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Diaspora, Development, and the Demise of the Nation State: Lessons from Haiti and Jamaica

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Diaspora, Development, and the Demise of the Nation State: Lessons from Haiti and Jamaica

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The Caribbean and the Emerging Post-National Global System

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Diaspora

- Scholarly understandings of Diaspora have changed.
- Today Diasporic groups include ethnic migrants, students, refugees, those in exile, migrant workers and expatriates and others as well as their descendants.
- The inclusionary aspects of Diaspora have in part been precipitated by the transnational flows that characterize our modern global society
- In the eyes of Appadurai and the discipline of anthropology migration as well as the media have played a role in the emergence of a post national political world that has been deterritorialized.

- The aim of this presentation is to point out new extra-statist forms of belonging that transcend the boundaries of national territories.

- Through the creation of diasporic public spheres which could bring with them fundamental transformations in the current global hegemonic order.

Diaspora

- The relationship between mass media and migration underlie the creation of diasporic public spheres. (Appadurai 1996)

- The flows of electronic media have linked producers to new audiences that disperse information across national borders to further expand diasporic public spheres and the nation- state that includes professionals, students, activists, lay workers, refugees and politicians with connections to home and host societies that transcend physical boundaries. (Appadurai 1996)

The nation-State…

- In his work Appadurai defines the nation state as groups with ideas about nationhood that represent imagined communities that seek to create states of their own or carve pieces out of existing states (Appadurai 1996). Ideas about the formation of nationhood are currently increasing and actively crossing state boundaries.

- State is defined as the sovereign system of government that utilizes power within territorial parameters in order to construct an organized political apparatus. Nation on the other hand evokes a collective identity usually based on language, history, national territory and culture used by a specific population as a marker that separates them from other national populations (Pessar 131).

Deterritorialization

- An examination of the extension of ethnoscapes and mediascapes that are constantly in flux highlights instances where deterritorialization takes places through global cultural processes within diasporic public spheres. And when one considers the contemporary increases in emigration alongside this advent of self and collective imaginings based on electronic media the birth of diasporic public spheres occurs as a contributing factor to the deterritorialization of the nation.

The demise of the nation state…

- There are several cases in the Caribbean that illustrate new extra-statist forms of belonging that transcend the boundaries of national territories

    - Prime Minister P.J. Patterson extended the scope of the nation-state to include Jamaican emigrants residing in various nations

    - The nation includes the Diaspora (11th Department)

- Deterritorialization is no longer limited to examples such as transnational companies but now can include ethnic groups and political formations.

Development…

To better understand the dynamics of international migration and the subsequent proliferation of diasporic spheres of influence one must look to a variety of views that examine these phenomenons at a micro as well as macro level. World Systems Theory asserts that international migration stems from the impact of globalization on the global system that allows for the invasion of markers across territorial lines. Therefore the movement of capital including human capital from poor to rich nations can be linked to the structure of the world market that has been in existence since the 16th century according to the work of Wallerstein (1974).

- Shifting ideas about the place that the Caribbean holds in world history call for an examination of the position of those islands that were at one point in world history key players in the world economy.

- The region has been exposed to various forms of brutality from those in the core as well as elites within the region since the days of Columbus. However, through processes of exploitation as well as development the Caribbean emerged as a peripheral area that 'showed the way of the future'. (Mintz 1971

Future Development

•Wallerstein speaks about north-south exploitative relationships that characterize the global international system and asserts that nations must take into account the south-south relationships that are evidence of the fact that the Caribbean as well as Latin America have the potential to shape the world economy in the future.

- Initiatives such as the Aid for Trade agenda
- The complete integration of Haiti into CARICOM
- National and regional development policies