

★★★★★★ CALL FOR PAPERS ★★★★★★

# PLURALITY OF CULTURE AND DEMOCRACY

17<sup>th</sup> Olomouc Colloquium of American Studies, November 4 - 7, 2010

Palacky University Olomouc, Czech Republic

Organized by Palacky University Olomouc and The Czech and Slovak Association for American Studies  
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*The study of the relationship between democracy and culture has for us primarily meant discovering the principles of American democracy, its inspirational power and its influence on other democracies. American democracy served from the very beginning as a model for European democracies, including Czech.*

*Cultural models of American democracy are connected with American cultural plurality. American culture is multi-layered, accepting impulses from race, ethnicity, economic classes, region, and gender. Each current of this stream has a feature that the branches of European cultures originally lacked, this being the strong bond between popular, mass, and high culture. This character is still the subject of debate. Europeans are often afraid that the result of an over reliance on popular culture will lower the level of culture as a whole and cause intellectual laziness of the populace.*

*In America, authors of "high literature" were already absorbed into popular culture in the 19th century and the majority of classic works of American literature can also be read as the products of popular culture. American culture wants to entertain, but it is not empty. In its democratic character it is a culture of improvisation (especially in music, but also in theatre and art).*

*American "counterculture" also had and still has a strong bond to popular culture. That culture, rising up against mainstream American culture, found and still finds a warm reception in Europe.*

## Our objectives:

- critical assessment of the current terminology in this field and its re-definition
- evaluating the impact of democracy on American culture and on European cultures from the 19th century to the present, particularly in the latter half of the 20th century
- a fundamental and complex assessment of Americanization and globalization, especially in the field of culture
- investigation of the impact of mass and popular culture (literature, music, film) as a democratic or culturally deprivational element
- analysis of the presence and function of ethnic plurality on contemporary culture in the context of cultural pluralism and multiculturalism
- exploration of plurality in regional contexts, for instance in the American South, and investigation of local traditions, customs and myths
- critical assessment of the division between "high" and "low" culture; and in doing this proposing new classification and evaluation criteria



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**DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS: June 15, 2010**



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