Lecture 23: The Cultural Politics of International Migration

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Today’s Plan

• Housekeeping
• Reading Quiz
• Finish up U.S. Immigration policy from last week

• Today’s topic:
  • The Cultural Politics of Migration
    • Milman article
    • Migration and Family Structure
      • Transnational Motherhood
    • Muslim migration, terrorism, and cultural assimilation
Housekeeping

• Christina Greer talk on December 4th: Black Ethnics: Race Migration and the Pursuit of the American Dream
  • 11-12:30, VKC 300a
  • Participation credit
Reading Quiz (1)

• What is the Millman’s candidate for Something that Matters?
  • A. The up and coming superpower that is China
  • B. The demographic explosion in sub-Saharan Africa
  • C. The Middle East religious conflicts
  • D. Gay Marriage
  • E. Mexican Emigration
Reading Quiz (2)

• What was Spain's offer in Grabar's article?
  • A. Subsidies to protect domestic producers
  • B. Quotas on foreign producer's goods
  • C. Subsidized home loans for families with children
  • D. Buy a house worth more than the mean home price, and receive residency papers
How Immigration Works in the U.S.

• Three historical principals:
  • Reunification of families
  • Admitting immigrants with valuable skills
  • Protecting refugees
Immigration into the U.S.: The Numbers

- 675,000 total (legal) permanent immigrants per year
  - Refugees not included (80,000 in 2010)
- Of that 675k:
  - 480,000 of these are for family reunification
  - 140,000 for employment based (and their children)
  - 50,000 diversity lottery visas per year
The Millman Article

- Starting point: Africa does not matter
- Not a huge population (13%)
- Tiny economically
- No military power projection capabilities
- Piracy/terrorism are (in global terms) minor threats
Global Wealth Distribution
Global Population Distribution
The Millman Article: Background

• The basic argument:
  • African population is growing fast
• Four possibilities:
  • 1. Population growth slows (very) quickly
  • 2. Massive emigration
  • 3. Economic growth increases (very) quickly
  • 4. Massive mortality
Global Migration Currently

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hcoOENI_fpU
Migration and Family Structure

• Labor migration:
  • Often single, young men
    • But not always
  • Many women, especially domestic workers
    • More vulnerable
  • Different implications for family structure
Transnational Motherhood

- Two major groups:
  - Latina mothers working in the U.S.
  - SE Asian mothers working in the Middle East
- Household employees are hidden from public view
  - Isolated from one another
- Women face sexual, as well as labor, exploitation
Migration and Family Structure

- What does it mean to be a good mother?
  - father, son, daughter
Who Should the U.S. be Admitting?

- Between the following groups, who should receive priority in getting into the U.S.?
  - A. Highly skilled workers
  - B. Relatives of U.S. citizens
  - C. Refugees
Cultural Impact on Receiving Countries

- Economic insecurity leads to fear
- And then there are strictly cultural concerns.
  - These can be hard to untangle
Vincent Chin

• Chinese American man murdered in Detroit in 1982
• Killed by Chrysler workers angry over job losses due to trade with Japan
• Lenient plea-bargain drew criticism
  • Politically mobilized the Asian American community
THE FOLLOWING PREVIEW HAS BEEN APPROVED FOR ALL AUDIENCES
BY THE MOTION PICTURE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6ixnusI8c
Tell Me the Other Version

- Let’s say (for sake of argument) that religion as a flashpoint is epiphenomenal
  - Tell me the economic story about these mosque controversies
Enclaves vs Assimilation

• Immigrants in enclaves, retain cultural identity
  • retain strong ties to the homeland
• Is this better or worse than dispersion and assimilation?
Why Michael Clemens is My Hero

• Careful, rigorous work quantifying the effects of migration on:
  • 1. Migrants themselves
  • 2. Migrants’ families
  • 3. Migrants’ countries of origin
A Question:

• Why does capital move so much more freely than people?
• Does this make sense?