. Glymph’s presentation, audience members were heard marveling at its fresh perspective, with some saying that they had known nothing of the refugee aspect of the Civil War. They lined up to buy Dr. Glymph’s book, vowing to keep learning about supposedly-familiar subjects. This year’s Stallworth lecture was especially successful in bringing an

Family History in Germany

By DR. DAVID MEOLA

For years, I’ve had an interest in my family’s origins, but professional interests have always taken precedence. But this summer while I was researching in Germany, I had the opportunity to take a few days and find something memorable. A few years ago, on our family tree, my sister added an unfamiliar name - Ida Felsenthal Katzenstein. Along with her name was her date and location of death - 30 April 1943, Sobibor. Ida was my great grandfather’s half-sister, and she was murdered along with six other members

of her family. My interest in Ida stems from my desire to one day lay a Stolperstein (stumbling block) in front of her last home in the town of Nahbollenbach and to see if I could find any traces about my great grandfather.

When I arrived in Nahbollenbach, I was disappointed to find little about Ida; however, I did find out about her ancestors, who were butchers, caterers, and cattle dealers. Following the limited archival trail, I then went to Rathskirchen—tucked away in the hills of the Bavarian Palatinate. It was here that

Jakob Isaak and his son, Elias, took the name Felsenthal at the behest of Napoleonic officials in 1802 (Elias is my 4x great-grandfather). It was here that I found my family’s home, still standing along Judengasse across from the barn where Elias kept his cattle. It was a surreal experience and there is more to tell. It was at this point that my professional and personal interests intersected...right there, wondering about how my family’s story lines up with my own interest in German-Jewish history.



The old Felsenthal residence in Rathskirchen

Spring 2023 Courses

HY 101 – History of Western Civilization I (7 sections)

HY 102 – History of Western Civilization II (4 sections)

HY 104 – History of Asian Civilization II (Miller)

HY 121 – World Civilization I (Wertelecki)

HY 135 – US History to 1877 (11 sections)

HY 136 – US History Since 1877 (12 sections)

HY 228 – Latin America (Urban)

HY 312 – America in the 1960s (Lombardo)

HY 336 – Central European History (Meola)

HY 347 – History of Eastern Europe (Kozelsky)

HY 346 – The Second World War (Messenger)

HY 362 – History of Africa Since 1500 (Gmannankou)

HY 365W – History of Islamic Civilization from 1453 (Williams)

HY 367 - Modern China (Miller)

HY 390 – Special Topics: Disease & Power in the Americas (Urban)

HY 401/501 – Colloquium in History: The Civil Rights Movement & the World (Vaughn-Roberson)

HY 432/532 – Colonial America (Hamilton)

HY 435/535 – Civil War & Reconstruction (McKiven)

HY 436/536 – Modern US I: 1877-1945 (McWilliams)

HY 442 – Research Seminar in European History: Trials in History (Cage)

HY 457/557 - Studies in European History: The African Diaspora in Europe (Gmannankou)

HY 461/561 - Studies in Asian History: The History of Taiwan (Miller)

HY 555 - History of Travel and Tourism (Strong)



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“Historians can process information in a systematic way. They recognize patterns that other people cannot.”

The USA History Department offers a wide variety of exciting courses, covering the histories of Eastern and Western Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, as well as the history of the United States and the South. Faculty are committed to teaching research and writing skills and the critical thinking that is becoming ever more necessary for survival in the information age. Now, more than ever, a history education is a prerequisite for an informed global citizenry.

Please visit us online or in person and see what History has to offer!



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