



# Barack Obama - the first African American US-President: The American Dream

*Carla Pagel*

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Pre-University Paper from the year 2011 in the subject English - Applied Geography, grade: 12, Maria-Theresia-Gymnasium Augsburg, language: English, abstract: The main topic of our seminar is “the American Dream in 20th Century Film, Music and Literature”. The aim is to get a deeper understanding of the American culture and identity in the 20th and beginning of the 21st century. My purpose is to analyze Barack Obama’s career in terms of the fulfilment of the American Dream. Obama is considered a symbol for a post-racial era and his career is supposed to be the evidence of the success of the black Civil Rights Movement and the overcoming of the racial discrimination in the USA. Obama’s sky rocketing career is also characteristic of what Americans cherish about their own country namely social permeability, support of talents and advancement opportunities regardless of origin and skin color. Obama, an African American had an exceptional career. He had an excellent education, took up the reputable profession of a lawyer, has earned a lot of money and has reached the pursuit of happiness within his family. Obama made that career for himself because of his path through life. It involves his social environment, his search for identity, his pursuit of happiness, his constant willingness and assertiveness, his hard work in school and at university, his dedication to the underprivileged of the Chicago ghettos and finally his professional and political experiences. All these phases of his life made Obama the politician he nowadays is, who reconciles and unifies like no other black politician ever has. Thus he was elected president, because he embodies a new type of black politician.

For my primary literature I chose “Dreams from my father. A Story of Race and Inheritance” an autobiography written by Barack Obama, because it gives an interesting account of his search for identity in his first 30 years. It was first published in July 1995 and the victory of the U.S. Senate Democratic primary in Illinois in March 2004 led to the book’s re-publication in August 2004. This edition included a new preface by Obama, where he said that nowadays he would tell the story just the same way as he had done ten years ago.

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